



14th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Date: Sunday, July 6, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: Isaiah 66:10–14c

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 66:1–7, 16, 20 | **Response:** Psalm 66:1

Second Reading: Galatians 6:14–18

Gospel Acclamation: Colossians 3:15a, 16a

Gospel Reading: Luke 10:1–12, 17–20

Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House in the Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe.

Today's readings are about the kind of joy that doesn't come from what we own or achieve, but from being sent by God. A joy that doesn't depend on having power, money, or comfort—but flows from carrying peace in our hearts. A joy that's quiet and steady, like water returning to dry ground. It comes when we say yes to God's call, when we go out with empty hands but open hearts, when we find ourselves part of something bigger than ourselves.

In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah speaks to people who have just returned from exile. They are tired. They have seen their home destroyed. But instead of giving them a speech about rebuilding or fighting back, Isaiah gives them an image of a mother. “As a mother comforts her child,” says the Lord, “so will I comfort you.” Jerusalem is pictured not as a fortress, but as a mother nursing her children. The city is being healed not by force, but by tenderness. God is not rushing to fix things from a distance. He is drawing near, sitting with His people in their weakness. In Isaiah's day, the heart of the city had been broken—by war, by injustice, by shame. And God's answer is not a quick solution, but a deep healing. Not just a return home, but a new beginning.

The psalm takes that same feeling and lifts it into song: “Shout with joy to God, all the earth!” This is not quiet praise—it's a loud, full-throated shout. Why? Because this kind of joy refuses to be hidden. The psalm remembers the Exodus—the moment when God led His people through the sea, when He made a path through the chaos. But this isn't just about the past. It's a memory that leads to action. The God who split the waters for Moses is the same God who sees what is happening in Zimbabwe today. He sees the children walking barefoot to school. He sees the nurses working in hospitals with no medicine. He hears the

prayers of widows and workers, farmers and teachers. Praise is not just something we say when things are going well. It's something we do when we want to remember that God is still with us, still listening, still faithful.

Then we hear from Saint Paul, who speaks with all the fire and honesty of a man who has suffered for what he believes. He says he will boast of nothing but the cross of Christ. Nothing. Not his education, not his background, not his strength. Just the cross. The Greek word he uses—*stauros*—was a brutal word in those days. It meant shame, failure, death. But Paul turns it into a badge of peace. He says what matters is not whether someone is circumcised or not, Jew or Gentile. What matters is the new creation. What matters is a heart that has been changed. A body marked not by pride, but by mercy. Paul is not hiding his scars. He is showing them, because they are proof of love. Proof that he has followed Jesus even through suffering. And somehow, through all that, he has found peace.

And that leads us to the Gospel. Jesus sends out seventy-two disciples. He sends them not with swords, but with peace. Not in groups of strength, but in pairs—two by two. He tells them to carry almost nothing. No money. No sandals. Just peace. He sends them like lambs among wolves. This is not a strategy for success. It's a way of showing that God's Kingdom grows through trust, not control. Through presence, not power.

The number seventy-two is important. In Jewish tradition, there were thought to be seventy-two nations in the world. So when Jesus sends out seventy-two, He is saying something very clear: this mission is for everyone. Not just for the insiders, not just for the strong or the holy. Everyone. Every town. Every tribe. Every family. And when the disciples come back, they are overjoyed—not because they had power, not because they were praised—but because they knew they were part of God's work. And Jesus says to them, "Don't rejoice that the spirits submit to you. Rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

That is the heart of it. To know your name is written in heaven. Not because of your success, but because you were willing to go. Not because you were strong, but because you said yes.

And here in Zimbabwe, this message is just as true. God still sends people out—but not always with great power or praise. Sometimes, mission looks like a mother walking with her child to Mass. Sometimes it's a teacher staying in the

classroom, even when the salary is late. Sometimes it's a young person refusing to give up on their dreams, choosing honesty and hope in a country where many have lost both. The Church reminds us: every person has dignity. Every act of love matters. And being sent by God today might mean giving bread to someone who is hungry, listening to someone who feels forgotten, or staying faithful in a place where many have lost hope.

Ignatius of Loyola would ask us to place ourselves in these stories. Imagine yourself among the seventy-two. Jesus looks at you—not the person next to you—you—and says, “Go.” What do you carry? What do you leave behind? Who do you walk with?

Or imagine yourself in Jerusalem. The sun warms the stones. You hear children laughing in the distance. You feel the hush of prayer in the air. Can you believe that God is not only welcoming you there, but using you to help rebuild?

These readings call us not to big, dramatic action—but to steady, faithful steps. To carry peace into the places we live. To let go of pride. To boast only in love. To walk with others, lightly and joyfully, as we go.

Pope Leo XIV, who now carries the shepherd's staff once held by Francis, has spoken with quiet firmness about the need for peace—not just the end of war, but the beginning of friendship. He reminds us that peace is not a distant dream, but a daily decision. It begins not in treaties, but in trust. While the world watches Gaza burn, while Sudan bleeds, while Ukraine weeps and northern Mozambique groans under fear—we must not grow numb. Peace can feel too big, too far away. But Jesus sends us two by two, not to fix the whole world, but to be peace in the places we are. And as Fr General reminds us, we do not have collaborators—we are collaborators, walking side by side with our partners-in-mission. That means we listen more than we speak, we learn as we lead, and we never serve alone. In the classroom, it might mean speaking gently. Among friends, it might mean refusing to gossip. At home, it might mean forgiving first. At school, it might mean seeing the one who is left out and sitting beside them. The world does not need louder voices—it needs braver hearts. And if we are to call ourselves disciples, we must become what He sent us to be: makers of peace, even when we are small, even when the world is not listening.

So I leave you with these questions for the week ahead:

- Where is Jesus sending me today—and what must I let go of to travel light?
- What joy do I find—not in success—but in knowing I belong to Christ?
- Who is Jesus asking me to draw near to, so that His Kingdom might come a little closer through me?

May your feet carry peace. May your heart rest in joy. And may your name be written forever in the heart of God. 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.