

YEAR OF FAITH

Newsletter -no 4



Enter the Year of Faith no. 4

We cannot accept that salt should become tasteless or the light be kept hidden (cf. Mt 5:13-16).

HOW TO USE BULLETIN No. 4

In this second bulletin to help us work through the Year of Faith we want to focus on the command of Jesus that we are to be “the salt of the earth” (Mt. 5, 13)

Consider what salt is to your food. It brings out the flavors that your tongue might miss. Salt brings out the deep reality of life.

By giving attention to what it means to live and believe the Year of Faith is a call to renewal and growth. In many parts of the world the Christian faith has grown sluggish and many people have walked away.

This year is a summons to give to our fellow citizens the Good News that is Jesus Christ. The good News that is his Church.



REFLECTIONS ON THE YEAR OF FAITH

This week, begin your reflections on those moments where the salt (i.e., the very life and spirit of Jesus Christ) has become tasteless.

Perhaps we have become so busy and are working so hard that we have given up the practice of daily prayer and sharing in the Sunday Eucharist.

Perhaps we have all sorts of excuses to avoid helping the

poor with their many faces. We have insulated ourselves from sharing our heart and our concern for others.

Perhaps we have become so self-satisfied in our life of faith that we resent anyone who challenges us. Maybe we have grown deaf to the teachings of Jesus. We do religious things but we will not allow it to take root in our lives.

What other times have we become “tasteless?”

We must rediscover a taste for feeding ourselves on the Word of God

The people of today can still experience the need to go to the well, like the Samaritan woman, in order to hear Jesus, who invites us to believe in him and to draw upon the source of living water welling up within him (cf. Jn 4:14). We must rediscover a taste for feeding ourselves on the word of God, faithfully handed down by the Church, and on the bread of life, offered as sustenance for his disciples (cf. Jn 6:51). Indeed, the teaching of Jesus still resounds in our day with the same power: “Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life” (Jn 6:27).

(The Door of Faith # 3)



I have spoken of the need to rediscover the journey of faith so as to shed ever clearer light on the joy and renewed enthusiasm of the encounter with Christ. *Pope Benedict XVI*

Belief in Jesus Christ, then, is the way to arrive definitively at salvation.



The Year of Faith is a summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the one Saviour of the world.

(The Door of Faith #6)

The question posed by his listeners is the same that we ask today: “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” (Jn 6:28). We know Jesus’ reply: “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent” (Jn 6:29).

(The Door of Faith # 3)

REDISCOVER WHERE YOU CAN BE SALT.....

Be the salt that Jesus has sent us to be by nourishing your life with daily prayer. Prayer must never be for the moments when we 'feel' like it. It must be the very air we breathe.

Carve out for yourself a time for daily prayer. It may be in the quiet moment of your morning coffee or when in those moments when you are waiting in the van to pick up the kids from one of their functions.

Develop the habit of daily prayer. The holy women and men from our past knew from long experience that if there is no sustained habit of daily prayer there probably will be only a minimal prayer life.

Taste the salt that Jesus was talking about in your daily prayer. Be the salt that Jesus has sent us to be by our love for the poor with their many faces. It must be the very air we breathe.



Be the salt that Jesus spoke about by picking up the phone and calling a friend (or co-worker) who is going through active cancer treatment.

These are the moments for daily prayer that are best for me.....

We must rediscover a taste for feeding ourselves on the word of God, faithfully handed down by the Church, and on the bread of life, offered as sustenance for his disciples (cf. Jn 6:51).

(The Door of Faith # 3)

If we do not eat we will grow very weak and soon perish. When we push it hard we feel hunger pains. We need to eat! How many parents have said over their children, not speaking but energetically eating, "Were they ever hungry!"

Every day try to read one small section from the Gospels of Jesus in your copy of the New Testament. Take only a small part but chew it over well, pray over it and allow it to sink into your consciousness.

Look to make the Sunday readings at the Sunday Eucharist and the homily a moment to encounter Jesus. This is very much a time to nourish our body and spirit.

Seek spiritual nourishment in spiritual reading and listening to CD's that have hymns and spiritual music. Allow the poetry and the melody of the words to flow through your veins.

May you be surprised how spiritually hungry you actually are.

Eat deeply of the Word of God.



Indeed, the teaching of Jesus still resounds in our day with the same power: "Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life" (Jn 6:27).

WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE DOING THE WORK OF GOD?

When people arrive at a sincere moment in their relationship with God they ask the question: What do I have to do?

Jesus never gave a bunch of hoops that you have to jump through to be right with God. He never outlined a recipe to follow: 'Do all the right things and you will make it to heaven.' The way to God is through faith. But faith is never something that happens in our heads.

Faith is the living and the doing of the Gospel of Jesus. It is personal. It is communal but it is always active.

Live every day with prayer. Seek to be attentive to the Holy Spirit moving in your own life. Listen to the Holy Spirit moving within your parish community.

Seek to have something good to say and do about other people. We may not understand why some people have such a hard time finding work but how can we walk with them in their struggles?

See the good that your fellow parishioners are doing this very week. They certainly do not organize like you do but are not their good efforts front and center of what we see happening in our parish?

Do the work of Jesus. Be his living hands within your own home, at your place of work and with the people whom you coffee with on Saturday morning.

Belief in Jesus Christ is lived out in our daily life. It is here that we are the salt of the earth.

PRAYER TO FOCUS

What is really important?

God, help me to focus on what is really important.

Help me to focus on what will give life.

Help me to focus on what promotes justice and peace.

Help me to let go of all the little things that do not matter.

Help me to let go of legalism that blocks your spirit.

God, you are my Mother, my Father;
You love me.

Help me to trust in your plan-- your plan for life,

your plan for the fullness of life for everyone.



God, help us to focus on what is really important.
Help us to focus on what will give life.

Help me to focus on what promotes justice and peace.