



**DIOCESE OF HAMILTON**

700 King Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8P 1C7

## Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time Children's Liturgy of the Word

In the readings from the Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year A, Jesus chooses two of the most ordinary realities of daily life: salt and light. In the ancient world, salt was precious. It preserved food and gave flavour. But salt only works when it comes into contact with what it touches. If it stays in the jar, it is useless. Light works the same way. A lamp was not meant to be admired; it was meant to be placed on a stand so others could see. A hidden light may be safe, but it fulfills no purpose.

Jesus is telling us something important about discipleship: faith that remains private, comfortable, or hidden loses its power. We are not meant to possess faith quietly; we are meant to share it through the way we live.

The first reading from Isaiah makes this very concrete. God rejects a faith that focuses only on religious observance while ignoring human need. True worship, Isaiah says, is feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and welcoming the poor. When God's people live this way, "your light shall rise in the darkness." Mercy becomes the visible sign of God's presence.

Saint Paul, in the second reading, reminds us that this light does not come from human brilliance or persuasive speech. When he preached in Corinth, he came in weakness and fear, relying not on himself but on the power of God. The Gospel shines not through strength, but through humility and trust in Christ crucified.

Finally, in the Gospel, Jesus concludes: you are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world. Not someday, not only the saints—now. Our good works are not meant to draw attention to us, but to point beyond us, so that others may give glory to the Father.

## Background

**Isaiah 58:7–10** addresses a community tempted to reduce religion to ritual observance. Isaiah insists that authentic fasting is relational and ethical: feeding the hungry, sheltering the oppressed, and restoring human dignity. Light becomes a metaphor for God's presence breaking forth when the people align their lives with God's concern for the poor. Divine favour is not automatic; it flows from covenant fidelity expressed in concrete acts of compassion.

**Psalms 112** describes the blessed life of one who fears the Lord, marked by generosity, justice, and trust. Light shines "in the darkness" not as private virtue but as public witness. Stability and confidence arise from a heart shaped by mercy. This psalm functions as a lived portrait of Isaiah's teaching.

**1 Corinthians 2:1–5** recalls Paul's initial preaching in Corinth, emphasizing weakness, fear, and reliance on the cross rather than rhetorical brilliance. Faith must rest on God's power, not human wisdom. The paradox is clear: divine light shines most clearly through human limitation when Christ crucified is proclaimed.

**Matthew 5:13-16** Jesus uses two everyday images—salt and light—to define the vocation of his followers. Salt preserves and gives flavour; light reveals and guides. Discipleship is inherently public and missionary. Good works are not for self-glorification but lead others to glorify the Father. The Church does not generate its own light; it reflects the light of Christ through a life shaped by the Beatitudes.

Across the readings, light emerges as a unifying symbol of God's presence made visible through a transformed people. Authentic faith: expresses itself in works of mercy (Isaiah), forms a stable and generous character (Psalm), relies on God's power, not self-confidence (Paul), and becomes a public witness that glorifies God (Gospel).

The liturgy invites the Church to examine whether its prayer, proclamation, and service truly allow Christ's light to shine before the world.

## The Liturgy

### Procession from the main Church

After the opening prayer, when all are seated, the leaders come forward and stand facing the altar.

**Priest:** (in these or similar words)

**Dear children, Jesus tells us that we are very important in the world. Go with your leaders and listen carefully to what Jesus is telling you. Go in peace.**

Once most of the children have formed a procession, the leader with the book proceeds to the celebration site. The second leader usually walks behind the children. Upon arrival at the CLoW room, the leader places the book on the prepared table.

### Welcome.

The leaders assist the children in sitting and preparing. **Begin with the Sign of the Cross.** Help the children think and connect their actions as they touch their foreheads, shoulders, and stomachs. The leader may offer the following prayer, in these or similar words.

**Jesus, thank you for loving us. Help us be kind and helpful today. Help our light shine for others. Amen.**

**Let us begin.**

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Amen.**

Invite the children to listen to the readings. Proclaiming all the readings is unnecessary; however, the Gospel is required.

## READINGS

### FIRST READING

Isaiah 58.6-10++

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Thus says the Lord:

"Is this not the fast that I choose:

to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them,  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

"Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you,  
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and he will say, 'Here I am.'

"If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,  
if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday."

The word of the Lord.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 112.4-5, 6-7, 8a-

**R.** Light rises in the darkness for the upright.

Light rises in the darkness for the upright:  
gracious, merciful, and righteous.

