

Have you ever felt like Habakkuk?

He is arguing with the Lord

How long?

Our enemies are getting stronger

They are conquering us

They are driving us from our land

God, are you listening?

Do you care?

Why don't you do something?

This feels familiar, doesn't it?

How long, O'Lord?

When we look at the world today

Millions of abortions every year

Terrorists

Suicide bombers

al-Qaida

Sexual abuse of minors

Tsunami's

Hurricanes

Disasters; both man-made and natural

How long?

We mimic Habakkuk's cry

God answered him

He answers our cries as well

But in His way and in His time

The Lord offers Habakkuk three things

First, He says the kingdom will surely come

The kingdom is God's vision, his plan for the world

If it delays God says to wait

Second, write it all down for people to read

Sacred Scripture has a message for us

It is not just something to pull out on Sunday's

At weddings or funerals

SS contains God's Wisdom

Study it so you can live it

Third, the just person

Because of our faith in God's vision

Because of our faith in the kingdom

We will be saved

These same three points serve us well today

We all need to have the vision of God guide our lives

Whatever is happening in the world today

We don't have to accept it as it is

The violence

The attacks on human life

The attacks on religious freedom

Just because this is the way the world is today

It does not mean we have to accept that is the way it will remain

When God's vision prevails

Incredible things can happen

In the lives of nations and in the lives of individuals

When we have this vision

We identify things in our lives

And we set about changing them

A defeatist attitude says I have a disability

I am a sinner

I am worthless

There is nothing I can do about it

God's vision looks at these very same things

And asks what can Christ do with these them?

What can I become in Christ?

There are many visions in our world

And all it takes is a video camera and internet access

And anyone can put theirs out there for the world to see

There are good visions and not so good ones

Republicans and democrats have their visions

Hitler had a vision

So did our founding fathers

Islam has a vision

Christianity has a vision

Which vision shapes my life?

Which vision will shape the future of our nation?

Of the world?

Having the vision is only a beginning

Then we have to plant that vision

This is what is behind having a faith the size of a mustard seed

The smallest of seeds

If you have a seed, it does no good to put it on a shelf

Take it out on Saturday evening or Sunday morning

Let it get a bit of air once a week

Maybe peek at it for a baptism, a wedding or a funeral

That is not what a seed is for

It is not what our faith is for

For a seed to do what it is meant to do

Give new life

It has to die

It has to get planted in the dirt

Rot and be watered and warmed by the sun
Then it sprouts and gives new life
From a single mustard seed produces so many new seeds
It is almost uncontrollable

When we plant our faith in God's garden
The same thing happens
The faith of one ignites the faith of another
Then another and another

Our faith is planted and grows through humility
It grows when we die to ourselves
When our ego is put in check
This self-sacrificial love we are called to live
By our actions and choices
In our moral decisions
In how we spend our money
In the movies we choose to watch
In what we allow into our homes through the TV or the internet
In the causes we promote and become involved with
Forgiving others
Forgiving ourselves
Studying the Bible
Learning about our faith

PRACTICING our faith

In every moment of our lives

Doing this, we enter into the third step

Trusting that God's vision will give us life

Through faith we will be given the grace we need

To live and to love as we are called to

To be in control rather than be controlled

How many people are there today that simply follow?

Seeing others cheat, they cheat

Seeing others gossiping, they gossip

Seeing others not going to Sunday Mass

They take no interest in it themselves

Seeing others lie, they lie

Hearing others using the Lord's name in vain

They follow suit

Seeing others giving up on a marriage when problems arise

They give up on their own

Seeing others living together or choosing to marry outside the Church

They choose to do something similar

Seeing others reject Church teaching on the sanctity of human life

Practicing contraception

Promoting embryonic stem cell research

And we go along because we don't want to rock the boat

God knows

He knows the evil of gangs

The evil of abortion

The evil of terrorism

He knows the greatest evil ever committed by human beings

The crucifixion of His Son

His ways are hard for us to fathom

Because they are mysterious to us

The God of all time, all people, all nations

He sees what we are blind to

He is in charge, working out His purpose

The just man shall live by faith

It takes faith to go against the tide

Especially when the loudest voices are telling us everybody is doing it

Faith gives us self-control

It gives us a long-term view over the present moment

It calls us to make loving choices

It allows us to let the ego die

Not living self-absorbed lives

It helps us see that what our families can become

What our parish can become

What our city, state and nation can become

God's Word to Habakkuk speaks to our own violent world

Let His vision lead us past the status quo

Plant his vision in our lives through concrete actions

Trust that this vision will give us the power to change our lives

The power to change our church

The power to build the kingdom here

As we wait for its fulfillment at the end of time