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A homily for the Tuesday of the 26th Week in Ordinary Time

Date: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: Zechariah 8:20–23

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 87:1b–7 | **Response:** Psalm 8:23

Gospel Acclamation: Mark 10:45

Gospel Reading: Luke 9:51–56

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

Dear friends in Christ,

Our readings today open a window onto God’s broad vision—a vision far larger than we often imagine.

From the prophet Zechariah, we hear a promise of a universal homecoming. He speaks to a weary people rebuilding after exile, but he dares to look further: “In those days, ten men from every nation will take hold of a Jew and say, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’” God’s presence is not limited to one people or one temple. Even outsiders, even enemies, will be drawn to Him.

The psalm echoes this hope. Nations like Egypt, Babylon, and Philistia—once rivals of Israel—are counted as citizens of Zion. God gives them new birth certificates of grace. Belonging is re-defined. The walls of separation are replaced by the gift of reconciliation.

In the Gospel, we see how Jesus Himself embodies this vision. Luke tells us He was “resolutely” determined to go to Jerusalem. In Greek: *estērisen to prosōpon* —He “set His face like flint.” This is the language of Isaiah’s Suffering Servant: “I have set my face like flint, knowing I shall not be put to shame.” Jesus knows the road will lead to suffering, but He chooses to walk it.

On the way, He passes through a Samaritan village. Here the old rivalry flares up. Samaritans and Jews shared the same ancestors but disagreed about the true place of worship: Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem. Centuries of mistrust had hardened into bitterness. So when Jesus came through on His way to Jerusalem, they shut their doors and would not receive him.

James and John wanted revenge. They remembered Elijah calling down fire from heaven and wanted to do the same. But Jesus rebuked them. His Kingdom is not fire and vengeance, but mercy. The true miracle here is restraint—choosing peace over retaliation, mercy over anger. Later, from the Cross, He will say: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

Today the Church also remembers St Jerome, who gave us the Latin Bible. Jerome could be fiery in temper like the ‘Sons of Thunder’ too, but he never tired of returning to the Word of God. His famous line still rings true: “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.” He shows us that holiness is found in letting God’s Word shape our lives.

Friends, here in Zimbabwe, we too know rivalries, divisions, and hardships that can breed bitterness. Many of our neighbours are searching for signs of hope, longing to hear: “God is with you.” Christ calls us to be those signs—not with fire in our words, but with mercy in our hands and hope in our eyes. Will we allow others to grasp our sleeves because they see God in our life?

Let us take today’s message to heart: God’s mercy is wider than our divisions; Christ’s face is set toward love, not anger; and like Jerome, we must let Scripture draw us close to Him.

Let us set our faces with Christ—and walk in mercy.

Amen.

Source: <https://sj.mcharlesworth.fr/homilies/2025-09sep-30-yc-ot-26/>

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