

ST. DENIS ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

230 LAKE STREET, ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO L2R 5Z3

PHONE: 905-685-5911 + FAX: 289-434-5269

WWW.STDENISCHURCH.CA

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Denis Parish is to create a warm and welcoming, Christ-centred, Catholic community that answers the call to know, love, and serve God by spreading the Gospel through words and actions.

PASTORAL TEAM

PASTOR

Very Rev. Fr. Stephen Joseph Bruzzese, V.F.
pastor@stdenischurch.ca

PRIEST-IN-RESIDENCE

Rev. Fr. Aji Varghese
ajivargheseoic@gmail.com

SECRETARY & BOOKKEEPER

Mrs. Nancy Chmay
secretary@stdenischurch.ca

DIRECTOR OF EVANGELIZATION

Mr. Ryan Hermack
evangelization@stdenischurch.ca

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday: Closed
Tuesday to Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Closed everyday for lunch: 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

PARISH SCHOOLS

ST. DENIS CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY

Principal: Mrs. Victoria Wegelin
175 Carlton Street, St. Catharines, ON L2R 1S1
905-682-4156

ST. JAMES CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY

Principal: Mr. Ken Lococo
615 Geneva Street, St. Catharines, ON L2N 2J3
905-934-3112

ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC SECONDARY

Principal: Mr. Tony Della Ventura
541 Lake Street, St. Catharines, ON L2N 4H7
905-646-2002

SACRAMENTAL SERVICES

MASSES OF THE LORD'S DAY

Saturday: 4:00 p.m.
Sunday: 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

WEEKDAY MASSES

Tuesday to Friday: 8:00 a.m.

CONFESSIONS

(IN CHURCH)

Tuesday to Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 7:45 a.m.
Saturday: 3:15 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.
Sunday: 7:30 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. & 9:30 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.

CONFESSIONS

(IN MEETING ROOM)

Monday to Friday: 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

BAPTISM

Every Sunday at 11:30 a.m.
Please call the parish office to schedule an appointment with the priest!

WEDDINGS

Please call the parish office to schedule an appointment with the priest!

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

(IN MEETING ROOM)

Sunday to Saturday: 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

MONTHLY HOLY HOUR

(1ST THURSDAY & 1ST FRIDAY)

8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

DEVOTION TO MARY

(DAILY RECITATION OF THE ROSARY)

30 minutes before all Masses

Would you like to become a parishioner?

Please call or email the parish office.

Thank you for your continued generosity towards our parish!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2023

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

MASS INTENTIONS

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday, February 6 – Private Mass

St. Paul Miki & Companions, Martyrs
Holy Souls in Purgatory

Tuesday, February 7 – 8:00 a.m.

Sp. Int. Marcella Kotarski

Wednesday, February 8 – 8:00 a.m.

St. Josephine Bakhita, Virgin
Mary Bruin

Thursday, February 9 – 8:00 a.m.

Sp. Int. Miketic Family

Friday, February 10 – 8:00 a.m.

St. Scholastica, Virgin
Sp. Int. Tessie Aonan

MASSSES OF THE LORD'S DAY

6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Saturday, February 11 – 4:00 p.m.

Gennaro and Maria Grazia Rotondaro & Family
Constantino Gutierrez | Sp. Int. Barry
Sp. Int. Carrie Tan

Sunday, February 12 – 8:00 a.m.

Pro Populo – For the People

Sunday, February 12 – 10:00 a.m.

Stephanie Cosgrove | Sp. Int. The Loeffen Family
Sp. Int. Anthony & Violet Vaz



COLLECTION FOR JANUARY 29

Pre-Authorized Debit [February 1]	\$ 3,255.00
Offertory	\$ 3,016.00
E-Transfers & CanadaHelps	\$ 103.00
Total Collection	\$ 6,374.00

Thank you for your faithful stewardship!

~ Please remember the parish in your will ~

THE PASTOR'S PORTICO

It is hard to believe that it has now been over two years since I have arrived at St. Denis. I honestly have no idea where the time went; I guess the old saying is true, *"Time flies when you are having fun!"* There is no doubt that it is my distinct privilege to serve as your pastor and I look forward to many more years ahead!

Last week we celebrated a beautiful Mass for the feast of the Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas). If you were unable to attend but would like some blessed candles or would like to have your candles blessed, please let me know. It is always good to have a few blessed candles on hand. Jesus says, *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."* Let us always be a people who walk in the light of Christ.

