

Chapter 12

Salt of the Earth Light of the World



Who is the salt of the earth and the light of the world?



Jesus, the saviour of the world, is the *Sanatana Guru* (Eternal Teacher). He explained, interpreted and clarified the divine laws in a way that no one else ever taught. Jesus, who taught the people on the sea shores, on the hills, on the streets and in the synagogues, explained the secrets of the kingdom of God to the disciples.

Jesus likened his disciples to salt and light through his teachings, giving precise instructions on how to live.



Jesus says: "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 underfoot.

You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. 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 others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Mt 5:13-16).

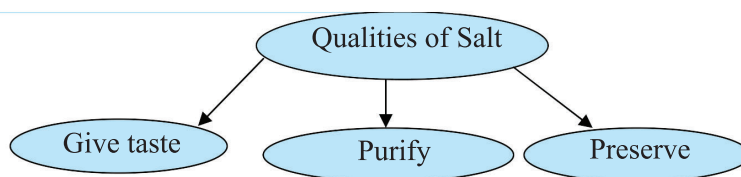
Salt of the Earth



? What are the qualities of salt?
Why is the Christian likened to salt?

Salt was used symbolically in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. **The Israelites were commanded to add salt to the public sacrifices, burnt offerings, sin offerings, and incense offered to God (Ezek 43:24).** Salt was used as a symbol of communion and covenant between God and man (2 Chr 13:5).

In the New Testament the expression "Have salt in yourselves" (Mk 9:50) refers to a covenant relationship with God. Jesus warns that discipleship should not be like salt that has lost its saltiness (Lk 14:34). "You are the salt of the earth" (Mt 5:13), through these words Jesus explains the special qualities that his disciples should have.



1. Adding Taste to Life

Salt is a substance that gives taste to food. Christians are called to add flavour to the world like salt. Their words and deeds should bring joy to the world. This is the scripture upon which the disciples of Christ must base themselves to be savoured by the world.

"Love one another just as I have loved you" (Jn 13:34).



"Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody, I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat"

(St. Mother Teresa 1910-1997).

To Give Taste to Life

- Care for bedridden patients
- Protect the orphans
- Donate food, clothes etc.
- Build good family relationships
- Strengthen the mentally weak
- Give hope to the hopeless

2. Purifies Life

Another quality of salt is its ability to purify things. Impurity exists in sinful human nature and in the created universe. Christians are responsible for purifying them. We have a duty to cleanse our brothers and sisters from evil by living in the spirit of God's kingdom.

We, the disciples of Jesus, are bound to purify the world by pouring out the spirit of virtue wherever sin grows. We become the true salt by freeing individuals living in difficult conditions and environments influenced by evil and by guiding them towards holiness.

3. Protect Lives

Another quality of salt is that it helps to preserve food. Salt can prevent destructive chemical reactions and thereby preserve food. The duty of the disciples of Jesus is to protect the society by standing up for the values and working with good conviction and courage in these days when materialism is flourishing and social evils are gaining strength.

To Protect Life

- Parents should protect their children and children should protect their parents.
- Stand up for those who are denied justice.
- Be the defenders of the poor who are deprived of their dwelling place.
- Rehabilitate the people addicted to alcohol and drugs and bring them back to life.
- Be considerate to the neglected aging people.
- Liberate the lonely from loneliness.

Light of the World



What are the functions of light?

Why is it important for Jesus' disciples to be beacons of light?

Light is another powerful symbol that Jesus uses to describe his disciples. In the Old Testament Light and Fire are signs of God's presence.

To Purify Life

- Family counseling (individual counselling can be done)
- Deaddiction systems can be improved
- Prison ministry can be continued

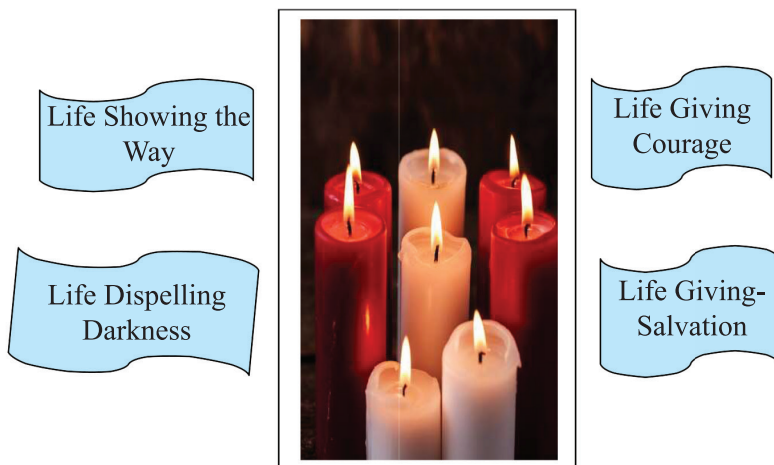


What does it mean by saying that "You are the salt of the earth?"



Divide into groups of three and discuss how the disciples can serve as the salt of the earth based on the Scripture verses given below. Let each group prepare an action plan and present it to the class.

- **Lk 23:43** - (Group1)
- **Lk19:9-** (Group2)
- **Lk8:7** - (Group3)



1. Life Showing the Way

When Jesus told his disciples that you are the light of the world, he meant that his disciples should be filled with the spirit of God. Those who are filled with God's spirit are like a lamp that gives light. The lamp shines not for itself, but for others. When there is light, the path to the goal is clear.

The true disciples of Jesus are those who guide others in this worldly life. Filled with the light of Jesus, our lives, words and actions should be light to others. Then the light within us will guide others also.

