

### 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."'

### HOMILY OF POPE LEO XIV

*5 October 2025*

Today we celebrate the Jubilee of the Missions and of Migrants. This is a wonderful opportunity to rekindle in ourselves the awareness of our missionary vocation, which arises from the desire to bring the joy and consolation of the Gospel to everyone, especially those who are experiencing difficult and painful situations. In particular, I think of our migrant brothers and sisters, who have had to depart their homelands, often leaving their loved ones behind, enduring nights of fear and loneliness, experiencing discrimination and violence firsthand.

We are here because, at the tomb of the Apostle Peter, each one of us should be able to say with joy: the entire Church is missionary, and it is urgent – as Pope Francis affirmed – that we "go forth and preach the Gospel to all: to all places, on all occasions, without hesitation, reluctance or fear" (Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 23).

The Spirit sends us to continue the work of Christ in the world's peripheries, marked at times by war, injustice and suffering. Faced with these menacing situations, the cry that so often in history has been raised up to God has re-emerged: Lord, why do you not intervene? Why do you seem absent? This cry of sorrow is a form of prayer that pervades all of Scripture and, this morning, we heard it from the prophet Habakkuk: "O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? ... Why do you make me see wrongs and look upon trouble?" (Hab 1:2-3).

Pope Benedict XVI, who had reflected on these questions during his historic visit to Auschwitz, returned to the theme in a catechesis, affirming: "God is silent and this silence pierces the soul of the person praying, who ceaselessly calls but receives no answer ... God seems so distant, so forgetful, so absent" (Catechesis, 14 September 2011).

The response of the Lord, however, opens us to hope. If the prophet denounces the inescapable force of evil that seems to prevail, the Lord, for his part, announces to him that all of this will end, will cease, because salvation will come and it will not delay: "Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous live by their faith" (Hab 2:4).

Therefore, there is life, a new possibility of life and salvation that comes from faith, because it not only helps us to resist evil and to persevere in doing good, but it transforms our lives so as to make of them an instrument of the salvation that even today God wishes to bring about in the world. And, as Jesus says in the Gospel, this is about a lowly strength, for faith does not impose itself by means of power and in extraordinary ways. Indeed, it is enough to have faith the size of a mustard seed in order to do unimaginable things (cf. Lk 17:6), because it carries within it the strength of God's love that opens the way to salvation.

This is a salvation that is fulfilled when we take responsibility and, with the compassion of the Gospel, care for the suffering of others; it is a salvation that leads the way, silently and apparently without success, in daily words and actions, which become precisely like the tiny seed of which Jesus speaks; it is a salvation that slowly grows when we become "unworthy servants", namely when we place ourselves at the service of the Gospel and of our brothers and sisters, not seeking our own interests but only bringing God's love to the world.

Trusting in this, we are called to renew in ourselves the fire of our missionary vocation. As Saint Paul VI affirmed, "it is our responsibility to proclaim the Gospel in this extraordinary period of human history, a time truly without precedent, in which, at the heights of progress never before reached, there are also accompanying depths of perplexity and desperation equally without precedent" (Message for World Mission Day, 25 June 1971).

Brothers and sisters, today a new missionary age opens up in the history of the Church.

If for a long time we have associated with mission the word “depart”, the going out to distant lands that did not know the Gospel or were experiencing poverty, today the frontiers of the missions are no longer geographical, because poverty, suffering and the desire for a greater hope have made their way to us. The story of so many of our migrant brothers and sisters bears witnesses to this: the tragedy of their flight from violence, the suffering which accompanies it, the fear of not succeeding, the perilous risk of traveling along the coastline, their cry of sorrow and desperation. Brothers and sisters, those boats which hope to catch sight of a safe port, and those eyes filled with anguish and hope seeking to reach the shore, cannot and must not find the coldness of indifference or the stigma of discrimination!

Mission is not so much about “departing”, but instead “remaining” in order to proclaim Christ through hospitality and welcome, compassion and solidarity. We are to remain without fleeing to the comforts of our individualism; to remain so as to look upon those who arrive from lands that are distant and violent; to remain and open our arms and hearts to them, welcoming them as brothers and sisters, and being for them a presence of consolation and hope.

There are many missionary men and women, but also believers and people of good will, who work in the service of migrants, and promote a new culture of fraternity on the theme of migration, beyond stereotypes and prejudices. But this precious service involves each one of us, within the limits of our own means. As Pope Francis affirmed, this is the time for all of us to let ourselves be “permanently in a state of mission” (Evangelii Gaudium, 25).

This entails at least two important missionary tasks: missionary cooperation and missionary vocation.

First of all, I ask you to promote a renewed missionary cooperation among the Churches. In the communities of ancient Christian tradition, such as those of the West, the presence of many brothers and sisters from the world’s South should be welcomed as an opportunity, through an exchange that renews the face of the Church and sustains a Christianity that is more open, more alive and more dynamic. At the same time, all missionaries that depart for other lands are called to live with respect within the culture they encounter, directing to the good all that is found true and worthy, and bringing there the prophetic message of the Gospel.

I would like to recall the beauty and importance of missionary vocations. I refer in particular to the Church in Europe: today there is a need for a new missionary effort by laity, religious and priests who will offer their service in missionary lands. We need new ideas and vocational experiences capable of sustaining this desire, especially in young people.

Beloved friends, I willingly give my blessing to the local clergy of the particular Churches, to missionaries and those discerning a vocation. Whereas, to migrants I say: know that you are always welcome! The seas and deserts that you have crossed, Scripture calls “places of salvation”, in which God makes himself present to save his people. I hope that you find this face of God in the missionaries that you encounter.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What stood out to you from the Gospel or Reflection/Homily?



**Head:** Jesus says, “Go,” but Pope Leo speaks of “remaining.” Are being sent and remaining opposites — or two parts of the same mission? Why?



**Heart:** How might God be inviting you to trust Him more deeply — to let His grace strengthen and sustain you as you share His love in the world?



**Hands:** Where is God calling you to remain — to stay present, faithful, and missionary right where you are? And where is God calling you to go — to reach out and be missionary in the world?

## PRAYER

Spend some time in prayer with one another:

1. Conscious of what has just been shared, members briefly name/describe their prayer needs.
2. Intentionally call on the Holy Spirit to be present (e.g. “Come Holy Spirit, please be present as we pray”)
3. Offer prayers of thanks and praise to God.
4. Pray for each others’ prayer needs. Where appropriate, you may like to encourage the group to place a hand on the shoulder of the individual that you are currently praying for.
5. Conclude your prayer time with another prayer of praise, perhaps praying the ‘Glory Be’.