

**Installation of the Cathedral Chapter, Diocesan Chancellor and
Commissioning of the Bishop's Council**

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Salt and Light.

These are simple things. Things we can take for granted. Yet, when salt and light are taken away, we sure miss them.

Think about walking down a slippery sidewalk or driving down an icy road. No salt? Treacherous conditions trying to get around.

Remember the recent power warnings from Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro last month? With risks of rotating outages due to issues at the Bay d'Espoir plant, we prepared for potential darkness—no electricity, no heat, no light. Dangerous conditions that can cause havoc. Just as these absences create chaos, Jesus warns in Matthew 5:13-16 that a world without the 'salt' and 'light' of his followers risks dullness and darkness.

Salt and Light. Simple things, but necessary for survival.

Before Big Oil, the early days of this province relied on the cod fishery. Cod was king—Salt Cod to be specific. Salt fish was the currency of the fishermen. After the moratorium, salt fish became a rare treat rather than a regular part of the diet. Just as salt preserved our province's livelihood, Jesus calls us to preserve and enhance the world today."

Jesus tells his followers that they are to be salt and light in the world around them. What does that mean?

First, Jesus doesn't give the disciples instructions on how to become salt and light. Instead, he tells them that that's what they are. "You are the

salt of the earth. You are the light of the world." He doesn't say, "If you want to become salt and light, do this...." Or, "In order to become salt and light, I'll need to see this from you...." Rather, he says both simply and directly, "You are salt. You are the light." And it is not that some of you are salt...a few of you are light. You - all of you - are.

So, if that is true, then all of us have something to contribute to the world around us. This saltiness and brightness aren't earned—they're gifts of the Spirit, empowered by grace, as we're called to reflect Christ's light (John 8:12). So, the question becomes, "How salty are you? How bright does your light shine?"

Those who follow Jesus don't merely sit back and receive abundant life, or simply tell others about what a great abundant life we have. Jesus is talking here about a life that makes a difference for others in the world.

We are the flavour that adds salt to lives around us—not just preserving against decay, but enhancing joy, purifying corruption, and even creating a thirst that draws others to the living water of Christ. We are light that makes plain the just way of the kingdom of God—not self-generated, but guiding paths in uncertainty and revealing truth, as God's people are called to be a light to the nations (Isaiah 49:6). Jesus says we must be flavourful and fully illuminated to make a difference for God in the world. Neither salt nor light exists for itself. They only fulfill their purpose when used.

It is unfortunate when people think they have nothing to offer to the world. Some believe that there is nothing they can do to make a difference. So often the Church falls into this trap. We see a huge problem, like poverty or homelessness, and we think that there is nothing we can do. So, in our perceived inadequacy, we retreat, we don't get involved, we tend to hide our light, as Jesus tells us, "under a bushel

basket," instead of letting it "shine before others, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

If a church loses its saltiness and loses its light, it has lost its purpose.

"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

For three years now, we have been launching Set Sail, our Diocesan Strategic Plan. We have been focused on Four Ships: Deepening Relationships, Transforming Discipleship, Engaging Partnerships, and Renewing Stewardship, and have asked you to set goals in living out these four Ships. I have to admit it surprised me that many Anglicans found it challenging to set goals, both personal and congregational, when it came to these four areas. You needed more help and direction, so we have proposed additional resources through this new Cathedral Chapter, based on the Five Marks of Mission, which have been in place in the Anglican Communion since 1984. The Set Sail Plan aligns exactly with these Five Marks, and the Marks serve as the "chart and compass" for us as we continue to launch into discipleship and baptismal ministry.

The Five Marks of Mission are an important statement on mission. The mission of the Church is the mission of Christ:

- **TELL:** To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;
- **TEACH:** To teach, baptize, and nurture [new] believers;
- **TEND:** To respond to human need by loving service;

- **TRANSFORM:** To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation;
- **TREASURE:** To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

To quote from the Episcopal Church: “The Five Marks of Mission offer a framework for mission and ministry work. For many, the work of the Five Marks is already part of a congregational or personal mission program. Whether it’s when you recycle (Mark #5), undertake social justice work (Mark #4), donate to a food bank, volunteer at a soup kitchen (Mark #3), renew your baptismal vows (Marks #1 and #2), or countless other ways, the Five Marks of Mission shine through. Mission is about receiving God’s love and then responding by going out to share it.”

