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Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

SALT OF THE EARTH AND LIGHT OF OUR LIVES!

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

Today's Gospel

Jesus said to his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father."

MATTHEW 5:13-16

Reflection

This reading from Matthew's gospel is rich in imagery and imagination. The two images provide insight into how we might view our own lives. Salt is the first image, used to reveal how we are to be spice in our world. Our faith ought

not be dull and uninviting; rather, our lives must be filled with the joy, love, and fullness we find in Christ Jesus.

The next image compels us to be light in the world. Our light is to shine before others, so they understand that our very lives are giving glory to God. Jesus uses the example of not putting a lamp under a bushel basket; it needs to be on the lampstand where it provides light in the house. What these images of light reveal to me is the desire for each of our lives to be beacons of light; light emanating from the source of all light – God.

A number of times I've been in caves where once the flashlight was turned off, I was cast in total darkness; I could not even see my hand in front of my eyes. This utter and complete darkness is a metaphor for what it is like when we don't have Jesus in our lives. It can be scary and almost place one in a state of paralysis. On one of those visits to a cave, in the Sierra Mountains, the guide turned the flashlight off and asked us to sit down. All of us did so, yet when the flashlight was turned on, I was alarmed to see a rather deep drop-off just behind where I was sitting. It was a bit frightening to think that if I had sat back just a bit more, I would have fallen down into the cave. It is so vivid in my memory that when I juxtaposed losing my way out of the light of God, I would experience just this sense of dread and loss.

We are called to be salt of the earth and light in the world. It is a way for us to show our faith in action and a beacon to draw others closer to God. We are each called to preach the gospels with our lives and extend the life-giving message of Jesus so that others might come to know and believe.



Photo by mkupiec7

For Pondering

- Have you ever experienced a time of darkness in your life -- either figuratively or in reality? How did you find your way back to the light? How has God's light called you back home?
 - What imagery speaks to you? How do you not hide or cover the light within you even in difficult times?
 - How does your own life speak to the glory of God?
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For Prayer

*O God of everlasting light,
may we never cease to give glory to you.
Let us be beacons of light that point to you in all that we do.
Like the lighthouses along the coast,
may God's light steer you on the path of life to which you are called.
Amen.*

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