



AMDG
5TH SUNDAY
ORDINARY TIME
YEAR A
5 FEBRUARY 2017



Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

Your integrity will go before you and the glory of the Lord behind you. Cry, and the Lord will answer; call, and he will say, 'I am here.' *First Reading* (Isaiah 58: 7–10)

'...your faith should not depend on human philosophy but on the power of God.' *Second Reading* (1 Corinthians 2: 1–5)

'...your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.' *Gospel* (Matthew 5: 13–16)

I am the light of the world, says the Lord, anyone who follows me will have the light of life. *Gospel Acclamation*



REFLECTION:

What does the week hold for me and how do I feel God may be calling me?
 And so, what do I want to ask of God for myself and for others?

'You are the salt of the earth.'

OPENING PRAYER

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.

Today's readings clearly outline what it means to be a disciple. Jesus openly declares what following him entails. I am challenged to preserve what is good, to witness to others that life in Christ is not bland and to freely radiate God's love to others. These things will only be accomplished by 'good works'.

The prophet Isaiah, foreshadowing Jesus' words, details the 'good works' that will cause 'light to rise in the darkness' of the poor and oppressed. By living a life committed to justice and peace – in my home and in the world – I am assured of the Lord's presence and healing.

If true discipleship seems beyond my human frailty, I am given heart with the words of St Paul. He too was afraid, but carried out his ministry relying totally on the power of the Holy Spirit. Today and throughout the coming week I come quietly and gently into the presence of God, the One who is light in my darkness. I break open the Word of God as the Spirit draws me.

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 58:7-10

Thus says the Lord: Share your bread with the hungry, and shelter the homeless poor, clothe the man you see to be naked and turn not from your own kin. Then will your light shine like the dawn and your wound be quickly healed over.

Your integrity will go before you and the glory of the Lord behind you. Cry and the Lord will answer; call, and he will say, 'I am here.'

If you do away with the yoke, the clenched fist, the wicked word, if you give your bread to the hungry, and relief to the oppressed, your light will rise in the darkness, and your shadows become like noon.

I take a moment to settle down and consciously enter into the presence of God who loves me just as I am. I try to put aside any distractions so that I can hear what God is saying to me in his Word.

I read what the Lord said to the people through the prophet Isaiah; the same message that Jesus brought to the world. I consider how God's words and instructions apply to the world today and to my life in particular.

What is my attitude to the 'hungry, the homeless poor'?

Do I think that 'the clenched fist' is ever justified?

I prayerfully read the text again this time especially noting the blessings the Lord promises to me when I take care of those in need.

I ask myself. 'where am I in need of spiritual healing?' what prevents me from reflecting God's love to others?

I speak to my Lord about these things, I listen to him in the silence of my heart.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 5:13-16

Jesus said to his disciples; 'You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by men.

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.'

I give myself the gift of time with Jesus. In the midst of noise and activity, I find a quiet space to pause and slow down in mind, body and spirit. I may like to imagine I am with the disciples, I am one of them, listening to Jesus' words.

Jesus is paying me and my companions an extraordinary compliment! He is saying that we are the salt of the earth and more than that, we are the light of the world! Jesus uses simple, everyday examples, to illustrate the value of salt and light, God given gifts which are rendered useless if hidden or wasted.

I take a moment to ponder what this means to me.

Do Jesus' words encourage me in my discipleship or do I find them daunting; can Jesus' words possibly apply to the likes of me?

Am I willing to use these vital qualities for the greater glory of God or would I rather be 'unseen'?

I stay in the presence of Jesus for a while. I can tell him how I feel, ask him for what I need, or simply be in his company.