Homily ~ OT V (A) > February 8, 2026.

The common thread running through today's three readings is our two-fold mission as Christians: *to be salt and to be light*. Jesus does not say, "Try to become salt" or "Work hard to be light." He says, "You are." By our Baptism, this is already our identity - and also our responsibility.

In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah reminds us that God's light shines through very concrete acts of love: *feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, and refusing to turn our backs on one another*. At the last part, we see Isaiah is using the conjunction *'if'*, that introduces a condition. When we live this way, he says, "*then light shall rise for you in the darkness".*

The Responsorial Psalm echoes this truth: *"The just man is a light in the darkness."* So also Saint Paul tells us that our faith becomes powerful not through clever words, but through reliance on the Spirit and the power of God.

In the Gospel, Jesus uses two simple but powerful images.

First, salt. In the ancient world, salt symbolized purity and was used in sacrifices. It preserved food from corruption and gave flavor to life. It has a healing capacity and adding taste to foods. If we are the salt of the earth, then we are called to live with purity - in our speech, our actions, and even our thoughts. We are also meant to be a healing presence in society, standing against injustice, corruption, and moral decay.

As salt preserves food, we are called to preserve the faith handed down to us - Christian values, moral principles, and the sacredness of family life. Moreover, like salt that gives flavor, we must bring hope and meaning into lives that feel empty or desperate - especially through compassion, outreach, and simple kindness.

Second, light. Light is meant to be seen. It guides, warns, and warms. Jesus calls us to receive His light and reflect it to the world through love, mercy, forgiveness, humility, and respect for all - regardless of cast, creed, background, lifestyle, or belief.

As guiding lights, we help others find the right path in times of confusion. As warning lights, we lovingly speak the truth when danger - moral or spiritual - is near. Moreover, as warming lights, we soften cold hearts with gentle words, patience, and compassionate deeds.

Dear ones, the world does not need more noise - it needs light. It does not need more judgment - it needs salt. Let us live in such a way that others, seeing our good works, may give glory not to us, but to our Father in heaven.