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Tuesday of the 28th Week in Ordinary Time

Date: Tuesday, October 14, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Romans 1:16–25
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 19:2–5 | **Response:** Psalm 19:2a
Gospel Acclamation: Hebrews 4:12
Gospel Reading: Luke 11:37–41
Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

The readings today are about remembering what matters most—and letting go of what distracts us from loving God and others with our whole hearts.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Jesus is sitting at a table again. In Luke's Gospel He's been invited to dinner by a Pharisee, but before anyone eats, there's already tension. The host is shocked that Jesus hasn't followed the proper ritual of hand-washing. And Jesus responds, not with excuses, but with truth. He says: You clean the outside of the cup, but inside, it's full of greed. You look holy on the outside, but your hearts are closed. You follow the rules, but forget the poor.

Now Jesus isn't dismissing tradition. He's calling us deeper. He's saying: What matters isn't just what people see—it's what's going on inside. What we treasure. What we give. What we hide. "Give alms from within," He says, "and everything will be clean." That is: let your mercy come from the heart. Share not just your money, but your kindness, your attention, your time. Give from the place that only God sees.

Saint Paul, in his letter to the Romans, speaks with boldness and sorrow. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel," he says, "it is the power of God for salvation." But he also warns what happens when we turn away from truth. God has made Himself known—in creation, in beauty, in the order of the world. But people chose to worship created things instead of the Creator. They made idols and lost sight of love.

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That same danger is with us today. We may not worship statues, but we still make idols—of control, comfort, and always needing to be right. Here in Zimbabwe, it's easy to grow used to what should never be normal: when corruption is expected, when hunger is ignored, when struggling students are blamed while the rich grow richer. These are not just social issues—they are signs that our hearts need cleansing, not with water, but with justice, mercy, and truth.

The Psalm today gives us a quiet answer. It says that the heavens declare the glory of God—not with words, but in their beauty. Every sunrise, every night sky, every breeze across the bushveld whispers that God is near. And yet, the ones made in God's image—us—are the ones who forget. The stars speak better than we do. They remind us that God is always revealing Himself. But we must look. We must listen. We must not let our hearts grow dull.

St Ignatius taught us to look for God in all things—not just in church, but in ordinary life. In silence. In people. In pain. And in joy. One of the most powerful moments in the Spiritual Exercises is when he invites us to imagine Christ looking at us with deep love and asking: "What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I to do for Christ?" These are not questions to make us feel guilty. They are questions of love—meant to stir the heart, to help us clean the inside of the cup, and to draw us closer to the one who has given us everything.

Saint Callistus, whom we remember today, lived this truth. He started life as a slave. He was beaten, thrown into prison, and still rose to become Pope. He was criticised for showing too much mercy—for welcoming back sinners, forgiving debts, for opening the Church's doors to those others had rejected. But he knew what Jesus knew: that love is worth more than law alone. That a clean heart matters more than a clean record. That God's mercy is bigger than our mistakes.

And so, we are left with a challenge: are we more worried about what others see, or what God sees? Are we making space for mercy? Are we giving from within?

Imagine yourself now at that dinner table. Jesus is sitting across from you. He has not washed. But He looks at you—not to judge, but to invite. And He asks: *What are you holding back? What gift is still locked away inside you? What would it mean to give it freely—out of love, not fear?*

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This week, let us take that question seriously. Let us stop polishing the outside while ignoring the inside. Let us give from the heart, speak with honesty, love with courage, and serve with joy.

Here are three questions to take into prayer:

- What part of my life am I still keeping on the surface—clean on the outside, but closed on the inside?
- What would it look like to give more from the heart this week?
- Where is God already showing His beauty and presence in my daily life—and how am I being invited to respond?

May the Lord help us give from within, love with freedom, and follow Him with clean and open hearts.

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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.