Soon we will begin the Season of Lent...again, where has the time gone? Nevertheless, I would like us as a parish to be spiritually prepared to make a more intense Lenten Season this year. Typically, as Catholics, we don't start thinking about Lent until about Shrove Tuesday, as we are mowing down on a mound of pancakes, covered in delicious syrup. Let's change that for 2023. Let's start thinking about the three Lenten disciplines now: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. If you want to go even further, you could participate in pre-Lent, which was traditionally known as Septuagesima (70 days before Easter) and lasts until Ash Wednesday. As Jesus said in the Gospel of Mark, in order to cast out some demons, it requires prayer and fasting. What are the demons we need to cast out of our lives?

Recently, I was asked if we will be having any more adult formation programs coming up in the future. This makes me realize that there is a hunger for learning more about our faith and a desire to go deeper. With this in mind, I would like to remind you that the parish has purchased a subscription to FORMED, which is free for your use. It is filled with amazing content: videos, audio books, and catechetical programs. During the Seasons of Lent & Easter, it is my desire that, as a parish, we deliver two adult formation series (one in each season). Please keep your eyes peeled for more information!

Fr. Stephen Joseph Bruzzese

PRAYER OF REPARATION

O Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore Thee profoundly. I offer Thee the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifferences by which He is offended. By the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary I beg the conversion of poor sinners. Amen.

PASCHAL CANDLE

I would like to thank the anonymous donor who came forward last week to sponsor the Paschal Candle for 2023-2024, in memory of one of their deceased loved ones. As mentioned, this year the candle will depict the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

TAX RECEIPTS

Tax receipts will be available after Mass this weekend. After this weekend, they will be available for pick up at the parish office. Please make sure that your information is up-to-date by sending an email to Nancy, if any of your information has recently changed.

LIFETEEN

Our next LifeTeen program will be taking place on Tuesday, February 7th at 7:00 p.m. in the parish hall. The group is open to all those students in high school. To sign up, please contact Ryan Hermack.

PRE-AUTHORIZED GIVING

Are you interested in using our new monthly Pre-Authorized Debit Program? Our deadline for the March withdrawal is Wednesday, February 22nd. As of today, we have 25 parishioners/families registered, which generates \$3,255.00 per month. This truly is easiest way to give. Thank you for your faithful stewardship!

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

Just a reminder that our Volunteer Appreciation Social is taking place on **Saturday, February 18th at 6:00 p.m. in the parish hall.** Please be sure to RSVP by Saturday, February 11th either by phone or by email.



MARIAN SHRINES PILGRIMAGE

Are you interested in joining an exclusive and cultural journey of a lifetime? If so, then this pilgrimage is for you! Join us for our 12 day pilgrimage which includes: Fatima with the celebration of the sixth and last visit of Our Lady (The Miracle of the Sun), Avila, Madrid, Zaragoza, Lourdes, Barcelona & much more.

**Monday, October 9th to Friday, October 20th
\$4,940.00 per person (based on 2 per room)**

What's Included?

- Roundtrip airfare to and from Toronto
- 10-night accommodation in 3+ & 4-star hotels
- Breakfast and dinner daily
- Daily Mass & spiritual activities
- And much, much more!

If you are interested in coming or would like more information, please let Fr. Stephen know as soon as possible...spots are already starting to be filled.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Men's Discernment Group at St. Julia

- Friday, February 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Parish Movie Night – “*Meet the Robinsons*”

- Friday, February 17th at 7:00 p.m.

Volunteer Appreciation Social

- Saturday, February 18th at 6:00 p.m.

Mothers' Group

- Friday, February 25th at 7:00 p.m.

Choose Life Niagara Annual Dinner at Club Italia

- Saturday, February 25th at 6:00 p.m.

Marian Shrine Pilgrimage Information Session

- Thursday, March 2nd at 7:00 p.m.

40 DAYS FOR LIFE

40 Days for Life is an internationally coordinated 40-day campaign that aims to end abortion locally through prayer and fasting, community outreach, and a peaceful half-day vigil in front of abortion clinics. *As a parish, we will be responsible for Wednesday, March 8th and Saturday, April 1st from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.* This will take place in front of the Greater Niagara General Hospital (5546 Portage Road, Niagara Falls). To sign up or for more information, please contact Cathy Havard at cathyhavard9@gmail.com or 365-880-4336. Please consider spending an hour in silent, prayerful, peaceful witness in defending the unborn, truly an extension of our Lenten disciples of prayer, penance, and sacrifice.

