



Matthew 5:13-16

Jesus said to his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything, but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. "You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father."

Introductory Prayer: Lord Jesus, once again I come to you to listen to your words. I come as one who is hungry, in need of nourishment. I need you to nourish me, for no one else can. I hunger not for the food of this world but for the food of your grace. May my prayer this day give you glory and be an instrument of grace for my brothers and sisters. Amen.

Petition: Lord Jesus, grant me the grace to grow in confidence as your disciple.

1. God's Choice: In today's Gospel, the Lord invites us to meditate on the extraordinary grace of being chosen by him. The Lord reminds his apostles time and again it is not they who have chosen him; rather, he has chosen them. At times it is easy to lose sight of the fact that Christ has called us through our baptism to be his disciples. The experience of our own weakness and limitations in doing what is right can cause us to lose heart before our great calling to be salt of the earth and light to the world. Yet, the Lord has chosen us precisely for that mission: we are to be instruments for the conversion of those around us, bringing society itself out of darkness and into Christ's light. Our mission far transcends the world of today and tomorrow, for we are called to help all people reach eternal life.

Who would dare claim this mission for himself?

2. Glorify the Father: How are we to go about the task? The answer lies in our baptism. Through this sacrament our whole being is introduced into a new life, the life of an adopted son or daughter of God in Christ Jesus. From now on, in all that we do for God's glory, we are able to do it through our participation in Christ's royal priesthood. How then shall we be the light of the world? Not in virtue of our own merits or knowledge, not in virtue of technology, science or any worldly power, but in virtue of the Holy Spirit who works within us, guiding and directing our efforts. So, if we are to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth, we must seek always to follow the Holy Spirit's inspirations and trust in him absolutely. By doing so, we will become those disciples whose greatest desire is to glorify the Father, and people will see in us the hand of God.

3. Be Strong in Love: Christ's call for us to be his disciples and to proclaim the Gospel to all men can seem too much. With the wear and tear of our daily life and the struggle to make ends meet, it appears that there is no time, no energy to be a disciple of Christ. We must not lose sight of the beginning of our discipleship. It did not originate in our making a contract with the Lord. It began in his heart, when he said, "It is not you who have chosen me, but I who have chosen you." It began when he said, "I no longer call you servants, but friends." The Son of God has called us his friends. Who would dare to say that? Who could dream it possible? No one! Yet it is the truth. Our discipleship is rooted in the love that Christ has for us. That is why he tells us to remain in his love always. In fact, he wants us to live in his love, just as a branch lives in the vine and thus is able to bear fruit.

Conversation with Christ: Lord, you chose me to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. It is too much for me! Nevertheless, I believe in you, I trust in you, and I love you. Today, may my every word and deed be courageous expressions of your love for all, leading those whom I meet to give glory to your Heavenly Father.

Resolution: I will trust in the Lord's call for me to be his disciple and so make known to those around me, in words and deeds of charity, the greatness of God's love.