

## **The righteous one, because of his faith, shall live! (27<sup>th</sup> Sunday)**

In June of 1859, Charles Blondin, the French tightrope walker became world-famous, when he walked on a tightrope, stretched over quarter of a mile across the mighty Niagara Falls. He became the first person to accomplish this amazing challenge. He walked across 160 feet above the waterfalls several times, each time with a different daring way - once in a sack, on a bicycle, in the dark, and once even carrying a stove and cooking an omelet! A large crowd gathered in excitement, ran along both sides of the falls. The crowd applauded as Blondin carefully walked across one dangerous step after another - blindfolded and pushing a wheelbarrow. Upon reaching the other side, the crowd's applause was louder than the roar of the falls! Blondin suddenly stopped and addressed his audience: "Do you believe I can carry a person across in this wheelbarrow?" The crowd enthusiastically shouted, "Yes, yes, yes. You are the greatest tightrope walker in the world. You can do anything!" "Okay," said Blondin, "then, get in the wheelbarrow", but truly, no one did, although all had faith in his ability!

In today's Gospel, Jesus challenges his disciples to have such a Faith in him so that God can work miracles through them and in their lives.

*"To one who has Faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without Faith, no explanation is useful."* (St. Aquinas). All three readings for this Sunday speak a lot about "Faith" and how it works in our lives. *Faith* as a theological virtue, infused virtue, enables us to believe something to be true and therefore worthy of trust, simply because it has been revealed to us by God. Faith is our response to God's call, to God's love.

Our **first reading** presents Faith as trusting in God and faithfully living out His Covenant with us. Here, Faith is shown as *steadfast expectation* in the face of suffering and delay. Prophet Habakkuk, who cries, "*O Lord, how long shall I cry for help and you don't listen*" - represents the typical human existential predicament that you pass through in your life. What would you do when the Lord delays in responding?

In our **second reading**, Paul tells Timothy that Faith operates as a believing, trusting, loving relationship with Christ. He stresses the need for a living Faith in, and loyalty to Christ's teachings handed down to us by the Church.

And in today's *Gospel*, Jesus teaches his Apostles that Faith is sharing in God's power. It is that trusting in *God in action*, expressed by steadfast loyalty, fidelity and total commitment to Him Even in small quantities, it allows God to work miracles in our lives and in the lives of others. It is Faith, which makes a person just, putting him into right relation with God and neighbor.

While the Apostles ask for an increase in the quantity of their Faith Jesus reminds them, that the *quality of one's Faith is more important than the quantity*. A small amount of deep Faith can accomplish great things if that small amount of Faith is placed in a great, mighty, and all-powerful God. Jesus also teaches us, that for Faith to be effective, it must be linked with ***trust, obedience and total commitment***: -an active submission to God, with a willingness to do whatever He commands.

**Friends**, we need to thank God, giving Him the credit for our well-being. Most of us are inclined to forget God's providence when our earthly affairs are going well. We often pray to Him, only when trouble strikes. True Faith enables us to accept the adversities and the trials of life, and will help to live a well-disciplined spiritual life.

We need to grow in our Faith by becoming dutiful servants of God. We grow in Faith, as we *act in Faith*. A sincere Christian can find many ways to help to make Christ, known to his neighbor. A quiet word, a charitable gesture, a lovely smile, an unselfish interest in a neighbor's troubles can do more good than tons of preaching.