

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, February 8, 2026
Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle A

A friend once told me about a time he cooked a big family meal. He followed the recipe carefully, plated everything beautifully – and yet, when they sat down to eat, something was off. The food looked perfect, but it tasted bland. Someone finally said what everyone was thinking: “Did you forget the salt?” He had. The meal was edible, but it was forgettable.

That little story mirrors something deeper. In a world full of noise, opinions, and confusion, it is possible for faith to look fine on the outside yet lose its flavor. That is why Jesus’ words today are so direct and personal. They challenge us to ask: Has our faith kept its taste, and does our light still shine?

In today’s gospel reading, Jesus tells his disciples, “You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world.” Notice what he does not say. He does not say, “Try to become salt,” or “Someday you might be light.” He says: “You are the salt...You are the light.” This is not a suggestion; it is an identity. Why salt and light?

Salt, in the time of Jesus, was precious. It preserved food from decay and gave it flavor. Light, of course, made life possible – guiding travelers, protecting homes, giving warmth and hope in the darkness. Jesus is saying that his

followers are meant to preserve what is good in the world and to illuminate what has grown dark.

But then comes the warning: “If salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned?” Salt that no longer tastes like salt is useless. Light that is hidden under a basket fails its purpose. The danger Jesus points out is subtle but real – the danger of blending in so well that our faith becomes indistinguishable from the culture around us. A tasteless faith changes nothing. A hidden light saves no one. We lose our flavor not by being too Christian, but by being afraid to be different. We hide our light not by sin alone, but by silence, compromise, and fear.

This matters deeply today. We live in a confused world – confused about truth, about love, about what really matters. In such a world, it is tempting for Christians to stay quiet, to soften the edges of the Gospel, to blend in so we will not stand out or be challenged. But Jesus never called us to blend in. He called us to stand out –not by shouting, but by shining.

Christian distinctiveness shows itself in simple, concrete ways. It is choosing honesty when dishonesty is easier. It is choosing forgiveness when resentment feels justified. It is caring for the poor, the elderly, the unborn, the forgotten – when indifference is the norm. It is living with hope when others are drowning in cynicism. And this begins personally. In our families, are we salt – bringing patience, kindness, and faith? Or have we grown tasteless through

anger or indifference? In our workplaces and communities, are we light – bringing integrity and compassion? Or do we hide our faith to stay comfortable?

Jesus says, “Your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.” The goal is not attention for ourselves, but glory for God. When faith is lived authentically, people notice – not us, but the God who lives in us.

The world does not need Christians who blend in. It needs disciples whose faith still has flavor, whose lives still give light. Salt that still tastes. Light that still shines. May the Lord give us the courage to live our faith clearly, so others may find light and hope through us. When we refuse to blend in, our faith keeps its flavor... and the light of Christ finds a way to shine.