



## Monday of the 21st Week in Ordinary Time



**Date:** Monday, August 25, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C

**First Reading:** 1 Thessalonians 1:1–5, 8b–10

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 149:1b–6a, 9b | **Response:** Psalm 149:4a

**Gospel Acclamation:** John 10:27

**Gospel Reading:** Matthew 23:13–22

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

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**D**ear Brothers,

The readings today remind us that the Gospel is not just something we speak—it's something we live. Truth shines most clearly in lives that are honest, open, and changed by grace.

In the first reading, Paul writes to the Christians in Thessalonica. They were new in the faith, still young in their understanding. But already their lives were speaking loudly. People were noticing them—not because of what they said, but because of how they lived. They had turned away from idols, let go of old ways, and begun to serve the living God. That was not easy. In those days, religion was part of everything—family, work, festivals. Choosing Christ meant going against the flow. But they did it. And they did it with joy.

Paul says he sees three things in them: faith that works, love that labours, and hope that lasts. These are not just ideas. They are real. Faith that shows up in what we do. Love that gives of itself. Hope that keeps going when things are hard.

That speaks to our life here, too. In Zimbabwe, faith can feel heavy when there's not enough to live on. Love can be stretched thin when we care for others with so little rest. Hope can wear down when change is slow. And yet, like the Thessalonians, we are not alone. The Spirit is still at work among us.

The psalm reminds us that God delights in His people. He doesn't look for the powerful or the perfect. He looks with love on the humble—the ones who depend on Him, who keep trusting even when life is hard. He lifts them up. Gives them dignity. Crowns them with quiet joy.

Take a moment and rest in that truth: God delights in you. Just as you are. Not because you have done everything right, but because you are His.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks strongly to the religious leaders. They had turned something simple—telling the truth—into something tricky. They made complicated rules about what counted and what didn't. They focused on small details and missed the bigger picture. Jesus saw this, and it grieved Him. They were meant to help people find God—but instead, they made things harder.

God is not interested in clever tricks. He wants truth from the heart. What matters is not how things look on the outside, but how they really are.

That brings us to the image I'd like to stay with today: clear glass. When glass is clear, light passes through it easily. You don't look at the glass—you see through it to the light beyond. That's what the Thessalonians were like. Their lives were clear. The light of Christ could shine through them.

The Pharisees were more like frosted or painted glass—complicated, cloudy. The light got lost. And sometimes, if we're honest, we can be like that too. We try to hide what we're feeling. We say one thing but mean another. We put up a front to look good. But the Gospel calls us to something different: clarity. Not perfection—but honesty. Simplicity. Transparency.

Today we remember two saints who lived like that.

St Joseph Calasanz saw poor children on the streets of Rome and didn't look away. He started schools for them—not just to teach letters, but to help them know God. His faith became action. His love took the shape of hard, daily work. His hope lasted, even when people misunderstood him. His life was like clear glass—he let the light of Christ shine through.

St Louis IX, King of France, ruled with fairness and mercy. He sat under a tree to give judgement, so he could be close to the people. He fed the hungry, cared for the sick, washed the feet of beggars. His power didn't get in the way of the Gospel—it made room for it. His life, too, let the light pass through.

Like them, we are called to live in a way that helps others see Christ. Not with grand words, but in small, honest choices. In how we speak. How we treat others. How we keep going in hope.

The world around us is hungry for truth. People are tired of empty talk, tired of show. They thirst for Good News, not Fake News. When we live with integrity—when we're the same person in private as in public—that becomes a light to others. And that is part of what it means to follow Jesus.

So let us pray today for that grace: to be people of clear glass. Not perfect, but real. So that others can see through our lives to the love of Christ shining behind them.

For your prayer this week:

- Where have I seen someone live with honesty and grace—like clear glass—and how did it move me?
- Is there an area of my life where I feel invited to live with more transparency or truth?
- How can I let Christ's light shine more clearly through me—in small, real ways—this week?

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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.

