

20th Sunday: The Fire of Holy Spirit

Today's gospel may appear very paradoxical! "*Do you think that I have come to establish peace on earth?*" It was PEACE, offered and proclaimed all the time, from Jesus' birth till his resurrection. Then why does he say, not peace but division? Yes, to be a disciple is choice, a decision; it means 'taking position'. Either I am for him, or I am against him. This choice has always brought division into the family, society and the world. This is exactly what we see even today.

But gospel continue to tell us: "I have come to **set earth on fire!**" In Bible, Fire symbolizes "purifying presence" and judgement of God. It also represents the Holy Spirit.

John Baptist proclaimed: "the Messiah will baptize you with the *Holy Spirit and fire!*" Jesus promises that he will send the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, and on Pentecost day, he fulfills the promise as the Spirit come upon the apostles like 'tongues of fire'!

The most important consequence of the presence of Jesus in our lives is the profound conviction, given to us by the Spirit, that we are embraced by the heavenly Father's love, just as Jesus was embraced by that love. Today we are already indwelt with the same Holy Spirit. If we listen to this Spirit, we will become ever more confident, in spite of the adversities that we may find in our lives. That is to say, gifted with the Spirit, we can make a difference in the world.

B&S, Jesus wants that the Holy Spirit fill us with his love. *Like fire, the Spirit changes everything he touches.* Jesus wants that transforming power to blaze in each of us. I don't mean that all of us are 'cold Christians or indifferent Christians'; but perhaps we may lack the fire within us in

witnessing to him. We need to fan into flame, the fire of the Holy Spirit.

-His fire will *warm our hearts*, so that they may burn with love for him, and those around us.

-He will *purify our hearts* so that we want to live a holy life that pleases the Lord.

-And it is the same fire that will enflame our hearts with the passion to tell everyone about the love of Jesus! To witness his love to the world.

This is how he fills the earth with that fire, *the fire of love!*

Let's all pray: Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and set my heart on fire! Let me be for the Lord and with the Lord, whatever it may cost me! Amen.