

Link to Liturgy



5th Sunday of Ordinary Time Salt of the Earth and Light of the World

Link to Liturgy provides faithful resources which use the latest audiovisual means alongside traditional means to evangelize & catechize thus linking life to the Gospel & the Gospel to life. Sign up Free to Link to Liturgy.



Lessons and Discussions

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“You are the salt of the Earth

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“You are the light of the world”

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“A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden”

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“That they may see your good deeds”

Entrance Antiphon (Ps 94:6-7) – Daily Roman Missal

Should be chanted three times so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred.

Venite, adoremus

Ps 95 (94): 6, 7

II
C
Come, let us worship God * and bow down be-
fore the Lord; let us shed tears before the Lord who made
us, for he is the Lord our God.

Source: <http://www.ccwatershed.org>

Alternate options:Hymns

O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts
Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

Praise Songs

Here I am to Worship (Tim Hughes)
We Bow Down (Chris Tomlin)

Remnant

Light of the World

Collect – Daily Roman Missal

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care,
that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace,
they may be defended always by your protection.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Gospel Reading – Matthew 5:13-16 – Daily Roman Missal

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
- Glory to you O Lord

Jesus said to his disciples: “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading

Excerpt from Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), No. 2, 16

The eternal Father, by a free and hidden plan of His own wisdom and goodness,
created the whole world. His plan was to raise men to a participation of the divine life.
Fallen in Adam, God the Father did not leave men to themselves, but ceaselessly
offered helps to salvation, in view of Christ, the Redeemer “who is the image of the
invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.” All the elect, before time began, the
Father “foreknew and pre- destined to become conformed to the image of His Son,
that he should be the firstborn among many brethren.”

He planned to assemble in the holy Church all those who would believe in Christ.

Already from the beginning of the world the foreshadowing of the Church took place.

It was prepared in a remarkable way throughout the history of the people of Israel and by means of the Old Covenant. In the present era of time the Church was constituted and, by the outpouring of the Spirit, was made manifest. At the end of time it will gloriously achieve completion, when, as is read in the Fathers, all the just, from Adam and "from Abel, the just one, to the last of the elect," will be gathered together with the Father in the universal Church.

Finally, those who have not yet received the Gospel are related in various ways to the people of God.

In the first place we must recall the people to whom the testament and the promises were given and from whom Christ was born according to the flesh. On account of their fathers this people remains most dear to God, for God does not repent of the gifts He makes nor of the calls He issues.

But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place amongst these there are the Mohammedans, who, professing to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us adore the one and merciful God, who on the last day will judge mankind.


Nor is God far distant from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God, for it is He who gives to all men life and breath and all things, and as Savior wills that all men be saved.

Those also can attain to salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and moved by grace strive by

