

27TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

By Al Mansfield

Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

Psalm 95

2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

Luke 17:5-10

KEEP THE FAITH

"The just man shall live by faith...Lord, increase our faith...Have faith the size of a mustard seed...Guard the rich deposit of faith." Today's liturgy is permeated by **faith**. We can't get more basic than that!

HABAKKUK

It's not too often that we have a reading from the prophet Habakkuk, who lived and prophesied just before the Babylonian Captivity. In our first reading today, the prophet is distressed at how the Lord permits such violence and misery, destruction and strife in the land. (Sound familiar, anyone?)

The Lord replies by telling Habakkuk, "Write down the vision...For the vision still has its time...if it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late...the just one, because of his faith, shall live." Babylon will indeed bring about divine punishment - but Judah will not perish forever. In other words - hold on to your faith!

The Responsorial, Psalm 95, tells us not to harden our hearts and not to put the Lord to the test. God doesn't answer to us, rather, we have to answer to him.

GOSPEL

Today's gospel from Luke 17 teaches us two main lessons. **First, hold on to your faith.** Faith is the most important gift we can have because it establishes our relationship with God. Faith can move mountains and even mulberry trees!

The second lesson is, we are unprofitable servants. We are not to question God, but simply stay in our lane and do whatever the Lord has called us to do.

2 TIMOTHY

Our second reading has the familiar quote from St. Paul to Timothy: "I remind you, to stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands."

Paul then says what God does **not** give us - a spirit of cowardice. But what **does** God give us? A spirit of power, love and self-control.

Paul then emphasizes faith in the "sound words that you have heard from me" and urges Timothy to "guard this rich trust with the help of the Holy Spirit that dwells within us."

ESSENTIAL, PRIMARY, PARAMOUNT

We cannot overstate the importance of faith. It brings to mind chapter 11 of Hebrews which tells us that "without faith it is impossible to please God. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

Faith is basic, essential, primary, and paramount! Let us pray for the grace of faith as the Apostles did: "Lord, increase our faith."