As Archbishop Desmond Tutu once said, "Mission is really making us all aware of the incredible love that God has for all of us... You don't have to earn God's love. God loves you, period."

Through these Five Marks, our Diocese is equipped to be fully salty and brightly lit—not hidden, but purposeful. They transform our perceived weaknesses into strengths, inviting every Anglican to contribute. In particular, as we live out the Mark of Transform, we are called to grow in right relationship with the Indigenous Peoples of this land—the Mi'kmaq, Innu, Inuit, and others who have stewarded these territories since time immemorial. Our Diocese's commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action, including the appointment of a Lay Canon for Reconciliation, and our participation in National Indigenous Peoples' Day observances align us with this pursuit of justice, peace, and healing.

By engaging in active listening, land acknowledgements, and collaborative initiatives, we remove barriers to reconciliation and let our light shine in ways that honour God's creation and all the Creator's children. But Jesus warned us about bushel baskets, and there are still

some bushel baskets in our Diocese. We are still hiding our light in some areas. When Jesus speaks of hiding our light under a bushel basket, he refers to a vessel big enough to cover a lamp. He describes a light not snuffed out but covered up. The light is not extinguished. It is rendered ineffective.

What are these bushels?

Maybe the bushel is a lack of confidence that comes from comparing ourselves to other churches across town or to the good, old days when our church was full of children and young people. The lack of confidence bushel blocks out God's light.

Maybe it is the "I'm too old for that" bushel. The one who thinks that when we reach a certain age, God has no use for us anymore. When I read the Bible, I read the opposite. God quite often goes to the elders of the people for leadership – remember Abraham and Sarah? This bushel prevents our light from shining.

Or perhaps it's the "too busy" bushel—for those juggling work, family, or screens, thinking there's no time for mission. Yet even small acts, like a youth group's community cleanup (Treasure) or a Sunday School teacher mentoring of new believers (Teach), can shine brightly.

Another bushel might be the fear of confronting our shared history - the discomfort of acknowledging past harms to Indigenous communities and the ongoing journey toward reconciliation. But Jesus calls us to uncover that light, to engage humbly and courageously, as we are enriched by the gifts and ministries of Indigenous Anglicans in our midst.

The only way for our light to be covered is if we put a bushel over it, "No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a bushel" (verse 15). Jesus is clear, bushels can only block out the light when we put them there.

I'm glad to see that there is more light shining in our Diocese than bushels blocking it.

The good news is that Jesus has already opened the Kingdom of God to everyone, regardless of who is righteous or deserving. When we remove our bushels, our lives shine with the good news of Jesus, welcoming the lost from death to life, from sin to forgiveness, from darkness to God's marvellous light. This is not just an individual journey - it's our collective calling as the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador. Together, let's challenge ourselves to embody the Five Marks through Set Sail: commit as parishes to at least one shared initiative this year, whether it's Telling the Good News through community outreach, Teaching new believers with Bible study groups or baptismal preparation classes, a service day to Tend to human needs, a collaborative effort to Transform unjust structures in our communities - such as partnering with Indigenous-led organizations for reconciliation workshops or holding a Mapping the Ground we Stand On exercise - or a unified effort to Treasure this Earth, our fragile island home, learning from Indigenous teachings on stewardship.

Imagine the impact. But what if this year, we didn't just imagine—we acted? What if our Diocese became a shining example of hope and welcome, where the lost find hope, the weary find rest, and all glimpse God's glory?

Imagine the impact—a Diocese fully alive, salty and shining, drawing all people closer to God's love and light.

Gracious God, ignite our saltiness and unveil Your light in our lives. Through the Five Marks, empower us to Tell, Teach, Tend, Transform, and Treasure in your name. Amen.