



Saturday of the 2nd Week of Easter



Date: Saturday, May 3, 2025 | **Season:** Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:1–8

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 19:2–5 | **Response:** Psalm 19:5

Gospel Acclamation: John 14:6b, 9c

Gospel Reading: John 14:6–14

Preached at: the Chapel of the Most Holy Name, Kolvenbach House in the Archdiocese of Lusaka, Zambia.

There is a story told of a sculptor who, when asked how he carved a lion from a block of marble, simply said, “I just cut away everything that wasn’t lion.” Faith can feel much the same. It is less about adding layers of complexity and more about stripping away illusions, distractions, and doubts until what remains is pure and true. On this Feast of Saints Philip and James, in this Easter season of new beginnings, we are invited to that same process: to allow ourselves to be carved and shaped until Christ is revealed in us — and to recognize Him standing before us, even when our eyes are slow to see.

Saint Paul, writing to the Corinthians, reminds them—and us—of the foundation stone of our faith. “I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received,” he says. Christ died for our sins; He was buried; He rose again; He appeared. Notice the simplicity. Notice the urgency. In a world already teeming with philosophies and mythologies, Paul cuts through the marble to reveal the lion — the core, the heart of it all. And it is this heart that sustains us even now in Zambia, a land aching for justice, for leadership that is honest, for communities where no child goes to bed hungry or dreams are not deferred by the iron bars of poverty. The resurrection is not a relic; it is a living force, calling forth courage against corruption, mercy in the face of indifference, and hope in the hard soil of struggle.

The psalm today sings of a wordless yet undeniable proclamation: “Day unto day takes up the story and night unto night makes known the message.” Creation itself is a great cathedral, its stones laid not by human hands but by the breath of God. In a country like ours, where the sunrise over the Kafue flats or the Milky Way stretched above Lake Bangweulu can still silence even the busiest mind, we are reminded that God’s voice is not always heard in words, but often in wonder.

Yet even this is not enough: beauty must move us to justice; awe must stir our feet into action. Catholic Social Teaching insists that the earth and all it holds is not the privilege of a few but the birthright of all. The fields, the mines, the markets—these must serve the dignity of every person, not just the profits of the powerful.

And then comes Philip, with his earnest, aching question: “Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied.” Is that not our question too, clothed in different words? In our doubts, in our struggles, in a Zambia where violence sometimes seems to have the last word, do we not also say: “Lord, show yourself. Make it plain. Tear open the heavens and reveal Your face.” Yet Jesus answers not by tearing open the heavens but by pointing to Himself, quietly, humbly: “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”

Philip’s name, meaning “lover of horses,” hints at a world of energy and movement, of striving and restlessness. And yet it is precisely his restlessness that Christ meets — and gently redirects — toward a deeper understanding. James, sometimes called “the Less,” reminds us that greatness in the Kingdom is measured not by acclaim but by fidelity. Little by little, these apostles, with all their flaws, became living stones in the Church’s foundation. And so may we.

Imagine for a moment, as St Ignatius invites us to do in the Spiritual Exercises, that you are there at the Last Supper. You hear Philip’s voice, see the longing in his eyes. You hear Jesus’ steady, sorrow-tinged reply. What stirs in your heart? Where do you recognize your own cry for clarity, for certainty, for nearness to God? And could you dare to hear Jesus say to you, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me?”

In every injustice endured, Christ is there. In every act of courage, every small kindness that passes unnoticed, Christ is there. In every humble effort to educate the young, to protect the vulnerable, to heal the broken, Christ is there. He is not a distant dream, but the heartbeat of the world renewed.

And so today, standing between the echo of Paul’s urgent testimony, the silent singing of the heavens, and the tender rebuke to Philip, we are offered a choice: to keep searching outward, or to let ourselves be carved inward, until Christ is revealed in us too.

The feast of Saints Philip and James is a celebration not of perfection, but of perseverance. It is an anthem for those who dare to hope even when the road is long, who dare to love even when it costs, who dare to believe that God has not abandoned the world but walks quietly, insistently among us still. In Lusaka's crowded streets, in the weary countryside, in lecture halls and family homes, the Risen Lord is nearer than we dare imagine. Our task, like Philip's, is not to conjure miracles but to recognize the miracle already before us.

So today, let us allow Christ to cut away our illusions, our cynicism, our despair, until what remains is faith that can stand, hope that can sing, and love that can serve.

And perhaps, at the end of it all, we will find ourselves saying, not with doubt but with quiet conviction: "Now we see You, Lord. And we are satisfied."

As you go into this week, I invite you to ponder:

- Where in my life am I still asking Christ to "show me the Father," when perhaps He is already standing before me, hidden in plain sight?
- What illusions or fears might Christ be inviting me to let go of, so that I can better recognize His presence?
- How can I, in my daily choices, become a living stone, building up a community that reflects the justice, mercy, and hope of the Risen Christ?

Prayer for the Cardinals preparing for Conclave

God of wisdom and grace,
you never cease to call your Church forward.

As the College of Cardinals gathers to discern and elect a new pope,
grant them inner freedom—free from fear, ambition, and division—
that they may be truly available to your Spirit.

Give them listening hearts,
attentive to the cries of the world and the needs of your Church.
Help them to listen to your Holy Spirit, whom you send to guide them,
that they may recognize your desire and faithfully follow your will.

Unite us all in prayer,
that this moment may be one of deep communion,
true discernment, and renewed hope for your Church.

With Mary, Mother of the Church, we entrust this time to you,
through Christ our Lord.

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.