

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel According to Luke (*Luke 12:49*)

(Jesus says) I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – Send Your Fire Lord

God is on fire with love for us. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is always depicted as a human heart topped by a blazing fire. The revelation of His Sacred Heart to us primarily through St. Margaret Mary is to give us some indication of how much the heart of Jesus is consumed with love for us. It is not difficult to understand this as throughout Jesus' earthly life, every thought, every word, every gesture, every action is borne out of love for us. Jesus was borne into this world in order to die for us. From the moment of His birth into this world till the last breath of His earthly life, Jesus endured untold suffering and hardship to win back our love and loyalty so that we could be with Him in eternity. After all He has done for us, are we on fire for the Lord? If we really believe God deserves all our love why are we not on fire for the Lord?

Unconfessed, unrepented hidden sins burden a heart. In our upside down world of today, morality is steadily being eroded; sin against God and neighbour is increasingly not being recognised for what it is. In our mind how serious an offence is depends on our personal feelings which are at best subjective. We fail to take into account how far such an offence draws our souls away from God and how much God in His infinite love is hurt by the offence. Thus, we treat sin casually, forgetting how much Christ paid for them, and going for Confession becomes a bother. Is it a wonder that hearts burdened down with unrepented and unconfessed sins become tepid in its love for the Lord? How does one set damp charcoal on fire?

Complacency, lack of decision and conviction. It is easy to take our faith for granted. We have all the external freedom to worship the Lord. We do not have to struggle and risk our lives to attend Mass. Religious persecution happens only in far away countries. In our spiritual blindness, we fail to recognise the more important battle going on involving our hearts and minds – the spiritual battle that actively engages every follower of Jesus Christ. We let the world evangelise to us. We easily made compromises. We fail to decide and convince ourselves that we have a priceless treasure in our faith. And how we should actively protect and nurture it. We fail to see we have a personal relationship with the Lord that has to assume priority over all other matters in our life. All other things will fade away but not the Lord.

Ingratitude, lack of contemplation on the Lord's goodness. Ingratitude burdens a heart and dampens its ardour and fire. Do I find it unnecessary to praise and thank the Lord on a frequent basis? Am I aware that at every moment, God's grace and light is always available to me? Am I aware of the ingratitude that exists in my heart? We can ward off ungrateful attitudes by constant remembrance of what God has done for us.

Attachments to the world. Too much cares and worries. It is no wonder why the Lord demands that we love Him with our whole heart (cf. Luke 10:27, Mark 12:30, Matthew 22:37). We have hearts with a limited capacity. If we fill our hearts with too many earthly things that do not help our sanctification we have no more room for God. If we do not surrender our cares and worries to the Lord, we have no room for Him in our hearts. The Lord exhorts us not to worry (cf. Matthew 6:25-34) and to give to Him all our worries and burdens (cf. Matthew 11:28) and to trust in Him (cf. Proverbs 3:5-6).

Attachments to ourselves: pride, self-love, fears, unforgiveness, grudges, self-righteousness. All these hamper the actions of the Holy Spirit within us. The soft prompting and inspirations of the Holy Spirit in helping us make free will choices that will strength the virtues of holy love and humility in our hearts are not heard and thus unheeded. The heart is hardened and weighed down and lacks the freedom to praise God.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord burning with love for me, I am sorry my love for You is so lukewarm. I really wish that the day when all hearts are set on fire with love for You will come very soon. Through the power of Your love, help me free myself of all the useless attachments that weigh down my heart. Purify me as I wash myself frequently in the fountain of Your love and mercy at the Confessional. Enlighten me on all my hidden sins. Help me empty my heart of the world and of myself. Fill my heart with holy love and help me embrace Your Eternal Divine Will in full confidence and trust. Through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I consecrate myself every day to Your Sacred Heart, praying that I may love and trust You more and more each day. Mary, Protectress of the Faith, You who love Jesus so ardently, teach me how to love Him like You do. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus.