



Wednesday of the 29th Week in Ordinary Time



Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: Romans 6:12–18

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 124:1b–8 | **Response:** Psalm 124:8a

Gospel Acclamation: Matthew 24:42a, 44

Gospel Reading: Luke 12:39–48

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

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The readings today are about being alert — alert to God, alert to what is right, alert to the people around us who need our care. Faith is not something we hide away; it’s something we live with open eyes and ready hearts. And today, as we remember Pope Saint John Paul II, we remember a man who lived that way — spiritually awake through joy and suffering, always reminding the world: “Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors for Christ.”

In our first reading from Saint Paul’s Letter to the Romans, Paul talks about freedom — not the kind that says “I can do whatever I want,” but the kind that sets us free to do what is right. “Do not let sin reign in your bodies,” he writes, “but present yourselves to God as people who have been brought from death to life.” Before this passage, Paul uses the image of baptism: being plunged into Christ’s death and rising with Him into new life. It’s as if our lives are twined together with His — like two trees whose roots and branches have become one. Saint John Chrysostom once said that the body becomes holy when we make it an instrument of righteousness. That’s what Paul means — that every part of us can serve God when it’s given in love.

Paul’s message would have amazed the Christians in Rome, especially those who had lived under strict religious laws. They were no longer slaves to sin, but living under grace — the free gift of God’s love. And that same grace speaks to us today in Zimbabwe, where so many feel bound by fear or frustration. Christ has planted a new life in us that no hardship can destroy. We are not free to sin, but free from sin — free to love, to forgive, and to bring hope where others see only despair.

Our Psalm is a song of gratitude from people who know what it means to be rescued. The psalmist says that if the Lord had not been on our side, the raging waters would have swept us away — but God broke the snare, and we escaped like a bird set free. “Our help,” it says, “is in the name of the Lord.” Many of us have lived that truth: through drought, illness, or disappointment, we are still here because God carried us through.

In the Gospel Jesus tells the story of a master who comes at an unexpected hour. He isn’t trying to frighten us, but to remind us to live ready — not anxious, but faithful. The good servant stays alert, not because he fears punishment, but because he loves his master. He keeps the lamps burning. He feeds others at the right time. He does what is right even when no one sees.

That’s what Ignatian spirituality calls the Examen — to stop each day and ask: Where did I serve? Where did I notice God? Where did I close my heart? It’s a way of keeping the light of faith burning in ordinary life.

Pope Saint John Paul II lived that vigilance. He stayed awake to God through the long years of communist oppression, through sickness and weakness, and through his constant message to a weary world: “Be not afraid.” He faced tyrants, bullets, and illness, yet never lost his joy — because he knew that fear ends where faith begins, and that once we open the door to Christ, nothing can close it again.

So what might staying alert look like for us this week?

It might be showing patience when tempers rise.

It might be refusing to give up hope when life feels uncertain.

It might be sharing what little we have with someone who has less.

Each small act is a lamp kept burning.

In all three readings today, we hear the same truth: God is near. The call is simple — stay faithful, stay grateful, stay alert.

And as we pray this morning, let’s ask ourselves three questions:

- How can I use my freedom to serve others and not just myself?
- Where is God visiting me quietly today, and am I awake enough to notice?
- Who has God placed in my care, and how can I serve them with love?

Lord, keep us awake in faith and steady in love, until You come again. 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.