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Wednesday of the 23rd Week in Ordinary Time

Date: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Colossians 3:1–11
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 145:2–3, 10–13b | **Response:** Psalm 145:9
Gospel Acclamation: Luke 6:23ab
Gospel Reading: Luke 6:20–26
Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

Some people go through life always looking down—just trying to survive, to stay safe, to keep going. But the readings today invite us to look up. Not to ignore what's happening around us, but to live with our eyes and hearts lifted—living here on earth, but rooted in heaven.

Saint Paul tells the Colossians: *"Since you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above."* He doesn't say this as advice. He says it as a command. You are already part of the kingdom of God—so live like it. In the early Church, people getting baptised would take off their clothes before entering the water, then come out wearing white. It showed they were starting a new life in Christ. That wasn't just a ceremony. It was a real change—leaving behind selfishness, pride, and fear, and choosing compassion, gentleness, and love instead.

That's what Paul is asking of us. Not to float above our troubles, but to face them with a different heart—a heart that belongs to God. In Zimbabwe, where so many are worn out by poverty, injustice, and corruption, this message is urgent. If we live only to protect ourselves or get ahead, then nothing will change. But if we live as people already raised with Christ, we begin to shine a different kind of light.

The Psalm reminds us why we can trust this way of living: *"The Lord is faithful in all His words."* That may sound simple, but it's powerful. We live in a country where promises are often broken—by governments, by institutions, sometimes even in our own homes. But God's word holds. His kingdom is not built on lies or empty slogans. It is built on truth, justice, and mercy. And when we say "God's kingdom lasts forever," we are saying something bold: that pain and injustice will not win in the end.

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Then Jesus speaks. He stands among ordinary people—poor fishermen, tired mothers, sick and struggling workers—and says: *"Blessed are you who are poor. Blessed are you who are hungry. Blessed are you who weep."* These words are not soft or poetic. They are strong and surprising. Jesus isn't saying poverty is good. He's saying that God sees those who are usually forgotten. That God is already close to them. That the world may not care—but God does.

And then He warns those who are rich, full, and comfortable: *"Woe to you."* Not because He hates them, but because comfort can make us blind. When we have enough, it's easy to stop seeing those who don't. Jesus is calling all of us—rich or poor—to choose what really matters. To care more about people than things. To build a life that reflects God's kingdom, not just our own security.

Blessed Francis Gárate, the Jesuit we remember today, lived this out in the most ordinary way. He was a porter—a doorkeeper—at the University of Deusto in Spain. For over 40 years, he welcomed students, staff, and visitors with patience, kindness, and humility. He didn't travel far or do great public works. But people who met him saw something holy. He did small things with great love. He treated each person with dignity. He lived close to God, even while opening doors. He's a reminder that we don't need to be famous or powerful to live like saints. We just need to be faithful, humble, and ready to love.

So, let's imagine ourselves in that crowd on the hillside, listening to Jesus. Maybe we are tired. Maybe we're hoping for something to change. And He looks at us—not past us—and says, *"Blessed are you."* What does that feel like? Do we believe Him? And if we do, how will it change the way we live this week?

The readings today call us to live differently—to live in a way that brings God's kingdom to life, here and now. In our homes, in our schools, in our workplaces. In the way we speak, forgive, listen, and serve. We may still struggle. The road may still be long. But the first steps have already been taken. Christ is risen, and we are risen with Him. So now we are invited to live as if that were true.

Let's walk into this week with these questions in our hearts:

- What old habits or attitudes is Christ asking me to leave behind?
- Who around me is poor, hurting, or forgotten—and how can I stand with them this week?

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- If I really believed that I’ve already been raised with Christ, how would it change the way I live, speak, and treat others today?

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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.