

Kids' Chronicle

Amos spreads God's messages

BY JOE SARNICOLA

My name is Amos. I am a shepherd in Tekoah, which lies just to the south of Jerusalem. Sometimes God finds humble men and women, and gives them words that must be spoken. I don't know why God chose me out of all the more educated or more prominent people in my country, but I always obey him.

There was a time when God showed me three frightful sights. The first was of a swarm of locusts that would devour the crops in the field. The second was of a wall of fire burning up the land in its path.

After these first two I pleaded, "God, do not do this. Jacob is too weak to endure your wrath." And the Lord heeded my plea.

But then I saw that God was ready to withhold his mercy from his rebellious people. The Lord gave me a word to speak before Jeroboam, king of Israel.

"Jeroboam will be killed by a sword and the people of Israel will be banished from their homeland."

Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, was sent to me with the king's response.

"Be gone with you," he said. "Prophesy in Judah, but never again in Bethel. This is the king's land and you are not wanted here."

The Lord gave me courage to speak to the priest without fear.

"Amaziah, this is what the Lord God



Linda Jeanne Rivers

says to you," I said. "Your wife will be taken from you, your children will be killed by soldiers, and you will die in a foreign country. And the people of Israel will be banished as I have said."

Another time the Lord used me to warn his people against greed.

"To those who take advantage of the poor and steal from the needy, take heed," I reported. "I can see what you have been doing. When I show my anger,

I will shake the earth, I will darken the sky at noon, and I will take any joy from your hearts. You will seek to hear my word, but it will be withheld from you."

But to the people who obey the commandments of the Lord, he says, "I will rebuild the home of my people, my Israel. Their villages will be clean and safe, their gardens will be fertile, and I will care for them forever."

The Lord has shown me that he loves his people, and that he watches over them like a shepherd watches his sheep. Perhaps that is the lesson God wants me to learn.

READ MORE ABOUT IT:
The Book of Amos

Q&A

1. What was Amos' occupation?
2. How did God feel about greedy people?

Bible Accent

The stories and prophecies of prophets like Amos make up a large portion of the Old Testament. The Bible is made of books about the prophets plus books of history, law, wisdom, the Gospels, Acts, letters and Revelation.

The church considers the books of the Bible to be the holy word of God. The Bible is the basis for all church doctrine and teaching, and selected readings are a part of every Mass. On Sundays, a lector reads passages from the Old and New Testaments, and a responsorial Psalm, and a priest or deacon reads from one of the Gospels.

The readings are carefully chosen so that a broad cross-section of the Bible will be read during Masses over a three-year period.

St. Robert Bellarmine

St. Robert Bellarmine was born in 1542 in Italy. From the time he was a boy, he showed bright intelligence and a gift for playing the violin. He entered the Society of Jesus and went to Rome to study. He was ordained a priest, and later became a cardinal. He also served for a while as archbishop of Capua, Italy.

St. Robert was a well-known teacher. He also gained a reputation for being a skilled preacher, and even though most of his sermons were in Latin, he drew large crowds of people.

Throughout his life, St. Robert wrote and studied, and worked to defend the church. His *Disputations on the Controversies* created a controversy of its own. Many scholars of the day found it hard to believe one man could possess the knowledge of the many things in it. He was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1931.

St. Robert is the patron saint of catechists. We honor him on Sept. 17.

Get Him To See His Doctor

September is

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Did you know that early detection increases the chance of survival 50-80%? That means an annual check up for men 40 and older.

Strong Cancer Center with Cancer Action is offering free prostate screenings on Sept. 17 only for men over 50—those most at risk.

Call **Cancer Action, 423-9700**, to schedule an appointment.

For more information and support:

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

288-1950
1-800-ACS-2345

Cancer Action
Helping you do what's best.

Monroe County 423-9700
Wayne County (315) 331-4147

Prostate Health Information Source: <http://www.prostatehealth.com>

Brought to you by the Rochester Prostate Cancer Community Coalition.



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Puzzle

Identify whether the following books belong to the Old Testament or the New Testament. Answers on page 7.

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Genesis _____ | 6. Matthew _____ |
| 2. Mark _____ | 7. Ruth _____ |
| 3. Romans _____ | 8. Judges _____ |
| 4. Job _____ | 9. Philemon _____ |
| 5. Joshua _____ | 10. James _____ |



Kids' Club

You can win a \$50 savings bond by writing an essay (100 or fewer words) answering this question:

Why is it good to read the Bible?

Send your essay — including name, home address, telephone number, school and grade — to **Catholic Courier, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, N.Y. 14624**. Deadline for entries is Sept. 17, 1998. The winner will be notified by phone and receive the savings bond by mail. In addition, the winner's essay will be published in an upcoming issue of *Kids' Chronicle*.

Last month's winner was Christopher Gentile, a third-grade student at St. Pius X School, Chili. In response to the question, **Both Jeremiah and St. Clare prayed often and God listened to them. What are some of the things you pray for?** he wrote:

Every night before I go to bed I pray for my family. I pray for my mom, my dad, me and my little sister to be happy and feel good. I also pray for my best friend Rashodd. My two grandmothers passed away so I pray for them. The last thing I pray for are my two goldfish that died.

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