Fr Matthew Charlesworth, SJ
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15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Date: Sunday, July 13, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Deuteronomy 30:10–14
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 69:14, 17, 30–31, 33–34, 36, 37 | **Response:** Psalm 69:33
Second Reading: Colossians 1:15–20
Gospel Acclamation: John 6:63c, 68c
Gospel Reading: Luke 10:25–37
Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

Dear brother,

The Gospel today brings us into a familiar story. A man lies by the side of the road. Stripped, wounded, half-dead. Two pass by. One stops.

Jesus tells the story and then asks, “Which of these was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” And beneath that question, there is another: “Will you go and do the same?”

We begin, not with the Gospel, but with Moses— his voice weathered by wilderness, by people’s complaints and God’s patience. He says something quietly hopeful: “This commandment is not too hard for you. It is not far away. It is very near—on your lips and in your heart—so that you may do it.”

It’s not a challenge shouted from a distance. It’s a reminder: you don’t have to climb to heaven or cross the sea. God’s Word is already close. Already in you. Already waiting to be lived.

The Psalm gives another voice. “The Lord listens to the needy.” Not only the materially poor—though them, yes, always— but also those quieter kinds of need. The one who doesn’t know what to pray. The one who feels stretched thin. The one who carries sorrow quietly, so as not to trouble others. God listens. Not with pity, but with presence.

Then Paul speaks. “Christ is the image of the invisible God… in Him all things hold together.” That includes galaxies. But it also includes our scattered thoughts, our fragile trust, our restless hearts. In Him, all things— even the parts

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of us that feel undone— are held together. Not forced into shape, but gathered, gently, in love.

And then the parable. The man is left behind. The priest and Levite move on. And then comes the Samaritan. The one who sees and stops. The one who touches and lifts. The one who gives and stays.

We often read this as a lesson in helping others— and it is. But it may also be something more interior. More hidden.

What if the wounded man is a part of us— a place inside we don't often visit? A disappointment we've buried. A weariness we keep pressing through. A longing we've never found the words for.

What if the priest and Levite are our own habits of distraction? Of staying busy, staying distant, staying safe. And what if the Samaritan is Christ? Christ who sees. Christ who stops. Christ who touches what we'd rather hide. Christ who carries, who tends, who promises to return.

The altar is the inn. The Eucharist is the oil and wine. And He still says: "I will come back for you."

This isn't just a soft story meant to comfort. It's the centre of our faith. That God came close. Not just into the world, but into us— into everything it means to be human.

Jesus wept. He rejoiced. He feared. He longed. He loved.

So our feelings, our frailty, our need— they're not signs that something is wrong. They're signs that we're alive. And loved. And not alone.

And then we come to the edge of the parable again. The one who is neighbour— the one who crosses the road— is the one we least expect.

Not the religious man. Not the insider. Not the one with the title or the robes. But the one who sees and acts with mercy.

That's a challenge. Because we draw lines too— even quietly. Between who matters and who doesn't. Between what I must feel and what I must ignore. Between parts of myself I welcome, and parts I avoid.

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But Christ keeps crossing those lines. And He invites us to do the same— in our ministry, yes, but also in how we treat ourselves. In how we pray. In how we listen. In how we carry the world.

Pope Francis reminded us: Go to the margins. Pope Leo continues to call us to walk together, to listen deeply. To make space for everyone—as Pope Francis said: todos, todos, todos.

That includes even the parts of ourselves we've left on the side of the road.

So let me offer three questions to hold in prayer this week— not to solve, but to listen to:

- What part of me feels wounded, and needs not fixing, but care?
- What or whom am I passing by—because I don't want to look too closely?
- Can I trust that Christ meets me not beyond my emotions, but within them — and that He is already holding what I cannot yet name?

May He give you courage to stop, gentleness to feel, and grace to go—quietly, steadily, and again and again— to go and do the same.

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.