



Monday of the 29th Week in Ordinary Time



Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: Romans 4:20–25

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 1:69–75 | **Response:** Psalm 1:68

Gospel Acclamation: Matthew 5:3

Gospel Reading: Luke 12:13–21

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

The readings today ask us what we really trust — God or our own security. They remind us that there are two kinds of wealth: the kind that ends when we die, and the kind that lasts forever.

In the first reading Saint Paul points to Abraham as the great example of faith. Paul says Abraham’s trust in God “was counted to him as righteousness.” The word *logizomai* means to record something in a ledger — to credit an account. In other words, Abraham’s faith wasn’t just a feeling; it was a real decision. He believed God’s promise even when all the facts said it was impossible. He and Sarah were old and childless, yet he didn’t lose hope. That kind of faith is not blind optimism. It’s clear-eyed trust that God can bring life where we see only death. Paul reminds us that the same God who gave Abraham and Sarah a child has also raised Jesus from the dead. In both cases, faith bridges the gap between what looks impossible and what God makes real.

The Psalm, taken from Zechariah’s song in Luke’s Gospel (Luke 1:68–75), carries that same message of trust. Zechariah, who had once been struck dumb for doubting God, now sings with joy that God keeps his promises. “He has raised up a mighty Saviour,” he says, fulfilling the promise made to Abraham. God’s mercy and faithfulness are not abstract words — they are actions. God remembers us even when we forget him. In Zimbabwe, where so many promises of prosperity and reform have come and gone, we can understand this longing for faithfulness. Human systems may fail us, but God’s mercy never does. His balance sheet never lies.

In the Gospel a man interrupts Jesus to ask him to sort out a family dispute over inheritance. It sounds reasonable, but Jesus sees what's really behind it — greed disguised as fairness. He refuses to take sides and instead tells a story about a rich farmer who keeps building bigger barns to store his crops. The man thinks he's finally secure. He says to himself, "Relax, eat, drink, be merry." But that night God calls him a fool. Not because he's rich, but because he's blind. The Greek word *aphrōn* means "without understanding." He was clever in business but foolish in soul. He thought he owned his life, but in truth, his life was on loan.

Jesus warns us about a kind of "spiritual inflation" — when our possessions increase but our gratitude shrinks. The rich man's barns got bigger, but his heart got smaller. Saint Augustine once said, "The rich man was not wrong to fill his barns, but he should have filled the mouths of the poor." We see this same tension around us — tall walls beside hungry neighbours, luxury cars next to bare-foot children. Jesus isn't condemning success; He's reminding us that wealth without compassion becomes a prison. What matters is not how much we keep, but how much we allow God to pass through us to others.

Saint Ignatius would call this an examen of our attachments. He might ask: what are the "barns" I'm building? My savings? My comfort? My reputation? The Spiritual Exercises begin with the "First Principle and Foundation," which says we are created to love and serve God, and that everything else is meant to help us do that. But when things start to own us — when our barns become our gods — we lose the freedom to trust.

Today we also remember Saint Paul of the Cross, who lived this truth. He founded the Passionists and spent his life meditating on the Cross. For him, the Cross was the real ledger of heaven — the place where God cancelled our debts. He used to tell his followers not to cling to comfort but to be "poor with the poor Christ." He knew that true wealth is found not in accumulation but in surrender.

So today's readings invite us to change how we measure success. God doesn't condemn abundance; He blesses it when it becomes generosity. To be "rich toward God" means to live in a way that multiplies goodness — in kindness, forgiveness, and sharing what we have. That's the kind of wealth that never dies.

Let's ask for the grace to keep our true accounts in order — not our bank accounts, but our hearts. May our faith, like Abraham's, be credited as righteousness. May our gratitude, like Zechariah's, turn silence into song. And may our generosity turn barns into blessings.

Before we go, let's each ask ourselves:

- What “barns” am I building to feel safe?
- How is God calling me to be “rich toward Him” this week — through compassion, generosity, or trust?
- When God looks at my life, what does He see written on my ledger: anxiety or faith?

May we count our blessings, not our barns, and trust the One whose mercy has no limit.

Source: <https://sj.mcharlesworth.fr/homilies/2025-10oct-20-yc-ot-29/>

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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.