THE MARIAN SHRINES OF PORTUGAL, FRANCE & SPAIN

With the spiritual leadership of **Fr. Stephen Bruzzese, Pastor of St. Denis, St. Catharines**

October 9 to 20, 2023



We invite you on an Exclusive spiritual and cultural journey of a lifetime! Our 12-day pilgrimage includes Fatima with the celebration of the sixth and last visit of Our Lady and Miracle of the Sun, Avila, Madrid, Zaragoza, Lourdes, Barcelona & much, much, more... see breathtaking landscapes with palaces and historical sights. Experience local treats and indulge in delicious meals. Pray at beautiful shrines dedicated to Our Lady and Saints, enrich your Catholic faith and open your heart to receive Blessings and Graces along the way that will encourage you throughout your lifelong pilgrimage.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 MONDAY OCT 9

FLIGHT TO LISBON

We will fly from Toronto to Lisbon aboard Air Canada. Relax and enjoy your flight with complimentary meals and entertainment on board. Group seating for our flight will be assigned by the airline.

DAY 2 TUESDAY OCT 10

FATIMA

Welcome to Portugal! Upon arrival and clearing customs and immigration, we meet our professional English-speaking Tour Manager and board our bus to drive to Fátima, where the Blessed Mother appeared in 1917 to three simple shepherd children and exhorted mankind to pray for world peace. On the way, we will enjoy a panoramic sightseeing of Lisbon with a stop for pictures at the Belem Tower. We arrive in Fatima, check-in in our hotel and get settled in our rooms. After dinner we will join the Candlelight Procession.

Overnight: Fatima

Dinner

DAY 3 WEDNESDAY OCT 11

FATIMA

This morning we follow the Stations of the Cross and visit Aljustrel, where the children's hamlet is still preserved in its original state, and Valinhos where Our Lady appeared after the children's return from prison. We pray at the Little Chapel of Apparitions and visit the tombs of Francisco, Jacinta and Lucia at the Basilica of the Rosary. Free time for private prayers. After dinner you may join the Candlelight Procession.

Overnight: Fatima

Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4 THURSDAY OCT 12

FATIMA-OBIDOS-NAZARE-FATIMA

A day of touring... Journey to the medieval town of Óbidos and the coastal village of Nazaré where we will have free time to explore and if you wish taste the local seafood in one of the many restaurants along the beach. Back in Fatima, enjoy some free time on your own. Dinner and optional Candlelight Procession.

Overnight: Fatima

Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 5 FRIDAY OCT 13

FATIMA-SALAMANCA

Six times, from May 13 to October 13, 1917, the Virgin Mary appeared here to three shepherd children. Join us today to celebrate Holy Mass and commemorate the sixth and last visit of Our Lady and *Miracle of the Sun*. In the afternoon we travel to charming Salamanca, Spain.

Overnight: Salamanca

Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 6 SATURDAY OCT 14

SALAMANCA-ALBA DE TORMES-AVILA-MADRID

We enjoy a panoramic sightseeing of Salamanca and see the most important sites in the city: the Plaza Mayor, St. Stephen's Convent and the famous University before getting off to Alba de Tormes and the Carmelite convent to see two of St. Teresa's most sacred relics, her left arm and her heart along with relics of Saint John of the Cross. Next to the 12th-century city of Ávila, where St. Teresa founded the Order of Carmelites. Visit the Monastery of the Incarnation and the convent of St. Teresa, where the saint experienced her remarkable vision of the angel. We continue to Madrid, the largest city in Spain and one of the most elegant capitals in Europe.

Overnight: Madrid

Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7 SUNDAY OCT 15

MADRID

We enjoy a sightseeing tour of Madrid's historic centre and see the Puerta del Sol and Plaza Mayor, where events have been held since the 17th-century! The afternoon is free to explore on your own, visit a museum or join an optional tour. Tapas in Spain is a food lover's dream and tonight we'll "go out for Tapas" and eat like the locals, hopping from bar to bar discovering the best eateries in town.