2. Life Dispelling Darkness

Light can dispel darkness. We have a duty to spread the light of goodness to those who live in the darkness of sin. War, terrorism, migration, aggression, injustice, exploitation, drug abuse, sexual anarchy, marginalization etc. are becoming daily occurrences. We should constantly strive to eradicate such dark forces from our families and society with the spirit of Christ.

3. Life Giving Courage to Others

Jesus tells us "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" (Mt 8:26). Jesus is our hope, this brightens and emboldens our lives. This light always gives alertness and courage. In the same way, our lives as disciples of Jesus should be a source of awakening and courage to others. At home, in our locality, place of study, work place etc. we are called to bring awareness and courage to the lives of others through honest behaviour and loving actions. Example: To give courage to those who are in debt and failed in studies, to encourage



From the Holy Scriptures, find the situations in which God's presence is presented in the form of light, write it down on a chart and display it in the class (Ex 3:2, Ex 13:22, Ezek 1:4, Acts 2:3, Jn 8:12, Mt 4:16, Jn 1:5).

"The most terrible diseases are not tuberculosis and cancer, but I think the most terrible disease is being unwanted and unloved" (St. Mother Teresa).



How can you, as a disciple of Christ, work to eradicate the above darkness of neglect?

those who have stopped midway in life in despair, to move ahead, to comfort the sick.

4. Life Giving Salvation

By owning the salvation received through Jesus Christ, we must make sure to secure the salvation of others. **"I will give you as a light of the Nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth" (Is 49:6).** It signifies our great responsibility and mission. Continuous faith formation is necessary to delve deeper into the life of Jesus. "For we have become partners of Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end" (Heb 3:14). Thus, we are constantly called to proclaim Jesus the Savior as the light of the world.

Christians in Church and Society

1. A Life that Radiates the Light of Faith

In this age of ours, the transfer of faith must be done through us only.

"Faith is passed on, we might say, by contact, from one person to another, just as a candle is lighted from another" (Light of Faith, 37)

By doing this, the spread of faith occurs in the life of the Church. Consequently, the light of faith flows unceasingly from one generation to another. Through this process, everyone can experience Jesus and see his holy face. Through such transfer of faith, one can become a witness and a connecting link in an unbroken chain. Let St. Thomas, the Apostle, our father, be our inspiration and role model.

2. A Life that Radiates the Beauty of Divine Life

It is from those who lived according to the commandment of Jesus that we received faith, grow and live in faith. Each one of us who are members of the Church through Baptism is obliged to execute the commandment we received from Jesus to evangelise even to this day. **"We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know him who is true" (1 Jn 5:20)".** Having known God, who is eternally beautiful, we are called to spread divine life in others through his word and our lives.

We should be constantly striving for all to know Him and to accept Him as the only Saviour, become members of the

"All Christ's faithful are called to hand it on from generation to generation, by professing the faith, by living it in fraternal sharing, and by celebrating it in liturgy and prayer" (CCC 3).



"By being the light of the world how can we show the way to others?"

"Jesus Christ is the center of all things and the foundation for all things; he who does not know Him knows nothing about the world and nothing about himself"

(Blaise Pascal

1588-1651)
(YOUCAT 42).



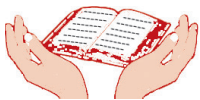
**St Thomas the
Apostle**

Church and become heirs to the Kingdom of Heaven. Let us not forget the fact that life in Jesus gives beauty and glory to life in this world and the next. Giving the lamp lit at Baptism, the priest says: "**May Jesus, the light of the world, be your guiding light**". Thus, we who are called to be the light of the Messiah, should glorify our heavenly Father with our good works. We should become the salt of the earth and the light of the world, so that seeing our daily life, many may glorify God.

My Convictions



1. Christians are called to add taste, to refine, and to preserve like salt.
2. Disciples of Jesus are those who should be the light to guide others, drive away the darkness and give courage and thereby help them to obtain salvation.
3. Knowing the eternally beautiful God, we are called to spread the divine life in others through the word of God and our life.



Let Us Read the Word of God

The Gospel According to
Luke Chapters 21-24



Let Us Illumine Our Hearts

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven"
(Mt 5:16).



My Resolution

As a disciple of Jesus, I will serve as the salt of the earth and the light of the world so that many may praise God.

What is heaven?

Heaven is the endless moment of love. Nothing more separates us from God, whom our soul loves and has sought our whole life long. Together with all the angels and saints we will be able to rejoice forever in and with God
(YOUCAT 158)

Testament of a Loving Father - Chavarul

"Days on which you have not rendered any good to others will not be reckoned in the book of life"

(St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara).



Describe what we must do to live according to the verse in Mt 5.16.

Reference Books

I. Abbreviations

CCC – Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1997.
YOUCAT–Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2011.

II. Second Vatican Council Documents

1. **Sacred Liturgy** -Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*
2. **Light of the Nations** - Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*
3. **The Church in the Modern World** - Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern world, *Gaudium et Spes*
4. **Divine Revelation, Word of God** Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*
5. **To the Nations**- Decree, On the Mission Activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes*
6. **Religious Freedom** -Declaration on Religious Freedom, *Dignitatis Humanae*

III. Encyclicals, Apostolic Exhortations

1. **The Light of Faith** - Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter, *Lumen Fidei*, 2013
2. **Praise be to You** - Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter, *Laudato Si*, 2015
3. **All Brothers**- Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter, *Fratelli Tutti*, 2020
4. **The Joy of the Gospel**- Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 2013
5. **The Joy of Love**- Pope Francis, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris Lætitia*, 2016
6. **Christ is Alive**-Pope Francis, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Christus Vivit*, 2019
7. **Preach the Gospel**- Pope Francis, Apostolic Constitution, *Praedicate Evangelium*, 2022