**“Salt and Light”**

All our readings today point us to holiness and service to others. It is by being the salt and light of the world that we would bring the Good News of salvation to all people of the world. As salt of the earth, we are called to be signs of purity and permanency. By being the light of the world, our holiness would reflect the light of Christ to all people of the world. As light, we are called by the way we live our lives to draw all people to Christ and His Church.

Our first reading, point us to how to become the salt and light of the world by becoming holy. According to what Prophet Isaiah received from God, to be holy, we need to share our earthly treasures with others especially with those who are oppressed, homeless, and marginalized. We need to cloth those who have none and not ignore our family. We need to serve others and not expect to be served.

It is then that we will become the light of the world. It is then that our wounds which are our sins would be forgiven and whipped away. And we will be protected by the Holy Spirit which is the glory of God. The Holy Spirit would be our helper when we call on God during the time of trials and tribulations. The Holy Spirit would be our comforter.

God also warned us to avoid oppressing others, accusing others without full knowledge of why we are accusing them. We are to avoid malicious speech or gossip that kills the other person without a sword or physical weapon. If we avoid all these, God promised us that we will be the salt of the earth. We will be able to accept any suffering and pain that God might allow to come our way, because our trust would be in God.

In our second reading, St. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians said, he did not talk or preached to them with many empty words that tickle the ears. He said he was to the point. His whole preaching was about Jesus who came to redeem us by His cross and resurrection.

Paul told them in not so many words that the message about Jesus Christ is what is important to take to heart and not the messenger and his/her oratory. Paul is telling us that we should not esteem the messenger so much that we forget the message. Paul’s summed up his message as **“Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”** According to him, it is the core of the Good News that we need to grasp, hold on to, and never let go.

It is the totality of the Messiah that should be followed and not just part of His message. That was one of Jesus’ instruction before He went back to be with His Father. **“Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”** Paul told them to hold on to what they have learned. He stressed the point that their faith and our faith must rest on God and not on human beings. Paul’s approach to faith is, as Scripture says, we should let God lead, and then, we should follow.

In our Gospel reading, Jesus told all His disciples to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Salt has many uses. It is used for seasoning, for melting ice, and for preservation so food can have constancy of taste. It is also a symbol of wisdom in the ancient world. Salt is linked to purity and its extraction either by underground mining or by distillation process takes quite a bit of labor.

Jesus by using the imagery of salt as a sign of purity, told His Church that with labor, our faith would need to grow from the size of a mustard seed to the size of a tree that attracts everyone to find it and rest on it.

Similarly, God expects us to labor so we will be able to develop virtues in many ways so our light can shine before others. For us, salt is useless if it cannot make a bland food taste good. Neither is a lamp of any use unless it lightens up the darkness. Jesus is telling us that it is by how we act that the world we see our light. In other words, our actions speak louder than words.

Our faith is a precious gift from God and God expects us to share it with others. The mere fact that Jesus wants our light to shine and be seen by others, is a sign that our light is not for us alone. Our light should shine for others so they too would desire to have light and join us in giving glory to God.

As we come with utmost reverence to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us ask for more faith so we can continue to be the salt and reflect His light for the world to see.