Overnight: Madrid

Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 8 MONDAY OCT 16

MADRID-ZARAGOZA-LOURDES

We depart by High-Speed train for Zaragoza and pray at one of Spain's most important Marian Shrines dedicated to Our Lady of the Pilar. The shrine is built on the site where the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to St. James the apostle on his way to northwestern Spain. Accompanied by celestial music, angels and a brilliant light, Our Lady encouraged St. James and his disciples on their journeys. This apparition was unlike any other, because when Our Lady appeared to St. James, she was still living on earth in Jerusalem. During the vision, St. James was given a wooden statue which is now in the center of the Basilica. In the afternoon we journey into France and arrive in Lourdes. Tonight join in the Candlelight Procession and pray the Rosary.

Overnight: Lourdes

Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 9 TUESDAY OCT 17

LOURDES

During our stay in Lourdes we will have an opportunity to attend Mass at the Grotto and walk in the footsteps of St. Bernadette. We will see the Boly Mill where St. Bernadette was born and the Cachot, an abandoned prison where Bernadette's impoverished family lived. We join with pilgrims from around the world to pray for the sick, drink water from the miraculous spring and/or submerge in the healing baths. Experience Christ's love as you walk the life-sized Stations of the Cross overlooking the holy Grotto. Kneel in the chapel built on the very rock of the Grotto in obedience to the request of the Immaculate Conception. After dinner join the Candlelight Procession.

Overnight: Lourdes

Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 10 WEDNESDAY OCT 18

LOURDES-CARCASSONE-BARCELONA

Depart Lourdes towards the French-Spanish border en-route to Barcelona, Spain. We stop in Carcassonne and enjoy free time for lunch and a walk around the medieval town. Continue to Barcelona for the last leg of our trip.

Overnight: Barcelona

Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 11 THURSDAY OCT 19

BARCELONA

Get introduced to this fascinating city including Plaza Catalunya and Paseo de Gracia to admire the eccentricity of Gaudi's architectural masterpieces in Houses Batlló and Milà and the Basilica of the Sagrada Família, Gaudi's masterpiece. Once completed, will have 18 towers: 12 dedicated to the apostles, 4 to the evangelists, one to Jesus and another to Mary. Free afternoon and evening to explore on your own. Tonight we share our thoughts and enjoy a Farewell Dinner.

Overnight: Barcelona

Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 12 FRIDAY OCT 20

FLIGHT HOME

At the agreed time, transfer to the airport for our return flight. **CONCLUSION OF OUR PILGRIMAGE.**

Breakfast

PRICE PER PERSON IN DOUBLE OCCUPANCY

\$ 4,940.00 CAD

Price includes Fuel Surcharge & Airport Taxes (\$ 762,61 CAD) and are subject to change without notice until time of ticketing. Supplement for individual room \$ 780.00 CAD.

See next page for complete list of inclusions

Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage (Psalm 84)

To register and for more information please contact:



30 Wertheim Court # 20, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 1B9
(905) 889-1681 Toll-Free 1-800-268-0900 Ext. 233
edgar@gateways-international.com
TICO Reg. #2171876

THE TOUR INCLUDES

- ✓ Roundtrip airfare from Toronto
- ✓ 10-night accommodation in First Class hotels, std room
- ✓ Breakfast and dinner daily
- ✓ Mineral water and a glass of local wine with all Dinners
- ✓ Transportation by private motorcoach throughout
- ✓ All entrance fees, tours and visit to holy sites as per the itinerary with English speaking guide
- ✓ High Speed train Ticket in 2nd class Madrid-Zaragoza
- ✓ Daily Mass and/or Spiritual activities
- ✓ Hotel taxes and service charges
- ✓ Fuel surcharge & Airport taxes (at time of printing is CAD\$762.61 and may change at any time without notice until time of ticketing)
- ✓ Gratuities to hotel and restaurant staff

NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

- ✓ Meals and drinks not mentioned above
- ✓ Passports: Canadian citizens require a valid passport for more than 6 months after the return date
- ✓ Gratuities to guides and drivers and other local staff: **€ 140.00** per participant collected in cash ahead for your convenience
- ✓ Costs of personal nature, optional excursions, excess baggage charges
- ✓ Insurance for medical, Cancellation and Interruption, baggage

BOOKING

A deposit of \$ 500.00 CAD per person is required at time of booking. If you opt to purchase Non-Medical or All-Inclusive insurance, it must be purchased at time of first deposit. See payment schedule below. *Bookings after June 9, 2023 are subject to availability.*

PLEASE NOTE ALL PAYMENTS ARE 100% NON- REFUNDABLE.

