



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
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Angelus: disciples of Christ not through words, but deeds

At midday the Holy Father appeared at the window of his study to pray the Angelus with the faithful and pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square. After the Marian prayer, the Pope reflected on the day's liturgy which, continuing with the Sermon on the Mount, highlights the words Jesus uses to describe the mission of His disciples. Jesus uses the metaphors of salt and light, and His phrase, as Francis underlined, refers to disciples of all times, and therefore to us too.

Jesus invites us to be a reflection of His light through the testimony of good works. He says: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father Who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). "These words underline that we are recognisable as true disciples of He who is the Light of the world, not through words, but rather by our works. In fact, it is above all our behaviour that – good or bad – leaves a sign in others. Hence the gift we have received implies a task and a responsibility: we must not keep this light of faith, which is in us by means of Christ and the action of the Holy Spirit, as if it were our own property. Instead, we are called to make it shine in the world, to give it to others through good works. And how the world needs the light of the Gospel that transforms, heals and guarantees salvation to those who welcome it! We must bring this light with our good works".

"The light of our faith, when it is given, is not extinguished; on the contrary, it is strengthened. Instead, it is weakened when we do not nurture it with love and works of charity. In this way the image of light encounters that of salt. This page from the Gospel tells us that, as Christ's disciples, we are also 'salt of the earth' (v.13). Salt is an element that, while imparting flavour, preserves food from alteration and corruption – in Jesus' time there were no refrigerators! Therefore, the mission of Christians in society is that of giving 'flavour' to life with the faith and love that Christ has given us, and at the same time keeping away the polluting germs of selfishness, envy, malicious gossip and so on. These germs spoil the fabric of our communities, which should instead shine as places of welcome, solidarity and reconciliation. To fulfil this mission, we ourselves must first be freed from the corrupting degeneration of worldly influences, which are contrary to Christ and to the Gospel; and this purification never comes to an end, but must be done continually, every day".

"Each one of us is called to be light and salt in the environment of his or her daily life, persevering in the task of regenerating humanity in the spirit of the Gospel and with the prospect of the Kingdom of God. May there always be the protection of Mary Most Holy, Jesus' first disciple and model of believers who live every day in the history

of their vocation and mission. May our Mother help us let ourselves always be purified and enlightened by the Lord, so that we in turn become 'salt of the earth' and light of the world", the Pope concluded.