- [3] Ex. 30:35; 2 Ki. 2:19-23; Ez. 16.4
- [4] Lv. 2:13, Ez. 43:24 and Nu. 18:19; 2 Ch. 13:5, Ezra 4:14
- [5] Sir. 39:26, Pliny, Nat. hist. 31.102
- [6] Dt. 29:23; Je. 17:6
- [7] Matthew 28:18-20
- [8] Fernandez In Conversation with God, 34.1
- [9] Benedict T. Viviano, O.P. "The Gospel According to the Matthew," The New Jerome Biblical Commentary, ed. R. Brown; J. Fitzmyer; and R. Murphy (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1990), 23
- [10] St. Augustine, On the customs of the Catholic Church, 1, 21
- [11] Address to the youth of Rome preparing for World Youth Day, n. 3
- [12] Augustinus, The Preaching of Augustine: "Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount," 17
- [13] Gen 1:15
- [14] Fernandez In Conversation with God, 34.1
- [15] Message for the 17th World Youth Day, n. 3
- [16] The Order of the Mass I; Nicene Creed
- [17] Liturgy of the Hours; Week II, Wednesday, Evening Prayer; Cantic from Colossians 1:12-20
- [18] Fernandez In Conversation with God, 34.1
- [19] Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), No. 2, 16
- [20] Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), No. 2, 16
- [21] Catechism of the Catholic Church 2656
- [22] Message for the 17th World Youth Day, n. 3
- [23] Apostolic Letter; Rosarium Virginis Mariae; Pope John Paul II
- [24] Fernandez In Conversation with God, 34.1
- [25] Matthew 13:29-30
- [26] Novena of the Holy Spirit by Saint Theresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)
- [27] Augustinus, The Preaching of Augustine: "Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount," 17
- [28] Betz 160
- [29] Augustinus, The Preaching of Augustine: "Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount," 17
- [30] New American Bible notes on Matt 5:13-16
- [31] Boring. "The Gospel of Matthew," 182
- [32] Matthew 5:16
- [33] Modern Catholic Dictionary pg. 95
- [34] James 1:17
- [35] Link to Liturgy Packet; Cycle C - 27th Ordinary Time
- [36] Ephesians 2:8
- [37] Matthew 5:16
- [38] Luke 18:18
- [39] Nolland, The Gospel of Matthew, 214
- [40] St. John Chryostom, Homilies on St. Matthew's Gospel, 15, 9
- [41] Fernandez In Conversation with God, 34.2
- [42] St. Therese of Lisieux, Autobiography of a Soul, IX, 24
- [43] Message for the 17th World Youth Day, n. 4

Marian Antiphon – Ave Regina Caelorum

6.



A -ve Regína caelórum, * Ave Dómina Ange-lórum :

Sálve rádix, sálve pórtá, Ex qua mundo lux est órta :

Gáude Vírgo glo-ri- ósa, Su-per ómnes spe-ci- ósa : Vále,

o valde decó-ra, Et pro nó-bis Chrístum exó-ra.

V. Dignare me laudare te Virgo sacrata.
R. Da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos.

English Translation

Hail, Queen of Heaven; hail, Mistress of the Angels; hail, root of Jesse; hail, the gate through which the Light rose over the earth.

Rejoice, Virgin most renowned and of unsurpassed beauty.
Farewell, Lady most comely. Prevail upon Christ to pity us.

V. Let me praise thee, most holy Virgin.
R. Give me strength against thine enemies.

Let us pray. Grant, O merciful God, defense to our weakness; that we who now celebrate the memory of the holy Mother of God may, by the aid of her intercession, rise again from our sins. Amen

“The End” Notes

[1] Merriam-Webster Dictionary
[2] <http://www.saltinstitute.org/Uses-benefits/Salt-in-history>

their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience.
Nor does Divine Providence deny the helps necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God and with His grace strive to live a good life.

Whatever good or truth is found amongst them is looked upon by the Church as a preparation for the Gospel. She knows that it is given by Him who enlightens all men so that they may finally have life.

Responsory – Office of Readings – Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Grace and peace be yours from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ,
- who gave himself up to death for our sins

If I were seeking to win the approval of men, I would not then be what I am – a servant of Christ.
- who gave himself up to death for our sins

Salt of the Earth – Lesson and Discussion

“You are the salt of the earth”

Right after preaching the Beatitudes during the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus turns his focus to his disciples by naming them with two metaphors. A metaphor is a word or phrase for one thing that is used to refer to another thing in order to show or suggest a likeness or similarity between them.[1] The first metaphor that Jesus uses to identify the disciples is comparing them to the ‘salt of the earth.’ Salt is a substance that is very familiar to us, if there is one thing that we love here in America it is salt. We put it on everything, and it is in almost everything we eat. More importantly, salt has been a staple to human civilization even before recorded history.[2] It is very interesting then for us to unpack what Jesus meant when he called his disciples the ‘salt of the earth.’

Why does Jesus call his disciples the ‘salt of the earth’?

First, it is important to note that Jesus uses this metaphor to

describe who the disciples already are and not about what they can be or will be in the future. Disciples of Jesus ARE the salt of the earth because that is what God created them to be. They have not earned this title, it is written into their very nature.

