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# Thursday of the 25th Week in Ordinary Time

**Date:** Thursday, September 25, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
**First Reading:** Haggai 1:1–8
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 149:1b–6a, 9b | **Response:** Psalm 149:4a
**Gospel Acclamation:** John 14:6
**Gospel Reading:** Luke 9:7–9
**Preached at:** the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

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Dear brothers and sisters,

The readings today ask us to stop and think: What are we really building with our lives? And what are we really looking for?

In the first reading the prophet speaks to the people who had returned from exile in Babylon. Eighteen years had passed, but the Temple in Jerusalem was still in ruins. Meanwhile, people had finished and decorated their own houses. They were not openly against God, but they kept postponing. They said, “Not yet. It is not the right time.” Haggai challenges them: “Consider your ways.” You plant much but harvest little. You earn wages but never have enough. Why? Because you have neglected the Lord’s house.

Haggai is the first of the three prophets who spoke after the exile: Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. His book is short but very precise. He even gives the exact dates of his four messages. Today’s reading is the first message, when he calls the people to stop delaying and to begin rebuilding the Temple. Haggai tells them that their struggles with poor harvests and economic hardship were linked to their spiritual indifference. They cared for their own homes while the Temple remained broken. But when they finally listened, something important happened: the Lord stirred up their spirit, and they began the work. The lesson is simple. When we put God first, even in difficult times, life begins to open up again.

The psalm lifts the tone: “The Lord takes delight in His people.” God does not delight in pride or power, but in those who are faithful and humble. To sing praise even in the middle of ruins is a way of resisting despair. It is saying: God is not finished with us yet.

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The Gospel gives us another picture. Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, was ruler of Galilee. He heard about Jesus and was confused. People whispered that Jesus might be John the Baptist raised from the dead, or Elijah returned, or the prophet Moses had promised. Herod was not interested in Scripture. He simply asked, “Who is this I hear so much about?” He wanted to see Jesus, but only out of curiosity. Later, when Jesus was brought before him during the trial, Herod mocked Him and dressed Him in fine clothes. He looked at Jesus but did not see His true kingship.

Herod’s question, “Who is this?”, will be answered not by him, but by Peter. After the feeding of the five thousand, Peter proclaims: “You are the Christ of God.” This is the answer. Jesus is not just another prophet or miracle worker. He is priest, prophet, and king. He is the Son of God, the one who forgives sins and who will come in glory. Herod saw without believing. Peter believed and proclaimed.

These two stories show the difference between indifference and faith. The people of Judah delayed, but when they finally listened, they rebuilt. Herod wanted to see Jesus on his own terms, but his heart remained closed.

Jesus asks us the same question He asked His disciples: “Who do you say that I am?” The answer must be shown not only in words, but also in the way we live. Do I center my life on Christ in my family, in my school, in my work? Or do I keep Him for later?

Today, let us ask for the grace to answer like Peter: “You are the Christ of God.” And like the people in Haggai’s time, let us pick up our tools, through our daily choices and our acts of justice and mercy, and rebuild the temple of God’s presence in our homes, our communities, and our country.

I leave you with the following questions to ponder this morning:

- What “temple” in my own life have I left neglected while I focused on other things?
- Do I seek Jesus with the openness of Peter or with the shallow curiosity of Herod?
- How can I help rebuild the presence of God in my school, my family, or my community today?

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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.