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Wednesday of the 1st week in Ordinary Time

Date: Wednesday, January 14, 2026 | **Season:** Ordinary Time before Easter | **Year:** A
First Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1–10, 19–20
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 40:2, 5, 7–10 | **Response:** Psalm 40:8a, 9a
Gospel Acclamation: John 10:27
Gospel Reading: Mark 1:29–39
Preached at: the Chapel of Emerald Hill Children's Home **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

Dear sisters in Christ, today's readings invite us to look more closely at how God enters ordinary life, heals what is deepest in us, and then sends us out to serve.

In the first reading from the First Book of Samuel we meet a young boy who hears his name called in the night. Samuel is close to holy things, yet he does not at first recognise God's voice. This already teaches us something important. God does not usually force himself on us. He speaks gently, often through ordinary experience. Many of us know this feeling. A thought returns again and again. A concern for someone grows stronger. A sense that something in our life needs to change will not go away. And we ask, is this God, or just me?

Samuel does not work it out alone. He goes to Eli. With prayer and guidance, he learns how to listen. God's call is not strange or wild. It fits the person God is calling. Samuel becomes a prophet because he already has the heart of one: open, honest, willing. This is why, in religious life especially, regular conversation with a spiritual director matters. God often helps us hear his voice through someone who knows us and wants our good.

The psalm today shows what true listening leads to. Here I am, Lord, I come to do your will. God is not asking for grand gestures. He wants a heart that is ready to respond. When God's word settles into us, it shapes our choices, our priorities, and the way we treat others.

The Gospel from Mark brings all this into daily life. Jesus leaves the synagogue and enters the house of Peter and Andrew. This is not just a change of location. It is a sign. Jesus moves from the public place of worship into a home. He enters

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family life. He enters weakness and illness. In the same way, Christ wants to enter the house of our own hearts, not only the public, religious parts of us, but the hidden and fragile places too.

Simon's mother in law is sick with a fever. Jesus takes her by the hand and lifts her up. There is healing here, but also raising up. Grace does both. It heals what is wounded and lifts us into new life. When she is restored, she begins to serve. This service is not a minor detail. Tradition tells us that Jesus spent much of his ministry based in Capernaum, often staying in Peter's house. For years, this unnamed woman likely cooked, cleaned, welcomed, and supported Jesus and the disciples. We do not know her name, but we know her faith through her service. When we care for the poor, the sick, the lonely, the homebound, we continue her quiet ministry. Small acts of care can sustain great works of God.

That evening, after sunset, people gather at the door. The Sabbath has ended. The crowd brings their suffering to Jesus. While many are physically ill, the Gospel points us to something deeper. The greatest sicknesses are not of the body but of the heart: fear, despair, bitterness, loss of meaning. Jesus comes to heal these too.

Then, early in the morning, Jesus goes off alone to pray. This moment is essential. All his compassion and energy flow from his closeness to the Father. When the disciples say, Everyone is looking for you, they give voice to the deepest truth about the human heart. We are all looking for Jesus, even when we do not know how to name it. God has placed this desire within us, and he never stops drawing us to himself.

At this altar today, Christ again enters our house. He takes us by the hand in the Eucharist. He heals, lifts us up, and then sends us out, not to remain comfortable, but to serve with love.

As we pray this week, let these questions guide us.

- Where in my life is God gently calling, and am I taking time to listen?
- How can I serve others quietly and faithfully, like Peter's mother in law?
- Whom is Christ asking me to help seek and find him through my words and actions?

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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.