

## 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time Year A

*You are salt of the earth.* What is salt? It is flavour and an anticorruption agent. We see that the world is still flavoured with Christianity. In truth, every good thing in the world is from our Christian faith, directly or indirectly. But it seems the corruption has not been halted or even slowed down so that now the flavour seems to be the other way. It is now common for people to get their news about the faith or the Church from an outside source with the different flavour of the world. How many times do I hear from people something that the pope has said that has not come from a Catholic news source. Do we think that the world is not trying to flavour us? Do you think that the world is not trying to corrupt us for their own ends? How long can we live under the influence of both and think we will not have our hearts changed?

Think of it, what message shines in your light? In your discussions, in your posts, in your emails, in your conversations does our light shine forth? Is it a message of salvation, of preserving the goodness that God has built us for? Or is it helping the corruption? I was reading about the skill of the media to use our human weakness against us. There is an effect called the Coolidge Effect. It means that a man's brain is wired to carry on his line. Many tests were done with rats and when a male rat was introduced to a willing female rat he would try as many times as he could to continue his line. Each time his brain though would not receive the same dopamine and the act would take longer. If a new female was introduced, the male brain would try to continue on his line with more rats until the male almost killed himself with the effort. Pornography short circuits reality by the breaking of the God given boundary that female are not always available to males. Thus enslaving the males by their biological instinct. I am not saying that males have no fault in the matter or that there are not God given ways out of the addiction to pornography, but my point is that the media is using a good thing to enslave us by twisting the truth of humanity. Even if it is not what we would typically call pornography, using the sensual aspects of a woman to sell things is a corruption of humanity. We are so corrupted and confused now it is hard to be salt with all the conflicting messages and pulls that are offered. The Church is often these days represented as a hateful institution. I am not saying that we haven't done things to earn some of our reputation but we earned that reputation by not following God.

How can we be the light again? How can we be salt again? How can we bring order back to the disorder that is going on in the world? We cannot. We simply do not have the wisdom, strength, understanding or skill to be the salt or light any more. It has gone beyond us. We cannot even save ourselves from this corruption and we have seen it in our own lives and in the lives of the Church. Yes, it is true that we are in a hopeless battle and at times it would seem easier to join the other side and to live it up. They seem to be having a good time. They have the power to harm us, humiliate us, imprison us and kill us and no one will say anything. Yes, it seems like a bad time to be a light or salt. As Théoden said in the battle of Helms Deep in the Lord of the Rings, "Who can contend with such reckless hatred?" And yes, my brothers and sisters, many of us have joined the other side thinking we can avoid the hate, be cool and enjoy life.

But there is another side to this. The other side is a lie as big as the lie that pornography is true and that real women like to be abused and used. And while it is true that we cannot change this problem and we are not strong enough to be light and stop the corruption, God is. And He can give us the strength and courage to live our lives so that we can be light and salt as it said in the First Reading. If we want to be light and salt then we have to let God enlighten us first. We have to look at our lives and ask, "What am I

living for? What is my purpose?" And we know from the Gospel it is to be light and salt and so we ask our Lord: *In what ways am I not living the truth, am I not living my purpose, in what ways have I been deceived and no longer living my life so that it purifies and loves in radical ways?* I have started praying the prayer, "Lord, let me burn with love of you." I know that I cannot do this on my own. I don't even desire it in a real way. But I trust that it is the way to live because God who made me said so. God who made me to live with Him forever told me that truth so I want to live but I know I can't so now I ask for this truth. It so right and just for me to love the Lord with all my strength, with all my heart and with all my soul. I invite you to pray for this grace, too, so we can be all we are created to be.