



Memorial of St Clare, virgin



Date: Monday, August 11, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: Deuteronomy 10:12–22

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 147:12–15, 19–20 | **Response:** Psalm 147:12a

Gospel Acclamation: 2 Thessalonians 2:14

Gospel Reading: Matthew 17:22–27

Preached at: the Chapel of Richartz House in the Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe.

Dear friends in Christ,

Today's readings speak about the heart—its faithfulness and failures, its courage and fears. They remind us that our relationship with God is not a cold rulebook, but a living friendship, a daily “yes” to the One who walks with the poor. And today, in the gentle light of Saint Clare—whose very name means “light”—we hear again the call to make this covenant not in stone, but in our hearts.

In the first reading, Moses is speaking to the people just before they enter the Promised Land. He does not tell them that God wants grand sacrifices or displays of power. He asks for something far simpler and far deeper: to respect God, to love Him, and to let that love change the heart. In the ancient world, circumcision was a sign of belonging to God's people. But Moses says the true sign is not on the body—it is in the heart.

And what kind of God do we belong to? A God who defends orphans and widows, who loves the stranger, who takes the side of the powerless. This is not a safe love. It is a love that gets its hands dirty. Here in Zimbabwe, where widows struggle to be heard, where children raise siblings, where migrants wait by the roadside with empty eyes, these words are not from the past. They are God's call to us today.

The psalm sings of the God who both rules the stars and strengthens the gates of a city. His Word is quick, living, and close—like rain on thirsty soil. This is the Word that can heal wounds, restore dignity, and give true peace—not the peace

of silence enforced by fear, but the peace that comes from shared bread and healed memories. Our parishes and communities are called to be such places—open to the stranger, rooted in justice, swift to show mercy.

In the Gospel, Jesus quietly tells His disciples that He will be betrayed, killed, and raised on the third day. Peter is distracted by the practical issue of paying the temple tax. But Jesus meets him there—with kindness. He reminds Peter that he is not a stranger but a son. Still, to avoid scandal, He sends him to find the needed coin in the mouth of a fish. God's providence meets human duty.

This is a quiet lesson: Jesus is Lord not only of the cross and the temple but also of the small, everyday corners of life—our work, our bills, our conversations. He fulfills the law not by harshness, but by love.

Saint Clare understood this. Born into wealth, she gave it all up—not because she hated it, but because she had found something greater. She chose a life of simplicity, hidden prayer, and love for Christ. Her convent walls were not a retreat from the world but an embrace of God and the poor. She shows us that clarity of heart comes not from having many things, but from desiring only God.

Here in Zimbabwe, where scarcity tests solidarity, her life is a challenge and an invitation. She reminds us that holiness is not about owning, but about offering. She calls us to measure wealth not in possessions, but in love.

So, as Saint Ignatius would encourage, imagine walking with Jesus and Peter in today's Gospel. Hear Him speak of surrender, not triumph. Let Him remind you: You are not a stranger—you are a child of God. Let that truth shape your choices this week.

God asks for our hearts, not our performances. He asks for love, not calculation. He walks with the lowly and gives us saints like Clare to show us the joy of giving everything.

- What part of my heart is still closed to God?
- Where do I live as though I am a stranger, not God's child?
- How can I choose this week to live with Clare's clarity—simply, generously, and truly?

Amen.

Source: <https://sj.mcharlesworth.fr/homilies/2025-08aug-11-yc-ot-19/>

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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.