Next, we must look at what Jesus meant by the phrase ‘salt of the earth.’ Salt imagery can be found throughout Scripture in a variety of uses which include: flavoring, preserving, a purifying/cleansing agent[3], a required addition to sacrifice (‘salt of the covenant’)[4], a fundamental human necessity[5], and used to render land unusable[6].

So, if salt is a necessary component to the earth that we live in, then the disciples must be a necessary component for the earth as well. The mission of the disciples is to be sown into the earth to purify it and make it worthy to be a sacrifice. The disciples are the salt of humankind; they spread the Word of God among all men and live as an example of faithful men of God. Just as salt is a fertilizer to promote vegetation; the disciples are that which prepares the soil of mankind for the Sower.

What was Jesus’ audience when he said, “you are the salt of the earth”? Who is he speaking to when he says “you”?

Jesus’ audience during the Sermon on the Mount was the crowds of people that followed him to the Mount, which included his disciples. By extension, however, he is speaking to all those men who would someday hear or read the Scriptures. This means that Jesus is speaking to us when he says ‘you are the salt of the earth’ since we have been baptized into the Catholic Church. All men and women who choose to follow Christ have the mission of evangelizing all mankind.

How have Jesus’ disciples been the ‘salt of the earth’ throughout history? Jesus’s public ministry took place in Israel, and he traveled only within her boundary. His mission was confined to a certain area, which is why the first apostles were so vital to the institution of the Church. Before ascending into Heaven, Jesus says to his disciples, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”[7] We see that Jesus sends his disciples out to evangelize the world by baptizing them and instructing them according to what they had been taught. The foundation that the

To set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship Him without fear,
Holy and righteous in His sight
All the days of our life.

You, My child shall be called
The prophet of the Most High,
For you will go before the Lord to prepare His way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation
By the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our Lord
The dawn from on high shall break upon us,
to shine on those who dwell in darkness
And the shadow of death,
And to guide our feet into the way of peace.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Oratory: Place of Prayer – Act of Charity

To purchase the Oratory: Place of Prayer Book - <http://remnantband.bandcamp.com/merc>

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

O my God, I love You above all things with my whole heart and soul, because You are infinitely good and deserving of all my love. I love my neighbor as myself for love of You. Amen

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

brighten not only those people I love most, but all those others who happen to be in the house.”[42]

Pope John Paul II wrote about living out the life of Christ as salt of the earth and light to the world meant living out our mission in life. “Yes, now is the time for mission! In your Dioceses and parishes, in your movements, associations and communities, Christ is calling you. The Church welcomes you and wishes to be your home, and your school of communion and prayer. Study the Word of God and let it enlighten your minds and hearts. Writing to the Christians of Rome, Saint Paul urges them to show clearly that their way of living and thinking was different from that of their contemporaries: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect” (Rom 12:2)”[43]

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Canticle of Zechariah

The Canticle of Zechariah is prayed during Morning Prayer in Liturgy of the Hours. Zechariah was the father of John the Baptist. After regaining his speech these words were said after being filled with the Holy Spirit. He references his son, but the canticle is about the new dawn that is breaking, the light of Christ is about to shine on the whole world

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Blessed be the Lord,
The God of Israel;
He has come to His people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour,
Born of the house of His servant David.

Through His holy prophets He promised of old
That He would save us from our enemies,
From the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers
And to remember His holy Covenant.

This was the oath He swore to our father Abraham:

apostles laid is the groundwork for the development of the Church; they passed on the words and actions of Jesus. From that institution, the Church has continuously grown and been preserved by the many disciples of Christ throughout the centuries. The Church and her members have been preserved from corruption, greed, and persecutions to bring wisdom to men by their words.[8]

We see in Jesus’ last words in Matthew that He promises to be with them always which means that He has been with His disciples throughout history. His disciples are able to fulfill God’s Will in their lives because God is always with them.

