

9. February 2026

## Salt of the earth, light of the world

Note: According to the traditional liturgical calendar, today is the feast day of Saint Cyril of Alexandria. In his honour, the following Gospel is read, which we will meditate on today.

*Mt 5:13-16*

*You are salt for the earth. But if salt loses its taste, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled under people's feet. You are light for the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in people's sight, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven.*

In a way, the words of the Lord that we hear today are themselves like salt that can burn in our wounds. Who will not lament when they feel that salt is losing its flavour and the light of the Church is dimmed? Only a few boldly proclaim the truth. In a sense, the Word of God is being watered down to the point where it is "no longer good for anything", and is almost only being proclaimed in a "be nice to each other" sense. If the Church moves according to the criteria of what is "politically correct", then it no longer constitutes a sign of contradiction and fades into insignificance. Is it therefore surprising that, during the coronavirus crisis, the Church has often been seen by the political powers as irrelevant in the system, and treated in the same way?

What has happened that the great treasure of truth, the authoritative proclamation of the Word of God, the urgent call to conversion... has been so neglected? Thus the Church is becoming less and less able to offer guidance to people, and is therefore hardly seen as the "Teacher of the people". Not even she herself seems to consider herself as such. Unfortunately, a lukewarmness is not infrequently perceived that is difficult to bear.

The Word of God, on the other hand, has none of this lukewarmness. It shows people God's love and mercy, but without omitting the consequences of not choosing the way

of truth. It proclaims Jesus to us as the only Saviour of mankind and does not make any other religion its own way of salvation... It calls sin "sin", without making false concessions; and, at the same time, it points the way to the forgiveness offered to us on the Cross... It teaches us to live in the world; but without being of the world.

We could make this list much longer, and we would feel again and again a burning in our wounds, when we see the truth of God and love the authentic doctrine of the Church, and at the same time we have to compare it with so many wrong and confused things that are happening in the life of the Church today.

Grounded in the Word of God and in the authentic doctrine of the Church, we have to walk the path of holiness day by day. Each one of us is responsible for ensuring that the salt in our lives does not become unpalatable and that the light, which is to shine on the lampstand and give guidance to others, is not dimmed.

I think it is justified to be concerned and to question whether these clear words of the Lord in today's Gospel can still shake us and lead us to critical reflection. On the contrary, it seems that a large part of the Church is in a spiritual lethargy, lulled into an attitude of wanting to please the world, not to cause controversy and to swim with the current. Thank God, there are exceptions!

Let us ask the Lord to wake us all up, so that we take advantage of the brief time of our earthly life to do everything in our power to ensure that the salt does not lose its taste and the light does not die out, because, as Jesus says: *"if salt loses its taste, what can make it salty again?"*

We should at least try and, above all, ask the Holy Spirit to renew the Church, cleansing it of the unnecessary, the banal and the noxious, and bringing out the true treasures of the Church. Then perhaps we could reply to the Lord: "If it is impossible for men to restore the taste of salt, it should be possible for the Holy Spirit to do so. Isn't it? You, Lord, what do you think?"

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Meditation on the day's Gospel: <https://en.elijamission.net/jesus-wants-to-heal/>