It is well with those who deal generously and lend,  
who conduct their affairs with justice. **R.**

For the righteous will never be moved;  
they will be remembered forever.  
Unafraid of evil tidings;  
their heart is firm, secure in the Lord. **R.**

That person's heart is steady and will not be afraid.  
One who has distributed freely, who has given to the poor;  
their righteousness endures forever;  
their name is exalted in honour. **R.**

## SECOND READING

## 1 Corinthians 2.1-5

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

When I came to you, brothers and sisters,  
I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you  
in lofty words or wisdom.

For I decided to know nothing among you  
except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

And I came to you in weakness and in fear  
and in much trembling.

My speech and my proclamation  
were not with plausible words of wisdom,  
but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power,  
so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom  
but on the power of God.

The word of the Lord.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

## GOSPEL

Matthew 5.13-16

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples:

"You are the salt of the earth;  
but if salt has lost its taste,  
how can its saltiness be restored?  
It is no longer good for anything,  
but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

"You are the light of the world.

A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.

No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it under the bushel basket,  
but on the lampstand,  
and it gives light to all in the house.

In the same way,

let your light shine before human beings,  
so that they may see your good works  
and give glory to your Father in heaven."

The Gospel of the Lord.

## REIMAGINED READINGS FOR CHILDREN

The reimagined readings below are intended for use after the children have heard the original reading. The intent is to allow the children to listen to the original reading and help them better understand it (not replace it).

Read at a minimum, the Gospel, which has the highest priority, and then ask the children to sit down. You can then read the reimagined reading. Leaders may not have time to read all of the reading. If time permits, after the Gospel, proclaim the Psalm, and then the first reading, if time permits.

Reimagined readers must always remain faithful to the original Scripture's intent, making it age-appropriate for children to understand.

### FIRST READING

God says to his people:

When you share your food with the hungry,  
when you help people who are lonely or sad,  
and when you are kind to those who need help,  
something wonderful happens.

Your life becomes bright—  
like the sun rising in the morning.  
God's light shines through you  
when you choose to love others.



## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Leader: The response is: God's light shines through us!

Children: Repeat, God's light shines through us!

Leader: When we are kind and generous,

Children: God's light shines through us!

Leader: When we help others and do what is right,

Children: God's light shines through us!

Leader: When we trust God and are not afraid,

Children: God's light shines through us!

## SECOND READING

Saint Paul tells us:

I did not come to show how smart or important I was.

I came to tell everyone about Jesus

and how much God loves them.

God's power does not come from big words.

It comes from trusting God

and loving like Jesus.

## GOSPEL

Jesus said to his friends:

You are the salt of the earth.

You make the world better when you are kind.

You are the light of the world.

You help others see goodness and love.

No turns on a lamp and hides it.

They put it where everyone can see.

So when you do good things,  
people will see God's love shining through you  
and thank God.

## Reflection

The leader may offer this reflection in these or similar words. Remember the amount of time available to return to the main assembly. The leader may wish to reduce the number of questions. An excellent place to begin is the question:

**What did you hear?** Allow children to respond.

Today, Jesus tells us something very important about you. He does not say this only to grown-ups, priests, or teachers. He says it to all of us—even children. Jesus says: “You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world.” Let's talk about that.

**Who likes salty food—like fries or popcorn?** (Pause for answers)

Salt makes food taste better. But salt only works when it is used. If salt stays in the shaker and never comes out, does it help the food? Yes or no?

**Does salt help if it stays in the jar?** (No)

Jesus is saying: When you are kind, when you share, when you help, you make the world better, just like salt makes food better.

**Is it being salt when you help clean up at home?** (Yes) Every kind choice makes the world a little better. Now let's talk about light.

**When it's dark, and you can't see, do you want the lights off or on?** (On)

Jesus says no one turns on a lamp and hides it under a bed. That would be silly! You turn it on so everyone can see. Your light shines when:

- you are kind instead of mean,
- you forgive instead of getting back at someone,
- you help someone who is sad or lonely.

**Is saying kind words shining your light?** (Yes)

**Is pushing someone shining your light?** (No)

When you do good things, people don't just see you— they see God's love.

Here is the really good news: You do not have to be big to shine. You do not have to be famous. You just have to love like Jesus. Every day you have chances to be:

- salt—making the world better,
- light—helping others see love.

**Who can think of one kind thing they can do this week to let their light shine?**

(Invite a few answers if appropriate.) Jesus believes in you. He says you are the light of the world. So go and shine—because the world needs your light.

Following the reflection, the prayer leader invites everyone to stand to profess their faith. Recite the Creed or use the sample below to ask the children to respond.

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### The Creed

Depending on the time, a simple profession of faith may be made (see below).

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth?

All: I believe.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, who gave his life for us?