VIDEO - History ‘The Spread of Christianity - POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 1:32

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jwp7oDLEff>

In this simple video showing the spread of Christianity on a map, we can see with our own eyes how Jesus has called his disciples to be the salt of the earth. Imagine for a moment what would have happened if the Apostles had never left the upper room after Jesus’ death. **Would Christianity have spread if they had been paralyzed by fear and ignored their call to evangelize? Now think about your own life...where is God calling you to spread his good news of salvation?**

In today’s Gospel, Jesus warns us that salt can lose its taste and when that happens, “it is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.” How can salt lose its flavor?

Salt, as a substance, cannot lose its taste or flavor unless something else is mixed in and dilutes it. However, in the Jewish tradition salt can become unclean and when it does, it must be thrown out.[9] In Israel, the salt that was thrown out was spread over the flat roofs covered in soil to harden the soil and stop leakage. This stresses the importance of our mission as disciples and the importance of us staying ‘clean’ and pure. We do not want to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

What are some ways we, as the ‘salt of the earth,’ lose our flavor? In our faith, Christ satisfies all of our needs. When we rely solely on this world to satisfy our needs, we can be assured that the world will not satisfy and that which we thought would satisfy will lose its taste. When we try to use the world’s “salt,” it can grow bland very quickly and we move on to something else. We must show self-control and temperance when using the

“salt” of this world. We must use earthly goods, “according to their needs and duties, with the moderation of the person using them, and not of the one who attaches too much value to them and sees himself dragged down by them.”[10]

How can we keep from losing our flavor? One way to keep from losing our flavor is to keep the Beatific Vision, the face of God in mind. “We must first remember that God created man in his image, calling him to his first and fundamental vocation: communion with him! It is this that gives human beings their highest dignity... Yes, dear friends, we are created by God and for God, and our longing for him is engraved on our hearts! Since ‘the glory of God is living man’, as St Irenaeus of Lyons observed, God never ceases to draw man to Himself, so that in Him, man may find the truth, beauty and happiness that he seeks without pause. This attraction that God exercises on us is called ‘vocation.’”[11]

We remember that our highest vocation is to behold the face of God for all eternity. While we are on earth, we also must seek to know and live our earthly vocation. **What is God calling you to do with your life?** You have a mission that is fulfilled by you alone. You are the salt of your earth; you are a source of life and love to the people you meet and see everyday. **Are you keeping yourself clean and pure so as to be an example in your words and actions to fertilize the soil for God?**

Light of the World – Lesson and Discussion
“You are Light of the World”

The second metaphor that Jesus uses to describe his disciples is comparing them to the “light of the world.” In 2002, Pope John Paul II gave the theme for World Youth Day in Toronto, “You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the World.” Just like salt, light is as an essential part of life. In the dawn of a new millennium, the late Holy Father wanted to remind us that we are the light that shines in the darkness.

Why does Jesus call his disciples the ‘light of the world’?

There are many Scriptural references to light that Jesus recalls when he names his disciples the ‘light of the world.’ It also gives the mission of the disciples a universal tone; they are the light of the world, not of Israel alone. Their duty is to shine and illuminate those “men who live in the world or who love it.”[12]

‘others,’ Non-Christians? Today, sadly enough we cannot tell the difference many times between a person who claims to be a Christian and the person who says they are a Non-Christian. **What are some thoughts and actions that seem to go against the current of the world?** Christians must have a Pro-Life mindset, which includes openness to life from the moment of conception to natural death. This thought and action includes openness to life that excludes contraception. A sacrificial and selfless lifestyle is contrary to the world in which we are encouraged to have more in order to be more. Christians think and act in light of the fact that there is absolute truth and that true is revealed by God. The world says that truth is relative; it depends on the circumstance and the person. This is the heresy of moral relativism. Christians think and act in humility knowing that there is a God and that they are not that God. Many people in the world now think and act in pride and have fallen pray to the heresy of secular humanism. There is no God, no religion, no sin, and no hell. Man is the measure of all things.