CANCELLATIONS AND CHANGES

If you must cancel, Gateways International must be informed in writing immediately. **All payments are 100% Non-Refundable.** A \$75 CAD fee will be applied for any changes you wish to make to the group's itinerary. Changes after full payment is received will be treated as cancellations.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Participants on this tour take full responsibility for being fully able to participate in the daily scheduled activities of the group, noting that tours organized by Gateways International require physical fitness. There is daily walking, sometimes up or down slopes, and at times sidewalks and uneven terrain. One may choose not to participate in parts of the sightseeing; however, there is no refund for missed sightseeing.

OPTIONAL TRAVEL HEALTH & CANCELLATION INSURANCE

CAD \$Premium per person	All-Inclusive	Non-Medical	Staying in single room add
up to 59 years	334.00	294.00	36.00
60-64 years	405.00	334.00	43.00
65-69 years	488.00	370.00	50.00
70-74 years	647.00	423.00	56.00
75-79 years	978.00	602.00	86.00

- ✓ **All-Inclusive Worldwide Plan** provides coverage for *cancellation and interruption* up to sum insured, trip delay, baggage & personal effects, baggage delay, personal money loss, passport loss, airflight accident and travel accident.
- ✓ **Non-Medical Plan** provides coverage for *cancellation and interruption* up to sum insured, trip delay, baggage & personal effects, baggage delay, personal money loss, passport loss, airflight accident and travel accident. There is no coverage for Emergency Medical.
- ✓ See the [Policy Brochure](#) for the full description and eligibility.
- ✓ For people living outside the province of Ontario, insurance will be processed by Old Republic Insurance Company of Canada.
- ✓ Premium per person is subject to change without prior notice

Travel insurance is designed to cover losses arising from sudden and unforeseeable circumstances. Please contact us to get a copy of the policy. It is important that you read and understand the policy before you purchase as the coverage is subject to certain limitations, conditions or exclusions.

****All participants must hold Trip Cancellation/Interruption + Emergency Medical Insurance to travel with us. Proof of coverage if purchased elsewhere must be provided at time of booking.**

COVID-19 is known event and is excluded from cancellation coverage. However, if you contract COVID-19 prior to departure, you may be covered for trip cancellation.

All participants must comply with the travel regulations and guidelines of Public Health and the Ministry of Health of each country we visit. Proof of vaccination and further testing may be required at time of travelling.

Please contact us if you live outside the Province of Ontario and for other types of coverage.

FR. STEPHEN BRUZZESE, MARIAN SHRINES PILGRIMAGE, OCT. 9 TO 20, 2023

Deposit Registration Form – copy of passport required

Name (as per passport): First _____ Middle _____ Last _____

Address: _____

City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____ e-mail: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Do you have any Dietary restrictions? _____ Do you have any Medical problems? _____

Passport #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ ☐ Enclosed is a photocopy of my passport (page showing name and photo)

☐ I am departing from Toronto ☐ Other _____ (fare supplement to be informed accordingly)

☐ I have a Roommate ☐ I need a Roommate (subject to availability) ☐ I would like to travel Single, Pay **\$ 780 CAD** Supplement

☐ Enclosed is my **deposit of \$ 500 CAD – by e-transfer or Cheques payable to Gateways International, for credit card complete below**

☐ I authorize Gateways International to charge the deposit of **\$500 CAD** now, and/or balance of **\$4,440 CAD** (plus or minus changes in Airport taxes if applicable) by **June 9, 2023**, on my credit card listed below

Credit Card Type: VISA _____ MASTERCARD _____ AMEX _____ Card Number _____
CVV _____ Exp. Date _____ Name as it appears on credit card _____
Signature _____ Date _____

INSURANCE: Please add the following Travel Insurance to my package (Payment will be collected separately)

☐ All-Inclusive Worldwide Policy ☐ Non-Medical Policy ☐ I decline insurance. Proof of my own Emergency Medical & Cancellation/ Interruption policy attached.

