



Feast of Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles



Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: Ephesians 2:19–22

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

Gospel Reading: Luke 6:12–16

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

The readings today are about belonging, and we celebrate that belonging through the lives of Saints Simon and Jude — two apostles about whom we know so little, yet whose faith became part of the Church’s very foundation. They remind us that holiness often hides in the humble, that true greatness is measured not by fame but by faithfulness. Their names are etched in the walls of our faith not because they were known, but because they were chosen; not because they were celebrated, but because they were steadfast.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our first reading from the Letter to the Ephesians places us within a building still under construction. Saint Paul speaks of us as citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. The image is both architectural and spiritual. In the ancient world, a cornerstone was not decorative; it was decisive. It aligned the walls, bore the weight, and gave stability to the whole. The apostles, including Simon and Jude, are not remembered for their brilliance, but for their willingness to be shaped and joined to that cornerstone. They are the foundation stones upon which the household of God continues to rise, stone by living stone.

When Paul wrote these words, he was addressing a Church struggling with division — Jews and Gentiles, free and enslaved, men and women, all learning what it meant to live as one people in Christ. And isn’t that still our struggle? In Zimbabwe today, our unity too is tested by inequality, by mistrust, by the slow erosion of hope. Yet the Apostle reminds us that we are not isolated believers scattered like loose bricks in a field. We are called to fit together, to bear one another’s weight, to let grace be the mortar that binds us into a dwelling for God. Catholic Social Teaching says that society is not a marketplace of competition,

but a community of persons, where the dignity of each one supports the dignity of all. To rebuild our nation, to rebuild our Church, is to take our place in that structure — humbly, faithfully, and in solidarity with those who have been left outside the house of plenty.

The Psalm sings that “through all the earth their voice resounds.” It is a song of the heavens themselves declaring the glory of God. The stars and sun become apostles of creation, proclaiming without words the artistry of the Creator. The psalmist reminds us that God’s communication is not confined to words or books, but written across the sky, in the rhythm of the seasons, in the resilience of the poor, in the courage of those who refuse to give up on peace. The apostles, too, became like those stars — silent yet radiant witnesses. Simon and Jude left no writings we can quote, no great miracles we can name. Their evangelisation was not a spectacle but a steady light, reaching places where no one else dared to go. Tradition tells us they preached together in Persia, far from home, perhaps misunderstood and persecuted, yet still proclaiming that same divine love that fills the heavens.

And then in the Gospel according to Saint Luke we find Jesus on the mountain-side, praying through the night before choosing the Twelve. We can almost see him in imaginative contemplation — the silence of the mountain, the stars above, his heart open to the Father’s will. Out of that night of prayer, the Church is born. He calls Simon, called the Zealot, and Judas the son of James, later known as Jude. Simon’s name means “he who listens”; Jude’s, “praise.” Listening and praising — the twin movements of every disciple’s life. Simon may once have been a political zealot, driven by a longing for national liberation; Jude, perhaps, a quiet follower whose question in John’s Gospel reveals his confusion and his faith. Yet Christ took their limited hearts and transformed their zeal into service, their confusion into courage. They remind us that holiness is not about perfection but participation — being available to God’s call, even when we do not fully understand it.

In Ignatian prayer, we might place ourselves among that group on the mountain. Feel the cool air before dawn. Hear Jesus calling your name. What does he see in you? What zeal does he wish to purify, what praise to awaken? The apostles were not chosen for their virtue, but for their willingness to be transformed.

They remind us that God can use even our most unruly passions — our political frustrations, our social anger, our restless hopes — if only we surrender them to his greater purpose.

For us here in Zimbabwe, perhaps Simon and Jude are saints for our time. We know what it means to live between promise and disappointment, between the dream of liberation and the daily struggle for bread. Their feast reminds us that God's revolution is not carried out by the sword but by service, not through slogans but through steadfast love. To be apostolic today is to build community where corruption breeds distrust; to speak truth where fear silences voices; to bring light where young people see only darkness. The Church is still being built — in our homes, our schools, our farms, and our parishes — every time we choose justice over cynicism, mercy over vengeance, faith over despair.

At the heart of this feast is a quiet courage: to believe that God can make something holy out of the ordinary, that the unnoticed can be foundational, that we are not forgotten stones but chosen ones. Simon and Jude disappeared from history's records, yet their names are carved into the very walls of the Church. They remind us that what endures is not brilliance but belonging, not ambition but fidelity. The living temple of God is built not with marble but with mercy.

And so, as we approach the altar today, let us bring ourselves — our fatigue, our frustrations, our longing for peace — and place them beside those ancient stones of faith. The cornerstone still holds. The walls still rise. And through the faith of ordinary disciples, the voice of God still resounds through all the earth.

To guide our prayer this morning:

- Where might God be inviting me to be a foundation of unity — in my community, my family, or my country — rather than a source of division?
- What part of my zeal, my energy or my anger, is Christ calling me to transform into service?
- As I imagine standing beside Simon and Jude on the mountain, what is Jesus asking me to build with him today?

Source: <https://sj.mcharlesworth.fr/homilies/2025-10oct-28-yc-ot-30/>

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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.