



20th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10
Ps 40:(14b)2-4,18
Hebrews 12:1-4
Luke 12:49-53

Monday August 15 Assumption of Mary

Rev 11:19a;12:1-6a,10ab
Ps 45:10-12,16
1 Corinthians 15:20-27
Luke 1:39-56

Tuesday August 16

Ezekiel 28:1-10
Deut 32:26-30,35-36
Matthew 19:23-30

Wednesday August 17

Ezekiel 34:1-11
Ps 23:1-6
Matthew 20:1-16

Thursday August 18

Ezekiel 36:23-28
Ps 51:12-15,18,19
Matthew 22:1-14

Friday August 19

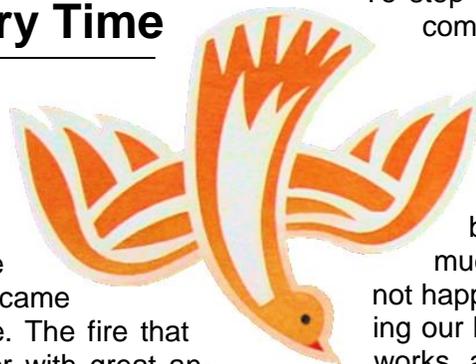
Ezekiel 37:1-14
Ps 107:2-9
Matthew 22:34-40

Saturday August 20 St. Bernard

Ezekiel 43:1-7ab
Ps 85:9-14
Matthew 23:1-12

In the Gospel reading, Jesus says that he did not come to bring peace to earth. He came to light a fire. The fire that he longed for with great anguish was the presence of the Holy Spirit alive and active within each of his followers. This is what changes the world. This is what brings lasting peace, first within us and then flowing out from us.

The Holy Spirit is a fire that purifies us from impurities – the unloving behaviors and attitudes – that cause disharmony, disunity, conflicts and war. This purification makes us capable of feeling peaceful even in the midst of trials and attacks from others. This is what makes us channels of God's peace in a world that desperately needs it. If you do not yet feel the fire of the Holy Spirit impassioning you to spread the peace of Christ, Jesus feels anguish over you.



To stop evil, we have to become like Jesus. Our willingness to make sacrifices for others is a sign of Christian maturity. We should be burning with so much love that we are not happy unless we're pouring our hearts and souls into works and prayers that to make a difference in someone else's ability to receive eternal peace.

Jesus noted that this fire divides households. It divides us from anyone who remains self-centered and unwilling to make sacrifices that will lead to peace. Nevertheless, we must continue to give them love. This heats up the fire within us, which purifies us further. And gradually, the world changes.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. Who has "burnt" you? What pain has been inflicted on you by others? See this as happening to Jesus, too. Instead of retaliating to try to stop the pain, choose a sacrifice that you're willing to make for them.
2. Jesus appreciates the sacrifices you make for others. How does his appreciation make you feel?
3. How is it possible to experience peace after making a sacrifice for someone who is unloving toward you? Give an example of an everyday sacrifice you've made. How does the Holy Spirit bring God's kingdom to earth through this?

Think of the evil around you that you've been wishing would stop. What does Jesus want you to do about it? What impurities in your own spirit needs to be burn off by the fire of the Holy Spirit so you can overshadow the evil with divine goodness? Look at what Jesus had to do. What baptism was he talking about? Not the water baptism he'd already received. It was the baptism of painful self-sacrifice, which he willingly accepted in order to rescue us from evil.