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Saturday of the 7th Week of Easter

Date: Saturday, June 7, 2025 | **Season:** Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Acts 28:16–20, 30–31
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 11:4–5, 7 | **Response:** Psalm 11:7b
Gospel Acclamation: John 16:7, 13
Gospel Reading: John 21:20–25
Preached at: the Chapel of the Most Holy Name, Kolvenbach House **in the** Archdiocese of Lusaka, Zambia**.**

As we come close to the end of the Easter season, the Church invites us to pause and reflect again on what the Resurrection truly means. It's not only something that happened long ago—it's something that still has power today. Jesus is not just risen in the past; He is risen now—alive in our struggles, in our families, in our communities, and in every quiet act of faith. The readings today help us see this truth through three different moments: Paul's preaching in prison, the Psalmist's trust in God's justice, and Jesus' personal words to Peter in the Gospel.

In our first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, we meet Paul under house arrest in Rome. He is not free to move around, but he is still full of courage. He continues to teach and preach about Jesus "with boldness and without hindrance." Though the chains are on his body, they are not on his spirit. His faith is not held back. Even in a place of confinement, the Word of God finds a way forward. This is something we can take to heart here in Zambia, where many feel held back by unemployment, financial pressures, or situations they cannot control. Maybe it's an illness, a broken relationship, or discouragement over the state of our country. But the message is clear: no matter where we find ourselves, the Gospel is not chained. God can still use us. The Good News can still be shared.

The Psalm today reassures us that "the Lord is in His holy temple," and that He sees what is happening. Even when it seems like the unjust have the upper hand, or when the cries of the poor go unheard, God is not blind or silent. "The upright shall behold His face," we are told. That means those who live in truth, who seek justice, who stay faithful even in hard times, will one day see God clearly. Here in Zambia, where people in rural areas go without clinics, where some students

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sit in overcrowded classrooms or walk long distances for school, where so many struggle just to afford mealie meal—this Psalm gives us hope. God sees. God hears. And He promises to act. But He also calls us to be part of that answer—to build a society that reflects His justice and care.

In the Gospel, we hear a quiet conversation between Jesus and Peter. Peter sees the beloved disciple and asks, "What about him?" And Jesus gently replies, "What concern is that of yours? You follow me." How easy it is for us to look around and compare ourselves to others. We wonder why others seem to have an easier life, more opportunities, or fewer struggles. But Jesus reminds Peter—and us—not to be distracted. Each of us has our own road, our own calling, our own mission. And our task is to follow Jesus faithfully on our path, not someone else's.

These three moments—Paul's preaching, the Psalm's promise, and Jesus' personal call—come together to remind us what Easter hope looks like in daily life. It's not always bright and joyful. Sometimes it looks like quiet perseverance, like Paul speaking from prison, or like a mother in Lusaka still sending her child to school even when there's not enough for lunch. Sometimes Easter hope means holding onto faith when things don't seem fair, trusting that God sees more than we do. And sometimes it means simply taking the next step on our path, trusting that Jesus walks with us.

Let us not grow tired of doing good. Let us keep forgiving, keep helping, keep speaking truth, even when it feels small or unseen. These are the ways the Risen Lord is made visible today—in acts of love, in words of encouragement, in small but faithful steps.

This week, I encourage you to choose one concrete way to live this Easter message in our Zambian context. Perhaps it's helping a neighbour in need, offering transport to someone walking a long distance, encouraging a young person who's lost hope, or even praying with someone who is struggling. It does not need to be big—just faithful. And as we prepare to receive the Eucharist, let us remember that it is in this sacred meal that we find the strength and grace to live out our faith with courage and compassion.

Let us ask ourselves:

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- Where in my life do I feel “chained” or stuck—and how might God be working through me in that very place?
- When I see suffering or injustice in Zambia, do I believe God sees it too? How am I being called to respond?
- Am I following Jesus faithfully on my own journey, or am I distracted by comparing myself to others? What might Jesus be asking of me today?

May the Risen Lord give us the courage to live our faith with quiet strength, and to be signs of His hope in our families, our workplaces, and our communities here in Zambia. May our lives speak of His love, not only in words, but through every choice we make.

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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.