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Wednesday of the 25th Week in Ordinary Time

Date: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Ezra 9:5–9
Responsorial Psalm: Tobit 13:2, 3-4a, 6, 7, 10 | **Response:** Tobit 13:1b
Gospel Acclamation: Mark 1:15
Gospel Reading: Luke 9:1–6
Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

Today's readings remind us to go back to basics — faith, freedom, and being faithful to God. They ask us to remember who we are, where we've come from, and what God wants us to become. God doesn't shout these things at us; He speaks quietly, in our hearts, and calls us to trust Him.

In the first reading, we see Ezra praying. His clothes are torn, and he kneels on the ground, not proud but ashamed. He admits that his people have failed God again and again. Even though they are back in their land and the Temple is rebuilt, their hearts are still broken. Ezra's name means "help," and in this moment he helps his people by showing them the first step to healing: being honest with God. Not pretending, not making excuses. Just naming the truth — and remembering that even in their weakness, they are still loved by God.

The Psalm from Tobit answers Ezra's sorrow with hope. It says, "Yes, God punishes, but He also shows mercy." The people who sang this had suffered. They had lost family and lived far from home. But even then, they praised God. Why? Because they believed He would never leave them. God's justice is real, but so is His mercy. His discipline is meant to heal, not to destroy. That's what it means to live by grace: even in pain, we trust that God is still with us.

Then in the Gospel, Jesus sends His disciples out. But He doesn't give them money, food, or baggage. He gives them only His message: "The Kingdom of God has come near." They go out with nothing but trust. That's the point. God's Kingdom doesn't come with power or riches, but with humility, trust, and love. Jesus even says, if people don't welcome you, just shake the dust off your feet and move on. Dust is a reminder that we're just passing through — but the message we carry lasts forever: God is near.

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Here in Zimbabwe, we know what it feels like to carry heavy burdens — from our history, our economy, our politics, and even in our communities. Like Ezra's people, we can't pretend everything is fine. We have to face the truth: the wounds in our hearts, in our families, and in our society. But as Ezra said, "even now" there is hope. God gives us "a little space of grace" — a chance to breathe, to begin again, to live differently.

And Jesus still sends us out today. Not because we're perfect, but because He trusts us. We don't need to wait until we've got everything figured out. We just need to go — with courage, with love, and with faith.

So imagine Jesus calling your name. He gives you nothing to carry but His trust. You don't know where you'll sleep tonight or how things will work out. But you know you carry something bigger than yourself: peace, healing, and the Word of God. That's enough.

We are not called to save the world — Jesus already has. We're called to be signs of Him, here and now. To tell the truth, to love deeply, and to walk forward with hope.

So this week, ask yourself:

- Where do I need to be honest with God, like Ezra?
- Where is Jesus asking me to trust Him instead of clinging to my own plans?
- What "little space of grace" has God given me — and how can I share it with others?

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.

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