

Homily.

Matthew 5:13-16

“Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket,” said Jesus. No sensible man shall light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket; much less God the Father. As Christians, we are meant to shine and shine for many. You are meant to shine wherever you are. You may be in a household with a few family members, but you are meant to shine the light of Jesus there. You may be part of a multinational company; you are meant to reflect Jesus there. You are meant to radiate Jesus among your friends, colleagues, family, and even among the strangers you encounter every day.

We live in a world where many call themselves Christians, and a few care to live a Christian life. We are concerned about those who ignore the call to live according to the commandments. We often get upset with our friends and family members who do not accompany us to church. Express your disappointment gently, without hurting a valuable relationship. Because we are meant to salt them gently.

Salt has three uses as per the Old Testament: to flavor, to preserve, and to be part of the incense that burned on the sacred altar (Ex 30:34-35, “the incense... salted, pure, and holy”). The faithful must be salt, possessing all three properties. We are meant to be the flavor of the world; we are meant to preserve the world, and we are meant to be a part of the sacred offering on the altar.

While Jesus was telling the handful of disciples, "You are the salt of the earth", He was pointing to the crowds below the mount. The very Jesus is telling the handful of us in the church,

‘you have to add flavor to the multitudes outside the church. It is your faith, your perseverance, your love, and your faithfulness that are going to preserve the world.

A handful can save a whole city. In Genesis, we see Abraham interceding for Sodom before God. God promised to preserve Sodom if he could find at least 10 just people there (Gen 18:25-33). Let us be thankful for the handful of just people who never cease to intercede for us, on account of whom God has spared our families, our parishes, our towns, our nations, and our world. Although we may not know many of them, we owe them our lives. Today, Jesus is asking us to emulate them.

Yes, we can! Our prayers, our fasting and penance, our acts of mercy, and above all, our just lives can flavor and preserve the world. They make the sacrifice we offer on the altar pleasing to God. Jesus is looking forward to us salting the world. He is eager to put us on the lampstand of his choice. Be bold and say amen to his invitation to be the salt and light for the world. The world may or may not appreciate you. But Jesus appreciates you.

Amen.