**OT 5 A Lectionary Catechesis**

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| Jesus is forming his disciples; he is not just merely flattering them with titles of “salt” and “light”. The Church underscores this by giving us the fruits of this salt and light in the practice of the Corporal Works of Mercy in the first reading. A solid connection between the theology of fasting and stealing from the poor could be considered further. St. James’ attributes are the three sea shells (coquille: scallops) which he carried on pilgrimage, because when he begged for his food, the amount to fill the shell was all that he would accept. Pilgrims used this as model for fasting on their long prayer journeys to a holy site. |

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 58, 7-10**

Here we find the works of mercy, and the rationale is given connecting them with justice and charity. The passage further connects in vs. 9 that our prayers will be answered only because we have done these things. The prophet calls the works of mercy, “fasting,” because the person stops “feeding” the self, but rather the other. “Fasting” means to stop being preoccupied with one’s own needs, and to turn and care for the other. Vs. 10 encourages that it be done “lavishly”. There’s a whole attitude behind this way of doing things. The larger context of fasting is in the previous vss. 2-6.

**Vs. 7: CCC 2447** The Corporal Works of Mercy, taken from this verse, are listed here in the CCC under the 7th Commandment. Works of justice are works of charity; the section heading is entitled: Love for the Poor.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | Read aloud together and memorize the Corporal Works of Mercy.  What is the connection between the Works of Mercy and prayer? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | What work of mercy do you volunteer for in the church or in civic life?  What would a “lavishly” done work of mercy look like for you? Share a story. |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | Name how each work of mercy is ful- filled in your parish.  What would the parish community need to do to fulfill the others? |
| **WORSHIP** | Catholics used to refrain from meat on Fridays. What is the connection be- tween fasting and worship?  How are the Works of Mercy manifest at Mass? |

**First Reading**

**RESPONSORIAL: Psalm 112, 4-5. 6-7. 8-9**

The person who performs works of mercy will not be shaken, and he receives all the ancient blessings given to the just: prosperity, posterity, peace, and a good old age. These represent the deepest earthly yearnings of the heart. Spiritually we long for the divine presence, everlasting peace, authentic joy, and enduring love.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | Why did God make us?  What does the just person seek? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | How do you think about and practice stewardship?  What shakes our heart and what makes our hearts steadfast? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | The expression “lavishly he gives to the poor” appears here again. What are your charities?  How do works of charity “salt” and “light up” the world? |
| **WORSHIP** | Why is the just person said “to fear the Lord” and that that’s a good thing?  Why do we trust in the Lord? |

**Responsorial Psalm**

**SECOND READING: I Corinthians 2, 1-5**

Paul speaks of proclaiming the mystery of God, which is the cross, so that our faith is not rooted in something we have done, but rather what God has done. The cross is not something to be explained, but rather something that shows us the power and wisdom of God.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | Why is the cross a mystery for us humans?  Why does faith not depend upon human wisdom or science? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | What do we mean when we use the expression “salt of the earth” in light of this passage?  Why does the evangelist experience his own human weaknesses? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | What kind of words or speech does the evangelizing person need?  How does an evangelizer demonstrate spirit? |
| **WORSHIP** | Why is there usually a cross above or behind the altar?  What role does the cross play in liturgy? |

**Second Reading**

**GOSPEL: Matthew 5, 13-16 Sermon on the Mount: You are salt and light**

Immediately after the Beatitudes, just when Jesus leaves us with persecution for knowing him, he calls his disciples salt in the first verse and light in the next three. A short gospel, it has a big truth. The public forum question of our time is just this: Has the Church lost its “flavor” in the world? Can the new evangelization restore it? Has the light in the Church gone out for many and why? Jesus is very clear that the purpose of this salt and light is to “glorify your heavenly Father.” This almost sounds foreign in our culture.

**Vss. 13-16: CCC 782, 2821** First, the CCC lists the ways in which the Church is distinguished from just any other organization, club, or party. These are important to know, understand, and implement pastorally, as today it brings some clarity and rationale for joining a parish. Together we pray, “Thy kingdom come” which is granted to us in the Eucharist.

**Vs. 14: CCC 1243** The baptismal candle received and lit from the Christ candles shares in his light.

**Vs. 16: CCC 326** This passage outlines what the Bibli- cal tradition typically means by “heavens.”

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | What are the characteristics of the Church?  Why does Jesus choose images of salt and light to name his disciples? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | How can you contribute to the new evangelization in the Church?  How do you avoid the applause that comes with a job well done, and give the glory to God? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | Why does the Church hide its light in the modern world?  Where the does the light of your faith and presence shine? |
| **WORSHIP** | How does your parish use light in the liturgy?  How is your parish a light to the world? |

**Gospel**

**Next Sunday: OT 6 A:**