**20th Sunday Ordinary Time Cycle. C. 2025.**

**In Todays’ Gospel Jesus says something** s**hockin**g:” ***I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing***”. These words can be hard to hear. We are used to the image of Jesus **as gentle, peaceful and full of compassion- But today, He speaks not of peace, but of division- even within the families. What does this mean to us?**

When Jesus speaks about fire, He isn’t referring to destruction, but purification. **Fire in the Bible** often represents God’ presence and the work of the Holy Spirit. Think of Moses and the burning bush or the tongues of fire at Pentecost. Jesus is saying is **He came to ignite hearts with passion, truth and holiness.** But that fire will cause division, because the Gospel challenges our comfort, our attachments and even our relationships.-It forces a decision-either to follow Him fully or resist. **So, The Gospel today shows us another side of Jesus**, not the peaceful Shepherd but the **Christ of fire and fl**ame. This is a fire of conviction, of commitment. So, are we letting Jesus light that fire in our hearts?

Do we have conviction about the Lord like **Jeremiah in to**day’s **First Reading, wh**o opposed the sins of a whole nation and suffered persecution or like our **predecessors in faith** that the letter to **the Hebrews des**cribes who lived by conviction or all the Old Testament saints whose pictures are in Churches and prayer books or **the cloud of New Testament witn**esses cheering us on… whose loyalty to Jesus **Christ shaped their life**? How deep is our conviction?

**Jesus endured the cross. He faced misunderstanding, betrayal and division. He didn’t quit- and neither should w**e. The Christian life is not a sprint- it’s a marathon. There will be trials and moments when we feel like giving up or when the cost of discipleship feels too high. But we should never ever give up.

The **fire Jesus wants is the fire of loyalty and commitment because Jesus did not come to bring an easy peace by sweeping problems in the world.** He came to bring a spiritual fire, a holy fire to undo the power of evil in our world and in ourselves and to **remake the face of the e**arth in every generation. So, His message is clear. Jesus did not come to make life easier, but to make us holy. The fire He brings is not comfortable- but it is life-giving. It is the fire of truth, love and transformation. **By Baptism, we are called to join in that cam**paign.

We can join it by educating our children in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and by speaking Gospel truth to the people with whom we live and work. We can join it by insisting on honesty and fairness in business, politics and govt. **We can join it by restoring a moral conscience to our natio**n and opposing the evil of **abortion, the corrosion of sexual license, the cancer of what has been called the “rip-off” society with its pervasive atmosphere of planned deception.** This is the public side of the campaign- the spiritual firestorm of moral truth Jesus came to undo the **effects of evil, to renew the face of the earth**. Its’ a campaign that every generation of Christians needs to fight. Its’ a struggle for the future soul of our society.

There is also a **personal side to this campaign** too. The fire of faith and conviction gives our life energy, direction and definition. **Because society’s values are confused, ours do not have to be.** Because our culture is morally adrift, we do not have to be. Because people are unsure about right and wrong about what makes for deep human fulfilment, we do not have to be. Because people are indifferent to the dignity of human life, we do not have to be. Because people are casual about commitments and loyalties, we do not have to be.

**The fire of faith gives our life direction, for which that fire must be fueled and fed**. How do we fuel the fire of our faith and our convictions? It **is important to develop a habit of contact with Christ thro**ugh prayer when we open ourselves to the power of His Holy Spirit. It is important to come to Mass to sustain and strengthen our Christian commitment. **It is also important to express our faith through a ministry, an apostolate, a mission of some kin**d to realize that **our conviction and faith grow as we share them with others.**

**The Gospel Reading today, widens our view of Christ.** From Jesus Christ as the prince of peace, which is true, to the Christ of fire and flame who lit a blaze that lights the way for human dignity, repentance, the sacredness of life, sense of sin as it burns away evil and deception to clear the way for grace and truth. **Let the fire of our faith in Christ, clarify our life and light the way for othe**rs. Let it burn away our apathy, our fear and our compromises. Let it give us the courage to stand up, speak out and live boldly for Christ-even when it cause division.

Faith is not just a personal possession but the holy fire that purifies, cleanses and gives light to ourselves and others. Faith is not and we should not never ever let it remain **only an adornment for our soul.** Let it be a **fire on the earth to bring forth a new world order in Christ no matter the cost.**