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Wednesday of the 30th Week in Ordinary Time

Date: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Romans 8:26–30
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 13:4–5, 6 | **Response:** Psalm 13:6a
Gospel Acclamation: 2 Thessalonians 2:14
Gospel Reading: Luke 13:22–30
Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

The readings today are about the quiet but steady work of grace — the partnership between God's mercy and our human response. They speak of the Spirit who prays within us, of a door that is narrow but open, and of a kingdom where the last will be first.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Saint Paul tells us in the Letter to the Romans that when we do not know how to pray, the Spirit himself prays for us with sighs too deep for words. Prayer, then, is never just our effort. It is God at work in our weakness. When our words fail, the Spirit's voice rises. When our hope falters, the Spirit's fire rekindles it.

And when we pray, we are not alone. The Spirit's sighs join the prayer of the saints and angels, forming one great song of love that rises to God. Our small petitions are gathered up with Mary's song, with the psalms of David, with the cries of the poor and the hopes of the faithful. Heaven and earth pray together.

Paul's words — "predestined, called, justified, glorified" — are not about exclusion. They remind us that God's purpose always leans toward glory, that everything is being drawn toward love. Yet that love does not cancel our freedom. It invites us to humility — to what the saints called "learned ignorance," the simple truth that we do not know how to pray or live without grace. Pride cannot pass through the doorway of God's kingdom; humility can.

The psalmist today sings through his tears: "I trust in your merciful love." He does not hide his pain, but turns it into prayer. Faith does not remove suffering; it redeems it. That is the Ignatian path — to find God in all things, even in the shadows.

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Zimbabwe knows something of that prayer. We pray for rain that does not come, for jobs that are scarce, for leaders who will serve the people with honesty. In all this, the Spirit is still sighing with us and through us, turning complaint into compassion and hope into courage.

In the Gospel, Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem when someone asks him, “Lord, will only a few be saved?” He does not answer with numbers. He answers with an invitation: “Strive to enter by the narrow door.” The word strive means to struggle, to persevere. The door is narrow, not because God is harsh, but because love requires letting go. We cannot squeeze through carrying our pride, our grudges, our greed.

The narrow door calls us to conversion — not a single moment, but a lifelong journey that is nourished by the sacraments. Baptism first opened the way. The Eucharist feeds us for the road. At the altar, heaven meets earth, and we learn again the humility and gratitude that make us light enough to pass through.

Yet this door, though narrow, opens wide. Jesus says people will come from east and west, north and south, and take their place at God’s table. This is the universal hope of our faith: God desires all people to be saved. Even those who seem far from the Church are not beyond the reach of God’s mercy. The arms of the Cross stretch wider than we can imagine.

And this kingdom turns everything upside down. The first become last, the proud are humbled, the forgotten find their place at the head of the table. God’s justice is not cold judgement; it is mercy set in motion. That reversal gives hope to those who persevere, especially the poor, the sick, and the weary who still believe.

But this kingdom is not only a promise for the next life. It begins here and now, in the choices we make and the love we show. The narrow way winds through our daily lives: through the crowded markets, the dry fields, the classrooms where teachers keep teaching despite low pay, the hospitals where nurses serve though medicines are short. Each act of honesty, patience, or forgiveness widens the world for someone else. That is the narrow way lived with love.

Ignatius of Loyola would invite us to imagine ourselves standing before that narrow door. What are we carrying that we need to set down before entering? Pride? Fear? Anger? Despair? The daily examen helps us see this. Each evening we

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look back in gratitude, notice where we loved or failed to love, and ask for the grace to begin again. Slowly, that habit shapes our hearts, keeping us close to the Spirit's quiet guidance.

The Spirit's sighs, the saints' prayers, the sacraments that feed us, the examen that helps us see — all these are gifts that draw us, step by step, into God's wide and welcoming heart.

And so, we might ask ourselves this morning:

- Where in my life is the Spirit inviting me to strive — to keep walking the narrow way of love, even when it costs me something?
- What must I lay down to pass through the door — pride, resentment, fear, indifference?
- How is the Spirit praying within me — in my longing for peace, in my compassion for others, in my desire to serve those most in need?

May the Spirit's sighs become our strength, and may the narrow door lead us all into the wide embrace of God.

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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.