

English

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

How long, Lord, am I to cry for help while you will not listen; to cry "Oppression!" in your ear and you will not save? Why do you set injustice before me, why do you look on where there is tyranny? Outrage and violence, this is all I see, all is contention, and discord flourishes. Then the Lord answered and said, "Write the vision down, inscribe it on tablets to be easily read, since this vision is for its own time only: eager for its own fulfilment, it does not deceive; if it comes slowly, wait, for come it will, without fail. See how he flags, he whose soul is not at rights, but the upright man will live by his faithfulness."

Second Reading 2 Timothy 1:6-8.13-14

I am reminding you to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you when I laid my hands on you. God's gift was not a spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power, and love, and self-control. So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to the Lord, or ashamed of me for being his prisoner; but with me, bear the hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God.

Keep as your pattern the sound teaching you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. You have been trusted to look after something precious; guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

Gospel Luke 17:5-10

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." The Lord replied, "Were your faith the size of a mustard seed you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea', and it would obey you.

Which of you, with a servant ploughing or minding sheep, would say to him when he returned from the fields, 'Come and have your meal immediately'? Would he not be more likely to say, 'Get my supper laid; make yourself tidy and wait on me while I eat and drink. You can eat and drink yourself afterwards'? Must he be grateful to the servant for doing what he was told? So with you: when you have done all you have been told to do, say, 'We are merely servants: we have done no more than our duty.'"

Meditation

Like the disciples, we turn to Jesus and say, "Increase our faith!" They have guessed correctly that faith is first of all a gift, a grace. No one conquers it, buys it, earns it. One can only implore the Lord who is both the gift and the giver. Without directly answering the disciples' prayer, Jesus turns to a paradoxical image which expresses the incredible vitality of faith. Like a lever which lifts much more than its weight, a tiny grain of faith is capable of achieving the impossible. To become convinced of this and to take advantage of its power one need only examine what happened to Paul. Faith is, for him, unmerited participation in the very life of the risen Lord. "To me, 'life' means Christ!" (Ph 1:21). His whole person, body, mind and heart is seized, transformed, lifted up, in such a way that he can live the kingdom of God in the midst of the world.