



# DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

700 King Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8P 1C7

## Children's Liturgy of the Word Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

### Overview

Imagine a child reaching for a star, believing it can be caught. That child's hope mirrors the disciples' request, "Increase our faith!" Yet Jesus does not give them a miracle on demand; He gives them a vision of how even the tiniest faith, when rooted in love, transforms ordinary work into a holy offering. The Gospel today invites us to ask for more faith, yet Jesus reminds us that even the smallest grain of trust must be lived out in humble service.

In the first reading, the prophet Habakkuk cries out against injustice, but God answers with a call to "wait for the vision" and live by faith. The psalmist responds with a joyful proclamation of God's greatness, urging us to worship with open hearts. Paul encourages us not to be ashamed of the gospel, to rekindle the gift of God, and to guard the treasure of faith with the Holy Spirit. Luke shows the disciples demanding greater faith and receiving the paradoxical promise that a mustard-seed can move a mulberry tree, followed by a lesson on faithful, unnoticed service.

All the readings converge on a single truth: faith is not a feeling but a catalyst for humble service. May our small, faithful deeds become the mulberry-tree-moving seeds that testify to God's love in the world.

## READINGS

### FIRST READING

Habakkuk 1.2-3; 2.2-4

*The righteous live by their faith.*

A reading from the book of the prophet Habakkuk.

"O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not listen?  
Or cry to you, 'Violence!' and you will not save?  
Why do you make me see wrongdoing and look at trouble?  
Destruction and violence are before me;  
strife and contention arise."

Then the Lord answered me and said:

"Write the vision; make it plain on tablets,  
so that a runner may read it.  
For there is still a vision for the appointed time;  
it speaks of the end, and does not lie.  
If it seems to tarry, wait for it;  
it will surely come, it will not delay.  
Look at the proud person!  
Their spirit is not right in them,  
but the righteous live by their faith."

The word of the Lord.

*A period of silence is observed after the reading.*

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 95.1-2, 6-7ab, 7c-9

**R.** O that today you would listen to the voice of the Lord.  
Do not harden your hearts!

O come, let us sing to the Lord;  
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!  
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! **R.**

O come, let us worship and bow down,  
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!  
For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture,  
and the sheep of his hand. **R.**

O that today you would listen to his voice!  
Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,  
as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,  
when your ancestors tested me,  
and put me to the proof,  
though they had seen my work. **R.**

## SECOND READING

2 Timothy 1.6-8, 13-14

*Do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord.*

A reading from the second letter of Paul to Timothy.

Beloved:

I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you  
through the laying on of my hands;  
for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice,  
but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

Do not be ashamed, then,  
of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner,  
but join with me in suffering for the Gospel,  
relying on the power of God.

Hold to the standard of sound teaching  
that you have heard from me,  
in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.  
Guard the good treasure entrusted to you,  
with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

The word of the Lord.

*A period of silence is observed after the reading.*

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

The apostles said to the Lord,  
"Increase our faith!"

The Lord replied,  
"If you had 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.

"Who among you would say to your slave  
who has just come in from ploughing  
or tending sheep in the field,  
'Come here at once and take your place at the table'?  
Would you not rather say to him,

'Prepare supper for me,  
put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink;  
later you may eat and drink'?

Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded?  
So you also,  
when you have done all that you were ordered to do,  
say, 'We are worthless slaves;  
we have done only what we ought to have done!'"

The Gospel of the Lord.

## Background

**Habakkuk** starts with a stark complaint: "O Lord, how long will I cry for help, but you will not listen?" He faces God's silence in the midst of violence and injustice. He speaks for Judah, which is suffering under the threat of the Chaldeans, a cruel foreign power. This situation raises a serious question about faith: why does God allow the wicked to succeed? God's answer is not about immediate help but a call to "wait for the vision" and to "live by faith." The instruction to "write the vision on tablets" shows that God's plan is permanent. The idea that "the righteous shall live by their faith" emphasizes that faith helps the good endure when times are difficult.

**Psalms 95** responds to Habakkuk's despair: while he waits for divine revelation, the psalmist urges the people to enter God's presence now, offering gratitude that keeps the heart receptive. The psalmists' call to "worship and bow down" aligns with the New Testament's emphasis on humility before God, preparing us to receive the gift of faith that Jesus will later discuss.

**2 Timothy** This is a personal letter written to Timothy. It reminds him that "God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but a spirit of power, love, and self-discipline." This spirit refers to the Holy Spirit, which helps believers share their faith courageously. Paul encourages Timothy not to feel ashamed of the teachings of the Gospel and to "guard the good treasure entrusted to you." By connecting the Spirit's strength with the duty of taking care of what has been given to him, the letter links the desire for justice from God with the real task of practicing that justice in the life of the Church.

**Luke 17:5-10** The disciples, having witnessed Jesus' miracles, ask, "Increase our faith!" Jesus answers with an interesting image: even a mustard-seed of faith could uproot a mulberry tree and plant it in the sea. This metaphor illustrates the potential of genuine faith to accomplish what seems impossible. Even with a small amount of faith, anything is possible. The Gospel immediately turns to a lesson on humility: the faithful servant "does not expect thanks for doing what is commanded." The narrative juxtaposes extraordinary faith with ordinary service, teaching that the true measure of faith is not spectacular signs but faithful obedience in daily duties.

