

***“My Peace I Give You: Ubuntu in a Wounded World”***

John 14:23–29, Reflection for Africa Sunday, 25 May 2025

At St. Catherine’s, we are a community richly blessed by diversity.

We gather from many nations, cultures, and backgrounds — not just as visitors, but as one body in Christ. As part of our journey together, we have begun dedicating certain Sundays to celebrate and honor the different countries or regions where our members originally come from.

These Sundays are more than a gesture of hospitality — they are a recognition that the Church is global, and that every culture brings something sacred to the table of Christ. When we honor a people’s story, we deepen our communion.

Today is one of those Sundays — and we dedicate it to **Africa**.

And so, we don’t just bring songs, clothes, or flavors from Africa into our worship — we bring Africa’s **joys and wounds, her history and hope**, into the heart of our prayer and our reflection. We remember that the Church in Africa has not only survived colonialism, apartheid, poverty, and war — it has also **shaped the global Church**, offered prophetic witness, and carried the Gospel with courage, even in exile and displacement.

The Gospel today, from John 14, carries a message that speaks deeply to this moment: *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled.”*

These are words from Jesus to a community on the edge of fear, on the verge of scattering. And into their fear, He speaks not strategy, not protection, but **peace** — a peace not of the world, but of the Spirit.

What does that peace look like today, in the context of Africa?

Across the continent, communities are still suffering — not from lack of spirit, but from the **continued extraction of Africa’s resources**, the **displacement of her people**, and the **climate disasters she did not cause**. From the Congo to Sudan, from Mozambique to the Sahel, people are caught between global powers, economic greed, and local conflict. And yet, Africa sings. Africa rises. Africa shares.

One of the most profound gifts from the African soul is **Ubuntu** — the truth that *“I am because we are.”*

Ubuntu teaches that peace is not found in power, but in relationship. That dignity is not earned by status, but shared in community.

This is also what Jesus means when He says, *“We will come to them and make our home with them.”*

God makes a home where love lives. And love, in the African spirit, is not just personal. It is communal. It is embodied in the mother who feeds another’s child, in the stranger welcomed as family, in the community that buries its dead together and rises to dance again.

Last year, we named the prophets and martyrs of the African struggle — Desmond Tutu, Janani Luwum, Wangari Maathai.

This year, we name the call that continues: the call to **peace with justice**, to **love with solidarity**, and to **faith with action**.

So we do not celebrate Africa today in the abstract. We celebrate her people. We hear her cry.

And we stand with her vision — of a world where no one is discarded, no child is unwanted, no land is poisoned for profit, and no people are forgotten.

Because the peace of Christ is not comfort for the few — it is **shalom for all**.

At St. Catherine’s, we are not just guests in each other’s cultures. We are hosts to one another’s burdens and joys.

May we continue to grow not only in diversity, but in **solidarity**.  
Not only in songs, but in shared stories.

And not only in Sunday celebrations, but in weekday compassion.

For as Ubuntu teaches, and Christ confirms: **I am because we are**.  
And together, we are because **God is with us**.