

Rev. Emmanuel-Garet Ifeakor
Zecharia 9:9-10
Romans 8:9, 11-13
Matthew 11:25-30

14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Epiphany Catholic Church
Louisville, KY, USA
July 5, 2026

Theme: Come to Jesus with your burdens!

(Singing) "Venite a me, alleluia! Credete in me, alleluia! Io sono la via, la verità, alleluia, alleluia." This is an Italian song. But we can have a translation that is nearer to the song. (Singing) "Come to Jesus, come to Jesus, come to Jesus just now. Just now come to Jesus. Come to Jesus just now."

Jesus invites every one of us. At the end of the gospel, according to Matthew 11, he sends this invitation out to all, saying, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." So, my dear friends in Christ, I would like us to reflect on "come to Jesus with your burdens." This is an open invitation to every one of us here that we should come to Jesus. It calls for a movement. Jesus says, "Come to me." It calls for a movement to come to Jesus. It calls for a decision to come to Jesus. It calls for making a choice for you to move and come to Jesus. Everything hinges on drawing near to him. Now, the invitation Christ is giving to you and giving to me today is an invitation not meant for the strong. It is an invitation meant for those who are exhausted, tired, and worn down by life's demands. Jesus is calling everyone, for all individuals who are physically, psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually exhausted, to come to him.

And the burdens we carry are different. Every one of us carries our own burden. My own burden may not be your own burden. Jesus is calling for those who are tired. Those who are exhausted. Those who are in fear or anxious. Those who are depressed. Those who are frustrated. Those who are weighed down or broken by sins. All these, Jesus is calling everybody to come to him. As I said before, the invitation is not for those who are strong. But for the brokenhearted. Approach Jesus and lay down your burdens at his feet. Jesus is calling, and his promise for those is very simple. He says, "And I will give you rest." It is very precise. He says, "I will give you rest." Now, Jesus assures you and me of a rest from our brokenness, a rest from our sins, a rest from our guilt, a rest from our fear, a rest from anxiety, a rest for those who are weighed down by life's challenges and

pressures. Jesus is assuring us of rest, relief, and spiritual renewal. It's not just physical relief but a spiritual renewal and peace.

In the first reading, we have a message of hope from the prophet Zechariah. He talks about a just savior who is coming to proclaim peace to everyone and redeem us. And in the second reading, one of the characteristics of those who do not live in the flesh but live in the spirit is coming to Jesus with all our burdens. My dear friends in Christ, the invitation of Jesus in today's gospel is meant for you and for me. Also, Jesus, at the end of that gospel, says, "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light." Can you learn from Jesus how to be humble? Can you humble yourself to make a movement to Jesus? Can you humble yourself to approach Jesus? Psalm 55:22 says, "Cast your burdens upon the Lord, and he will sustain you." Are you going to be humble enough to approach Jesus? Or are you still ashamed to approach Jesus? Why can't you humble yourself and make a move? You have tried every other means, but have you tried Jesus? The invitation Jesus is giving to you and me today is very, very important because I don't think we are going to get any rest from anyone except in Jesus. St. Augustine says, "You(God) have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless, until they can find rest in you." So, anywhere else we are trying to find rest might be restless. I don't know how many years, or how many months, or how many weeks you have stayed in your trouble, anxiety, depression, or frustration. But Jesus is telling you today, can you make a movement? Can you approach him? Just get up from where you are and move toward Jesus, who assures us he'll help us. You are not going to resolve this trouble by yourself. If you are going to resolve this trouble yourself, it must have been resolved by now. But it has not been resolved. Why can't you move? Why can't you approach the person to whom God has given everything? That is the introduction of that gospel after Jesus gave thanks to his father: "All things have been handed over to me by my Father." In another instance, he says, "All that father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out," John 6:37. My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, what are you still waiting for?

As we celebrate the 250th birthday of our country, like what is said in the first reading, a king, a savior who comes proclaiming peace, we continue to ask God to give us the grace to always live in peace, harmony, and justice. And ultimately, to always have the courage to come to Jesus with our burdens. (Singing) "Come to Jesus, come to Jesus. Come to Jesus just now. Come to Jesus. Come to Jesus just now." Come to Jesus with your burden.