**“Have You Been Set on Fire by Jesus”**

All our readings today point us how we could be set on fire by Jesus if we let Him. On the other hand we are given examples of those who refused to be set on fire. By not allowing themselves to be set on fire by God, they end up doing ungodly things.

In our first reading we heard about the plight of prophet Jeremiah who was sent by God to set the hearts of His people on fire. But they did not allow the Spirit of God to set their hearts on fire. When that happened, their actions led them to desire the death of Jeremiah who to them, was prophesying hard things for them to do. They did not want to hear the truth and change their ways. Left to their own devices, the Devil came in and they were led to plan evil. They became self-centered, thinking only of themselves and not of God.

Prophet Jeremiah in his ministry went through great suffering over and over again because he kept proclaiming God’s message to His people. We too will be persecuted, ridiculed and mocked when we hold on to the Gospel and do not yield to the ways of the world. Are we ready to be persecuted for the sake of Christ?

The letter to the Hebrews tells us that it is only when we keep our eyes on Jesus that is when our hearts would be set on fire for God. We would rid ourselves of sin. Sin leads us to death and death means eternal separation from God. When we overcome our sinfulness, then, we would willingly carry our crosses or sufferings whatever they may be. We will not lose heart.

It is not easy to be a disciple of Jesus, because naturally, we want to follow the ways of the world which is self-gratifying. Self-gratification leads us to be accepted by the world. However, the road of the world is wide and paved with earthly desires because the world says, as long as it feels good, do it. Instead, Jesus calls us to follow the narrow road that is defined by His Gospel as He presented it to us through His Church.

In the Gospel, we heard about what Jesus said He desires for us. He wants to set the earth on fire! Fire is usually a symbol of judgment. But the sense in which our Lord uses it here, is different. The ‘fire’ means the all-consuming love which separated His disciples from all others. He knew the fire would not be blazing until after His death and resurrection. Then He would start the fire with His disciples who would then spread it all over the earth. We are the recipient of that fire if we want it.

It is the blazing fire that the two disciples experienced on the way to Emmaus. My sisters and brothers, after Christ explained the scriptures to them, broke the bread with them, and disappeared, **“Then they said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning [within us] while He spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?”” (Luke 24:32)**

That is the type of fire Jesus is talking about. It is a fire that burns our hearts with His love. Jesus wants to fill our hearts with the warmth of His love so that loving Him, in all things and above all things, we may attain His promise of everlasting joy. One question we should ask ourselves is, are we on fire for Jesus or are we lukewarm? If we are lukewarm, He said He will spit us out.

Jesus warned us that His all-consuming fire would cause division among family members. Some would accept His Gospel and some would refuse to accept it, hence the division. Some would accept it based on worldly understanding and some would fully accept it as it is presented by His Church.

Our challenge is to grasp the breath, length and depth of Christ’s love for us. If we grasp that love, then whatever He commands us to do or sacrifice, we would find not to be too great for us to handle. If we follow Him, we would not be cafeteria Catholics who chooses only what they want to belief out of the doctrine He left His Church.

As we come to receive Him in the Eucharist, for those who might not fully belief, let us ask Him for the grace to fully belief that we are receiving His true body and blood.