



## Saturday of the 22nd Week in Ordinary Time



**Date:** Saturday, September 6, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C

**First Reading:** Colossians 1:21–23

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 54:3–4, 6, 8 | **Response:** Psalm 54:6

**Gospel Acclamation:** John 14:6

**Gospel Reading:** Luke 6:1–5

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

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**M**y brothers and sisters, as we gather at this altar today, the Word of God brings us back to what matters most. It tells us again: God wants to bring us from distance to closeness, from fear to trust, from a religion of rules to a life shaped by mercy.

St Paul says it plainly: “You who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled.” But there’s a condition: “provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith.” In other words, don’t walk away. Don’t drift. Stay rooted in what matters. Keep your heart close to Christ.

The early Church knew this wasn’t easy. Even John Chrysostom, a bishop and preacher, warned his people: don’t get tired. Don’t lose your footing. Stay grounded. Hold fast to the Gospel.

The Psalmist shows us how. He says, “Surely God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.” That’s not an assertion—it’s the cry of someone holding on in hard times. Someone who’s been surrounded by trouble, yet still trusts. We know that voice. It’s the voice of a mother who still prays after another failed harvest. It’s the voice of a father walking his child to school, still hoping the school fees will come. It’s the voice of anyone in this room who has whispered, “Lord, I don’t see the way—but I believe you will make one.” Trust in God’s help.

And then we come to the Gospel. Jesus and His disciples are walking through the fields on the Sabbath. They’re hungry. So they pick grain. They rub it in their hands. They eat. Something simple enough to understand. But not for everyone.

The Pharisees are watching. They see hands breaking the rules. “Why are you doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” they ask.

Jesus doesn’t argue. He tells a story. He reminds them of David, the great king, who once entered the house of God and ate the bread of offering. Why? Because his men were hungry. Because life matters. Because mercy matters. And then Jesus says something no one else could say: “The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.”

That means this: the law is good, but love comes first. Rules matter, but people matter more. The Sabbath was made for rest, not restriction. For healing, not harm. And the Church still holds this truth. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (CCC 2173), and the Lord’s Day (CCC 2190) is a day for worship, rest, and service to neighbour. The Catechism says the Sabbath was made for us—not to control us, but to free us.

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But we all know how easy it is to let our faith become just routine. To say our prayers but keep our hearts shut. To go to Mass but not go out of our way. To keep the rule but miss the reason. And so Jesus asks again: Is it lawful to do good—or to do nothing? To love—or just to look busy?

Here in Zimbabwe, Sunday rest is not always possible. A mother still works to feed her family. And sometimes, even in the Church, we guard routines more than we guard the poor. But Christ calls us to more. He calls us to mercy.

So this week, walk into your own grainfields—those places where need and habit meet—and choose mercy. Not once. Not when it’s easy. But again and again. Choose mercy. Be merciful.

I invite you to pray with your imagination. Picture yourself in that field. The sun is hot. The stalks crackle under your feet. Jesus is walking just ahead. You see Him stop. You see Him reach. You see Him turn.

He looks at you. And He asks: What hunger are you walking past? What good could you do today—if you let go of your schedule, your fear, your pride? What bread can you offer, even if it costs you something? Can you trust me enough to give what you have received?

And now, we come to this table. To this field. To this feast. Here we receive the Bread of Life. The mercy of Christ made flesh. May the One who feeds us send us out to feed others. May He find us not debating the rules—but offering the bread.

Three questions for your prayer this morning:

- Where in my life do I still feel estranged from God—and how can I return to Him?
- In what moments do I lean on my own strength instead of praying, “God is my helper”?
- What human need have I ignored because it disrupted my schedule or challenged my comfort?

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