

Reflection for Bulletin for 02/05/2023

Jesus tells his followers that they are the “salt of the earth.” He then cautions, “but if salt loses its taste...it is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.”

I often fear that I have become salt that has lost its flavor, that it would be better if I were discarded, and that there was no hope for me to regain flavor. Part of why I fear I have lost my taste is because I so rarely do what Jesus and the prophet Isaiah instruct us, that which brings light into our being: to share bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and homeless, clothe the naked, and to not turn our back on our own...and to remove oppression, false accusation, and malicious speech.

When people I encounter on the streets ask me for money for food, I am usually mistrustful and lacking in generosity. When I see Facebook posts from Winter Outreach seeking help with comforting those without homes on the coldest nights, I keep scrolling. When I hear about injustice, I feel dismayed and move on. More often than not, I turn my back and justify it with claims of not wanting to enable those in need, or claims of overwhelm and confusion about what I could really do to help.

Deep within me, I believe Jesus has not given up on me. Jesus knows my misgivings, my hesitations, and my rationalizations for denying from the others in my flock what I have been gifted. My darkness is not darkness to God—God still sees my light.

Our God is a God of not only two, but seventy-seven chances (See Matthew 18:22). God continually forgives. *Yes, God can always make me salt again.* God paves my path with communities like St. Cronan and friends involved in various ministries that offer invitation after invitation to do the Lord’s work, so that I might choose among the many next times to share my light with others.

For us with hardening hearts, let us commit to letting our light shine out not only towards those who are well, but those who are unwell and in need (and, as Pope Francis recently instructed, to actively find where they are, for they are often hidden in the darkness).

So let us allow the words of that great spiritual to guide our upcoming actions:

“This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine...let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.”