



TASTE Reflection Questions
6 November 2025

Press on, Habakkuk (How Hope Gets Us Through One More Day)

Sr. Mary Michael Fox

Pray, Hope, and Don't Worry ~ Padre Pio



1. What did you find most interesting about this talk?

2. Sr. Mary Michael Fox discussed the book of **HABAKKUK** in which the prophet sees injustice and corruption all around him in Judah & thinks God is ignoring it. He also asks how a holy God can use a nation as wicked & violent as Babylon to accomplish his will. God instructs him to record the vision, promising that the vision will come to pass and 1) the righteous will live by their faith and 2) the unrighteous will be judged for their greedy economic practices, abuse of power, etc.

- What did you think of Habakkuk's boldness in complaining to God? When have you or someone you know used such boldness?
- When have you thought that God was ignoring injustice and corruption all around you? What did you do about it?
- Have you ever seen how God could use wicked and violent people to accomplish His will?
- In times such as these, have you felt called to simply have hope that in time, His will would be done?

3. Sr. Mary Michael gave two differing definitions of **HOPE**. First, hope can be an emotion that is more like wishful thinking or Pollyannaish. The second is the virtue of Hope Paul talks about in Romans 5. It is God's presence that anchors us in the reality that no harm can come to us. No evil can snatch us from His hand. She used the example of the prisoners of war in Hanoi as an example of the difference....wishful thinking and destruction and true Hope trusting God is in control and life.

- What did you think of the two differing definitions of Hope? Did you see a clarification of the difference?
- When have you or a loved one experienced emotional hope? What was the result?
- When have you or a loved one experienced the virtue of Hope? What was the outcome?

4. Sr. Mary Michael discussed a few ways to **INCREASE OUR VIRTUE OF HOPE**.

- By being attentive to it and assenting to it with our mind.
- By recalling bible stories and the lives of saints which show us how God keeps His Promises.
- By saying the formal Act of Hope or simply by summarizing it as "Jesus, I know you got this"
- By reflecting on Psalm 23 which reminds us that God is our Shepherd, anchor, rock, and refuge.

- In times when you need hope, have you relied on one or more of these methods already?
- Which one in particular do you want to try to exercise to increase your virtue of hope?

Summary of Sr. Mary Michael's Talk

The book of **HABAKKUK** is a dialogue between the prophet and God, structured around the prophet's two complaints and God's two responses.

- Habakkuk laments the injustice and corruption within Judah, which he sees as being ignored by God. God reveals that He is raising up the Babylonians to punish Judah for its wickedness.
- Habakkuk questions how a holy God can use a nation as wicked and violent as Babylon to accomplish His will. God instructs Habakkuk to record the vision, promising that the vision will come to pass and that the righteous will live by their faith. God also details a series of "woes" that describe the kinds of injustices Babylon will be judged for, such as greedy economic practices and abuse of power.
- The final chapter is a prayer where Habakkuk expresses his unwavering faith and trust in God's power and future judgment and salvation, ending with a hymn of praise and confidence.
- Chapter 1 — And you think you have trouble!!! And you do! But God says to us: Have hope.
- Chapter 2:2-4 essentially says the vision still has its time.

HOPE — We can all be tempted to lose hope in the face of currently unrealized hope. These situations weigh on us & discourage us from hoping that things can change. But, they can & do — but a lot depends on our perspective... on what we think about hope. In a recent [address](#) to bishops, his holiness Pope Leo XIV remarked: "At times, preaching the message that hope does not disappoint means swimming against the tide, even in certain painful situations that appear to be hopeless. Yet it is precisely at those times when it becomes all the more apparent that our faith and our hope do not come from ourselves, but from God." Hope is a passion — an emotion-of your soul. We all desire things — it is how we are hardwired. While we desire all kinds of things, most of them are rather trite. But, there is a contrast between:

- the **EMOTION OF HOPE** that is more like wishful thinking and it can be Pollyannaish.
- the **VIRTUE OF HOPE** which is a stable habit of the soul. It is the very presence of the Holy Spirit in your soul — the gift of God's very life that you received in your Baptism. It is this Presence of God that enkindles within us a desire for Him and fosters a confidence that He will keep His promise to care for us. It is His Presence that anchors us in the reality that no harm can come to us. No evil can snatch us from His hand.

HOPELESSNESS — So, why don't we always feel so hopeful & so confident in His love & care? It is because we get drawn to other things outside ourselves. The more time we spend outside of ourselves (longing for some other material thing that we think will satisfy us), the more we are drawn away from God, and the harder it is to stand firm in hope. We can ask ourselves: 1) How attentive am I to His Presence? 2) How often do I go within — being silent and listening to His voice? and 3) Do I know that He is there and He waits for me?

INCREASING OUR HOPE is as easy as being attentive to it and assenting to it with our mind. Our mind seeks to conform to reality — this is a critical component for hope to flourish. Bible stories and the lives of saints are full of the truth of: 1) who God is, 2) how deeply He loves and cares for us, and 3) how He keeps his promises. Thus, they are full of hope. But we also need to make acts of hope & the Church does have a formal **ACT OF HOPE**. "O my God, relying on Your almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Your grace and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Amen" But there's a simpler prayer:

JESUS — I KNOW YOU GOT THIS!

Finally, read **PSALM 23** and hear it anew for your soul today. It is also a message of Hope. Jesus isn't the Good Shepherd because we believe that he is. We believe that He is because it's true. Hope is the anchor that we drop in the harbor of Truth. It is this Presence of the Holy Spirit dwelling in your soul that gives you **POWER** to keep going — to walk day by day, sometimes hour by hour — in faith that regardless of what is happening around you, in you, to you: God remains. He is your **ANCHOR**, your **ROCK**, your **REFUGE**. His goodness and mercy shall follow all the days of your life.

WISHFUL THINKING lives in a fantasy of maybe's. **HOPE** lives in the reality of absolutes. The God of the Universe who holds all things in existence, The Alpha and the Omega, The King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, The Good Shepherd, The True Vine, The Light that shatters all darkness — dwells in your soul. If that is not worth celebrating a Jubilee, what is?