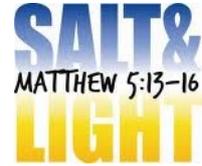


Salt and light are metaphors used by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, one of the main teachings of Jesus on morality and discipleship. ... You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.



In a small village in one of the islands off of the coast of New Guinea, salt is made every six months. For the villagers, salt is the most needed and expensive of all commodities and the salt maker is considered the most important person in the village. One of the images in today's gospel is that of salt. We know that if salt loses its quality then it is useless. Salt flavours and preserves food. Jesus calls us to become the salt of the earth. Just as salt enhances the taste of food and yet does not change it, so we are asked to enhance the gifts of others, not change them, and to help others share and rejoice in their gifts.

Jesus also uses light as a symbol in this gospel. All of us I'm sure have experienced personally the meaning of light in our lives. We all know after a power cut or blackout just how much light means. Jesus is the light of the world; he calls each of us to let his light shine through us to others. He asks us not to be afraid, nor hide his light within us.

Catechist Reflection....

Your Integrity Will Go Before You

*an extract from **The Peace of Jesus***

By Joseph G Donders

Discuss

the different ways salt may be used
~ *I/we can become salt to another by...*

Jesus was referred to as the "light of the world"
He now calls us to be a light....

~ *how can I/we become a light to others?*
e.g. *the young people in your group*



*"Kia inu kau ahau,
If I could just drink"*

Te Pu Akonga Whakapono Katorika ki Tamaki

Religious Education Team

Catholic Diocese of Auckland

www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/religious-education

Suggested Approach with Children



Aim

To introduce the children to the concept of “being the light of Christ” to others

Welcome

the young people to a new year of sharing, and exploring together the Gospel of Matthew
The **Gospel of Matthew** is one of the four Gospels of the **New Testament**. The gospels are traditionally printed with Matthew first, followed by Mark, Luke, and John, in that order.

Pray together

Loving God,
We thank you for this new year and the chance to meet once again in your presence.
Help us to understand Your Word and live it daily at home, at school, in everything we do. **Amen.**

This is a NEW YEAR for us in this group... but is it a new start to Year A, the Gospel of Matthew?

Remind

the young people that Year A actually began on the first Sunday of Advent.

Feeling into.....

- Have any of you ever experienced a power cut at night? what was it like? what did you do?
 - Have any of you ever woken suddenly in the dark? what did you do?
- Many people have torches or candles in case of power cuts, and of course we all have lights in our bedrooms.

Invite

the children to share their thoughts on the importance of light

- why is it important? Where do we use it?
- What would happen if we had no means of light?
e.g. couldn't find our way

As Catholic/Christians we use candles often.

- Can you name some of the events we use them for?
e.g. the mass, the paschal candle, the advent wreath, BAPTISM
- have you ever been to a baptism?
- what do you remember?

The candle at baptism represents Jesus and his light coming into our lives. In John 8:12 we hear Jesus say:

“I am the light for the world! Follow me and you won't be walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life.”

- What do you think that means?

Meeting with.....

In the gospel today we hear Jesus talking about the light. Let's listen to what he says....

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew.....

One day Jesus said:

No one lights a lamp and then covers it up,
because then they could not see in the darkness.
They put the lamp up high so that its rays shine out!
You are like lamps, with the brightness of God's love
and goodness shining out from you. When you are good,
you will bring light into the world around you, and others
will see you and thank God for sharing his goodness."

Let Your
Light Shine

Responding to.....

- What does Jesus compare the people (and us) to?
- Does he say we should cover the lamp or hide it?
- Why?
- Where does this light within us come from?
- When did we first receive this light?
- What does Jesus say will happen if we let our light shine?
- How will **you** let **your light shine** this week at home, at school, in the community?

Dear Jesus,
You are the light of the world.
Your light shines before all people.
Help us to live in your light
In all that we do
And in all that we say.
May we bring your light to others
By the way we live our lives.

AMEN.

*an extract from **Bless This Day**
by Patricia Mathson*

Catechist Reflection....

Your Integrity Will Go Before You

an extract from

The Peace of Jesus

by Joseph G Donders

The gospel text of today
is a continuation of the gospel text
of last Sunday.

Do you still remember?
It was the gospel about the
beatitudes.
It was the gospel about the poor
in spirit.
It was the gospel about those
who are open to God.
It was a gospel that told us
what would happen to those
who would be open to their God:
they would be gentle,
full of mercy,
longing and thirsting for what
is right,
pure,
peacemaking,
and very often in serious
difficulties because of the
kingdom of God. It was a
gospel about us,
about you,
about me.

It was a gospel
in which Jesus explained
to us
our content,
our possibilities,
our potentialities,
our personalities,
our nature,
our inner core,
our centre,
our heart,
our feelings,
and his Spirit
in us.

So often we make the mistake
that we think
that all Jesus speaks about
has still to come,
has still to be worked out in us.
We think
that we have to become gentle,

that we, once, might be
peacemakers,
or to speak in the terms
of the gospel of today,
we think
that we *should become*
the salt,
that we should make ourselves
a light,
that we should be like
a city
on a hilltop.

But that is not
what Jesus said.

He said:

"You are the salt,
you are the light,
you are that city."

Jesus said:

"Who believes in me
has eternal life,
who believes in me
is in the kingdom."
It is not a question
that we should become,
it is a question
that we should show,
that we should manifest
who we are and
what we have.

It is to his disciples,
to their community
that he speaks like that.
That is an important fact,
I believe.

When speaking like that
he spoke to his disciples
in the plural.

We have very many ways
of neutralizing the salt in us,
of losing our taste and pungency,
of hiding our light.

One of those many ways is
to think that

I, myself, individually
should be that salt,
that

I, myself, individually
should be that light;

and that is, of course, a burden
we cannot carry,
and we say:

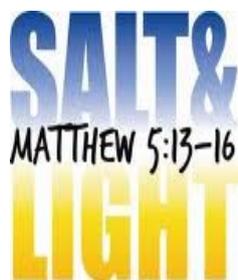
I am giving up,
I am not going to be able
to change the world,

and we get discouraged.
We forget
that his last model
is that town
on top of that hill.
You cannot be a town
on your own,
you can only be a town
when you are together
working and praying,
dancing and singing.

If we together would be
-and we are-
with God
then our own small world
would break open
to those good deeds,
to those good works
that are really worthwhile
economically,
socially,
scientifically,
culturally, and
charitably.

If we would be
the ones we are,
our environment would change,
not because we are so good
but because God would work
through us
and all,
seeing our works,
would give the praise
to our Father
in heaven.

This is the gospel
of the Lord.



For personal / group reflection

Jesus said:

"You are the salt,
you are the light,
you are that city."

- *What is your personal response to this?*

We have very many ways
of neutralizing the salt in us,
of losing our taste and pungency,
of hiding our light.

One of those many ways is
to think that

I, myself, individually
should be that salt,
that

I, myself, individually
should be that light;

- *Do you have any experience of this?*
- *Have you ever observed this ?*

We forget
that his last model
is that town
on top of that hill.
You cannot be a town
on your own,
you can only be a town
when you are together
working and praying,
dancing and singing.

- *How can we bring this into being
in our daily lives?*

My/Our prayer today is

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