



Feast of All Saints and Blessed of the Society of Jesus



Date: Wednesday, November 5, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: Deut 30:11-14

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 16:1-2a+5, 7-8, 9-10, 11

Gospel Acclamation: 1 Peter 4:14

Gospel Reading: John 12:23-26

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

The readings today are about God’s nearness, the courage to follow, and the seed that must fall before it grows. They remind us that holiness is not far off, not unreachable. It is close. It is planted in our daily lives. And today, as we honour the 53 Saints and 158 Blessed of the Society of Jesus, we remember those who lived this truth—not perfectly, but faithfully.

Dear friends in Christ, our first reading from the Book of Deuteronomy comes as Moses prepares to leave his people. He tells them something simple and striking: God’s command is not too hard. It isn’t hidden or far away. It’s near—in our hearts and on our lips. That’s a radical thought. God’s Word isn’t reserved for experts or saints. It’s woven into ordinary life, into every honest choice, every act of love, every time we turn toward the good. In Hebrew thinking, the heart is not just where we feel, but where we choose. So when Moses says the Word is in our hearts, he means it can shape our whole life. The saints we honour today lived that way—not chasing distant ideals, but trusting that God was already near, already working in their hearts.

Our psalm continues this theme of trust. The writer says, “You are my portion and my cup,” and speaks of God’s counsel even at night. That line speaks deeply to our Ignatian way of prayer. The night hours often bring doubt or fear. But the psalm reminds us that God is there too, helping us to see, helping us to choose. In the Spiritual Exercises, we are taught to reflect on our day, to listen for how God was present, even in small things. The Jesuit saints did this—not only in prayer, but in how they lived. Men like Miguel Pro, who held firm to joy and

faith in the face of violence. Or Peter Faber, who used gentleness and friendship to bridge division. These were people who trusted that God would not abandon them—and so they did not abandon others.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks plainly: unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears fruit. He is speaking about his own death, yes, but also about the pattern of every Christian life. Life doesn't come from holding on. It comes from letting go—from giving ourselves away. The saints understood that. Their lives bore fruit because they gave them away—bit by bit, day by day. Some gave them quickly, in martyrdom. Others gave them slowly, in service. Either way, they trusted that dying to self was not the end, but the beginning.

Here in Zimbabwe, that message matters. People are carrying heavy burdens—students struggling with school fees, parents choosing between food and medicine, workers whose pay doesn't cover the basics. The temptation in hard times is to withdraw, to protect ourselves, to stop giving. But the Gospel challenges us to do the opposite. To trust that giving—our time, our care, our attention—still matters. That seeds can grow even in dry soil. That faith doesn't fix every problem, but it changes how we face them. Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that dignity is not just a word. It's shown in how we treat each other—in fair wages, honest work, shared burdens. The Jesuit saints didn't just write about justice—they lived it. They taught. They protested. They visited the sick. They stood with the poor. Not because they were perfect, but because they were committed.

Ignatius said that love shows itself more in deeds than in words. So let's not stop at admiring the saints. Let's join them. In our prayer, we can ask: what would it look like to walk with Jesus through my neighbourhood? Who would I notice? Who would I stop for? Who needs to be heard, or helped, or simply seen?

The examen prayer asks us to look back each day and see where God was present. That's where holiness begins—not with grand gestures, but with awareness. Where did I show love today? Where did I close my heart? Where is God asking me to begin again?

The Word is near. The seed is ready. Holiness isn't for someone else. It's for us, now. It begins when we listen, when we let go, and when we act.

- What is one small comfort I can give up this week to make space for someone else?
- Where in my life is God inviting me to trust, even when it's hard?
- Who around me needs to know they are not forgotten—and how can I show them?

Amen.

Source: <https://sj.mcharlesworth.fr/homilies/2025-11nov-05-yc-ot-as/>

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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.