

Reading for the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

8th February 2026

First reading

Isaiah 58:6-10

'Your light shall break forth like the dawn.'

Thus says the Lord:

Is not this the fast that I choose:

to loose the bonds of wickedness,

to undo the straps of the yoke,

to let the oppressed go free,

and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry

and bring the homeless poor into your house;

when you see the naked, to cover him,

and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

Then shall your light break forth like the dawn,

and your healing shall spring up speedily;

your righteousness shall go before you;

the glory of the Lord shall be your rearguard.

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;

you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'

If you take away the yoke from your midst,

the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,

if you pour yourself out for the hungry

and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,

then shall your light rise in the darkness

and your gloom be as the noonday.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 112(111):4-5. 6-7. 8a, 9. R4a

A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

or: Alleluia.

A light rises in the darkness for the upright;

he is generous, merciful, and righteous.

It goes well for the man who deals generously and lends,

who conducts his affairs with justice.

He will never be moved;

for ever shall the upright be remembered.

He has no fear of evil news;

with a firm heart, he trusts in the Lord.

With a steadfast heart he will not fear.

Open-handed, he gives to the poor;

his justice stands firm for ever.

His might shall be exalted in glory.

Second reading

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

'I proclaimed to you the mystery of Christ crucified.'

I, when I came to you, brothers and sisters, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Gospel Acclamation

John 8:12

Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will have the light of life.

Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 5:13-16

'You are the light of the world.'

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, 'You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

'You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a 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 who is in heaven.'

Short reflection on the reading for today

With the images of salt and light, Jesus says what he expects from his followers. They don't need to be always thinking about their own interests, their own prestige, their own power. Even though they are a small group in the huge Roman Empire, they are the «salt» and the «light» that the world needs. "You are the salt of the world." The simple people of Galilee spontaneously knew what he meant. They knew what salt is good for: giving food flavour and conserving it from spoiling. Just so, we need to contribute to helping people find the savour in life. "You are the light of the world." Without sunlight, our world would stay dark and gloomy. Jesus' disciples can shine a light to probe the meaning of life, to walk with hope.

These metaphors have something vital in common. If the salt stays in the shaker, it doesn't do its proper work. Only when it dissolves in the food can it give flavour to what we eat. The same thing happens with light. If it stays closed up and hidden away, it can't enlighten anyone. Only when it shines out in the dark can it illuminate and guide. A church isolated from the world can be neither salt nor light.

Pope Francis called on Catholics to "go out to the margins." He preferred a church that is "bruised and dirty because it has been out on the streets" to one that is "clinging to its own security, caught up in a web of procedures." We can't hunker down in our structures with passive hope. The Gospel invites us to run the risk of meeting face to face with others. It wants to promote culture of encounter, because what our church needs today is to heal wounds and to warm hearts.