



Respect Life Sunday HOMILY HELPS

October 5, 2025: Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (Lectionary: 141)

First Reading: Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

Gospel Acclamation: 1 Peter 1:25

Gospel: Luke 17:5-10

First Reading: Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

- In the First Reading we hear a voice crying out to God in anguish: *“How long, O LORD? I cry for help but you do not listen!”* How often do we feel that God does not hear our pleas for help? How often do we fear that our prayers will not be answered in the manner we desire? The voice again cries out:

I cry out to you, “Violence!”

but you do not intervene.

Why do you let me see ruin;

why must I look at misery?

Destruction and violence are before me;

there is strife, and clamorous discord.

- We can relate all too well to this feeling today. When we watch the news or scroll through social media, we are inundated by stories of violence against human life. The tone of public debate and discourse disrespects the very dignity of the human person. We can often feel that misery surrounds us as abortion, assisted suicide, and

other affronts to the dignity of the person find wide public support.

- But God responds with a message of *hope*. We are assured that the Lord, *“will not disappoint.”* And that, *“the just one, because of his faith, shall live.”* While God does not promise to answer our prayers on our schedule or according to our plans, we know He does not abandon us. While suffering is indeed a part of our earthly life, our destiny is to share eternal life with Christ.
- During this Jubilee Year of Hope, we are invited to reflect more deeply on the virtue of hope and cultivate it in our hearts and in our day-to-day lives. The challenges, difficulties, and sufferings we experience become opportunities to place greater trust in God and his loving plan for our lives. Because of our Christian hope, we can face the unknown trials of life with faith rather than fear.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

- In his encyclical *Evangelium vitae*, Pope St. John Paul II wrote that “the Gospel of life is not for believers alone: it is for everyone.”¹ Although faith allows us to more deeply understand the sacred value of human life, the light of reason naturally endows the human conscience with the ability to recognize the dignity of each and every person.
- The psalmist writes, *“If today you hear his voice,*

harden not your hearts.” It seems that many in our world have indeed hardened their hearts to the truth. They are unable to see the humanity of the child growing in his or her mother’s womb. They incorrectly believe that a person’s value is determined by his or her abilities. They fail to comprehend that one’s worth is not dependent on one’s age or circumstance. And perhaps, if we’re honest with ourselves, we’ve allowed our own hearts to be hardened to attacks against human life. Maybe we’ve allowed the pain of loss to make our hearts numb.

- In a world that seems to have lost sight of the value of human life, we must pray that those whose hearts have been hardened would hear the voice of God and come to see the invaluable dignity of every person they meet. We must pray that our own hearts would be pierced by the suffering of the most vulnerable among us.

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

- Because the world in which we live is so often hostile to the Truth, proclaiming the Gospel of Life can be difficult. In many arenas, defense of infants’ lives, the lives of those who are disabled or dying, or the lives of any vulnerable human population is met with resistance. Proclaiming the Church’s teaching on topics like abortion, assisted suicide, and the death penalty can provoke challenging and emotional responses from those who disagree.
- Sometimes we may find ourselves afraid to speak up about these issues in our families, among our coworkers, or with students in our school community. We may fear disagreement, judgement, confrontation, or misunderstanding. But in the Second Reading, St. Paul tells us that *“God did not give us a spirit of cowardice.”* Rather, God has given us a spirit of *“power and love”*—and this should cast out our fear.
- St. Paul encourages us to *“not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord.”* He urges us to *“bear your share of hardship for the gospel,”* and reminds us of our *“strength that comes from God.”* Through our faith in Jesus Christ, we know that sin and death

have been defeated. We know that our identity can only be found in our Savior. The sufferings and persecutions that we endure in our earthly life glorify God; and we are given the strength and grace to persevere in hope.

- We are called to be signs of hope to all people, especially those whose goodness, value, and dignity are undermined. As members of the Body of Christ, we carry this hope with us as we



continue Jesus’ mission on earth. Pope Leo XIV encourages us, “How important it is that each and every baptized person feel himself or herself called by God to be a sign of hope in the world today.”²

Gospel: Luke 17:5-10

- Faith gives us this ability to hope. The example of the apostles in the Gospel encourages us to ask God Himself to *“increase our faith.”* If we struggle to find the courage to speak boldly about human life, we shouldn’t be ashamed. The apostles—who themselves lived, ate, and prayed with Christ—needed God’s grace to carry out Christ’s saving mission. We needn’t be afraid to ask God to increase our faith. For if we have but *“faith the size*

of a mustard seed,” Christ can give us the power to do incredible things in service of the Gospel.

- Sadly, there is a devastating absence of hope today. We see this most profoundly in a sweeping disregard for human life in its most vulnerable forms and stages. Abortion and assisted suicide are products of hopelessness and despair. Yet even amid the increasing attacks on human life, we know that the “storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ and to overcome sin, fear and death.”³
- So today, as we recommit ourselves to upholding the teachings of the Church on the inviolability of human life, may we recall that we have merely “*done what we were obliged to do*” as followers of Christ. Through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven, death is overcome, and life is victorious. The gift of life that God has granted to us is indeed a sign of hope.



¹ Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 101.

² Pope Leo XIV, Vatican News, May 26, 2025: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2025-05/pope-leo-xiv-africa-day-pilgrimage-blessing-vatican-basilica.html>.

³ Pope Francis, *Spes non confundit*, 25.

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