

Gospel reflections for Sunday 9th February 2020

[Matthew 5:13-20](#)

The readings in these last three weeks, have been sequential as they have followed the beginning of Jesus' ministry. They provide a great framing for the beginning of this year.

It was in week 1 (Matthew 4:12-23) where Jesus introduces us to a new way of thinking about God and helps us to know the loving heart of God.

In Matthew 5:1-12 (week 2) Jesus describes the new state of being, a blessedness that is available for all people in all of life's circumstances.

This week we have a continuation of Jesus' teaching with the affirmation that those who are so loved and blessed are now salt and light in the world. Jesus has fulfilled the law (verse 17) and sets his followers free to be God's love and blessedness in the world.

Just as salt only really has value in its application to food, so too love reaches its potential in relationship with others. Just as light shines and illuminates the darkness, so too God's promises and blessings provide comfort and help in challenging times. We can let our imaginations help us explore what the metaphors of salt and light might mean for us each day.

What an amazing framing for our year in Lutheran education!

We all know that while these passages align our head and heart and free us to be loving and a blessing to the world, they don't mean that we will have a magical year where everything is just perfect. There will be many times when we struggle to really know the love God has for us or feel the blessedness that Jesus brings. We will not feel anything at all like salt and light in our relationships with students or colleagues.

If we look closely at who Jesus was speaking to in these passages we may find some comfort for these times. The people who flocked to Jesus and clamoured to hear his teaching were the broken, the outcast and the hurting. Jesus looks straight at them, loves them, blesses them and then affirms them as salt and light in the world. The love and blessings of God falling on the unexpected.

It is even in the challenging times in our communities, when the hurt and brokenness is very real, that Jesus looks straight us, loves us, blesses us and affirms us as salt and light.

It is my prayer that this year as you journey together through the joys and challenges of the many relationships you will navigate and the range of life experiences, you can remind each other of God's love, live the blessedness and bring hope through this new way of being.

Lutheran education communities ...so loved and loving... so blessed and blessing... revealing God's heart and being God's presence in the world.

Anne