



NEWSLETTER

5TH FEB, 5TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR.

A PARISH OF THE MULLINGAR DEANERY

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The Community of St. Camillus 044 9374115.

ST. JOSEPH'S, RATHWIRE.

Sunday 12th, 11.30am. Eileen Leech. John Lawlor. Paddy and John Mulvaney & dec.d Maguire family. Jim Gorman. Jack Murtagh. Anne Marie Bowe & dec.d family members.

ST. BRIGID'S, RAHARNEY.

Saturday 4th, 6pm. Valarie Murtagh.

Sunday 5th, Rose & Seamus Holdright.

Weekday Masses; Wed Rathwire. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday in Raharney 9am.

Adoration
of the
Blessed Sacrament



In St. Joseph's Tuesday 1pm-9pm.
& St. Brigid's Wed. 5pm-10pm:
*Special Diocesan intention of prayer
for vocations and the family.*
Take one Hour with the Lord

MASS OFFERTORY COLLECTION: €
PARISH DEVELOPMENT FUND €

RIP: Tommy Dempsey, Ballyhawe.

Mary O'Brien nee O'Keeffe, Portlaoise. Late of Craddenstown.
Collette Doyle, Leney. Daughter in law of Tish Doyle.

Light For The World

In today's [Gospel](#) Matthew applies to Jesus the prophetic oracle of Isaiah: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone." In like manner, the psalmist's assertion that the Lord is my light is echoed in Jesus' words: "I am the light of the world; the man who follows me will have the light of life."

Christianity is about light. Just as Jesus is light to the world, so his church is to be light in a world of darkness. Light enables the beauty of things to be seen, and we are called to make the beauty of the world shine. But we are not to call attention to ourselves: if you are aware of the light in a room, it is too bright. Our vocation is for others, not ourselves.

Surrounded by discrimination, oppression and war, Christians are challenged to "be united in mind and judgment," and they are directed by God's love to "bring humankind to unity and peace." The light we bring to the world should lead in time to an end of all the world's darkness: the alienation and oppression of peoples, the attacks on human life and dignity, and disrespect for God's creation.

"A people living in darkness has seen a great light."

The Church ... serves as a leaven and as a kind of soul for human society as it is to be renewed in Christ and transformed into God's family. ... the Church not only communicates divine life to men, but in some way casts the reflected light of that life over the entire earth.

Vatican II, [Constitution on the Church in the Modern World](#),

Sunday Message

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year A • 5 February 2023 • Colour: Green • Psalter Week 1



**TO BE THE
SALT OF THE
EARTH**
(MT 5:13-16)

The key to today's Gospel is the two sayings comparing the disciples to salt and light. Both begin with the words "You are..." and then draw out lessons from these two natural elements.

Salt was an essential commodity for life. In an era before refrigeration, it was used to preserve food or add flavour. Salt was an essential item of trade in the ancient world. The Dead Sea in Palestine was rich in minerals, including salt, but it was not always of the highest quality because of the presence of other minerals in it. Salt doesn't easily lose its flavour, but it can become damp and difficult to use. When that happens, all you can do is throw it away.

Disciples are to become "salt of the earth". The word 'earth' should be understood here in its general sense of the world. By their way of life, especially one that is modelled on the beatitudes, they will impart flavour to the world and preserve it from going bad.

Disciples must also be a light to the world. Towns in the ancient world were often built on top of hills for defensive purposes, as the hill offered protection from an invading army. Even if protected by a wall, a town on a hillside could not be hidden from view. In the same way, the lifestyle of the disciples of Jesus should be visible to all and mark them out as different.

The short parable-like saying about what people do when they light a lamp develops the same theme. Lamps are intended to give light. It would be foolish to light a lamp and hide it under a bucket, except if the house was in danger of being burgled. The light the disciple of Jesus will shed on the world comes from his or her good deeds. ■

REFLECT

Salt has a bad reputation today. Doctors tell us that too much of it is bad for us, that it increases the risk of heart attacks and other illnesses. It's not the sort of news that salt lovers like to hear.

But while health-wise there may be such a thing as too much salt, faith-wise there is no such thing as too much salt.

Jesus tells us that we are the salt of the earth. Like good salt, our lives must add fresh flavour to our world. But how precisely do we add that flavour?

By practising what we profess in church every day, by being faithful to our Christian calling as best we can, by trying to live up to the radical challenge spelled out so strongly for us by the prophet Isaiah in today's first reading. That's what being salt of the earth means.

Even if you reduce the amount of salt you put in your dinner or pour onto your chips, you must never cut back on the Christian witness you are called to give every day.

There is no better compliment than to be referred to as 'salt of the earth'.

LEARN

Jesus is the Light of the world.

Our Christian faith can never be a private matter, something we keep hidden. It must be out there, shining bright for all to see.

DO

Jesus is the light of the world. As his followers, we must be a light to our world also. Look at your life, your values, your behaviour. What kind of light do you shine? For help on how to be a light to others, read the words of Isaiah in today's first reading.



SAY

Lord, help me to be a beacon of your presence in our world. Give me the courage to shine your light everywhere. Amen.

PRAY

Pray for people living in the darkness of depression or experiencing tremendous financial or family difficulties. Ask the Lord to be with them, to fill them with his light and love.

