

## Homily of Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C, 2025

Habakkuk 1:2-3, 2:2-4; Psalm 95:1-26-9; 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14; Luke 17:5-10

Prophet Habakkuk prophesied in Judah about 600 years before Jesus Christ. At that time, there were political decadence and abandonment of the worship of Yahweh. The first reading was a section of Habakkuk's lamentation over the situation in Judah. Habakkuk questioned God about his silence over his and the people's cry and prayers: "How long, O Lord? I cry for help but you do not listen! I cry out to you, 'Violence!' But you do not intervene. Why do you let me see ruin; why must I look at misery? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and clamorous discord."

There are people whose conditions are as it was with Judah, and like Habakkuk, in their grief and desolation they think that God is silent. They ask God many questions: "Why me?" "Why this?" "Why that?" "Where are you, God?" "Where are your promises?" And many other questions. Some people think that it is not proper to ask God questions. Questions to God with faith are prayers in themselves. It is praying to God as we are, according to our mood, and according to our situation. That is why we have different Mysteries of the Rosary and different seasons of the Church's liturgical calendar. Every season has its kind of prayer. There are many prayerful questions to God in the Scriptures. Jesus prayed on the Cross with a question to God from Psalm 22:1, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). Jesus did not stop at the question; he set an example for us by his act of faith: "Father into your hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46). Inappropriate questions are questions to God asked with doubt and unbelief.

Habakkuk encourages us, "For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint; if it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late. ... The just one, because of his faith, shall live" (Habakkuk 2:2-3). Jesus gives the same assurance, "Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night? Will he be slow to answer them? I tell you, he will see to it that justice is done for them speedily" (Luke 18:7-8). Prophet Isaiah says, "No, the hand of the Lord is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear" (Isaiah 59:1-2).

St. Paul writes in the second reading, "Beloved: I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control..." (2 Timothy 1:6-7). "Take as your norm the sound words that you heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 1:13). St. Paul encourages us that no matter what happens, we are to keep our spirit and faith alive. In these virtues lie our strength. Do not despair! Do not give up!

In today's gospel, we read, "The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith.' The Lord replied, 'If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea, and it would obey you'" (Luke 17:5-6). Jesus tells us that by our Baptism, the fire of faith is ignited in us. If it is now smoldering, it is in our hands to fan it into flame.

Yes, our faith will be tested as that of the servant who came in from hard work in the field. The servant was not allowed to get some rest. Immediately, the servant's master tasked the servant to prepare a meal for him. After the servant served him the food, the master ordered, "Put on your apron and wait while I eat and drink. You may eat and drink when I am finished" (Luke 17:7-10). He

remained obedient and faithful. St James writes, “The testing of your faith produces perseverance” (James 4:3). St. Paul says that perseverance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope, the hope that does not disappoint (Romans 5:4-4). When my faith is tested, what does it produce?

The victory over this world is our faith (1 John 5:4). St. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:7, “We walk by faith, not by sight.” Jesus bade some persons farewell, recognizing the power of their faith: To the repentant woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” (Luke 7:50). To the Samaritan healed of leprosy, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well” (Luke 17:19). To the woman healed of hemorrhage, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering,” (Mark 5:34). To blind Bartimaeus, “Go, your faith has healed you” (Mark 10:52). What will Jesus say to me about my faith?

However, it does happen that we have the faith that uproots trees and moves mountains and have the perseverance that produces proven character yet we do not receive what we have prayed for. At such times, we do not give up but do what Jesus did at Gethsemane and on the Cross. He prayed to God, “... not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42); “Father into your hands I commend my spirit” (Luke 23:46).

Let us pray: O Lord, may we see your hand in all our unanswered prayers. May our unanswered prayers come together for our good. May our unanswered prayers produce joyful and thanksgiving testimonies. Amen.

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