Doctors and dieticians would have some difficulty with the first part of today’s Gospel. Jesus does not seem to know that salt is bad for hypertension and cholesterol! Just as health professionals are encouraging us to be careful in using salt, Jesus is telling us to keep it up. Salt in Jesus’ day, and for centuries before and after, was the primary preserving agent for food. That day-to-day usage gives us a clue as to the challenge being laid before us. We are told that if salt has lost its taste it’s good for nothing. So the challenge is to keep it fresh so it can keep doing its job. Jesus suggests that, in the same way, we have to be on guard to make sure that our faith remains fresh so it’s able to do its job as well.

The fifth and sixth chapters of Matthew’s Gospel are devoted to describing the elements of Christian faith. At the start of the fifth chapter we have the Beatitudes that tell us that the presence of God can be discovered in all of life’s situations. It reminds us that as Christians we can find God wherever we want to. The rest of these two chapters go on to give us specific directions about the dangers and aides to faith. Jesus tells us that a hollow attachment to the letter of the law, unbridled anger, an inability to forgive, being unfaithful in marriage, seeking revenge on our enemies, not being true to our word and being enslaved by money are all examples of bad faith. Think for a moment of people you know who are trapped by any of these vicious forces. It’s sad to see the energy it takes them to remain angry, greedy, legalistic, fraudulent and unforgiving.

More positively Jesus tells us in these chapters that prayer, being generous to the poor, being discerning about whom we spend time with and what we see and hear, and going without things we often consider essential are helpful to living a faith-filled life. Think for a moment of people you know who live lives like this. Their detachment, sense of generosity and ease with others stands out in our stress-ridden world.

My professor of liturgy used to say ‘Good liturgy enlivens faith and bad liturgy deadens it.’ This is the same message Jesus gives us today about faith in general. It’s crazy for us to keep spending time with people and doing things that deaden our faith. We know the impact of these people or activities by the bad taste they leave in our mouths. After an encounter with them or it we usually tell ourselves that we must not go back for more, but the bad spirit seduces us into repeating the entire episode with frightening frequency. St Ignatius Loyola tells us that in these situations we have to deal with the bad spirit quickly and consistently and learn a new pattern of behaviour that will lead us away from darkness into the light.

The job of faith is to enable us to live out and build Christ’s reign of justice and love in this world as a foretaste of what awaits us in heaven. May this Eucharist enable us to seek out the people and places that will see the saltiness of our faith remain fresh and interesting so that we will have every chance of preserving our faith in the dryer times, and of our faith in Jesus preserving us in the face of the trials and tests that come our way.
ATTENTION ALL OP SHOP VOLUNTEERS
(or anyone interested in joining to assist)
There will be a meeting regarding the FUTURE of the Op Shop at the New Dynasty Chinese Restaurant on 22nd February at 12.00 Noon – Lunch is included!

Parish Council
Thursday, 9th February at 3.30pm in the Parish House.

Parish Finance Committee
Monday, 6th February at 5.30pm in the Parish Centre.

St Vincent De Paul Meeting
Monday, 13th February at 5.00pm at the Vinnies Store.

Fancy a game of Indoor Bowls or Cards?
Come along to the Parish Centre at 9.30am on 13th February. New faces very welcome to this social morning.

The next St. Mary’s Luncheon will be held on the 6th March, commencing at 11.30am in the Parish Centre. Come and enjoy some time with friends. All Welcome.

Last Wednesday we celebrated our “Beginning of School Year Mass”. The theme for this year will revolve around the symbol of a wheel. All of the Middle School participated in the reading as you can see above left. Below that photo is the blessing of the badges for all our leaders in Years 6 and 8. The photo also includes our two new teachers, Miss Fairweather and Mrs Makim. As always we invite the GSHS Year 12 Captains to speak about leadership – what a great job they did!! Pictured with the Year 12 Captains, Ellie Billsborough and Rian Le Roux and Principal Mr Brett Hallett are the St. Mary’s Primary Captains, Charlie Buck and Lucinda Richards, and Middle School Captains, Michael Toohey and Josephine Crothers.

May God Bless another exciting year at St. Mary’s!
Weekday and Weekend Masses

Tuesday…Kaloma….11.00am
Wednesday ……..5.30pm  Friday………..12.15pm

4th/5th February, 2017
SATURDAY EVENING: 6.00pm Goondiwindi
SUNDAY MORNING: 8.00am Weengallon and 10.00am Daymar

11th/12th February, 2017
SUNDAY EVENING: 6.00pm Goondiwindi

18th/19th February, 2017
SUNDAY MORNING: 9.00am Goondiwindi

25th/26th February, 2017
SATURDAY EVENING: 6.00pm Goondiwindi
SUNDAY MORNING: 8.00am Goondiwindi
9.30am Children’s Mass Goondiwindi

ASH WEDNESDAY – 1st March, 2017
11.15am - with Grades 4 – 6.
5.30pm Mass, with distribution of Ashes.

