June 1st: Memorial of Saint Justin, Martyr

Gospel text (*Mt* 5:13-19): Jesus said to his disciples: “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

«You are the salt of the Earth»

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Today, Jesus shows us the testimony as the essential mission of all Christians: «So let your light shine upon others» (Mt 5:16). This light will come to us out of satiating us with the Gospels and being inflamed by the Holy Spirit. Jesus also tells us that we must be salt: "You are the salt of the Earth" (Mt 5:13). What is the salt supposed to be for? Mainly for two things: to give savor to the meals and, in those days, also to keep food. The Lord wants us to give the taste of the divine grace to our world that needs it so much while preserving good manners in our society, a good coexistence, justice and respect for the value and dignity of all human lives.

At all times there have been people who have seriously taken the call of God, and the saint whose memory we venerate today, Justin (2nd century), is one of them. In Christian ancient times, he was salt and light; at the same time he was one of the first secular saints of the Church. Intrinsically, a philosopher and researcher, he found in the Christian faith a reason for his life and the answer to his questions, as he himself stated before the prefect of Rome Rusticus in the process that led to his martyrdom: "I have endeavored to learn all doctrines, but I have acquiesced at last in the true doctrines, those namely of the Christians". Pope Francis says in his "Lumen Fidei": «Those who believe, see; they see

with a light that illumines their entire journey, for it comes from the risen Christ, the morning star which never sets».

While he was a student of philosophy and theology, Justin was also one of the early popularizers and exhibitors of the Christian doctrine; we owe him the first detailed revelation of the Sunday Eucharist and its rites.