What are some good deeds we can do? To start any great journey it begins with a single step. To shine our light for the whole world to see, we must begin with our personal areas of life in which we live and work. If we are outgoing and warm towards others, “They will have greater faith in our deeds than in any other form of speech.”[40] We should be known as “men and women who are loyal, straightforward, truthful, cheerful, hardworking, and optimistic.”[41]

We must be this way not only to strangers and co-workers, but also to our family members. It is easier sometimes to be nicer to complete strangers than it is to our own family. People sometimes say, “I have to love you because you are family,” or sometimes we don’t show as much love to our family members for a whole host of reasons. Whatever the reason may be, our faith and the good deeds of our faith begin in the home. It begins with showing compassion and love to our parents, our children, our siblings, and our extended family; to forgive one another when we have sinned against each other, and grow the family in holiness. **Am I setting the perfect example in my home, work, school, and public places?** “I have learned especially that charity should not remain shut up inside our hearts, for men ‘do not light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand and it gives light to all in the house.’ It seems to me that this lamp represents charity which should enlighten and

Can we work our way to Heaven by these ‘good deeds’? The short answer to this question is no, you cannot “work” your way to heaven. We learned in the “Once Saved Always Saved”[35] that we are “saved” by faith, through grace, acted out in love.[36] That love which St. Paul writes about is the acts of charity that Christ tells us not to hide in today’s gospel. If we are truly living in Christ’s light, being salt to the earth and light to the world, then we will be in doing good deeds in our lives. How do we know this? By living Christ’s light, we are doing those things in our lives that God has called us to do. Those deeds that we do are good deeds that, in turn, glorify our heavenly Father.[37] By doing good deeds, we show the world we are Christians and we have the light of Christ shining out from us.

[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson - Once Saved Always Saved?]

In the Gospel a young ruler approaches Jesus and says, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone...’”[38] In this verse Jesus is affirming that He indeed is “good” and that He is God. There is only one “good”, therefore all “good” works are works in union with the one “good”. Any good work we do is in union with the one good work of Christ Jesus. Good works cannot be done apart from Jesus Christ. **Do good works save?** We can reply to this question as follows. There is only one good, Jesus Christ and His work does save. All good works are in union with His good work and so yes good works save.

Who are the ‘others’ that Jesus refers to when he says, “your light must shine before others”? ‘Others’ refers to those men who either do not yet know of God or do not believe what they have heard. We, as disciples, become the light through whom others come to recognize and acknowledge God. When these men acknowledge God, the unbelieving observer gives glory to Him for His goodness.[39] Therefore, we must lead lives that produce visible signs of goodness for men to see and as a result, desire to know the One from whom we receive this goodness. The use of the verb ‘must’ implies the urgency that we have to complete their mission. As disciples, we are indispensable in the sense that God has appointed us a mission and we must fulfill both for our own salvation and for that of the world.

How do Christians think and act differently than the

The first thing God did in creation was to create of light.[13] Light is created on the first day and the sun is created on the fourth. In the physical world, the sun is the source of light, but in the spiritual world, Christ is the source of light. Light brings forth sight and warmth. These are symbols of the Lord himself, of Heaven and of Life.[14] Christ is the light himself. When He ascended into Heaven He did not leave us empty handed. He left us his teachings, His One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church, and His presence in the Eucharist. Christ’s disciples are the light of the world when they/we choose to be Christ to others do not know or love God.

MUSIC - “Alive Again” by Matt Maher - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 4:00

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h30qiH7MSH>

The song sings of conversion. When we are led away from the light of Christ we can sometimes wake up in darkness. We tend to get scared because we don’t know which way is up or down. Christ shatters the darkness in our lives, and gives us new life.

Are we willing to do whatever it takes to get to Christ because we love him?

