



**St. David's Parish
Monastery Road, Pantasaph,
Holywell. CH8 8PE**



Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time February 5, 2023

Salvation

Pope Benedict XVI

"The Lord God did not counter the threats of history with external power, as we human beings would expect according to the prospects of our world. His weapon is goodness. He revealed himself as a child, born in a stable. This is precisely how he counters with his power, completely different from the destructive powers of violence. In this very way he saves us. In this very way he shows us what saves."—Speech, Dec. 22, 2005

READINGS

1st Reading **Is 58:7-10**

2nd Reading **1 Cor 2:1-5**

Gospel **Mt 5:13-16**

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Introduction: The common theme of all three readings today is our mission to the world as salt and light.

Scripture lessons: In our first reading, the prophet Isaiah gives examples of how we are to allow the light of God to shine through us. *“Share your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own. Then light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday”* (58: 7, 10). St. Paul, in the second reading, tells us that our proclamation of faith will carry the Spirit and His power when we rely on the power and wisdom of God. Using two simple metaphors of salt and light in today’s Gospel, Jesus

outlines the role of Christians in this world. As a symbol of purity, salt was the common ingredient in sacrifices offered to God by Jews and pagans. In the ancient world it was the commonest of all preservatives, used to prevent putrefaction of meat, fish and fruits in pickles. Salt lends flavor to food items and was used to season and preserve food. A light is something which is meant to be seen. A lamp or light is a guide to make clear the way. A light serves also as a warning (e.g., red traffic lights which tell us to halt when there is danger ahead. Finally, light, particularly the sun's, gives warmth and heat.

In Search of Freedom; Against Reason Fallen Ill and Religion Abused- By Pope Benedict XVI

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In the first, the cohesiveness of the law, and the capacity of diverse communities to live together, seem suddenly to break apart. Somalia, it seems to me, presents a typical example of the breakdown of the sustaining power of law, and with it, the collapse into chaos and anarchy. The reasons for this dissolution of law and the capacity for reconciliation are many fold. We can list a few. In all these realms, the cynicism of ideology has benighted conscience. Side by side with the cynicism of ideology, and often closely bound together with it, is the cynicism of the interests and of big business, the ruthless exploitation of the earth's reserves. Here also is the good shoved aside by the expedient, and might setup in the place of right.

The other new phenomenon is terror. The threat that terror's network, (and/or that of common-garden organized crime) growing ever stronger and widespread, might gain access to atomic weapons and to biological weapons, constitutes an increasingly frightening danger. For as long as these destructive capabilities remained exclusively in the hands of the great powers, one could always hope that reason, and knowledge of the danger that their use would pose to their own people and state, would preclude their employment of these weapons systems.

Terror cannot be overcome by force alone. Granted that the defence of right and law against a violence that would destroy them, may and must, for its own part, according to circumstances, have recourse to carefully calibrated force, for the protection of law and right. But in order that force in the defence of law and right shall not be itself do wrong, it must subject itself to stringent measures. It

must pay heed to the causes of terror, which so often has its source in standing injustice, not addressed by effective measures. It must thus, by every means, address the elimination of that antecedent injustice. Above all is it important to vouchsafe forgiveness in advance, in order that the circle of violence may be broken. Where a merciless eye-for-an-eye obtains, there is no way to break free of violence. Acts of humanity, which have the power to break the circle of violence, which seek the human in the other and call out to his humanity, are essential, though they seem, at first glance, a waste of effort.

In all these cases it is important that no one particular power act as the champion of justice. All too easily can interest interfere with action, and contaminate one's view of what is just. Most urgent is a genuine *jus genitum*, free from hegemonic predominance and action which follows from it: only thus can it remain clear that what is at stake is the defense of collective law and right, and those also of them who stand, so to speak, on the other side. But in the contemporary clash between the great democracies and an Islamic-motivated terror, deeper questions come into play. Two great cultural systems with very different forms of power and moral orientation appear to be in conflict - the "West" and Islam.

But what is it, the West? And what is Islam? Both are multi-layered worlds with great internal differences - worlds that, in many ways, also intersect. In this respect, the crude antithesis West-Islam, does not apply. Some incline toward a greater deepening of opposition: Enlightened reason is set up against a fundamentalist-fanatical form of religion. Truly, the relationship between reason and religion is of the first importance in this situation, and the struggle for the right relationship belongs at the heart of our concern for the cause of peace. There are pathologies of religion - we see this; and there are pathologies of reason - we see this, too, and both pathologies are life threatening for peace - indeed, in an age of global power structures, for humanity as a whole.

God or the divine can make for the absolutizing of one's own power, one's own interests. But there are pathologies of reason totally disconnected from God. One would probably denominate Hitler as irrational. But the great explicators and executors of Marxism understood themselves very much as construction engineers, redesigning the world in accordance with reason. Perhaps the most dramatic expression of this pathology of reason is Pol Pot, where the barbarity of such a reconstruction of the world makes its most direct appearance. But the evolution of intellect in the West, also, inclines ever more

toward the destructive pathologies of reason. Was not the atom bomb already an overstepping of the frontier, where reason instead of being a constructive power, sought its potency in its capacity to destroy? (will Continue)

JAN 28/29 COLLECTIONS

Gift Aid collection	210.95
Loose cash	77.95
Total	288.90

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

**Sacrament of Confession at 11.30 am on Saturday
ON EMERGENCY ANY TIME 0741-749-4277**

Please Pray for our Sick

Ann Parry, Mary Toumaine, Patrick Nagle,
Phillip Mc Greavy, Anthony Parry

ANNIVERSARIES (Feb 5-11)

Mary Edith McCann, '96:, Cecil Pemberton, Cecil Patrick Pemberton 2022,
Robert Williams, Margaret Jones, '95: Fr. Clement Vahet, May Gateley,
'88: Ann Frances Smyth, Martin McCann, '95: Sr Paul Columba Ward,
Elizabeth Oliver, '13., Sr. Veronica, Mary Farley, '95: Annie Cahill,

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