

From The Desk of Fr. Patrick

My dear friends,

This Sunday's Gospel gives us two powerful images that are simple, familiar, and yet deeply challenging: **salt** and **light**. Jesus looks at His disciples, ordinary people like us, and says, "You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:13-16). He does not say you should try to be, or you might become. He says, "**you are**". Our identity as Christians carries a mission.

Salt is small, but it makes a big difference. Most of us barely notice it, yet we use it every day. Salt **adds flavor**. Without it, food tastes bland and lifeless. In the same way, Christians are called to bring the "flavor" of Christ into the world — kindness in a harsh conversation, patience in traffic, honesty in business, compassion in a hurting family. A workplace, a home, or a community without love, mercy, and faith can feel empty. Our presence as believers should make life richer and more hopeful for others.

Salt also **preserves**. In the ancient world, salt kept food from spoiling. Today, disciples of Jesus help preserve what is good and holy in society: respect for life, the dignity of every person, the value of family, the importance of truth. We do this not by shouting the loudest, but by living with integrity and courage.

But Jesus gives a warning: "*If salt loses its taste... it is no longer good for anything.*" When we hide our faith, when we blend in so much that no one can see Christ in us, we lose our "saltiness." The world does not need more silent Christians. It needs faithful ones whose lives quietly but clearly reflect Jesus.

Jesus continues, "*You are the light of the world... your light must shine before others.*" Light is meant to be seen. A lamp under a basket is useless. Faith locked away only for Sunday morning cannot guide anyone. Our light shines through **good deeds** — helping a neighbor, forgiving someone who hurt us, volunteering, giving generously, praying for others, standing up for what is right. When people see these actions, Jesus says they will "*glorify your heavenly Father.*" Our lives become a way for others to discover God.

We do not live this mission alone. We are the mystical body, the Church, one body, one family. Together, our small acts of faith become a great light.

This connects beautifully with the **Annual Catholic Appeal 2026**, whose theme is: "**Together we bring light.**" As you know, this is my first Annual Catholic Appeal with you, and I truly encourage everyone to be generous. This appeal is about my identity as a Christian and the mission I carry in the family, parish, archdiocese and the world at large. It supports the day-to-day running of our archdiocese and strengthens the work of our parish ministries that teach the faith, serve the poor, form our children, support vocations, and bring Christ's light to those who feel forgotten.

When we give, we are being the **salt**, preserving and strengthening the life of the Church. When we give, we are being the **light**, helping the love of Christ reach beyond these walls into many lives we may never meet.

Next weekend, **February 14-15**, please come prepared to commit to the Annual Catholic Appeal with whatever you are able to give. No gift is too small when it is given with love. Your generosity is a real and practical way to let your light shine. May we never lose our saltiness. May we never hide our light. And together, may our lives lead others to glorify our Heavenly Father.

-Fr. Patrick Kizza