

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

[Reading I: Hab 1: 2-3, 2: 2-4](#)

[Responsorial Psalm 95: 1-2, 6-7, 8-9](#)

[Reading II: 2 Timothy 1: 6-8, 13-14](#)

[Gospel: Luke 17: 5-10](#)

Readings may be found on the US Bishop's website:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/100222.cfm>

The Gospel passage for today begins with the disciples' request that Jesus would increase their faith. This request comes as Jesus has been instructing them in the previous verses that they need to show particular concern for those new to following him and not give them any scandal. He has also taught them that they must forgive those who offend them unlimitedly. To this, Jesus replies that it is not the amount (quantity) of faith but the quality of one's faith that makes the difference.

Apparently, the disciples have recognized that they cannot be followers of Jesus on the strength of their own will. They need God's help to live as disciples, forgive those who offend them and be non-judgmental toward others.

Faith is not an intellectual activity of identifying and defining concepts. It is about being in a trusting and dependable relationship with someone. Fidelity is a virtue for spouses. Fidelity can give a perspective on what it means to be in a faith relationship with God. One trusts and relies upon God for the gift of life each day, for inspiration as to how to live, and for serving the needs of others.

The use of unprofitable is misleading. The language of Jesus may be a wordplay that is not easily conveyed. The servant who fulfills his duties and responsibilities is not unprofitable or worthless. It might better be understood as a "due-nothing" servant as opposed to a "do-nothing" servant. When a person has completed all their responsibilities, they are not due anything extra. They have done what was expected.

In the same way, when a disciple lives in the example of Jesus, they are not owed anything. God gave them the opportunity, the gifts, and the grace, and they were only following through. Everything is a gift, even salvation. One does not earn it; one only responds to the gift. The call of the Gospel is to love as God loves and to be grateful.

Faith is dynamic, like a relationship. Faith takes time and lived experience to develop. It develops through prayer, reflection, life experience, and the testimony of others. Faith does not grow in a vacuum. As one journeys with others, one encounters different dimensions of faith. Prayer can offer different exercises to help listen to God and review experiences in light of the Good News.

Habakkuk lived at the time of the Babylonians' second conquest of Jerusalem around 587 before Christ. It was a time of suffering and the loss of everything held sacred by the Jews. Habakkuk voices the pain and outrage of the residents of Jerusalem when their independence is lost, and the Temple is destroyed. He cries out for God to answer his "How long" and "Why." God responds that there will be a resolution and that God's vision will come true. The person of faith must wait for the time to come. This requires a living relationship with God in which there is a trusting reliance and a spirit of hope. This trust and fidelity bring forth life.

The second reading moves from the first to the second letter to Timothy this week. It is included in a group called the Pastoral Letters. These letters are written to the leaders of churches and focus on the organization of Christian communities.

The reading highlights how leadership was passed to a person through the ritual of the laying on of hands. An office of responsibility has been entrusted to Timothy through this ritual. The laying on of hands continues to be part of the ordination rite for deacons, priests, and bishops. The gift of the Spirit is imparted through the rite, and they come to share in the community of the ordained to serve the church and offer their lives for the good of the community. Paul is presented as an example of one who served the church, who suffered for the Gospel, and who bore witness through his preaching and dedication.

Reflection Questions:

How do you understand faith?

What has helped your faith grow?

Who is an example of a faithful person for you?

How does suffering impact your sense of God's presence?

What are qualities that you look for in good leaders in the Church?

Themes:

Faith

Developing Faith

Hope

Suffering and Justice

Holy Orders

Prayer Suggestions:

For the Church: that God will stir up the Spirit who has been given to each of us and embolden us to love without expectation and to forgive without condition

For a vision of hope: that all who face violence, destruction, and chaos may be renewed by the Spirit of God and become a source of light and promise to others who are struggling

For all who serve the church in Holy Orders: that Spirit of God will inspire their ministry and embolden them with wisdom and love to serve God's people

For all who suffer for their faith: that those living in oppressive societies may know God's presence in their suffering and that the Spirit will renew and strengthen them

For those who work for social justice: that they may continue to manifest the vision of God's reign where all will be sisters and brothers caring for and seeking the good of one another