



Christian Art

Daily Gospel Reading and Art Reflection

Matthew 5:13-16

You are the salt of the earth



Floating Garden
Salt Art installation by **Motoi Yamamoto**,
Executed in 2013,
Installation at Ernst Barlach Haus, Hamburg
© Motoi Yamamoto

Daily Gospel Reading

Matthew 5:13-16

Jesus said to his disciples: **You are the salt of the earth.** But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by men.

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.'

Reflection on the contemporary art installation

Motoi Yamamoto is a Japanese 'Salt artist'. He uses salt alone to create monumental floor paintings, such as our artwork today. Yamamoto began working with salt after his sister passed away from brain cancer. In Japan, salt is a symbol of purification and mourning, so his artworks were a soothing way of honouring his sister and expressing a sense of eternity with her. His art constructions are a meditation for him as he produces these elaborate salt paintings with great patience and dedication. After the artworks are displayed, the salt is simply swept back together and then the artist pours the used salt into a river, from where it eventually returns to the sea. The artist symbolically thus gives the salt back to the sea, after having temporarily created a work of beauty.

Salt gives taste, salt preserves, salt is one of the very necessary ingredients we all need and use on a daily basis. Jesus is telling us in today's reading that as Christians we need to add taste and colour to the blandness of the world around us...

Recently a friend of mine told me: 'As Christians our job is not to get everyone to like us... Jesus said we are to be salt, not sugar!'