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Tuesday of the 29th Week in Ordinary Time

Date: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Romans 5:12, 15b, 17–19, 20b–21
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 40:7–10, 17 | **Response:** Psalm 40:8a, 9a
Gospel Acclamation: Luke 21:36
Gospel Reading: Luke 12:35–38
Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

Today's readings are about being ready for God — staying awake to His presence and responding with love. Readiness, in the Gospel sense, isn't about fear or guessing when the end will come. It's about living each day alert to grace, aware that God can show up in any moment.

In his letter to the Romans, Saint Paul reminds us that sin entered the world through one man, Adam — and with it came death. But Paul's real message is one of hope: where sin increased, grace overflowed even more. God's mercy doesn't just cover our sins; it floods them. Adam's choice brought darkness, but Christ's obedience brings light and life. Through Jesus, a new way of being human has begun — one ruled not by guilt or fear, but by trust in a God who saves.

The Psalm gives us the response of a heart that trusts: "Here I am, Lord, I come to do your will." In Hebrew, the word *hineni* — "Here I am" — is what Abraham, Moses, and Mary each said when God called. It's not a phrase of panic but of peace. It means: I'm ready, Lord. I'm listening. Readiness, for the people of God, is not waiting nervously — it's being open and willing to say yes.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells his followers, "Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit." He paints a simple picture: servants keeping watch through the night, ready for their master to return. But then Jesus flips the story. When the master arrives, it is he who serves them. This is a shocking image — the Lord Himself taking the servant's place. It's the same humility we see at the Last Supper, when Jesus washes the disciples' feet. God's greatness is not in being served, but in serving.

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This is what readiness looks like: love in action. Not fear of judgment, but faithfulness born of love. As Shakespeare once wrote, “The readiness is all.” (*Hamlet*, Act 5, Scene 2) For us, readiness means living each day as if it were the day of the Lord’s coming — not in fear, but with steady love and prayer.

Here in Zimbabwe, this message has real weight. Many people live between darkness and dawn — between hardship and hope. To be ready in this context means refusing to close our eyes to suffering. It means keeping our lamps lit by caring for one another, by refusing to grow numb to corruption or despair, by defending dignity and seeking justice. This is what Catholic Social Teaching looks like in daily life: staying awake to the needs around us and letting our faith shape how we respond.

Think of all those who serve quietly — teachers, nurses, parish workers, and volunteers. They are keeping vigil in the night, doing what they can with love. They are the servants the Lord will find awake when He comes — and He will serve them in return.

We also remember today the Jesuit missionary Diego Luis de San Vitores, who left everything behind to bring the Gospel to distant shores. Along with the young catechist Pedro Calungsod, he taught, baptized, and cared for the people of Guam — and both gave their lives for the faith. They died with their lamps burning. Their story reminds us that readiness is not about knowing the time of the Master’s return, but living every hour as His faithful servants.

Saint Ignatius teaches us to make the same choice each day. The Examen helps us ask: Where today was I awake to God’s grace? Where did I fall asleep to love? Imagine Christ knocking at your door tonight — would you be ready to welcome Him with joy?

The Gospel is not a warning to be afraid; it’s an invitation to be faithful. Watchfulness means love that doesn’t give up. Service is what keeps our hearts ready. Grace is the light that never goes out.

So let’s keep our lamps burning — through prayer, mercy, and justice — so that when Christ comes, He finds us already at work in His name, shining with the joy of those who have met Him in the faces of others.

We might ask ourselves in prayer this morning:

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- Where in my life have I stopped noticing God’s quiet invitations to love and grace?
- When someone needs me, do I recognize Christ in them and respond with readiness?
- In the struggles and hopes of our country, what small, faithful action can I take this week to keep the lamp of justice and compassion burning bright?

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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.