What ‘light’ does Christ speak of in the Gospel? The ‘light’ Jesus speaks of is the light of faith, “God’s free gift, which enlightens the heart and clarifies the mind. It is the God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness’, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of Christ” (2 Cor 4:6). That is why the words of Jesus explaining his identity and his mission are so important: “I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (Jn 8:12).”[15] We confess we believe “in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God.”[16] Jesus is the very light that he speaks of in the Gospel, if we have Him in our lives

How are we the ‘light of the world’? When we live in the light of faith, we show men the way in the midst of darkness. It is Christ that “rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his beloved Son.”[17] Christ has rescued us and so we now are able to rescue others. When we look at the lives of the Saints we see that “they lived in accordance with their faith, with their irreproachable and upright conduct, they shine like bright lights in the world” (Phil 2:15).”[18] We are light because we are the Body of Christ, the Church. The Church is

the Light to the Nations; we therefore are called to bring light to all nations and all people. There are so many who wander in the shadows and for those people, God is not far off. “Nor is God far distant from those who in shadows and images.”[19] All light comes from one source, and God in His mercy “enlightens all men so that they may finally have life.”[20] We must look for the light in the darkness of each culture, because any light that we see is from God and in preparation for the Gospel.

How do we remain the ‘light of the world’? What a flame needs to stay alive is oxygen. For the flame or light of our faith to breathe it needs to stay connected with Christ. We could say that the light of faith needs the oxygen for grace to stay alive. The most essential way to stay connected with Christ is through prayer. In prayer we seek the face of the Lord.[21] The light evokes the desire for truth and thirst for the fullness of truth and knowledge, which is engrained in every human person.[22]

A priest once said that the best way to keep our light from going out is to remember MARC. Mass. Adoration. Rosary. Confession.

When we attend Mass, we participate in the sacrifice of Christ and receive Him body, blood, soul, and divinity. In Adoration, we venerate Christ and spend time in praise and awe of His most holy presence. When we pray the mysteries of the Rosary, we meditate on the virtues of Jesus and Mary that we find in the Gospels. “It [the Rosary] has all the *depth of the Gospel message in its entirety*, of which it can be said to be a compendium.”[23] A great place to begin meditating on the Gospel is to pray the twenty decades of the mystery. What better way to keep our light than to meditate especially on the mysteries of light which include: The Baptism of Jesus, The Wedding at Cana, The Proclamation of the Kingdom, the Transfiguration and the Institution of the Eucharist.

Another way to keep the light from going out is to go to Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) often, especially if we have committed a Mortal Sin. Not only does Christ breathe new life into us, but he is also like the surgeon using his light to heal the wounds we have done to ourselves by sinning.

Why do we want to stay in the light? Light represents Heaven and life. Darkness, on the other hand, symbolizes “disorder,

gauntlet. No longer can we hide our faith, stay the same old same old, or status quo. Christ has demanded us our faith for Him. By choosing Him and following his word, we are called to be the supreme example, a city on a mountain and a lamp set on a lampstand. Jesus tells us that these examples are set up for all to see and “just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”[32]

What are the ‘good deeds’ that Jesus is speaking about here? Jesus is speaking about good deeds of charity since it is in those acts that we glorify God. Acts of charity are supernatural acts, based on faith, wherein God is loved for himself and not for any hope of reward. An act of charity requires divine grace, either sanctifying or actual or both. It is also the normal way of growing in the virtue of charity.[33]

BOOK - “The Giving Tree” by Shel Silverstein - POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 8:51

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PaDSzifZfZ>

The tree is happy in giving even though there is no hope of reward in the giving.

In order to live out God’s love, to become the light of the world and the salt of the earth, we are moved to show charity to God and neighbor. When we perform acts of charity with no intention of receiving anything back, we are acting to others as God acts towards us. “Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.”[34] God gives us every good thing and every perfect gift even though we do not merit them and can never repay Him on our own.

