

Twentieth Sunday Ordinary Time – C – 2022
Jer. 38.4-6,8-10///Heb.12.1-4///Luke 12.49-53

→→[one day] a young 16 year old boy entered the local pharmacy...he asked the pharmacist for 3 boxes of candy...he said....I want a \$2 box, a \$4 box and a \$6 box

→now when the druggist commented that this was indeed a curious purchasethe young 16 year old responded.... “I have my first date with a girl tonight. I plan to take her to the movies....on the way to the show if she permits me to hold her hand I will give her the \$2 box of candy

→during the movie, if she permits me to put my arm around her, I will give her the \$4 box

→and if she wants to do some hugging and kissing, I will give her the \$6 box of candy

→laughing....the pharmacist ...sold the young man the three boxes of candy

→later that night, the young 16 year old appeared at the girl’s door and her father invited him in....“we are about to sit down for dinner Jimmy” the father said.... “why don’t you join us”

→when Jimmy sat down, the father asked him to say the grace before the evening meal....and Jimmy politely obliged and said a beautiful prayer asking for special blessings upon this family, calling for a better world in which **everyone** treats **everyone** with respect and decency

→after dinner, on the way to the movie, Susie, the young girl commented to Jimmy... “I didn’t realize you were so religious...the prayer you said before dinner was

lovely...to which a rather embarrassed Jimmy responded.... “and I didn’t realize your father was the town’s pharmacist!!”

→we commonly think of Christ as the one who brings peace to our lives and unity to our relationships

--//→and many...with a troubled spirit have found peace...many with a broken relationship have been healed by his presence

→which is why today’s Gospel might be considered disturbing...because it reveals to us another side of Christ that is not all sweetness and charm...

→today Jesus declares that he has *come to light a fire on earth*...that he has *a baptism to receive...a message to give*.....that is going to result in division and uncomfortableness

PAUSE

→and he speaks of “**passion**”... **passion** for the Good News...**passion** for the Christian life.....saying that...if we are genuinely passionate about our faith...then expect division...and conflict...and differences.

→think of that for just a moment....the result of Jesus’ coming...the outpouring of the Spirit...the preaching of the Word of God....is going to cause division...not peace but division.....

→now there is an aspect of Christ that we seldom ever consider ...yet how true it is...--//--when you think about it more closely!

→the principles that Christ stood for....deeply disturbed the Jewish people...it divided friends and families

.....and ultimately it lead to him being put on the cross

→read over the gospel accounts and you will discover that Christ seldom, if ever, touched any person's life without bringing disturbance, disruption or change...

→recall all the different characters that Jesus had an encounter with....Zacchaeus [the tax collector]...Martha and Mary...the apostles...Lazarus...the wedding feast at Cana...

→on the surface it appears as if there were always good results...but every time Jesus opened his mouth...every time Jesus actedthere was a hint of trouble....

→Jesus never got hold of **any one** without disturbing ...disrupting...and rearranging their life

---//---and it is that type of **spirit** that needs to take hold of us today as well especially in the world we live in...the world our children and young people are growing up in.

→it seems to me...that there is something terribly wrong with our commitment, our faith, our belief's.... if they never set us apart from the crowd, or brings us into conflict with modern values

→can you imagine...if Jesus was walking this earth here and now the type of message he would deliver...

→we are fooling ourselves... if we think our society, our country and the majority of people alive today...have fallen in step with the ideas and teachings of Jesus.

→and if you think that it has

→then I challenge you to go to any board room or company and convince them that people are more important than profits

→go before Congress and persuade them that taking care of people is more important than their political parties agenda

→or perhaps closer to home....try and tell someone that the misuse of alcohol, drugs, and sex isn't an accepted way of life

→that discrimination against minorities, or people of a different lifestyle isn't tolerable

→that the disregard for human life – is not ok

→and the list could go on and on.....

....we would get about as far as Jesus did when he told his generation to love their enemies and overcome evil with good....PAUSE

→...the world that disregarded him back then and would disregard him now**and** for the very same reasons...

→because to value truth over compromise and convenience, to put the will of God above the will of governments....to value humility over power...to do what is right and proper over what is my own desires and wants....has never been a popular way to live....and it still isn't today!

PAUSE

→this is not a favorite part of the gospel to hear...in fact I would suppose that we would much rather hear the words of peace and reconciliation over this anytime...give us the beatitudes instead of this...because...we don't like division in our lives...we don't like conflict...we don't like being called to responsibility and accountability...and most of us will do everything possible or come up with any excuse to avoid it

→we will go out of our way to make peace and keep everybody happy...to make endless compromises to avoid confrontation....

→how often have we sacrificed our beliefs, our ethics, our morals, our baptismal promises so that everything will be peaceful...

→how often have we sacrificed accountability and responsibility for harmony

→how often have we sacrificed values, goodwill, appropriate behavior for tranquility and calm.

→God forbid, that we should upset anyone these days...or challenge them to accountability...or responsibility...

PAUSE

→and so, maybe...the true message for us today...is to recapture the fire ...the enthusiasm....the energy of the gospel message

→each one of us on the day of our baptism...was set on FIRE with the Holy Spirit...we were *baptized into discipleship...into the gospel of Jesus Christ... we became HIS followers*

→charged with promoting and living the gospel message...no matter how unpleasant, or inconvenient it may be

PAUSE

--/-- being a disciple of Christ...is not easy...but **if** the **fire** of the Holy Spirit
burns within us...there should be nothing that stands in our way

--/--...and so, perhaps then...the real and only question that needs to be asked
...is...if that **fire** is still burning....or like so many others...have we allowed it to be
extinguished.