

Homily For Tuesday of the 10th Week of Ordinary Time - Year 1

St Peter's 8:30/7:00 Masses - June 13, 2023

(Memorial - St. Anthony of Padua)

2 Corinthians 1:18-22 "In Jesus Christ, all of God's promises is a YES. This is why we say the Amen."

Psalms 119:129-135 "With open mouth I pant, because I long for your commandments."

Matthew 5:13-16 "Let your light shine before others, so that they give glory to your Father in heaven."

Let There Be Light

Introduction

Yesterday, the daily Gospel reading began what will be a series of readings from Chapters five to seven of Matthew's Gospel. These three chapters, Augustine called the 'Magna Carta of Christian life'. He says that if we had nothing else from Jesus' teaching, we would know his heart and the summary of his teaching from these three chapters. Of course, we call these three chapters, 'The Sermon on the Mount'. Yesterday, it was the Beatitudes. Today, it is the teaching on salt and light.

Matthew

The idea of salt losing its flavour is strange. Someone might correct me, but I don't think that is possible scientifically. The flavour of salt and the thing we call salt can't be separated. It would not be salt without flavour. It would be something else. In the same way, if the believer in God does not bring the flavour of Christ into the world, then it is legitimate for someone to question the faith that we claim. I don't know how to understand this in an easier way.

The image of light is more relatable, I think. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus cites Isaiah at the beginning of his ministry: "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light. For those who sat in the shadow of death, light has dawned." Wow! Light dispels the shadow of death. So, Jesus cites the Old Testament prophetic tradition that God will shed light like a sunrise, like new life. The Magi came following a star, a light in the sky. The coming of the light is a cosmic event, meant for the whole world. Luke tells us about Simeon in the temple, who says, when he

sees the infant Jesus: "My eyes have seen your salvation, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." John's Gospel tells us that "Jesus is **the** light that shines in the darkness, that the darkness did not overcome."

But in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus turns to a crowd of ordinary people like us and he says: "YOU are the salt of the earth" and "YOU are the light of the world." But only God is light, we say. How did WE become light? And, this is not just some ordinary light, but the deeds - the words and actions - that must be for others a sign of the glory of God. That's some light. Our job, our task, our very identity, according to the one we follow, is to shine into the world's darkness with light which has a divine source. We don't shine the light for ourselves but for others. When others receive a witness of love, they will come to believe in the source of all love.

Many are wandering in a darkness unique to our time. Life is seen only as one difficulty and disappointment after another, which can only be covered over by one amusement after another, and we have so many opportunities for amusement. It is up to Christians to show the joyful and serene optimism of he who recognizes himself as the son or daughter of God. Everything in our lives can be a path to sanctity, even the difficulties

Thus, Christians are the light of the world, by bringing the light of truth everywhere in the world. "The People of God is marked by characteristics that clearly distinguish it from all other religious, ethnic, political, or cultural groups found in history. Its mission is to be salt of the earth and light of the world, a most sure seed of unity, hope, and salvation for the whole human race." (CCC #782)

St. Anthony

We have the saints as our models in light of course. We remember St. Anthony of Padua today. Many have a kind of personal relationship with him as the one who helps them find lost things, especially keys it seems. Isn't that interesting how we it fits with light, which is necessary for finding anything that is lost? But St. Anthony just preached Christ, especially to those who were in error about the

Christian faith. We are told that he converted many back to the true faith. But he understood we do that in different ways. Listen to what he says: "The man who is filled with the Holy Spirit speaks in different languages. These different languages are different ways of witnessing to Christ, such as humility, poverty, patience and obedience. We speak in those languages when we reveal in ourselves these virtues to others."

2 Corinthians

St. Paul describes the light of Christ as saying YES to God. He says that "In Jesus Christ, every one of God's promises is a 'YES'. So, if God's promise is that a light will dawn, as the prophets testify in advance, we see the fulfilment of that promise in Christ himself who, in turn, asks us to be God's YES to the world.

Psalm

Psalm 119 is worth mentioning in this context. It goes on for page after page describing how wonderful and full of light and life is the law of God. His decrees are wonderful. His commandments are righteous. His precepts fill human longing. This is where the world needs light. The commandments of God are not burdens in the sense that the world sees them. They are the path that the Father has set out for us to follow into the true light of joy.

Call To Conversion

Many in the world and, even some in the Church, want to water down the Gospel, making us more like the world around us. Why would you want the Church to look like the world? The Church must be a light for the world, not its clone. Vatican II proclaimed that it is the role of the laity to bring the kingdom of heaven into the ordinary places of the world, into every nook and cranny.

Come stand in the light of Christ risen from the dead. The kingdom of heaven has come near to you. With Christ in us after this mass, let our countenance be as the light of Christ in the world's darkness. Let there be light.

Key Scripture Passages

Entrance Antiphon: *Your priests, O Lord, shall be clothed with justice. Your holy ones shall ring out their joy.*

Collect: *Almighty every living God, who gave Saint Anthony to your people as an outstanding preacher and intercessor, grant that we may know your help in every trial.*

2 Corinthians: *God is faithful. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, there is no Yes and No, but in him every one of God's promises is a YES. For this reason it is through Christ that we say the 'Amen' to the glory of God. But it is God who has anointed us, by giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first installment.*

Psalm: Your **decrees** are wonderful. Therefore, my soul keeps them. The unfolding of your words gives light. It imparts understanding. With open mouth I pant, because I long for your **commandments**. Keep my steps steady according to your promise. Make your face shine upon your servant, and teach me your **statutes**.

Matthew: *Jesus said to his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. You are the light of the world. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*