

Meditations: Tuesday of the Tenth Week of Ordinary Time

Some reflections that can assist our prayer during the tenth week of Ordinary Time.

- Illuminating the darkness
- Anchoring ourselves in Christ
- Salt preserves and flavours

GOD OUR Lord invites us to participate in the mission of bringing joy and peace to every corner of the

earth. *You are the salt of the earth [...] You are the light of the world (Mt 5:13-14)*. He gives us the ability to illuminate the darkness and give flavour to what is flavourless. We don't bring about these changes on our own: Christ uses us as instruments. Just before healing a blind man, He says, *As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world (Jn 9:5)*. This is no easy adventure, not even for Jesus, who gave Himself to us in all his human and divine perfection. That might be why we find it so helpful to thank Him for inviting us to fill our world with light and our lives with flavour, in spite of our many mistakes.

"Think not then, He says, that you are drawn on to ordinary conflicts, or that for some small matters you are to give account. You are the salt of the earth."^[1] The mission is such that we want to be able to draw on his company and advice all the time. It is

in our best interest, undoubtedly, to do his will. Thus we will be able to help every soul. There are no set formulas, and only God knows what each person needs at each moment. He sends us to spread his light in every situation and every home. Sometimes, perhaps, the darkness will frighten us, but we know that a single light, however small, can make the darkness bearable. A lighted match in a dark room may not give much light, but even so, the flame cuts through the darkness and can be seen from a distance.

Let the light of your face shine on us, O Lord (Ps 4). In the darkness that sometimes fills the world, the light of Christ that we reflect is even more visible. Our hope in God, who stays with us, inspires us to devote our best efforts to this task. Even if, at times, it seems fruitless, we know that no seed is ever lost in this divine sowing of peace and joy.

EXPERIENCING OUR limitations sometimes causes us to doubt the effectiveness of our collaboration with the Holy Spirit's mission. These moments should help us anchor ourselves and our task in Christ, our rock. "To be sure, those who believe in Jesus do not lead lives of perpetual sunshine, as though they could be spared suffering and hardship, but there is always a bright glimmer there, lighting up the path that leads to fullness of life."^[2]

"Filling the world with light, being the salt and light — that was how our Lord described the mission of his disciples," St. Josemaria wrote: "to bring to the ends of the earth the good news of God's love."^[3] When we sow with Christ, the growth can seem slow and the fruit insufficient. But to Him every short prayer and tiny sacrifice is a triumph. It does not

take great things to quench his thirst. A slight excuse is enough for Him to save a thief (cf. *Lk 23:42*), multiply his grace (cf. *Mt 14:19*), and forgive betrayal (cf. *Mt 26:75*).

Jesus tells us, his apostles, the mission is limitless, and his words fill us with peace and courage: "For not to two cities, nor to ten or twenty, nor to a single nation am I sending you, as I sent the prophets; but to earth, and sea, and the whole world."^[4]

What He asks of us is not to let our weakness tarnish the brilliance of the mission. "The Christian is the salt and light of the world, not because he conquers or triumphs, but because he bears witness to God's love."^[5]

YOU ARE the salt of the earth. Salt gives flavour to food: "This image

reminds us that, through Baptism, our whole being has been profoundly changed, because it has been 'seasoned' with the new life which comes from Christ."^[6] In ancient times salt was also used to preserve food, and Christians are also called to preserve the faith we have received in order to pass it on to others.

One characteristic of salt is that, in the right dose, it does not call attention to itself. We do not praise the salt, but the meal: no one stops to say, "This salt is so good" when the food is well-prepared. Therefore, a disciple is salt when he "does not look for consensus and praise, but strives to be a humble, constructive presence, faithful to the teachings of Jesus who came into the world not to be served, but to serve."^[7]

We are not alone in our mission. "Jesus invites us not to be afraid to

live in the world, [...] the Christian cannot withdraw into himself or hide in the security of his own enclosure."^[8] Salt that has lost its flavour or hasn't been added to food is of little value: let us ask our Lady to fill us with the desire to share the flavour of a life close to Christ.

^[1] St. John Chrysostom, Homily 15 on the Gospel of Matthew, no. 10.

^[2] Pope Benedict XVI, Vigil with young people, 24-IX-2011.

^[3] St. Josemaria, *Christ is Passing By*, no. 147.

^[4] St. John Chrysostom, Homily 15 on the Gospel of Matthew, no. 10.

^[5] St. Josemaria, *Christ is Passing By*, no. 100.

^[6] St. John Paul II, II, Message for the XVII World Youth Day, 25-VII-2001.

^[7] here Pope Francis, Angelus, 9-II-2020.

^[8] here *Ibid.*

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