



## Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Here's an earthy explanation for Jesus' words about salt, and how, after it loses its taste, is good for nothing but to be trampled underfoot.

In Israel, even today, many prefer cooking in clay ovens rather than on electric stoves. These ovens have been around since ancient times, and are undoubtedly what Jesus refers to when he speaks of the importance of salt.

The common fuel for these communal ovens was camel or donkey dung. It was the task of the girls in the family to gather the dung, mix salt in it, mold it into patties, and leave them in the sun to dry.

A slab of salt was placed at the base of the oven, and upon it the salted dung patty. Salt has catalytic properties that cause it to burn, so food can be cooked. Dung fuel is still used today.

Eventually, of course, the salt loses its catalytic capacity and becomes useless. Jesus says it's good for nothing but to be thrown outside, where it can still provide sure footing in a muddy road. Jesus is so earthy, so at home with the family life of his listeners. No wonder crowds followed him everywhere he went.

I recently read a book that I think you would love. *Theo of Golden (by Allen Levi)*, demonstrates for the reader how *to bring light to the world*. As one reviewer put it, *You think you're settling into a quiet story about companionship, but before you know it, you're rethinking what it means to live a meaningful life.*

It's like receiving a warm hug, or someone turning on the light in a dark room. It's what the world needs now.

*Who in your life is like salt, bringing joy and Light?*

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