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Feast of St Luke, Evangelist

Date: Saturday, October 18, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: 2 Timothy 4:10–17b
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 145:10–13, 17–18 | **Response:** Psalm 145:12
Gospel Acclamation: John 15:16
Gospel Reading: Luke 10:1–9
Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

The readings today are about being sent, staying faithful, and sharing the joy of the Gospel.

Dear friends in Christ, today we honour Saint Luke the Evangelist — doctor, traveller, and storyteller of divine mercy. The early historian Eusebius tells us that "Luke, a physician of Antioch, was especially intimate with Paul," and the Apostle himself calls him "the most dear physician" (Col 4:14). Luke's pen, then, was guided by the heart of a healer — one who cared for bodies as well as souls. His name, Luke — from the root *lux*, light — has long been taken to mean "light-bringer." Yet this light must not be confused with the false light that blinds, the proud glow of Lucifer. Luke's light is different — it is the true light that heals. He is not a bearer of pride but a bringer of Christ's mercy, a light that never turns from God.

In our first reading from the Second Letter to Timothy, we meet Paul in his final days. The great missionary writes from prison, his body weary but his spirit strong. "Only Luke is with me," he says. Others have gone, but Luke remains. That single line carries the whole beauty of Christian friendship. When Paul's race was nearly done, Luke's steady presence became his consolation. Sometimes holiness is not a matter of great deeds, but of simple faithfulness — to stay when others leave, to stand when others fall silent, to keep company in suffering.

Our Psalm sings of that same faithfulness: "The Lord is faithful in all his words and loving in all his deeds. The Lord is near to all who call on him in truth." And in the Gospel (Luke 10:9), Jesus tells his disciples to say to every household, "The Kingdom of God is very near to you." The Psalm declares that God draws

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near; the Gospel sends us to make that nearness visible. God's closeness is both a divine promise and a missionary invitation. When we answer that call, we become the hands through which the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down (Ps 145:14).

In today's Gospel, Jesus sends out seventy-two disciples, two by two, to every town and place. "Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals," he tells them. They are to move lightly, not burdened by possessions, but strengthened by peace. Their mission is to heal, to bless, to proclaim hope. The number seventy-two recalls the nations of the world listed in Genesis — it is Luke's way of reminding us that this mission belongs to everyone. As Pope John Paul II once said, Luke's Gospel throws vivid light on the evangelizing mission and shows how the Holy Spirit "moulds the Church" to carry salvation to all nations.

Let us pause, as St Ignatius would invite us, and picture that scene — perhaps as we have seen it portrayed in *The Chosen*. The morning sun rises; the disciples step forward with trust alone for their provision. Dust clings to their sandals; their hearts beat with quiet courage. They knock on doors and speak the words, "Peace to this house." And in each small welcome, each act of kindness, the Kingdom of God draws near.

Here in Zimbabwe, this mission is our own — our road, our calling, our chance to make the Gospel visible. Many of our people still walk through the valley of hardship — struggling to find work, to feed their children, to believe that tomorrow can be better. Yet Christ still sends us. "Carry no purse," he says — meaning, rely not on wealth or comfort, but on faith. Our task is to bring healing where there is hurt, justice where there is neglect, and joy where hope has faded. The Lord "lifts up those who are bowed down," and he calls us to do the same — to lift, to listen, to love.

This is the heart of Catholic Social Teaching: that every person, however poor, carries the image of God. To follow Luke's Gospel today is to honour that image in those who suffer — to defend their dignity, to stand beside them in truth. Healing, as Luke shows us, is not only about curing bodies; it is about restoring the soul of a people.

Saint Luke lived this truth. He healed with compassion, wrote with tenderness, and travelled with courage. Through him we received the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the Magnificat. In these stories, God bends low to lift the broken.

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Luke shows us that love is not a feeling but a movement — a descent into mercy, a rising in joy.

Like Luke and Paul, we are called to companionship — to go out and to stay faithful, to walk with others in their struggles, and to carry Christ's peace to every home and heart. The mission of the Church is not a task for a few; it is the daily work of those who love with patience and serve with hope.

So, brothers and sisters, let us rise and go — not with heavy bags or anxious hearts, but with light in our eyes and peace in our steps. Let us, like Luke, be healers who bind wounds, companions who stay, messengers who bring hope. Let us go where love is needed, stay where pain is hidden, and bring joy where hearts are cold. For the Lord still sends us, two by two, to whisper across this land, "The Kingdom of God is very near."

And so, let us ask ourselves this morning:

- Who in my life needs me simply to stay — to listen, to walk beside them, to be faithful?
- Where is Jesus sending me to bring peace or healing in my community?
- How can I see the hidden face of God in those whom the world overlooks?

May the Lord who sent Luke and Paul send us too — to be light-bringers of his mercy in our own time.

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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.