

# FIFTH Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 5, 2023



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**“Your light must shine before others,  
that they may see your good deeds  
and glorify your heavenly Father.”**

Matthew 5:16

## *The Light Of Service*

The prophet Isaiah inspires us with these words: “Light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday.” All of us celebrating the liturgy today praise God for these words of encouragement. Surely each of us knows the gloomy side of life, but today’s readings propose a brilliant antidote to misery: the light of service. Isaiah focuses on physical suffering, telling us to provide food, clothing, housing, and equal opportunity to those with limited resources. Moving beyond material needs, Saint Paul demonstrates how to proceed humbly when attending to people’s spiritual needs. Saint Matthew’s Gospel stirs us to bold action: whatever gifts we have, we must put them at the service of our communities. As Christians, we must engage with one another without holding back, letting our light shine before all.  
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## *Saints and Special Observances*

- Sunday:** Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time;  
Tu B’Svat (the Jewish new year of trees)  
begins at sunset
- Monday:** St. Paul Miki and Companions
- Wednesday:** St. Jerome Emiliani;  
St. Josephine Bakhita;  
International Day of Prayer and  
Awareness against Human Trafficking
- Friday:** St. Scholastica
- Saturday:** Our Lady of Lourdes;  
Blessed Virgin Mary;  
World Day of the Sick

## *Readings for the Week*

- Monday:** Gn 1:1-19; Ps 104:1-2a, 5-6, 10, 12, 24,  
35c; Mk 6:53-56
- Tuesday:** Gn 1:20 — 2:4a; Ps 8:4-9; Mk 7:1-13
- Wednesday:** Gn 2:4b-9, 15-17; Ps 104:1-2a, 27-28,  
29bc-30; Mk 7:14-23
- Thursday:** Gn 2:18-25; Ps 128:1-5; Mk 7:24-30
- Friday:** Gn 3:1-8; Ps 32:1-2, 5-7; Mk 7:31-37
- Saturday:** Gn 3:9-24; Ps 90:2-6, 12-13; Mk 8:1-10
- Sunday:** Sir 15:15-20; Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18,  
33-34; 1 Cor 2:6-10; Mt 5:17-37  
[20-22a, 27-28, 33-34a, 37]



## *Today's Readings*

- First Reading** — If you share your food with the hungry, provide housing for the homeless, then light shall break forth upon you (Isaiah 58:7-10).
- Psalm** — One who is just is a model for the righteous (Psalm 112).
- Second Reading** — My message to you, says Paul, was not clever words of wisdom but the proclamation of Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 2:1-5).
- Gospel** — You are the salt of the earth, the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16).



## *Catholic Prayer Corner*

### **Prayer in Time of Illness**

Lord Jesus,  
I believe that having passed through the gate  
of life in baptism,  
I will always have your protection and comfort.  
Yet today the pains of my illness threaten  
to overcome me and cause me to forget  
all the good things  
you have given me in this life.  
I pray in confidence that you would  
send forth your Spirit  
to refresh and revive me as you have  
always done in the past.  
May I continue to witness to your goodness  
in this life so that I may be with you at  
the heavenly banquet table in eternity.  
Amen. Alleluia.  
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## *A Low-Salt Faith*

Jesus uses two different examples of a good disciple--salt of the earth and light of the world. While these images seem to have little in common, there are similarities, the most obvious being that a little of either goes a long way. Just a pinch of salt can change the taste of food. Similarly, when we wake up in a dark room, one light bulb can be blinding. So also, a little faith can make a big difference. The faith of little children can bring their parents back to the Church. The way we live our faith can speak even louder.

Isaiah gives us some hints in the first reading when he writes about feeding the hungry and giving shelter to the homeless and clothes to the poor. When someone has so much faith that it shows in their actions, as Isaiah puts it, "Your light shall break forth like the dawn." But we sometimes get things backwards. If we do the things Isaiah tells the people to do, we might think that the deeds will give us faith. But faith is the source of those actions, not the result. If we truly believe in God's love for us, and we believe that God lives in the people around us, especially the poor, then we will want to show our love by caring for each other.

When we do have faith, we don't have to worry about how people react to us. Like St. Paul in the second reading, we don't need to be dramatic or full of worldly wisdom. As he preached the wisdom of Christ who died on the cross and was raised from the dead by the power of the Spirit, he let people see that power in the lives of other believers as well as his own life.

But if we don't have faith, then we are like the salt that has lost its flavor. A low-salt diet may be good for us; but a low-salt faith, instead of making things better, would make them worse. Without faith in God's love for us, we would not respond with love of our own. We could still be a good person, but we would not be a very good disciple. We could not spread the faith if we didn't have it ourselves.

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## *Treasures From Our Tradition*

As soon as Christmas ends, people begin planning for Easter! Originally, the source of our Paschal Triduum was but a single liturgy extending from Saturday sundown to sunrise on Easter Sunday. The two days leading up to the liturgy were days of fast, not only for the elect, but for the church preparing to baptize them. A fifth-century pope explained that the church imitated the apostles, who were in hiding with their grief from the arrest of Jesus, and therefore sacraments, even penance, were forbidden.

Inevitably, though, people wanted to come together, and so eventually a Liturgy of the Word developed for Good Friday. This was the first step toward today's shape of the Triduum, and gradually new ideas were embraced, including the veneration of the cross and a simple Communion service. Interestingly, the Word remained central, since we know that in those days the pope did not receive Communion at this liturgy, even though the faithful had that option. In the other churches of Rome, priests and people received Communion under both species. Although the custom of Communion on Good Friday took hold, it did not endure past the Middle Ages. The central liturgies of the year slowly unraveled and disappeared from parish life. Remember that there were no seminaries in those days, and books were a rare luxury. Most priests could only manage to celebrate a simple "low" Mass, and few parishes could afford the ritual books that would guide a priest through the complex forms. Holy Week remained important in private devotion, but for a time the liturgies virtually disappeared.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

## *Our Fascinating Faith*

### *Our Lady of Lourdes (February 11)*

On February 11, 1858, fourteen-year-old Bernadette



Soubirous, the oldest of nine children in a poor family from Lourdes, France, saw Our Lady in the first of eighteen apparitions. At the grotto of Massabielle, Bernadette saw "a small lady in white" who invited her to return each day. During the visions the Lady communicated a message of penance, instructed Bernadette to dig

so that a spring of water began to flow, requested that a chapel be built there at the grotto, and eventually identified herself by saying "I am the Immaculate Conception." Throughout these apparitions, Our Lady addressed Bernadette in a formal way, treating the humble girl with dignity. In 1862 the authenticity of the apparitions was confirmed by Church authorities. The Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes was recognized worldwide in 1907. Lourdes became a place of pilgrimage for thousands of the faithful; their faith and the faith of many others was revitalized through the story of a simple young girl from rural France.

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## *Giving*

When you give, see that you give that which multiplies in giving.

—Raymond Lull

## *Popularity*

Avoid popularity if you would have peace.

—Abraham Lincoln



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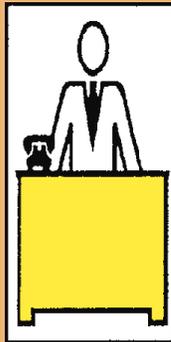
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