

27th Sunday Ordinary Time Year "C"  
Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 1:6-14; Luke 17:5-10  
October 2, 2022: (Marathon Weekend)

*Usqueque Domine clamabo, et non exaudies*

“How long, O LORD? I cry for help, but you do not listen!” At the time of these words, idolatry and political intrigue in Israel were widespread. It was around 600 B.C. and soon, Jerusalem would be captured, the people sent into exile. Habakkuk knew something was going to happen, so he sounded the alarm. But there was a difference.

Rather than sound the alarm with the people, he sounded the alarm with God himself. The situation of Judah was desperate and so was Habakkuk. For what may be the first time in Israelite literature, a man questions the very ways of God.

We may know intellectually that it is wrong to be frustrated with God, but sometimes we have reached the end of the rope. In that case, is it wrong to lash out in frustration? Was Habakkuk sinning? I humbly respond by saying, “No.” He was crying out to the Lord in his need, his frustration, his anger, his exasperation. At least he had not given up.

Not only can the Lord handle our cries, He helps to transform them. He understands that we want justice to be handed out to those who block the ways of truth and goodness. It reminded of one of the stories of the desert fathers in the early church.

Coming to the abbot Sisois, a brother explained the wrong which he had suffered from another monk and said, “I am set to revenge myself, Father.” And the old abbot began to entreat him to leave vengeance to **God**. But he insisted, “I shall not rest until I have avenged myself.”

Then Sisois said to him, 'Since your mind is altogether made up with regard to this matter, I need not reason with you. Let us, however, pray together.' He rose and began to pray: “God, we no longer have need of

you to care for us, since we do justice for ourselves.” As soon as he heard these words, the brother fell at the abbot’s feet, begging pardon and vowing never to seek vengeance again.

Vengeance is never a good option; it fills our hearts with hatred, and we easily obsess about it. We have to know when to let things go. Simply ask yourself how the anger is helping you, making you feel better or more at peace. In short, it is not and deep down we know it! Revenge is a costly and ultimately unsatisfying response to perceived evils that we face.

Like Habakkuk, we await the workings of the Lord, and sometimes feel as though nothing is happening. We need hope and the grace to see that somehow, God has other plans for us.

In dealing with the question of evil and free will, St. Augustine wisely observed: “God judged it better to bring good out of evil than to suffer no evil to exist.”<sup>1</sup>

Twenty-six centuries separate us from Habakkuk, yet we feel a kindred spirit. Vengeance is His, not ours. Let the Lord be the Lord. This is the human condition, but we all need to realize, that even in our struggle, God and God alone is in charge.

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<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine, [Enchiridion de Fide, Spe et Charitate liber unus](#) : (PL, 40: Enchirid., 8, 27): “Melius enim iudicavit de malis bene facere quam mala nulla esse permittere.”