



Friday of the 7th Week of Easter



Date: Friday, June 6, 2025 | **Season:** Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: Acts 25:13b–21

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 103:1–2, 11–12, 19–20b | **Response:** Psalm 103:19a

Gospel Acclamation: John 14:26

Gospel Reading: John 21:15–19

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

Today's readings show us two men near the end of their journeys—Paul and Peter. Both carry the weight of their past and the fire of their calling. Paul speaks to King Agrippa not in defence, but to share the truth that changed him. Peter, once afraid, now stands before Jesus, ready to lead.

They were apostles, yes—but also human, like us. They failed, they fell, they were forgiven. And in being forgiven, they were made strong.

Paul had once persecuted Christians. But when he met the Risen Christ, everything changed. That moment didn't erase his past—it transformed it. His mission came from that encounter: to witness boldly, even in chains. And so he speaks with freedom—the kind the world cannot give—because he knows Jesus is alive.

Here in Zambia, we know the courage it takes to speak truth in hard places. From the women in our markets to the students and workers who press on with faith, we see that same spirit. Christ still stands with His people.

We also remember with sorrow the death of our sixth President, Edgar Chagwa Lungu. Whether or not we agreed with him, he carried the heavy responsibility of leadership in difficult times. Let us pray for him. May God, who sees every heart, welcome him with mercy. Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace.

Death reminds us how short life is. It reminds us that the most important thing is not how we are remembered, but whether we learned to love and to forgive. Forgiveness does not mean forgetting wrongs. It means refusing to let hate have the last word.

Peter knows this. After denying Jesus, he is not rejected—he is restored. Jesus doesn't humiliate him; He heals him. Three times He asks, "Do you love me?" And three times He entrusts Peter with care for the flock.

This is how God works. He does not hold our sins over us. As today's psalm says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our sins." And just as Peter was forgiven, we too are called to forgive.

Saint Norbert, whom we remember today, lived this spirit. He left behind comfort to follow Christ more closely. He didn't just speak about love—he lived it with his hands and heart. He shows us that holiness means being faithful, not flawless.

As we prepare for Pentecost, let us ask the Holy Spirit to fill us anew. The Spirit gave Paul and Peter courage—and that same Spirit is ready to do the same in us.

Come, Holy Spirit—into our homes, our wounds, our tiredness. Come, Holy Spirit—into the Church in Zambia, and into each heart that longs to forgive, to serve, and to love.

May the Spirit bring healing to our nation, especially as we mourn. May He comfort those who grieve, and help us to walk together in peace.

May the Risen Lord help us to answer His call—not just with our lips, but with our lives. And may we go forth—humble, faithful, and free—as witnesses to His love, in Zambia and beyond.

Source: <https://sj.mcharlesworth.fr/homilies/2025-06jun-06-yc-et-07/>

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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.

