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Monday of the 2nd Week of Easter

Date: Monday, April 28, 2025 | **Season:** Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Acts 4:23–31
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 2:1–9 | **Response:** Psalm 2:11d
Gospel Acclamation: Colossians 3:1
Gospel Reading: John 3:1–8
Preached at: the Chapel of the Most Holy Name, Kolvenbach House **in the** Archdiocese of Lusaka, Zambia**.**

There is a quiet but profound contrast in today's readings—a juxtaposition of courage and caution, of boldness and hesitancy, of those who speak in the light of day and those who whisper under cover of night. Peter and John stand before the authorities, fearless in their proclamation of the Risen Christ. When released, they return to their community, lifting their voices to heaven, and the earth itself seems to tremble in response, as the Holy Spirit descends upon them. Theirs is a faith ablaze, a faith that refuses to be silenced.

And then there is Nicodemus. A learned man, a ruler of the Jews, yet one who comes to Jesus by night. Not yet ready to be seen, not yet ready to stand boldly in the light. He approaches, perhaps, out of curiosity, perhaps out of fear. And Jesus challenges him—challenges him to be reborn, to leave behind the old ways of thinking, to embrace the life of the Spirit, which, like the wind, moves as it wills, beyond human control.

The Easter season is one of new birth, of transformation, of stepping from darkness into light. And yet, how often do we find ourselves like Nicodemus? We hold back. We hesitate. We seek safety in the familiar, even when we know we are being called to something greater. To be reborn in the Spirit is not simply to believe differently but to live differently. It is to act with courage when the world tells us to be silent. It is to stand for truth when truth is inconvenient. It is to let go of what we think we know, so that God might lead us somewhere deeper.

Psalm 2 asks: "Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain?" The powers of this world rage against God's anointed, yet their schemes come to nothing. This is the confidence of Peter and John, who know that no earthly

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power can prevail against the Kingdom of God. And yet, how often do we live as though the powers of this world still hold ultimate sway? How often do we make compromises with injustice, excuse our inaction, fail to speak when we should? The message of Easter is clear: Christ has triumphed. The victory is won. Our task is to live in that victory—to proclaim it not just with our lips but with our lives.

In Zambia today, we see the same tensions. Ours is a nation of deep faith, a people who name Christ as Lord. And yet we, too, face moments of testing: the pressures of injustice, the struggles of poverty, the weariness of unemployment, the temptation to lose hope. There are those who speak boldly for the dignity of every person, for the protection of the vulnerable, for the building of a more just and peaceful society. And there are many who, like Nicodemus, long to believe more deeply but find themselves holding back, wondering if it is safe to step fully into the light.

But the Risen Christ does not call us to timidity. He calls us to courage. To love. To a faith that does not whisper in the shadows, but stands in the daylight and proclaims: He is Risen!

This call is especially urgent for our young people—the new generation who must carry forward the light of the Gospel into tomorrow's Zambia. They are called not to fear, but to faith. Not to hesitation, but to hope.

Today, we also honor two great saints: Peter Chanel and Louis Marie de Montfort. Peter Chanel, a missionary to the Pacific islands, gave his life for the Gospel, martyred for his faith. And Louis de Montfort, that great preacher of Marian devotion, understood that true renewal begins with surrender—surrender to the will of God, to the movement of the Spirit, to the path of Christ. Their lives echo the same challenge placed before Nicodemus: will we be cautious, or will we be bold? Will we whisper, or will we proclaim?

And so, as we stand in this Easter season, the question comes to each of us: Where do I still hold back? Where do I hesitate to step fully into the light of the Risen Christ? And how is the Spirit calling me, even now, to be reborn?

Let us ask for the grace to listen, to follow, and to proclaim with boldness the victory of Christ. For the world needs voices of truth. It needs lives that radiate the light of Easter. And it needs disciples willing to stand, as Peter and John

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stood, and say: we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.

As you enter into prayer this week, I invite you to consider:

- Where in my life am I still afraid to fully embrace the new life Christ offers?
- How is the Spirit calling me to step more boldly into the light?
- In what way can I proclaim, through my actions, the victory of the Risen Christ in the world today?

May we each find the courage to answer these questions—not with words alone, but with lives transformed by the power of the Resurrection.

Prayer for the Cardinals preparing for Conclave

God of wisdom and grace,
you never cease to call your Church forward.

As the College of Cardinals gathers to discern and elect a new pope,
grant them inner freedom—free from fear, ambition, and division—
that they may be truly available to your Spirit.

Give them listening hearts,
attentive to the cries of the world and the needs of your Church.
Help them to listen to your Holy Spirit, whom you send to guide them,
that they may recognize your desire and faithfully follow your will.

Unite us all in prayer,
that this moment may be one of deep communion,
true discernment, and renewed hope for your Church.

With Mary, Mother of the Church, we entrust this time to you,
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

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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.

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