



## Monday of the 31st Week in Ordinary Time



**Date:** Monday, November 3, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C

**First Reading:** Romans 11:29–36

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 69:30–31, 33–34, 36 | **Response:** Psalm 69:14c

**Gospel Acclamation:** John 8:31b–32

**Gospel Reading:** Luke 14:12–14

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

**D**ear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today we remember Saint Martin de Porres, born of mixed race and raised in poverty, and Blessed Rupert Mayer, a Jesuit who preached truth during tyranny. Both lived in different centuries and faced very different trials, but both placed their lives in the hands of a God whose love never gives up, whose gifts never expire, and whose mercy never runs dry.

As Saint Paul tells us in the First Reading, “The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.” That is the foundation of our hope. God’s covenant with Israel was not a contract that could be broken by human failure. It was a promise sealed in love. Even when Israel disobeyed, even when the Gentiles turned away, God did not withdraw his calling. He simply found new ways to show mercy. Paul sees a kind of divine strategy here: even disobedience becomes an opening for grace.

And that’s true for us as well. Our failures do not cancel God’s call. His gifts—our vocations, our faith, our identity as his beloved—are not withdrawn when we fall. He is faithful even when we are not. And when we realise this, like Paul, we can only fall into praise: “O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!”

That same movement—from mercy to gratitude—is found in today’s Psalm (Psalm 69): “I will praise the name of God with a song; I will glorify him with thanksgiving.” But this praise is not just private. It must flow outward. Praise without action becomes empty. True thanksgiving moves us to serve—to act justly, to love tenderly, to welcome those who are most easily ignored.

Which brings us to the Gospel, where Jesus gives us a practical example of how to live that mercy. He says, “When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind.” It’s a simple command, but one that breaks all the usual rules of how we treat others. We tend to give to those who can return the favour. But Jesus asks us to live differently—to give freely, without calculating, without expecting a return. In God’s Kingdom, love is not an investment; it is a gift.

This call speaks directly to our life here in Zimbabwe, where many are passed over, not by accident, but by design. We see young people graduate into unemployment, full of promise but shut out of opportunity. We see families skipping meals so children can eat, pensioners selling tomatoes by the roadside, children walking miles for school with nothing in their stomachs. And still, we find ourselves tempted to surround our tables—literal and social—with those who are like us, those who can return a favour, those who make us comfortable. But Jesus is not giving polite advice. He is asking us to see the people we usually don’t see. To give without expecting return. To make room for those who have never been invited. If the Kingdom of God is like a banquet, then it must begin with those who are still waiting outside the gate.

That is exactly what St Martin de Porres did. He cared for the poor, the sick, and the outcast not because it was efficient, but because it was faithful. He trusted that God’s gifts were not revoked by race or poverty. He believed the Gospel was real. Blessed Rupert Mayer did the same in a very different context—standing up for truth, defending the displaced, and holding fast to hope when others compromised. Neither man was repaid by the world—but both were rich in the eyes of God.

So today, we are reminded: The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. He has chosen each one of us, and he will not take that calling back. But he asks us to live it—not in comfort, but in compassion; not in self-interest, but in service.

As we come to this Eucharistic table—where Christ invites those who can never repay him—let us ask for the grace to live as He lived: giving freely, loving fully, and welcoming the ones the world has left out.

And as you go forth into this morning, I invite you to reflect:

- Where in my life have I seen God remain faithful, even when I was not?

- What can I do this week to welcome or serve someone who cannot repay me?
- How can my praise become action, so that worship and justice go hand in hand?

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Source: <https://sj.mcharlesworth.fr/homilies/2025-11nov-03-yc-ot-31/>

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