All: I believe.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and gives us everlasting life?

All: I believe.

Leader: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it.

## Prayer of the Faithful

Leaders may begin the intercessions by announcing the needs they know. The leader may need to repeat and paraphrase the petition, concluding it with the cue for the response: 'We pray.' All respond to each petition by saying, "Lord, hear our prayer." Sample intercessions are below.

The intercessions are said. The Leader introduces them, and an assistant announces them.

The leader says:

**Let us pray to God, who asks us to shine with love and kindness. After each intercession, we all say, 'Lord, hear our prayer.'**

**R: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Assistant:

**For the Church, that we may share God's love with everyone by what we say and do. We pray to the Lord. R:**

Assistant:

**For our Pope, Bishops, Priests, Deacons, and all leaders, that they may guide others with wisdom and care. We pray to the Lord. R:**

Assistant:

**For our families, teachers, and friends, that our homes and schools may be places of kindness and forgiveness. We pray to the Lord. R:**

Assistant:

**For ourselves, that this week we may choose one kind thing to do each day. We pray to the Lord. R:**

Assistant:

**In the quiet of our hearts, we offer our own prayers... [pause]. We pray: Come, Lord Jesus. R:**

The Leader says:

**Loving God, hear our prayers. Help us follow Jesus and let our light shine each day. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## Return to the church

Ask the children to return to the main assembly. Ask them to return quietly and reflect on what they have heard and what they are now doing. Be mindful of children who may have difficulty finding their families.

## You are the Salt and Light!



Jesus says we are the salt of the earth. Have you ever tasted food that wasn't salty enough? It can taste pretty bland. But do you notice when food has the right amount of salt? Usually we don't think about it. It's kind of hiding in the food and making it taste good. Jesus wants us to be like the "salt" in the world, with the goodness and truth that He gives us.

Jesus also says that we are the light of the world. Can you imagine a completely dark world: no sun or lights or anything? It would be pretty scary. You'd never know what was happening or where you were going. That's what the world can be like for people who don't have the light of God's truth. It's our job to bring the truth to the world so that everyone can see that God loves them.

We have to bring God's light everywhere we go. But we must be gentle with people who don't understand the truth. Otherwise it would be like shining a light in someone's eyes, and they wouldn't be able to see anything. We need to start out like little candles, lighting the way so that people can follow us toward God.

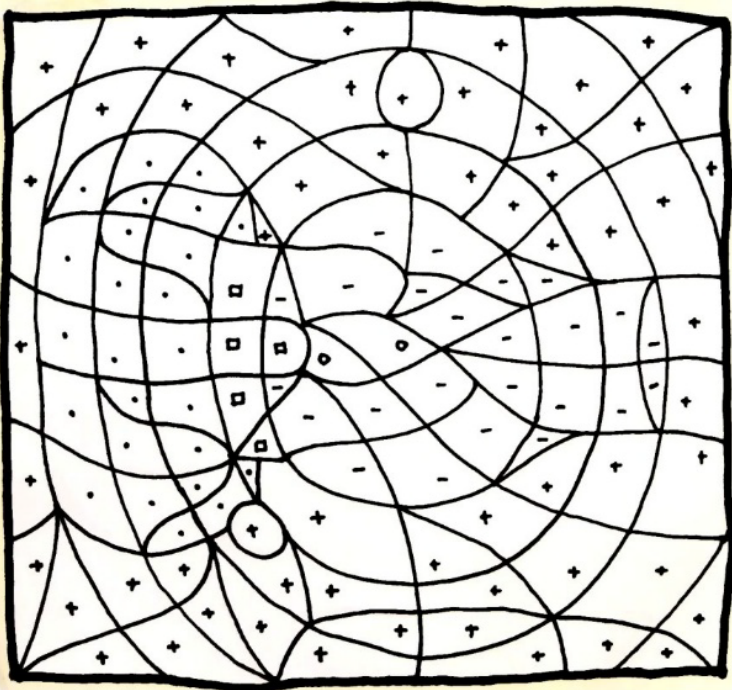


Answers to Cross-word Puzzle:  
Across: 4. must 8. earth 9. you 13. mountain 14. all 16. light 18. so 19. house 20. taste 21. to  
Down: 1. city 2. Jesus 3. are 5. said 7. hidden 10. world 11. salt 12. basket 15. loses 17. good 18. set

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## The Kids' Bulletin

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
February 8th, 2026



Matt 5:13-16

What did Jesus tell us we should be like?  
Colour in the spaces according to the code to find out!

- + blue
- white
- ◻ brown
- orange
- red

Readings: Lectionary Sundays and Solemnities,  
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