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Saturday of the 31st Week in Ordinary Time

Date: Saturday, November 8, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Romans 16:3–9, 16, 22–27
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 145:2–5, 10–11 | **Response:** Psalm 145:1b
Gospel Acclamation: 2 Corinthians 8:9
Gospel Reading: Luke 16:9–15
Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,
The readings today are about what really lasts: not titles, not possessions, but relationships—those formed in faith, remembered in love, and carried into eternity.

In the first reading Paul brings his great theological letter to a close not with more arguments, but with names. Dozens of them. Priscilla and Aquila. Phoebe. Epaenetus. Rufus. People we mostly know nothing about, yet whose names are spoken aloud in the Church's liturgy even now, two thousand years later.

Why end this way? Because names are sacred. They carry memory. They represent real lives and shared stories. Paul shows us that Christian life is not abstract. It's not a theory. It is always relational. The gospel does not come to us as isolated individuals—it makes us a family. And so to speak one another's names is not just polite; it is Eucharistic. It means: you belong.

This matters, especially here in Zimbabwe, where hardship and migration have frayed so many communities. Our call as Church is to be a people who remember—who greet, who name, who carry and care for one another. In Catholic Social Teaching, this is the heart of solidarity: not abstract duty, but personal responsibility—by name.

Psalm 145 sings of this same faithfulness: "Every day I will bless you… they shall speak of the glory of your reign." God, too, remembers. He opens His hand to feed the poor. He is near to the brokenhearted. And so our praise is not performance—it is participation. A response to a God who does not forget.

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Then, in the Gospel, Jesus tells a troubling parable. A dishonest steward uses his last days in the job to secure a future for himself. He's not praised for cheating—he's praised for being shrewd, for acting with urgency, for thinking ahead. "Make friends with dishonest wealth," Jesus says, "so that you may be welcomed into eternal dwellings." In other words: use what passes away—money, time, influence—for what will last—relationship, mercy, communion.

And then the sharp warning: "You cannot serve both God and mammon." Because what you do with what you have reveals what you love—and whom you serve. God sees not just our actions, but our motives. Not just our performance, but our priorities. As St Ignatius would put it: what is the direction of your heart?

So we're left with this unspoken but urgent question: am I using my life to build something temporary, or something eternal? Are my hands open? Is my heart free? Am I making space for others at the table—or just protecting my corner?

And this brings us full circle: the Church grows not through strategies, but through people who know one another, speak one another's names, and share what they have. Paul knew it. Jesus lived it. And we're invited to it.

So as you leave this Eucharist today, remember: God calls you by name. Let us do the same for one another.

Three questions to carry with you:

- Whose name do I need to learn, remember, or say this week with more care and love?
- How am I using what I have—my time, my gifts, my attention—to build relationships that lead to God?
- In the quiet of prayer, what might God reveal about the motives in my heart—and what am I being invited to change?

May we live in such a way that others feel seen, remembered, and welcomed—not just by us, but through us, by 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.

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