Fr Matthew Charlesworth, SJ
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Memorial of St Josaphat, bishop and martyr

Date: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Wisdom of Solomon 6:1–11
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 82:3–4, 6–7 | **Response:** Psalm 82:8a
Gospel Acclamation: 1 Thessalonians 5:18
Gospel Reading: Luke 17:11–19
Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The readings today are about wisdom that serves, mercy that heals, and gratitude that unites. They invite us to cross the thresholds that separate us—from God, from one another, and even from our own indifference—and to step into the light of communion.

In our first reading from the Book of Wisdom, the inspired writer addresses rulers and all who lead: "Hear, O kings, and understand." He reminds them that power is entrusted, not owned; that leadership is service, not privilege. True wisdom, he says, is measured not by brilliance but by justice—by the way the strong defend the weak.

This warning is timeless. Wisdom calls every person with influence—whether a parent, a teacher, a community leader—to use authority for others' good. It speaks as clearly to us in Zimbabwe today as it did to the kings of old. It calls us to take responsibility for one another, to lead with compassion, and to use whatever we hold—knowledge, time, position—as a means of building others up.

The Psalm deepens that warning: "Give justice to the weak and the orphan; rescue the needy." Those who abuse power, the psalmist says, may be called "gods," but they will fall like any mortal. It is a poetic but piercing image: even the mighty are dust if they forget mercy. The Psalm's "fallen gods" echo Wisdom's caution—authority without love collapses into its own ruin.

In the Gospel according to Luke, we find Jesus walking the border between Samaria and Galilee. Ten lepers cry out from afar, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" They are cut off—socially, physically, spiritually. Jesus tells them to go

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show themselves to the priests, and as they go, they are cleansed. Yet only one—an outsider, a Samaritan—returns. He praises God, falls at Jesus' feet, and gives thanks.

"Were not ten cleansed?" Jesus asks. "Where are the other nine?" It is a question that pierces the heart. All ten received healing, but only one discovered salvation. Gratitude transforms health into holiness. The nine were restored to society; the one was restored to communion.

This story shows that faith is not only about asking for help—it is about turning back in thanksgiving. Gratitude opens the doorway to relationship with God. In the spirit of daily reflection—what we Jesuits call the Examen—we, too, are invited to notice God's gifts, to give thanks, and to let that gratitude shape our choices. Every Eucharist is that same pattern made visible: healing received, thanksgiving offered, communion renewed.

Saint Josaphat, Bishop and Martyr, whose feast we celebrate today, lived this pattern with extraordinary courage. Born into the Orthodox tradition, he became a Basilian monk and bishop, working for unity between East and West. He sought not uniformity but communion—faithful hearts, reconciled differences, one Body in Christ. Misunderstood and opposed, he gave his life for that vision. Like the grateful Samaritan, he turned again and again to Christ, until even his martyrdom became an act of thanksgiving.

His example speaks powerfully to our time. Division, whether in Church, community, or family, weakens us all. Saint Josaphat reminds us that unity begins in humble gratitude—thanking God for what we already share, and daring to build bridges where others have built walls. This is not abstract. It begins in small, steady acts of reconciliation: in listening, in forgiving, in choosing cooperation over complaint.

If you enter the Gospel scene in prayerful imagination, picture yourself among the ten lepers. Feel the ache of exclusion, the relief of healing. Then notice the choice: to rush ahead, or to turn back. That turning back is conversion. It is where wisdom, mercy, and gratitude meet.

The unifying image today is the doorway. Wisdom stands at the door, calling us to serve. Mercy meets us there, healing what is broken. Gratitude opens the door to unity. Saint Josaphat stepped through that doorway with his life. The

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Samaritan crossed that threshold in thanksgiving. Each of us is invited to do the same—personally, and together as a community responsible for one another.

And so, I leave you with three questions for your reflection this morning:

- Where is Christ inviting me to use my gifts or influence for the good of others—especially those who are weak or overlooked?
- What blessings have I received that I have not yet turned back to thank God for—and how might the Eucharist teach me that gratitude?
- Where am I called to cross a boundary—of pride, fear, or division—and build communion with others?

May the wisdom of God guide our minds, the mercy of Christ heal our hearts, and the gratitude of the Spirit unite us in peace.

Amen.

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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.