

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

OPENING PRAYER We listen to the song: *The Light of the World*. World Youth Day 2002-Canada.

READINGS

FIRST READING – Isaiah 58,7-10

- ★ The first Reading is taken from the book of the Second Isaiah.
- ★ This prophet developed his ministry during the 6th century B.C.
- ★ The prophet speaks to a people that does not live in Jerusalem, as was the case of the First Isaiah called also Isaiah from Jerusalem, but to a people that lives in exile.
- ★ He has an unconditional faith in God as Lord of history, so much so that he sees all the events as contributions to the redemption of Israel.
- ★ His message speaks of
 - The New Exodus, the return of the exiles, with the same joy and surprise and awe as in the first Exodus.
 - He speaks also about the Justice of God, because God fulfills his promises. The time of the fulfillment is imminent. The justice of God is his faithfulness, he does not destroy or chastise his creatures but purifies them.
 - Another theme is the power of the word of God, not so much the written or the spoken word, but the word transformed in concrete events.,
- ★ Today's reading has a special beauty.
 - It unveils for us how God wants to be loved and served
 - In our brothers and sisters in need – this is a constant message in the Law of Israel. In different books of the Scripture, the Lord reminds Israel that they have been foreigners, oppressed, poor in a foreign land.... This is the reason for them to remember and care about all those who suffer. Besides this is the way that Yahweh has acted with them and with every human being.
 - Hungry – who are those who are hungry in our world?
 - Who are the oppressed and the homeless?
 - If you have eyes to see and do not turn your back to those who need you
 - You will be light
 - Your wounds will heal, what are these wounds?
 - God will always walk with you.
 - You will call him and he will answer “Here I am”
 - If
 - You remove from your life
 - Oppression, whom do you oppress?
 - Do you hurt others with your words?
 - You give
 - Your bread to the hungry
 - Then your light will be like noon time in the midst of the night.

GOSPEL Mt. 5,13-16

We continue the reading of the teaching of Jesus in the Sermon of the Mountain(ch. 5,6,7). According to the Gospel of Matthew these three chapters are the center of Jesus teaching.

★ You are salt and light

- Why do we use salt? What is the goodness of salt? What would happen to our life and to our world if there were no salt?
- And what is the use of light?
 - When there is no light we feel lost, even when we are very familiar with the place.
 - If it is dark and light comes, we rejoice, we experience a sensation of goodness physically, psychologically and even spiritually.
- When Jesus tells us that we are the salt and the light, what does he mean? What does he want to tell us?
 - Maybe we will find the answer in the first reading.
 - The proclamation of the Gospel of Christ who is the Light of the world, does not depend only on our words but most of all on our deeds
 - The proclamation of the Gospels requires that we be light and salt, how?
 - May be being peaceful, compassionate, merciful, as we were told in the beatitudes last Sunday.
 - Being welcoming. When someone welcomes us as we are, we feel happy and our darkness little by little becomes light, because we want to be like the person who welcomed us without passing any judgment on us.
 - Showing tenderness, affection to everyone, in so doing we are saying “I am glad that you are in the world in which I live” It is in some way as if we touch the person, as Jesus did with the sick, lepers, sinners, dead. In so doing he gave them back the trust in themselves and joy.
 - Having eyes able to see what goes on around us, to see the persons who we encounter in our journey.
 - Leaving positive memories in the persons we meet, so that this experience may lead them to Jesus.

SECOND READING – 1Co 2,1-5

We continue the reading of the First Letter of Paul to the Community of Corinth. We know that Paul had some difficulties with the community, because he was not eloquent as other preachers, they questioned his being apostle. But Paul moved by his love for Christ and for the community continues to preach in spite of the difficulties and the lack of trust.

Paul says to the community

- ★ That when he went to them he did use neither eloquent words nor human wisdom.
- ★ He went there with fear
- ★ That he was determined to speak only of Jesus and Jesus crucified.
- ★ So that the faith of the community would not rest on his eloquence but in the eloquence of the power of God.

Let us take some moments to reflect and meditate on today’s readings. Afterwards let us transform our meditation in dialogue with our Lord.