

# HOMILY

## 20th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### AUGUST 13/14, 2022

I warn you, today's Gospel is short and so is the Homily, so pay close attention or you will miss it all! Jesus speaks. He is speaking to the people of his time, but he is also speaking to all of us here and now.

***"I have come to set the earth on fire,***

***and how I wish it were already blazing!***

***There is a baptism with which I must be baptized,***

***and how great is my anguish until it is accomplished!***

Here Jesus speaks of his pending death!

Can this be the gentle Jesus talking to the crowds?

Yes, he is on his way to Jerusalem, the Holy City. His journey, his last journey, is about to end.

He has told us, his disciples, he is going to Jerusalem for one purpose and that is to die: to be nailed to a cross and to be crucified. He says to the people that follow him that he is in anguish until this is accomplished.

And why is he saying these things? Is it to frighten us?

And what is this "fire" which Jesus, our Lord, is so anxious to let loose upon the earth? Simple! This fire is the fire of love. Not our love, his Father's love: God's love. *"Love one another,"* he has always told us this. But he also hastened to add: *"in the way I have loved you."* That way you must love one another.

And how is his love different from ours, our ordinary love? His is self-sacrificing love, not just sharing and caring as we do in our ordinary human days. Jesus' love is total: totally giving, giving of himself, his whole heart, his whole soul, and all his being. Yes, this is the kind of love that the world needs: God's love, His presence.

And we Catholics, and we who believe in God, we are privileged chosen ones to carry God's love, Divine Love, to the ends of this world. We are the bearers of God's gift to His world: the gift of His presence among us, the gift of God Himself.

Do you remember the children's prayers you learned, perhaps from your parents, grandparents, or from the nuns at school, and not maybe so many years ago.

Here's one, one of my favorites:

***Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful***

***And kindle in them the fire of your Divine Love.***

***Send forth your Spirit and we shall be recreated.***

***And you shall renew the face of the earth.***

This is the prayer that Jesus prays. He prays to the Holy Spirit and he prays to his Father. And we are to set our hearts, as Jesus has set his heart, on fire.

And that is what Jesus has been saying to the people all of this day.

Listen carefully. You, my brothers and sisters, must be on fire with love, on fire with zeal to set the world aflame, not to burn it, but to fill the world with God's dazzling light.

And that is why Jesus is full of anguish that the Divine Love we carry should burn like a blazing fire until it covers and warms and fills the face of the earth.

Did you ever feel a kind of lazy hunger in your heart that perhaps food alone could not satisfy? It may be, it just may be, because your hunger is not for food, your hunger is for your Father's love.

In Christ,

Deacon Don