[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson - Christian Charity

There are many examples of heroic acts of charity in the lives of the Saints. Saint Ignatius of Loyola, for example, was friends with Saint Francis Xavier. When Saint Ignatius found out that Francis’ parents were no longer sending him money for his studies at the university, Ignatius worked a night job to raise extra money. He secretly gave this money to Francis. When Francis discovered that it was Ignatius who was supplying the money, he was so moved by the act of charity that it began a deeper conversion in his life, which eventually led to his own acts of charity as a priest in the Jesuit order.

How do we set our light on a lampstand? How do we give light to all in the house? As we covered earlier, our light is Jesus Christ and we set that light of faith on a lampstand when we choose to be a witness to Him. We give light to all in the house when we choose to follow Christ; we are set apart from the world. We are not made for this world but for Heaven. Christ tells us that our light is set on a lampstand to be shown for all to see. When Christ was crucified at Golgotha he hung on a cross for all to see the fullness of God's love for us. Christ tells his disciples and us today, we are set up for far higher standards than what the world has for us. We are to influence the world for good, and if we fail in good works, then we are as useless as flavorless salt or a lamp concealed.[30]

Why can't we keep our religion to ourselves and let other people believe what they want? With the combination of the three images of salt, light, and city Jesus "strikes the death blow to all religion that is purely personal and private." [31] These descriptions are united by the fact that they portray the disciples' mission as a public one. Disciples of Christ are 'the salt of the earth,' 'the light of the world,' and 'a city on a mountain' it is our job to be a physical witness to the Word of God on this earth. It is in our nature to be seen by all men and so it would be unnatural to keep our religion to ourselves. The explanation of the mission of the disciples is not limited to the original twelve; it is a mission that extends to all peoples at all times. Just as Jesus begins by calling the disciples to leave their former lives and follow him, he is calling us to leave our former sinful lives and follow him. As the disciples then were the salt, light, and city to a world in darkness and ignorance of God; we are called to be these things for our world today. It is true that our task is not to introduce a new religion and in America we are free to practice our religion without fear of death. However, we cannot downplay the significance of our missions on earth today; we are called to evangelize the world. Today we are told to tolerate all religions by not trying to impose our beliefs on other people. This view is in complete contradiction to the mission of disciples as described by Jesus. We must spread the good news of the gospel for the salvation of the world, for if one is truly a Christian then one must take up his cross and follow him.

Act of Charity: Faith in Action - Lesson and Discussion
"that they may see your good deeds"

The last verse in today's Gospel, Jesus throws down the

death, hell and evil." [24] When we shine our light twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week in everything we do, we show Christ to the world. Those that have lost sight of Christ, by not knowing what God is calling them to do, fall more easily into sin. If we lose sight of light, we could end up extinguishing our own light. To stay in the light is a choice. Jesus said very clearly that the weeds [dark] and wheat [light] would grow up together. "If you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them. Let them grow together until harvest." [25] No matter how dark the world gets, no matter how many weeds grow, all are called to stay in the light to be a witness and live for Christ. In our own life our sin is the weed and our holiness is the wheat. It is important when we are examining our conscious to look into our life and see where there is grace (wheat) and where there is sin (weeds), the sin becomes more evident in the light of grace. Saint Edith Stein describes this penetrating light as the Holy Spirit. "Are you the ray that flashes down from the eternal Judge's throne and breaks into the night of the soul, that had never known itself? Mercifully relentlessly, it penetrates hidden folds. Alarmed at seeing itself, the self makes space for holy fear." [26]

VIDEO - "Does God Exist - Albert Einstein" - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 1:19

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HvhGeNzdRZ>

While this may or may not have been exclusively said by Einstein himself, the boy in this video is exactly correct. Cold does not exist; it is the absence of heat. Darkness does not exist; it is the absence of light. Sin does not exist; God did not create it. Sin is the absence of Grace, the absence of God. Many times in life we are too focus on the negative. We focus on what is absent rather than what is present.

