

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON** (or a hymn) O Come, let us worship God and bow low before the God who made us, for he is the Lord our God.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** (Ps 111)

**ANTIPHON:** A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

**RESPONSE:** A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

**LECTOR:** He is a light in the darkness for the upright: he is generous, merciful and just. The good man takes pity and lends, he conducts his affairs with honour. . **R.**

**LECTOR:** The just man will never waver: he will be remembered for ever. He has no fear of evil news; with a firm heart he trusts in the Lord. **R.**

**LECTOR:** With a steadfast heart he will not fear; open-handed, he gives to the poor; his justice stands firm for ever. His head will be raised in glory. **R.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** Alleluia, alleluia! I am the light of the world, says the Lord; the man who follows me will have the light of life. Alleluia!

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON** (or a hymn) Let them thank the Lord for his mercy, his wonders for the children of men, for he satisfies the thirsty soul, and the hungry he fills with good things.

**(Or)** Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be consoled. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall have their fill.

**TODAY'S READINGS** Isaiah 58:7-10; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5; Matthew 5:13-16

**NEXT WEEK** (6th Sunday of Year A) Sir 15:15-20; Psalm 118; 1 Corinthians 2:6-10; Matthew 5:17-37

*Want to learn more?*

*Daybreaks Daily Reflections for Easter and Lent* is that annual journey that takes us into the depths of God's mystery. For many who must juggle life's daily demands, Lent often seems to pass by with little opportunity for spiritual growth. But in this booklet, world-renowned spiritual writer Father Ron Rolheiser provides reflections for each day of Lent and Easter Week that are short and clear enough for the busy person, yet provocative, and challenging to the spirit. The booklet is available from Majellan Media for \$7.50 (postage included). For more information contact us at 03 9592 2777 or [office@majellan.org.au](mailto:office@majellan.org.au)

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*How are we salt and light?*



9 February 2020 5th Sunday Year A

Paul, the Apostle, had a powerful intellect, and he was well trained in rhetorical eloquence and philosophic reasoning. Yet he writes: "I did not come with sublimity of words or of wisdom." He knew that spreading the gospel did not depend upon brilliant oratory or erudite argumentation, but on the sincerity of his simple faith in 'the crucified Christ'.

Neither did Jesus rely on sublime words or clever argument. He preferred simple everyday imagery to make his point, as demonstrated in today's gospel reading. Following on from the Sermon on the Mount which we heard in last week's gospel, Jesus articulates clearly what is expected of his followers. He uses the powerful images of salt and light: We are to be salt of the earth; we are to be light of the world.

Salt was highly valued in the ancient world. It was used as a seasoning, a preservative, a disinfectant, a component of ceremonial offerings, and as a unit of exchange in trade and currency.

Just as salt enhances the flavour of food, and serves as a preservative, to 'be salt of the earth' means to be useful and helpful, and to make a real and positive difference to the world. We are to be a presence which brings out the best in our society.

As for light, it too is vital to life. Light dispels darkness, warming all it reaches, illuminating all in its path. Jesus' followers

would have appreciated how a single lamp would illuminate their one-room home at night. We know that the very existence of life on Earth depends on the light from the sun. It warms our seas, generates our weather patterns, powers our solar energy systems, and gives energy to the growing green plants that provide food and oxygen for life on Earth.

To be the light of the world means that we are to bring light, to bring warmth, to illuminate and enlighten all that nurtures life in our world. It means that we will dispel darkness caused by ignorance or selfishness or prejudice. It means that we will be a light for others, illuminating their way on life's journey.

The prophet Isaiah in today's first reading spells out what this means in very practical terms: "share your bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and the homeless; clothe the naked when you see them, and do not turn your back on your own."

Jesus' teaching, the Christian message, is so very simple and yet so profoundly challenging. We are to have a life-giving effect on others, on the society in which we live, and on the world around us. He challenges us to reflect on what we do and how we might do better.

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