

Homily Summary – Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time (Year A)

Short Overview: This Sunday’s readings remind us that we are called to be “salt of the earth” and “light of the world” (Matthew 5:13–16). Christians are not meant to draw attention to themselves, but to humbly point to Christ. Through works of mercy, reverent worship, and spiritual discipline, we shine God’s light and help preserve the world from moral and spiritual corruption. We are called to bring our “A game” to the spiritual life—like athletes running a race for an eternal prize.

Main Points

1. Salt and Light – Humble Witness

Jesus says:

“You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world.” (Matthew 5:13–14)

- **Light** makes life possible and reveals truth. We are called to shine God’s love and truth in the world.
- **Salt** preserves from corruption and enhances flavor. Christians help preserve society from moral decay and bring joy and meaning to others.

Salt and light do not point to themselves—they serve something greater. Our lives should humbly point to Christ.

2. How to Be Light – Isaiah’s Teaching

The first reading teaches how we shine:

“Share your bread with the hungry... shelter the oppressed... clothe the naked... then your light shall break forth like the dawn.” (Isaiah 58:7–8)

Light shines through works of mercy and justice.

The Catechism reminds us:

“The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor.” (CCC 2447)

We especially remember February 11, Our Lady of Lourdes and the World Day of Prayer for the Sick, and our call to care for the sick and suffering.

3. Reverence in Worship

- **Incense** reminds us of the cloud of God’s presence (Exodus 13:21), the prayers of the saints rising to heaven (Revelation 8:3–4), and the “fragrant offering” of Christ (Ephesians 5:2).
- Singing before and after the Gospel is a mark of honor for Christ, who speaks in the Gospel (cf. CCC 1154).

Our reverence in liturgy reflects our love for Christ.

4. Spiritual Athletes

With the Olympics and Super Bowl happening, we are reminded of St. Paul’s words:

“Run so as to win.” (1 Corinthians 9:24)

“I have fought the good fight... I have finished the race.” (2 Timothy 4:7)

We are spiritual athletes striving for an eternal crown (1 Corinthians 9:25). Our faith deserves our best effort.

5. Preparing for Lent

Returning last year’s palms prepares for Ash Wednesday—a reminder of repentance and renewal (Genesis 3:19).

St. Benedict medals, distributed this weekend, remind us of spiritual protection and our call to resist evil (cf. CCC 1674–1676 on sacramentals).

Catechism References

- CCC 2447 – Works of mercy
 - CCC 1154 – Sacred Scripture in liturgy
 - CCC 1324 – Eucharist as source and summit
 - CCC 1674–1676 – Sacramentals
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Reflection Questions

1. In what concrete ways am I being "salt" and "light" in my family, workplace, or parish?
2. Do my actions point others to Christ - or to myself?
3. How am I caring for the sick or suffering in my life?
4. Do I bring my "A game" to prayer and worship?
5. What practical step can I take this week to shine Christ's light more clearly?

Rhyme summary:

We're called to be salt and we're called to be light. We're bearers of peace, making Christ's presence bright. We honor the Gospel, let it renew. Our prayers rise like incense, our faith in shows in what we do. Lent approaches soon, so we now start to prepare. A little bit longer, and Ash Wednesday will be there. We bring God and neighbour our A-game and love. As God gives us protection from Heaven above.

Some Scriptural reasons to come to Mass each weekend

Exodus 20:8 - "Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy."

Acts 2:42 - "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

Hebrews 10:24-25 - "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Luke 22:19 - "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"

John 6:53-54 - "So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.'"

Matthew 18:20 - "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Psalms 122:1 - "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"

Colossians 3:16 - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

Additional resources to learn more about God and the Catholic faith

- Check out the resource list available on www.frmerkley.com
- Catholic Answers: <https://www.catholic.com/>
- Word on Fire: <https://www.wordonfire.org/>
- Formed: <https://formed.org/>
- The Coming Home Network: <https://chnetwork.org/>
- Catholic Exchange: <https://catholicexchange.com/>
- Dynamic Catholic: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/>
- The Augustine Institute: <https://augustineinstitute.org/>
- Ascension Press: <https://ascensionpress.com/>
- EWTN: <https://www.ewtn.com/>
- The Catholic Company: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/>
- Busted Halo: <https://bustedhalo.com/>
- CatholicCulture.org: <https://www.catholicculture.org/>
- The Thomistic Institute: <https://thomisticinstitute.org/>
- Ignatius Press: <https://www.ignatius.com/>
- Catholic Education Resource Center (CERC): <https://www.catholiceducation.org/>