WE PRAY FOR Those who have entered your kingdom: including
Grant Carrigan, Isabel Coleman, Rosemary Lawson, Phillipa Day, Mary
Wyatt (Roma), Monica Nicholas, Barbara Bishop, Marie Gore, Pat Parson
(Margaret Oliver’s daughter), Sr Joan MacGinley, RSM, Alicia Devine,
Deshawer, Greg Oliver, Sr. Colleen Carney, Sr Bess Turvey, Mary
Loveday, Timothy Lawless-Pyne, Fr. Mick Skehan, Audrey Albeck, Peter
Ints, David Hiles, Shirley Byrne, Mona O’Brien, Norm Hilderson, Chris
Finlayson, Maria Magoffin, Mel McGuire, Alma Betts, Darren Benecke,
Robert Picking, Len Collins, Vince Mullins, Mary Terry;
For all whose anniversary is at this time:

For all whose anniversary is at this time: including Barry Cook, Kevin
Cook, Patrick Morrissey, Brett Linton, Joan Price, Molly McDonald, Joan
Turvey, James ‘Ally’ Brennan, Joyce Turvey, Georgia Bourke, Carolyn
Sewell, Paul Zacka, Albert Knight, , David Webster, Leslie “Cloudy” Marsh,
Willy Heynen, Kevin Percival, Joan Smith, Irene “Ronnie” Blomley, Marj
McMillan, Patrick Burns, Beth Cook, Thelva O’Shea, Lynn Sutton, Rachel
Cowmeadow;
For those who are ill: including Phillip Marshall, Tom Turvey, Bill Dyer,
Trish Dyer, Brian Freney, Deanna Dawson, Anne Hunt, Kevin Lawless,
Ray Mackie, Peter Keehn, Joan Fleming, Frank Brosnan, Gloria Bale,
David Croft, Tim Bourke, Pat and Teresa Mullins, Joe Cowmeadow,
Shirley Schluter, Stasia Lawless, Paul Lloyd, Mavis Gordon, Jean
Ramada, Stella McGovern, Jean Sizer, Francis Lloyd, Madonna Nicoletti,
Kathy McDonald, Steph Adamson, Bailey Brennan, Pauline Robinson, Win
Skinner, Sonya Horrigan, Helen Paige, John Toohey, Marie Cook, Phillip
Carney, Shirley Riley, Therese Sullivan and Joseph Hord; also those ill at
home, in hospital and for those in Kaloma.

LET US PRAY FOR all those who have entered your kingdom: including
Grant Carrigan, Isabel Coleman, Rosemary Lawson, Phillipa Day, Mary
Wyatt (Roma), Monica Nicholas, Barbara Bishop, Marie Gore, Pat Parson
(Margaret Oliver’s daughter), Sr Joan MacGinley, RSM, Alicia Devine,
Deshawer, Greg Oliver, Sr. Colleen Carney, Sr Bess Turvey, Mary
Loveday, Timothy Lawless-Pyne, Fr. Mick Skehan, Audrey Albeck, Peter
Ints, David Hiles, Shirley Byrne, Mona O’Brien, Norm Hilderson, Chris
Finlayson, Maria Magoffin, Mel McGuire, Alma Betts, Darren Benecke,
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For all whose anniversary is at this time: including Barry Cook, Kevin
Cook, Patrick Morrissey, Brett Linton, Joan Price, Molly McDonald, Joan
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Sewell, Paul Zacka, Albert Knight, , David Webster, Leslie “Cloudy” Marsh,
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McMillan, Patrick Burns, Beth Cook, Thelva O’Shea, Lynn Sutton, Rachel
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Carney, Shirley Riley, Therese Sullivan and Joseph Hord; also those ill at
home, in hospital and for those in Kaloma.

Lord, be merciful to your servants, the Bishops and Priests of this Diocese,
welcome them into the company of your Saints, in the Kingdom of light and
peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.
Introduction
What does it mean to be salt, light, a city built on a mountain? Today’s readings remind us that, as baptized Christians, we can’t hide. God — who is a God of justice and mercy — had expectations of Israel. The Israelites weren't off the hook regarding how they were to act, and neither are the followers of Jesus. God has expectations of us. People see us, they observe what we do and how we act. What are they seeing? We can’t be followers in name only.

First Reading
Isaiah 58:7-10
God expects Israel to be people of light.

Responsorial Psalm
A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

Second Reading
1 Corinthians 2:1-5
Paul’s strength and wisdom comes from the Lord.

ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord; the man who follows me will have the light of life ALLELUIA!

Gospel
Matthew 5:13-16
Others must be able to see our good deeds.

Prayers of the Faithful
For those who sit in the darkness of poverty, violence, war or injustice ...we pray,
For those whose light has dimmed, who need support to live as Christ’s disciples...we pray,
For those who will not let the light of others shine...we pray,
For those held captive by the internal darkness of doubt, depression, lack of faith or self-worth...we pray,
For individuals and organisations whose work is to bring light to others or zest to their lives...we pray,
For the ministers of our diocese and our parish: that they may truly be light for others...we pray,
For the sick, the dying and the grieving among us; and for those who have died ... we pray,

Let us pray together:
God who guides us, you call your people to show your endless love to others. Give us the courage to live as we are called and to reflect your light to those who sit in darkness. We ask this in the name of Jesus, who showed us how to be light for others. Amen.