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# Monday of the 28th Week in Ordinary Time

**Date:** Monday, October 13, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
**First Reading:** Romans 1:1–7
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 98:1b–e, 2–4 | **Response:** Psalm 98:2a
**Gospel Acclamation:** Psalm 95:8
**Gospel Reading:** Luke 11:29–32
**Preached at:** the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

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The readings today are about hearing God's voice — and having the courage to respond with faith.

Dear friends in Christ, Saint Paul opens his Letter to the Romans (Romans 1:1–7) with words that carry great weight. He introduces himself as a servant, an apostle, and one set apart for the Gospel. These are not just fancy titles. In calling himself a "servant" (Greek: *doulos*), Paul links himself to the faithful servants of Israel—those who lived not for themselves, but for God's purposes. The word *doulos* echoes the Hebrew *ebed*, the word used in the Old Testament for those called to serve in God's covenant, such as Moses and the prophets (cf. Exodus 15:2). In calling himself an apostle, Paul reminds us that he was sent, not by his own desire, but by God's command. And when he says he has been "set apart" (*aphorizō*), he is echoing the Old Testament call to be a holy people, a kingdom of priests (cf. Exodus 19:6). This shows that Paul's call is not just personal but covenantal—he is part of God's great saving plan.

This greeting is more than an introduction. It is a mission statement. Paul says that the Gospel was promised long ago, through the prophets. That is, this message about Jesus didn't come out of nowhere. It is the fruit of a long journey—from Abraham to Moses to David and the prophets. And now it has reached its fulfilment in Jesus Christ, who is both the Son of David and the Son of God. Paul says Jesus was shown to be the Son of God in power when He rose from the dead. That victory, Paul says, is the reason he has been given a new life and a new mission: to bring all people to the "obedience of faith."

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This is not obedience out of fear. It is the kind of obedience that flows from trust. Trust in a God who keeps His promises. Trust in a God whose power is made perfect in love. Paul ends his greeting by wishing us grace and peace—not just the absence of conflict, but true peace (*eirēnē*): the harmony that comes from being in communion with the living God. His greeting is addressed to "all God's beloved," reminding us that the Gospel is for everyone, Jew and Gentile alike.

And then we come to Jesus in Luke's Gospel. A crowd gathers, hungry for signs. They are not satisfied with His words; they want proof. But Jesus refuses to give them what they ask for. He says the only sign they will get is the sign of Jonah.

We heard last week how Jonah was swallowed by a great fish, and after three days was brought back to land. It was as if he had been buried and then raised. Jesus is saying: "That's your sign." The death and resurrection of the Son of Man is the only sign we need. And it has already been given. This is not just a future promise. It is the heart of our faith—the Cross, the Tomb, and the Resurrection. It is, as Paul will say later in this letter, "the power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16).

But Jesus says more. He points to the Queen of the South, who travelled far to hear the wisdom of Solomon. She was a Gentile, an outsider. Yet she recognised God's wisdom when she heard it. And the people of Nineveh, another pagan city whose story we heard about recently, turned away from their sin when Jonah preached to them. Both the Queen and the Ninevites responded to what they heard. The Queen, in fact, is a model for the Gentile Church. Her journey to Israel foreshadows the missionary outreach of the apostles—a reminder that the Gospel is for the ends of the earth (cf. Romans 1:5–6).

Jesus is saying: "And now, someone greater than Solomon is here. Someone greater than Jonah. But you do not listen."

That's the heart of it. God is speaking. Are we listening?

In Psalm 98, we are told to sing a new song. Why? Because "the Lord has done marvellous things." His right hand and His holy arm have brought victory. In the light of the Gospel, we see that this "new song" is the song of the resurrection. It is the song we sing every time we celebrate the Eucharist. The Church teaches

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that the early Christians sang the mystery of Christ in the Psalms (CCC 2641). So this is not just poetry. It is liturgy. It is our voice joining the great chorus of creation in grateful worship.

The Psalmist does not limit the song to Israel. He calls “all the earth” to sing. The seas roar. The rivers clap their hands. The hills rejoice. All creation joins in this praise. And Paul mirrors this when he says the Gospel is for “all God’s beloved.” The Gospel does not belong to one people. It is good news for everyone. And hear we can recall Pope Francis’ “todos, todos, todos!”

But the psalm is not just about music. It is about our response. God has acted. Now we must respond. Not just with words, but with our lives.

That’s where everything comes together: Paul’s mission, the Psalm’s song, and Jesus’s warning. Paul shows us how to respond to God’s call: with a life set apart. The Psalm invites us to join in the new song. And Jesus warns us not to delay, not to wait for another sign.

Here in Zimbabwe, many people long for signs of hope—in politics, in the economy, in daily life. But the Gospel tells us that the greatest sign has already been given. Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. The question now is not, “Where is the sign?” but, “How will I respond?”

In the spirit of Saint Ignatius, we are invited to pray with these Scriptures not just as distant stories, but as living words. Imagine yourself in the crowd around Jesus. What do you hear in His voice? What do you feel when He speaks of Jonah, of Nineveh, of the Queen who searched for wisdom? What is He asking of you?

The Christian life is not about waiting for the perfect moment. It is about hearing God’s voice today, and responding in faith. It is about turning away from sin now. It is about singing the new song now. It is about living as those who are set apart, not to withdraw from the world, but to love it more deeply.

So let me leave you with three questions for reflection this morning:

- Where in my life have I been waiting for a sign, when God has already spoken?
- How am I being called to respond today—in prayer, in service, in repentance?

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- What would it look like for me to live as someone “set apart” for the Gospel, in the middle of my everyday life?

May the Lord give us grace to hear His voice, peace to trust Him, and courage to respond with our whole lives. 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.