

Fr. Romeo Evangelista's Homily  
October 6, 2019  
27th Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Upon recalling a story of my high school classmate whose daughter had died two years ago from Leukemia, I couldn't help but recall what the prophet Habakkuk said in our first reading. Although my classmate said that he would never lose his faith in God, but maybe in his heart he cried out like the prophet. "How long, O Lord? I cry for help but you do not listen. Why do you let me see ruin; why must I look at misery?" And maybe some of us here had the same experience when our faith had been challenged at the highest level.

In the Gospel, the disciples approach Jesus for an increase of faith. And Jesus assures them that even if faith is as small as a mustard seed, it can indeed perform miracles for people. A mustard seed is certainly small, as tiny as a crumb of bread. Yet Jesus says that the size of faith is not the primary factor in life. It is the strength and sincerity of faith that truly matter in the end.

Some people have very simple faith and yet their faith carries them through life's ups and downs. They emerge wise and victorious because they believe in the power of God to help them in every difficulty. There are people who have been given bigger opportunities to embrace their faith and yet it means almost nothing to them—not becoming part of daily life, not allowed to influence their decisions and plans, an almost forgotten relic of past innocence.

Fr. Andrew Greeley wrote: "Faith is an overwhelming power no matter how weak it may seem. Given half a chance it will take over and direct our lives, comforting us when we are discouraged and challenging us when we are complacent".

It is alright that at times, our faith is shaken, that we are enveloped by fear of the odds facing us. But we need to hold on to this faith if we are to discover the power of God present in the world and in our lives today. Our hearts must always have space for God.

As Catholics, we know that our faith is challenged from all sides. So many new religious movements teach another gospel, convincing some to abandon the faith of their fathers. Atheists stage aggressive propaganda to shake people's convictions. The scandals that struck the church. Daily problems and many inner questions lead us to examine if truly God is good, if truly he is faithful to us.

Let us not feel guilty that at times we doubt God's promises or forget God's goodness. But let us strive never to give up on God. Even if we feel our faith is too small and weak, it is so much better than a lost one. Daily, ask the Lord Jesus to increase your faith. Daily, exercise your faith, even in small steps, so that it may grow stronger and bear fruit in our lives.