My signature below indicates that I have read and agreed to the Terms and Conditions outlined by Gateways International in this brochure. I also understand that is now mandatory that all participants on a Gateways International tour, must have Emergency Medical and Trip Cancellation/Interruption insurance, which is not included in the trip price, and that Gateways International's cancellation policy cannot be waived for any reason. In order to participate in the aforementioned group, I confirm I will have such insurance, and I will not hold Gateways International liable in any matter that is or is not covered by this added insurance.

Signature of participant: _____ **Date:** _____

Please complete and mail with payment to: GATEWAYS INTERNATIONAL, 30 WERTHEIM COURT # 20, RICHMOND HILL, ONT L4B 1B9

First Aid
5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

“Your wound shall be quickly healed.”

Opening Prayer

Jesus, Divine Physician, you heal every wound and vanish every scar. You make the blind see and the deaf hear. Open my eyes to see you more clearly. Open my ears to hear you more easily. Give me the grace to serve you joyfully and draw me closer to you. Amen.

FIRST READING Isaiah 58:7-10

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

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

GOSPEL Matthew 5:13-16

Beyond Words

If you've ever witnessed an accident or found yourself in a situation where someone needed emergency medical attention, then you know how stressful it can be. As people wait for an ambulance to arrive, other people desperately begin searching for a doctor or nurse or anyone with medical or emergency training. If viewed through this lens of urgency, action, and wisdom, this week's readings have a similar theme.

As Christians, we are called to act, to serve, and to help the Lord in His work of salvation here on Earth. To extend the analogy, if Christ is the divine surgeon in the E.R. of the sanctuary and confessional, we who know Him and follow Him are like His paramedics. We help bring the sick to the physician. We aren't supposed to hide our light but to shine brightly, as the Gospel challenges us. God's children must be prepared to act and to serve in tangible ways, ways that will save lives (and souls), as we see in Isaiah's admonition. If we are humble enough to trust in God's wisdom and power — the first aid training we have received — we will be prepared to share His knowledge and His truth with the souls dying for it, spiritually.

If we see the culture for where it really is — a culture of darkness and increasing hopelessness — there will be a sense of urgency for us to respond. Souls are perishing and the modern Christian must be prepared to become small (in humility) but not act small (with false humility or timidity). God wants us to act and to do so in a way that unleashes His power and brings Him all the glory.

Random Fact

Salt was a very valuable commodity in Jesus' time. It was used as a preservative for food (since there weren't any refrigerators). It was of such great value to people that Roman taxes were sometimes paid with salt rather than coins. The phrase “he's not worth his salt” came from this practice.

Behind the Scenes

How can a lamp, placed on a lampstand, light an entire house? If you were to go home tonight and only turn on a lamp in your living room, would it light up your bedroom? This analogy that our Lord uses is usually lost on modern readers, but it teaches us a great deal about Israelite culture 2,000 years ago. In Jesus' day, the lamp would illuminate the entire house because many of the houses were only one large room. While some houses were larger, a majority of the homes were one bigger-sized interior space along with an outer courtyard where cooking and gathering occurred. In the lines that follow, we will hear the Lord tell us to “go into your room and shut the door” (Matthew 6:6). Knowing that most houses had no separate “bedroom,” the listeners of the day would have naturally inferred

from the Lord's context that their inner room was not an architectural space but, rather, their own heart.

Word Play

In this Gospel passage on salt and light, Jesus is teaching His *disciples*. The word disciple comes from the Latin *discipulus* meaning "learner." Simply put, a disciple is one who sits at the feet of and learns from the master. Learning was active in Christ's day; it was/is not only theoretical, but also practical. For the disciples to actually be the salt and the light, they needed not only to "hear" what the Lord was saying, but also live it out in their daily lives.

Journal

1. Before we can bring others to health, we must be healthy ourselves. Is there anything from your past that has created a wound? Has it been healed? If not, how can you open yourself up to God's healing power?
2. Have you ever brought someone to Christ who needed healing? How did that experience change you?
3. How is God calling you to bring others to Him (or bring Him to others)? Is there a kind of service that you feel a pull towards?

Challenge for the Week

One way that we can serve others and bring them closer to Christ is to be hospitable. Meeting someone's needs by sacrificing yourself, belongings, or time are all things that Jesus did while walking on this Earth. This week, be hospitable. Invite a friend to your home and make them dinner. Tutor that guy in your math class who is having trouble with the particular lesson you are learning. Service and sacrifice for others always glorifies God.

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