## The Liturgy

### Procession from the main Church

After the opening prayer, when all are seated, the leaders come forward and stand facing the altar.

### Dismissal

**Priest: Good morning. Today, you hear Jesus tell his disciples that even a little bit of faith can do big things. Go with your leaders and listen to how God invites us to trust Him.**

When most of the children have formed a procession, the leader with the book proceeds to the place of the celebration. The second leader usually walks behind the children. Upon arrival at the location of the celebration, the leader places the book on the prepared table.

### Welcome

The leaders assist the children in sitting and preparing. **Begin with the Sign of the Cross.** Help the children think and connect their actions as they touch their foreheads, shoulders, and stomachs. The leader may say the following prayer in these or similar words.

### Let us pray:

Pause for 5 – 10 seconds

**Lord Jesus, you teach us to believe and trust in You. Help us to grow in faith every day, even when it feels small.**

**Amen.**

Invite the children to listen to the readings. Proclaiming all the readings is unnecessary; however, the Gospel is required.

## ADAPTED READINGS FOR CHILDREN

### FIRST READING

A reading from the book of the prophet Habakkuk.

Habakkuk saw many bad things happening in his country and prayed to God. He asked God how long he had to wait for help.

God answered him and said, "Be patient. Trust me. The person who is faithful to me will live."

The word of the Lord.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

R. Leader: If today you hear God's voice...  
Children: ...harden not your hearts!

Let us sing to the Lord;

Let us enter into God's presence with thanksgiving. **R.**

For he is our God, and we are the people. **R.**



## SECOND READING

A reading from the second letter of Paul to Timothy.

St. Paul tells Timothy: 'God gave us a Spirit of power, love, and self-control. Do not be afraid to speak about Jesus. Be strong and keep the faith that God has given you.'

The word of the Lord.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

## GOSPEL

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

The apostles said to Jesus, "Lord, give us more faith!"

Jesus replied, "If you had faith as tiny as a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

The Gospel of the Lord.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

## Reflection

The leader may offer this reflection in these or similar words. Remember the amount of time available to return to the main assembly. The leader may wish to reduce the number of questions. An excellent place to begin is the question:

### **Have you ever seen a mustard seed?** (Show a tiny seed if possible.)

It is so small you can hardly see it, yet Jesus tells us that even such a little seed can grow into a big tree that gives shade to birds. This helps us understand faith – the trust we have in God – even when it seems tiny at first.

### **Why do you think Jesus used something so small to explain faith?**

Imagine you have a tiny seed in your hand. You plant it in soil, water it, and wait. At first, nothing seems to happen, but day after day, you care for it. One morning, you see a sprout! Soon it becomes a tall tree where birds can rest. Our faith works the same way. When we trust God a little and keep caring for that trust, God makes it grow into something big and beautiful.

### **What can you do today?**

- † Pray a little each morning, even if it's just a short "Thank you, God."
- † Share a smile or a toy with a friend.
- † Listen to your parents and teachers, showing respect.

These simple actions are like water and sunshine for your mustard-seed faith. As you keep them up, you will notice how your trust in God becomes stronger and stronger.

Faith does not have to be huge to be powerful. Like the mustard seed, a small, sincere trust in God can grow into a mighty tree that bears fruit for others. Keep planting that seed, and watch how God's love blossoms in your heart.

### **Can you think of times when you trusted God, even if it was hard?**

Faith isn't about size—it's about trust. God can take our small prayers, our little acts of kindness, and do great things with them.

Following the reflection, the prayer leader invites everyone to stand to profess their faith. Recite the Creed or use the sample below to ask the children to respond.

## The Creed

Depending on the time, a simple profession of faith may be made (see below).

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth?

All: I believe.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, who gave his life for us?

All: I believe.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and gives us everlasting life?

All: I believe.

Leader: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it.

## Prayer of the Faithful

Leaders may begin the intercessions by announcing the needs they know. The leader may need to repeat and paraphrase the petition and conclude it with the cue for the response: we pray. All respond to each petition by saying, "Lord, hear our prayer." Sample intercessions are below.

Leader: Jesus tells us today that even a little bit of faith can do great things. With faith and trust in God's love, we offer our prayers. The response is: Lord, hear our prayer. All: Lord, hear our prayer.

1. For our Pope, bishops, priests, deacons and all the Church leaders, that they may guide us in faith, we pray to the Lord. All: Lord, hear our prayer.
2. For children everywhere, that they may feel God's love, we pray to the Lord. All: Lord, hear our prayer.
3. For families and friends, that we may show kindness and faithfulness, we pray to the Lord. All: Lord, hear our prayer.
4. For the sick, poor, and lonely, that God may comfort them, we pray to the Lord. All: Lord, hear our prayer.
5. The leader may invite other intercessions from the children.

Leader: Loving God, you hear our prayers spoken aloud and in the silence of our hearts. Help our faith to grow like a tiny seed that becomes strong. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ask the children to return to the main assembly. Ask them to return quietly and think about what they have heard and are now doing. Be mindful of children having difficulty finding their families.

Liturgy adapted for Children.

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Acknowledgments:

LECTIONARY SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops 2500 Don Reid Drive Ottawa, ON K1H 2J2