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8 TUESDAY

TUESDAY, 10th WEEK of YEAR

1 Kings 17: 7-16

Ps 4: 2-5,7-8

Matt 5: 13-16

Faith is a gift of God, not something “acquired” by peoples’ own efforts. The journey anyone makes towards recognising the Father and accepting His gift is mostly quite mysterious. But, like in every area of human life and activity, we always learn from and are influenced by other people, often unconsciously. We are encouraged and strengthened in our faith not only by the sacraments and the Word of God and the life of the Christian community we belong to, but also by all the many encounters with God which come to us through other people, and in the things that happen in our lives. The example and influence of people around us can affect our faith, just as we influence others mostly perhaps without being aware of it. And maybe they’re not aware of it either. Talking of what kind of people He wanted His followers to be, Jesus used two images, of a city on a hill, and an ordinary lamp-stand. You cannot but notice a city that’s on a hill; and the whole point of a lamp-stand is to give light. He wants His followers to be noticeable ---- just as He was noticeable, by dying on a cross on a hillside, and by being the “light of the world” expected by the prophets. Christians are to carry on His mission and be bearers of His message. And influence people. It’s not a matter of having power or control, or of being ostentatious. It’s to allow the power of God’s love to shine through our lives in such a way that people notice, are attracted, pay attention, not to us but to the presence of the Father in the meetings between us.

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