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Easter Tuesday

Date: Tuesday, April 22, 2025 | **Season:** Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Acts 2:36–41
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 33:4–5, 18–20, 22 | **Response:** Psalm 33:5b
Gospel Acclamation: Psalm 118:24
Gospel Reading: John 20:11–18
Preached at: the Chapel of the Most Holy Name, Kolvenbach House **in the** Archdiocese of Lusaka, Zambia**.**

In the stillness of the garden, Mary Magdalene weeps.
The weight of grief bends her low, her heart heavy with sorrow. The one who had seen her, known her, called her out of darkness, was gone. The silence is unbearable, the absence—total. She is lost, as many of us feel lost today. Our beloved Holy Father, Pope Francis, the one who reminded us tirelessly of God's mercy, who lifted up the poor, who opened doors and broke down walls and built bridges, has gone to the Lord.

Like Mary, we weep. We grieve not only the death of a man, but the loss of a shepherd, a father, a pastor, a prophet. In our anguish, we may not immediately recognize the risen Christ standing among us. But just as in the garden, it is when he speaks her name—"Mary"—that the world shifts. Recognition dawns. The night of sorrow gives way to the dawn of resurrection. This is the hinge upon which the Gospel turns: the moment when love calls a name, and death begins to lose its grip.

Mary Magdalene's encounter with the risen Christ is not merely a personal moment of joy; it is the beginning of mission. "Go to my brothers," Jesus tells her. And so she goes. Not despite her tears, but with them. She becomes the apostle to the apostles—the first witness of the Resurrection.

Grief and mission are not opposites. They can be companions.

We see this same truth unfold in the first reading. Peter, who had once denied Jesus in fear, now stands before the people with unshakable conviction:
"God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

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His words pierce their hearts—just as the voice of Jesus pierced Mary's sorrow. And their response echoes hers:
"What are we to do?"

Peter's answer is plain: repent, be baptized, receive the Holy Spirit.
Three thousand souls are added that day. Three thousand names are called into new life.

The Psalm sings the same refrain:
"The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord."
Today, it may feel harder to believe that. But this is the Easter promise—that even in grief, goodness has not fled the earth. That love has not left us orphaned. The Lord's steadfast love rests upon those who trust in Him—even through tears.

What does this mean for us, here and now, in Zambia?
We do not proclaim resurrection from a place of comfort, but from amidst hardship: the weight of economic challenges, growing concerns about governance and corruption, and the daily cry of the poor. These are not abstract concerns. They are real, and they are urgent. The Easter message was never meant to be whispered in safe places—it must be proclaimed in streets and boardrooms, in classrooms and clinics, in every broken place crying out for healing.

Pope Francis reminded us again and again: "A Church that doesn't go out, withers."
He lived the Resurrection by walking with the wounded, by demanding dignity for the forgotten. If we are to honour his legacy, then we too must let the Gospel breathe through our lives. If Christ is risen, then no one is disposable. No one is invisible.

St. Ignatius of Loyola invites us to place ourselves in the scene—to enter the garden with Mary, to hear Peter's words not as history, but as a summons.
What name is Christ calling today?
What conversion is He asking of us?
What mission does He entrust to you, even now?

Mary's story does not end with recognition—it begins there.
She goes forth. So must we. Even through our sorrow. Even in our mourning.
Because Christ is risen. And love, as Pope Francis once said, "is stronger than

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death.”

And so, I leave you with three questions for your prayer:

- Where in your life are you seeking the living among the dead? Where might Christ be calling you by name, even through your grief?
- Like Peter’s audience, what response is the Spirit stirring in your heart? What change, what courage, is God asking of you this Easter season?
- How is the Resurrection calling you to mission? In honour of Christ—and in memory of Pope Francis—who needs to hear the Gospel through your witness of compassion and truth?

This is the day the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice—not by denying our sorrow, but by standing in defiant hope.
Christ is risen.
And love will never be the same.
Pope Francis is at rest. Christ lives. Alleluia.

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In preparing this homily, I consulted various resources to deepen my understanding of today’s readings, including using Magisterium AI for assistance. The final content remains the responsibility of the author.