MOVIE - Lord of the Rings "Look to the East" - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 3:32

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrXqQjJPcq>

This is near the end of the second installment of the Lord of the Rings trilogy. As the clip shows, the humans have all but lost. In the darkest hour they have confidence that Gandalf the White will come as he said, "At first light on the fifth day." The light of the new day helps defeat their enemies. Their enemies are blinded by the light. Even in our darkest hours in our life, Christ will shine so brightly that He will blind our enemies and help will come to keep us going.

The Public Nature of Discipleship - Lesson and Discussion*“A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden”*

What city is Jesus talking about here? Augustine explains how a city on a mountain signifies a city that is built on great and extraordinary righteousness.[27] This also recalls the mountain that Jesus is teaching from, he calls his people to rise up and follow him. Modern uses of the image of a ‘city on a hill’ draws on biblical roots to refer to a physical place that is influential in and throughout the world. It implies a city that is not only involved in worldly affairs, but that is an ideal place to which other cities should strive to imitate.

What is the significance of a city that is set on a mountain?

A city set on a mountain is significant because it is physically impossible for a city on a mountain to be hidden or kept out of sight. Also, the light from a city that is on a hill can be seen at night when the rest of the world is in darkness due to the fact that has been built on a higher location. This is important because it implies a sense that the disciples must minister to the nations, they must be seen by the world and not hidden. It is unthinkable for the disciples to keep the Word of God to themselves, because they are the means by which God intended His Word to be spread.

VIDEO – A City on a Hill - POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 13:22

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUGkdMvvcgx>

NOTE – *This video is from a non-Catholic source and some areas (i.e. Bible being outlawed) could be misunderstood.*

In the 17th century, a Puritan man named John Winthrop quotes this Bible passage about a “city set on a mountain” to refer to the United States. Throughout our history as a country, leaders have seen the US as a shining example of freedom and equality. In his 1989 farewell address, Ronald Reagan speaks about how strong America stands and lights the way as a beacon for all those who are lost and hurtling towards darkness. **Is there any truth in their claim for America being a ‘city on a hill’?**

What are some things that threaten America’s example and claim to “liberty and justice for all”? How is the Church set on the mountain different than America set on top of a hill?

How were the disciples a ‘city set on a mountain’? The disciples were a city set on a mountain in the sense that they lived as a unified community acting for a greater good than

worldly success. They were not concerned with success, wealth, or fame but rather with doing the Will of God. Their lives were a light to others and examples that men could not ignore.

How can we be a ‘city set on a mountain’? Just like the disciples, we are called to be witnesses to the Word of God. The Greek word for witness is ‘marturia’ which is where we get our word martyr. Most of us are not called to literally lay down our lives as martyrs for our belief in Christ; however we are all called to lay down our lives according to our callings. We must be witnesses to Christ in every single one of our words and actions even if it means we lose friends, look foolish, or suffer harassment. We must be outstanding examples for all men so they may know without a doubt that we are followers of Christ.

[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson - The Chalice

Why does Jesus compare a ‘city set on a mountain’ with a ‘light set on a lampstand’? The connection between light and city is found in Isaiah 42:6 where God promises His people that they will be “a light for the Gentiles.” The Jewish aspiration of being a ‘light to the world’ involved them being the intellectual leaders of the world.[28] Similarly, the disciples are called to be a city on a hill not in the sense of military or political domination, but in a sense of enlightenment as people who possess some special quality.

Why would anyone put a light under a bushel basket? What is a bushel basket? The simple answer is that no one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, we light lamps so that they may shine light throughout the house. This analogy would have meant much more to Jesus’ original audience since they lived in a time before electricity and thus relied heavily on the use of hand-lit lamps. This example would have made them uncomfortable because this lamp is being presented in a way that is contrary to its nature.

A bushel basket referred originally to a quantity of grain, however, it came to mean the container used to measure out grain. According to Augustine, the placing of a lamp under a bushel can signify someone placing the comforts of the body as greater importance than the preaching of truth.[29] If a disciple “hides their light” then it shows that they are choosing not to live as God wants them to, but as they want.