

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A

**THEME: CALLED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

In today's Gospel passage, Jesus uses the images of salt and light to tell us the role we have to play wherever we find ourselves.

When first you think of it, salt and light seem to have nothing in common. But they do, in fact, have one thing in common that is quite striking; and that is, they make a difference. And the difference that they make is a positive one. Salt brings out the flavor in our food, while light brightens our surroundings. Without salt, food can be quite tasteless, insipid. In the absence of light, it is impossible to see any color. The only color that you see, if you choose to call it color is black. Pitch black.

When Jesus says in today's Gospel reading, therefore, that his disciples are "salt of the earth" and "light of the world", he is saying that they should make the kind of difference that salt and light make: a positive difference, wherever they find themselves. Wherever a disciple of Christ is present, there should be a difference, and that difference should be clear. But it is important that it be a positive difference, a difference for good. It is all too easily the case that someone can make a difference, and that difference is a decidedly negative one, a difference for evil. That is not the kind of difference that a disciple of Christ should be making.

What all that means in concrete terms is that we who are the present day disciples of Christ, should be constantly engaged in making the part of the world that we find ourselves better than we met it. That is true even of the family that divine providence has placed us in. We must think of what we can do to make our family better, to improve the lot of each and every member of our family. We have to think of what we can do to make a positive difference in our place of work, in our community, and especially, our parish community.

As Christians, we need to be constantly engaged in building a better society, a society that is not merely materially prosperous, economically sound, but one that is founded on sound moral principles, such as justice, equity, freedom, respect for human life and human rights, accountability, probity, fear of the Lord, and, above all love.

If more and more Christians today, take it upon themselves to be truly salt and light in these different ways, and reflecting the prophecy of Isaiah in our first reading in their lives, then indeed will our light shine in the sights of men and women of our time, and our father in heaven will be glorified.

Are you making a difference in your surrounding? And what type of difference are you making; positive or negative? Remember, by their fruits we shall know them.