

**You are the salt of the earth, but if the salt loses its flavor...**

**In ancient days, animal dung was salted so a to burn more easily in the hearth.**

**But we are more familiar with salt as a necessary seasoning for our food.**

**But what is "seasoning our culture" these days?**

**The flavor of the day is FEAR.**

**Fear of the refugee, fear of an entire religion, fear even of our neighbors.**

**And this fear is stoked at the highest levels of our government.**

**"You are the light of the world." says Jesus**

**But are we?**

**That shining light held in the hands of the Statue of Liberty grows dimmer and dimmer.**

**The whole Judeo tradition is reversed.**

**Listen to the ancient Prophet Isaiah today:**

**"Shelter the homeless and the oppressed!"**

**This is our ancient heritage.**

**This week Pope Francis spoke out clearly and boldly against the fear and yes hate that is beginning to grip or land:**

**"No one who denies shelter to the refugee and the homeless, can claim the title "Christian."**

**And what if salt loses its flavor? " It is good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled under foot!" says Jesus.**

**Have we lost the flavor of welcoming the oppressed?**

**Has the light that we have shone upon immigrants been smothered by fear mongering, disdain, and hate?**

**Surely it is in danger.**

**A recent poll showed 48% of Americans in favor of restrictive immigration policies.**

**The light in the Statue of Liberty has dimmed.**

**The light is flickering.**

**"You are the light of the world!**

**Are we still?**

**□ And so we pray:**

**Jesus,**

**you yourself were a refugee in a strange land.**

**Your parents fled in terror from a ruthless dictator.**

**They sought refuge in Egypt.**

**Open our hearts to the plight of today's refugees.**

**Deliver us from condemning an entire religious group.**

**Deliver us from escalating fear and hatred.**

## 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Feb. 5,2017

Written by Fr. Fitz

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**Deliver us from evil.**

**Amen**□