

27<sup>th</sup> Sunday October 5, 2025

Intro:

**1) Faith of a little boy:** A little boy wanted \$100.00 very much, and his mother told him to pray to God with Faith. He prayed and prayed for two weeks, but nothing turned up. Then he decided perhaps he should write God a letter requesting the \$100.00. When the postal authorities received the letter addressed to God, they opened it up and decided to send it to the President. President Trump was so impressed and touched that he instructed his secretary to send the little boy a check for \$5.00. He thought that this would appear to be a lot of money to a little boy. The little boy was delighted with the \$5.00 and sat down to write a thank-you letter to God, which ran as follows: *“Dear God: Thank you very much for the money. I noticed that you had to send it through Washington. Dad said that, as usual, they deducted \$95.00 for themselves in the name of ‘Homeland Security’*

2) Today, all of our readings focus on Faith: faith in God as a loving creator, faith in Jesus Christ dying for our sins and rose from the dead to bring us to eternal life, and faith in the Holy Spirit who is ever present who gives us the courage and power to live a faith filled life.

3) The first reading is from the book of Habakkuk. Habakkuk was a prophet during the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC. The Israelites had become unfaithful to Yahweh by worshiping other gods, and living sinful lives. So, God has allowed the Babylonians to plunder Jerusalem. Habakkuk laments to God, “How long, O lord I cry for help but you do not listen”. Then the Lord replies back to Habakkuk: “Be patient, the vision has it’s time, presses on to fulfillment, if it delays- wait for it. The rash one (one without faith) has no integrity, but the just one, because of his faith, shall live”.

In other words, trust, especially in difficult situations, that God is still in control. I think for most of us, the Covid pandemic, was one such

difficult situation for us. Fewer masses, fewer church activities, less human contact, isolation, loss of control, all challenged our faith, each of us in different ways.

4) Our responsorial Psalm sums it up by saying, “if today you hear His voice, harden not your hearts”. “Harden not your hearts as at Meribah and Massah in the desert they tempted me and they tested me although they had seen all my works.” The Israelites had been in the desert now about 6 weeks after leaving Egypt and now they were out of water. They complained to Moses saying. “Why did you bring us out here to die of hunger and thirst when we could at least have food and drink back in Egypt.

What is this teaching us about faith? Most of the saints talk about a desert experience in their spiritual life. Where they begin to follow God’s direction in their life and then everything seems to dry up. Mother Theresa admitted to this after she was denied by the Pope to start her own order to serve the poor. The lesson is to keep the faith, not harden our hearts and press on (don’t go back to Egypt, or our old way of living)

Aside: The Israelites journeyed for 40 years with many ups and downs before reaching the promised land. In our Diocese of Dubuque, we are starting on our own “Journey in Faith” over the next five years. Will we live by faith along the way or grumble like the Israelites?

5) Our New Testament reading taken from the 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to Timothy finds Timothy disillusioned by the local Christian community that has now become complacent and Lukewarm in their faith. Timothy is challenged to “stir into flames the gift God gave you”.

We too need to keep the flame of faith alive in our hearts, as it is easy to become complacent and lukewarm, taking our blessing from God for granted. How do we keep our faith alive and lively? The short answer is prayer. Daily prayer, in whatever form. Mother Theresa talks about the poor and prayer: everyone talks about the poor but not always with the poor and everyone talks about prayer but does not actually pray. Prayer can be simple or complex, traditional (like the Our Father and Hail Mary) or spontaneous, it can be scheduled or intermittent throughout the day. The point is, just do it. It has to happen to keep your faith alive and lively.

6) In our Gospel, Luke 17: vs 5 the apostles said to the Lord, “increase our faith”. They are on their way to Jerusalem with Jesus. They have seen His many miracles and healings. In verse 3-4 Jesus informs the disciples that if their brother wrongs them 7 times in one day and asks for forgiveness 7 times, that they must forgive them. It is just after this statement from Jesus, that they ask for more faith.

You see Faith ultimately calls us to action. There is no me and Jesus. It’s not about just being saved. It’s about faith in a loving God who longs to be with us and who calls us to love (and forgive) our brothers and sisters along the way. It is only by Faith that we can do this. Make Faith a daily part of your life this week.