



LIVING THE GOSPEL

**27th Sunday of Ordinary Time.
October 05th 2025**

Theme: "Increase our faith!"

Gathering Prayer

All: Almighty ever-living God, who in the abundance of your kindness surpass the merits and the desires of those who entreat you, pour out your mercy upon us to pardon what conscience dreads and to give what prayer does not dare to ask. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Exploring the Word

Gospel Reading: Luke 17:5-10

⁵ The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" ⁶ And the Lord said, "If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this sycamore tree, 'Be rooted up, and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. ⁷ "Will any one of you, who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep, say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down at table'?

⁸ Will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, and gird yourself and serve me, till I eat and drink; and afterward you shall eat and drink'? ⁹ Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? ¹⁰ So you also, when you have done all that is commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'"

Gospel Focus

Jesus here speaks of the power of faith. He promises that even a small amount of faith gives a great amount of power. The example he gives is absurd-trees do not obey commands to uproot themselves and grow in the sea. The hard implication here is that, since we are not able to move trees around on command, our faith is really rather small. And he is right-in comparison to the vastness of God's love and goodness, anything we are offering is always too small. Our faith, our gratitude, our praise can never be enough to repay the debt we owe to God.

Gospel Reflection

Philosophers and thinkers debate the meaning of justice and charity. Justice is often considered the doing or giving what is owed to another, for example, money, labor, or some other arrangement. On the other hand, charity is the gift one gives expecting nothing in return. A philosophical parlor game centers around the definition of charity. Can an act be considered charity if the doer expects a thank you? Or does the expectation of an expression of gratitude

annul the act of charity, which is given expecting nothing in return?

The disciples have a simple request of Jesus today: "Increase our faith." How many of us have made the same request? But what did the disciples mean by it? And what would we mean by it? Further, what is the point of the request?

In another example of hyperbole, Jesus responds by saying that if their faith was the size of a mustard seed (about the size of a sesame seed) they would be able to move trees. Now, nobody, not even Jesus, moved trees. Significantly, there are other gospels where the claim is that they could with faith the size of a mustard seed move mountains (Mark 11:23; Matt 17:20). But apparently Luke thought that was hyperbole taken too far. For in this gospel the extent of faith is moving only trees. Mountains are not mentioned. Nevertheless, the point is simply that they have little faith, not even that the size of a mustard seed.

Jesus continues his lesson with a demonstration of the proper attitude of a servant who does what he is told expecting nothing, not even gratitude, in return. That attitude, striking for us today, is proper for discipleship.

So the disciples' query about increasing their faith brings a mild rebuke from Jesus, stating that their faith is smaller than the size of a mustard seed. Even so, they should simply carry out their mission without expecting even a thank you.

This "tough love" approach to discipleship may seem at odds with the Jesus that has been portrayed in much of the gospel. It's as though he is sure to put the disciples in their place so they turn their attention away from their own wants, desires, and requests, and on to carrying out the mission of Jesus. This is the true call of discipleship, to serve the master rather than oneself. And upon offering and completing that service, to have no expectations at all, not even a thank you.

This is a tall order. How many of us, upon performing an act of kindness, no matter how small, appreciate a word of gratitude. In fact, many of us likely expect that. But the story we have today presents a different standard. It would be good for us to reevaluate our role in this relationship. We are mere servants, carrying out the wishes of the Lord. When complete, we are happy simply to have done his bidding.

Old/New Testament and CCC links

First Reading – Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

² O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and thou wilt not hear? Or cry to thee "Violence!" and thou wilt not save? ³ Why dost thou make me see wrongs and look upon trouble? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. ...

^{2:2} And the LORD answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain upon tablets, so he may run who reads it. ³ For still the vision awaits its time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seem slow, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. ⁴ Behold, he whose soul is not upright in him shall fail, but the righteous shall live by his faith.

Responsorial Reading – Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

R: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts! (R)

Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord; let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation. Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to him. **(R)**

Come, let us bow down in worship; let us kneel before the Lord who made us. For he is our God, and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides. **(R)**

Oh, that today you would hear his voice: "Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the desert, where your fathers tempted me; they tested me though they had seen my works." **(R)**

Second Reading – 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

⁶ Hence I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; ⁷ for God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control. Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel in the power of God, ...¹³ Follow the pattern of the sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; ¹⁴ guard the truth that has been entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us.

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162 Faith is an entirely free gift that God makes to man. We can lose this priceless gift, as St. Paul indicated to St. Timothy: "Wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, certain persons have made shipwreck of their faith." (1 Tim 1:18-19.) To live, grow and persevere in the faith until the end we must nourish it with the word of God; we must beg the Lord to increase our faith; (Cf. Mk 9:24; Lk 17:5; 22:32.) it must be "working through charity," abounding in hope, and rooted in the faith of the Church. (Gal 5:6; Rom 15:13; cf. Jas 2:14-26.)

Sharing and Discussion

1. What changes have you seen in the quality of your faith in recent years?
2. How do you respond to unanswered prayers? What helps you remember to be patient with God's timeline rather than imposing your own?
3. What are the attitudes necessary to be a willing servant of Christ?

Closing Prayer

All: Almighty and ever-living God, all peoples receive their origin in you. Fill our hearts with the fire of your love, and may we pursue justice and peace for all your children. We ask this through Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Leader: May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

Living The Gospel bible study/sharing will resume on the 25th of October. It will be held in the Parish in an in-person format.

Venue: Church of the Holy Cross: Rm 03-06

All are welcome!

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References:

- (1) Gospel Notes are taken from The Navarre Bible
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