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Thursday of the 14th Week in Ordinary Time

Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Genesis 44:18–21, 23b–29, 45:1–5
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 105:16–21 | **Response:** Psalm 105:5a
Gospel Acclamation: Mark 1:15
Gospel Reading: Matthew 10:7–15
Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe.

This morning's readings speak to us about wounds—wounds we carry inside, and wounds we show on the outside. Some are physical. Some are emotional. Some are spiritual. But not every wound means something is broken. Some wounds become places where healing begins. Some lead us closer to Christ.

We're in Ordinary Time—a season that calls us to follow Jesus not with big shows, but in simple, faithful choices. A quiet act of service. A word of patience. A steady walk, even when the road is dry. These readings remind us that even the hard parts of life—our struggles and suffering—can be filled with God's presence and purpose.

In the first reading from Genesis, we find Judah standing before a powerful Egyptian official. He doesn't know it's actually Joseph—his brother, whom he and the others sold into slavery. Joseph could now take revenge. But instead, he watches to see if his brothers have changed. Judah, who once helped get rid of Joseph, now steps forward to offer himself in place of Benjamin. The one who once turned away now stands up.

Joseph can't hold back his emotions. He cries and says, "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt." He names the wound—but not to blame them. He does it to begin healing. "God sent me ahead of you to preserve life," he says.

This is what we call providence. God didn't cause the evil, but He didn't let it win either. His love entered the mess and began to work something new. This is part of what the Church calls God's permissive will—He allows human freedom,

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even when it leads to sin or harm, but He never abandons us to it. He always works, patiently and powerfully, to bring good from it. As Pope John Paul II said, “Each person, in his suffering, can become a sharer in the redemptive suffering of Christ.” (*Salvifici Doloris* 19) God’s grace doesn’t just survive hardship—it transforms it. He doesn’t erase our failures, but He can write a new story through them.

This is what the Church calls redemptive suffering. When we suffer, and we join that suffering to Jesus and His cross, it becomes part of His saving work. Suffering is never easy. It’s often a mystery. But in Christ, it can become a gift—an act of love, a silent prayer, a way of helping others. Our pain, offered with faith, draws us close to Jesus. And through Him, it becomes a path to new life.

The Psalm tells us the next part of Joseph’s story. He was chained and tested. But God raised him up—not for power or pride, but to feed people during famine. That’s the Gospel of suffering. When we suffer with Christ, we become more open to others. Our hearts grow. We begin to serve from a place of compassion. Joseph saved others because he himself had suffered.

This speaks to us in Zimbabwe. The famine here is not just in food. There’s a famine of clean water. A famine of jobs. A famine of electricity. A famine of justice. A famine of trust. But God still sends people ahead—people who keep serving, sharing, praying, forgiving. They may not be in the headlines, but they are holding this country together.

And here’s the truth: your suffering, joined to Christ, can help heal others. St Paul said, “I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake… for the sake of the Church.” When we suffer with love, the whole Body of Christ grows stronger. The Church needs the quiet strength of those who suffer faithfully—not just to endure, but to offer wisdom, patience, and witness.

The Gospel shows what this looks like in action. Jesus sends out the Twelve. He gives them no money, no spare clothes—just the power to heal, to bless, to speak peace. “The Kingdom of Heaven is near,” He tells them. Go and show it.

And if people reject you? Jesus says, “Shake the dust off your feet.” Not in anger, but in freedom. The Gospel must move forward. Don’t carry bitterness. This is very Ignatian: go where God sends you, and serve with an open heart—

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whether you succeed or not, whether you are welcomed or not. Ask only for the grace to love and to follow Christ.

Now imagine: you're walking through your town or village. You knock on doors. Some open. Some stay shut. You carry no silver, only Christ's word. You meet pain. You meet hope. You keep going. And in your walking, the Kingdom draws near.

This Word is for all of us. For the brother who quietly cares for the old and frail, wondering if anyone notices. For the scholastic buried in philosophy texts, wondering if these long hours at the desk will ever touch a soul. For the spiritual director who listens more than he speaks. For the rector holding together a tired community. For the elder Jesuit who wonders if his years of ministry—his teaching, his preaching, his prayers—have borne any fruit. The Kingdom is close. It comes when we forgive. When we keep going. When we serve, even when no one sees. When we hope, even in silence.

And again, we return to Joseph. He does not forget what happened. But he forgives. He blesses. The scar remains—but it becomes a place of grace.

So let us be signs like that. Not because we are whole and perfect, but because our wounds have been touched by Christ. Let us show others that pain does not have to destroy us. It can lead us to love.

Before we leave, let's sit in silence. Christ still carries His wounds. He knows ours. Let Him speak to your heart now.

- Where have I been wounded—and how might God be asking me to let that pain become an act of love?
- Where is God sending me—and what word of hope or healing am I being asked to carry?
- What dust do I need to shake off, so I can walk freely, with joy, for the sake of the Gospel?

And let us pray together:

Lord Jesus,
You suffered not to make pain holy,
but to bring healing.

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You chose to walk with us in sorrow.
Help us to carry our crosses with love,
to offer our hurts as prayer,
and to serve others even in our weakness.
Let our pain serve your Church.
Let our scars speak of your mercy.
Let our lives quietly preach your Gospel of hope.
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.