

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Year A February 9, 2014

Theme: Staying Salty

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Well, there's not much wiggle room in that Gospel, is there?

“Jesus told his disciples: ‘You are the salt of the earth.... You are the light the world.’”

No ifs, ands or buts: you are salt; you are light. Period.

A fantastic vote of confidence in the abilities of a bunch of fishermen and a tax collector and whatever else the other apostles were.

And to all of us 21st century disciples who hear it today.

But what if you don't feel ready? Or maybe feel too old? Or have other priorities in life right now?

How about health, my health isn't so hot right now, Jesus. Look me up again when I'm better.

Or financially more secure. Or older and settled.

And besides, I' not the sort who's inclined to going around carrying a torch.

“You are the light of the world. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a bushel basket.”

And salt: the doctor said watch it: no good for the heart and the blood pressure; but, I still can't eat my fries or eggs without it.

And, whew, this past month or so it sure has come in handy on the ice.

Sure don't want to leave on the car too long and you don't want to get any of it on an open cut, nasty stuff.

“You are the salt of the earth. But what if salt loses its saltiness? It’s good for nothing but to be thrown out on the road.”

There’s no wiggle room here at all: he wants us to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

For us as Catholics the principal way we have tried to maintain our saltiness and the brightness of our light has been by weekly (and I do mean every week) participation in community Eucharist.

This Lord’s Day gathering has been the way our community has -- from the day Christ left us until now -- kept our saltiness and our brightness.

Sometimes it has worked better than others and clearly we have a lot of work to do to make it work better in our own time.

But this is the place and the time where we should be getting fed and prepared and reinforced to go back out and be the salt which brings the best out in our world, that melts its frozen hearts, and that irritates the hell out of what needs to be irritated.

Here at this Sunday Eucharist we should find the courage from each other and in God’s Word and from the Food and Drink of Christ’s Table to take the bushel baskets off our lights and let them shine out:

---shine on the glory of God that fills this world
---shine on the beauty of Spirit working in so many people and places,
---and yes, shine on and expose any dark ugliness that would hold any child of God in its grip.

This Sunday Eucharist is where our salt get salted and our light relighted.

Now, I’m going to stop at just two pages instead of my usual three or four to save time for one of our parish team members to speak to you about someone planned for the coming season of Lent.

It is an outreach promoted by our bishop and being done by a significant number of parishes in our diocese and it will speak exactly to the topic I have just addressed with you: “Living the Eucharist.”