

**October 5-6, 2019**

**Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Habakkuk 1:2-3, 2:2-4**

**Second Timothy 1:6-14**

**Luke 17:5-10**

*Crime. Disease. Political discord. Divorce. Betrayals. Miscarriages. Unemployment. Despair. Addictions. Personal failures. Separations. Homelessness. War. Climate change. Environmental destruction. Loneliness. Age.*

Like swarms of gnats, on any given day our lives can be disheartened or overwhelmed by the abundance of personal struggles and confusions that surround us. Awakening to whatever is occurring within our lives can become a further disappointment in itself, one darkness leading to deeper despairs. This weekend's selection from the Prophet Habakkuk (in all my years, I have never baptized any child named Habakkuk!) speaks to this immersion in confusion and uncertainty: 'How long O Lord? I cry to you for help but you do not listen! I cry out but you do not intervene! There is strife, violence, discord....' How many of us have cried out to God for cures, jobs, stability, intervention or just a way out of whatever is afflicting us? Who has NOT, at one time or another, bartered with God, offering undying fidelity, if ONLY God would extend a particular favor to us? Desirous of obtaining WHAT WE WANT we frequently fail to see the small SEED of grace extended to us by God that allows us to survive. 'If you have faith the size of a mustard seed....' Survival allows us to awaken another day...and another day following that one and so forth...the accumulation of days frequently deadening the pain of what we once thought was unbearable, we begin to perceive our ability to survive despite whatever crisis challenges us. Like new clothes, the original stiffness of 'new normals' diminishes with familiarity and what was once unthinkable and overwhelming becomes just another part of our individual story. A wise Irish pastor from another parish long ago once offered sage advice: 'Set low goals and you will always be happy.' (Of course, he also said, 'Keep your head in the gutter and you will never get dizzy.' Go figure.) Instead of seeking the whole world, treasure, miraculous cures and vast success...how about simply seeking the tiny seed of grace by which to get through another day?

Thank you for sharing the fine Autumnal weekend with our Santa Clara community. Please take note of the assorted events and news mentioned in this weekend's Bulletin...and don't forget that the Oak Glen Apple Orchards are a delightful (albeit, crowded) seasonal option for a weekend or weekday afternoon. As our new month progresses, please remember, you are loved. FKB