

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Homily: Fr. Shijo George

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“Increase our faith” was a prayer from the heart of Jesus’ Disciples. By listening and following the teachings of Jesus daily, the disciples understood that it is not easy to follow His teachings. They were overwhelmed and realized that by relying on their own human abilities, they would be unable to live as Jesus expected; that there is a tremendous need for Divine Power to heed this call.

Faith is a precious gift from God; stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC § 153):

Faith is a gift of God, a supernatural virtue infused by him. "Before this faith can be exercised, man must have the grace of God to move and assist him; he must have the interior helps of the Holy Spirit, who moves the heart and converts it to God, who opens the eyes of the mind and 'makes it easy for all to accept and believe the truth.'"

St. Paul uses the analogy of “the treasure in jars of clay” to teach that Faith is a precious gift: “But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us.” (2 Corinthians, 4:7) That is: what is given in the jars of clay, our human weaknesses and fragile nature, is perfected through the Grace of God.

Again, the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC §155) teaches:

In faith, the human intellect and will co-operate with divine grace: “Believing is an act of the intellect assenting to the divine truth by command of the will moved by God through grace.”

Faith is perfected through an ongoing process of action, growth, and perseverance leading to a deeper, unshakeable trust in God and His word. This is often marked by obedience, unwavering confidence, and giving thanks in all circumstances. This requires receiving God's promises, demonstrating faith through works, and being transformed by the Holy Spirit to achieve a state of spiritual maturity and unwavering certainty.



Today, all three Scripture Readings teach us how diligently and carefully we must receive and grow in Faith. In the First Reading, the book of Habakkuk depicts Faith as having the ability to help us achieve a life of righteousness and harmony with everyone. Similarly, St. Paul advises Timothy to guard the ‘good treasure’ that is entrusted to him. The Greek word ‘paratheke’ is the word that was used to describe ‘a good treasure’ or ‘a good deposit’ in Scripture. This ‘good treasure’ is the Gospel, Heavenly Wisdom, and Faith: the invaluable treasure that God gave to Paul, and who in turn entrusted it to Timothy and the Church; to protect and guard it against false teachings, worldly corruption, and to ensure its continued transmission to the world. We know that through Baptism, we received and are connected through this same Faith, and we are called to live this Faith and to transmit it.

Dear brothers and sisters, we have all received Faith from Jesus through his mystical body, the Church. The question now is: How do we take care of this great treasure?

The ‘clay jars’, who are ourselves, can be strengthened by keeping this Faith alive through living the Sacramental Life, regular family and personal prayer, and through a deep love and trust in Christ. Taking to heart the advice that St. Paul gave to Timothy, we are all called to protect and guard this great treasure, and to share it.

So as Disciples, ourselves, let us pray in the same way: “Jesus, increase our Faith.”