

### Jesus Came to Cast Fire on the Earth (20<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C)

#### Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10—Jeremiah Thrown into a Cistern

1. Persecution: “let this man [Jeremiah] be put to death” (38:4)
2. (Attempted) Execution: “they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern” (38:6)

#### Psalm 40—The Lord Heard my Cry

1. Pit: “he drew me up from the desolate pit” (40:2)
2. Deliverer: “Thou art my help and my deliverer” (40:17)

#### Hebrews 12:1-4—The Great Cloud of Witnesses

1. Witnesses: the righteous of the old covenant (e.g., Abraham, Sarah, Moses, Rahab...)

#### Luke 12:49-53—I Have Come to Cast Fire

1. Fire: “I came to cast fire upon the earth” (12:49)
2. Water: “I have a baptism to be baptized with” (12:50)
3. Division: not “peace on earth” but rather “division” (12:51)
4. Families: in one “house” (Greek *oikos*) (12:52)
  - a. Father vs. Son
  - b. Mother vs. Daughter
  - c. Mother-in-law vs. Daughter-in-law

*The son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house. But as for me, I will look to the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me... In that day they will come to you, from Assyria to Egypt, and from Egypt to the River, from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain... As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt I will show them marvelous things.* (Micah 7:6-7, 12, 15)

#### The Living Tradition

Cyril of Jerusalem: For [John the Baptist] says, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He that cometh after me,” and the rest; “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” *But wherefore with fire? Because the descent of the Holy Ghost was in fiery tongues; concerning which the Lord says joyfully, “I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?”* (Luke 12:49) (Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 17.8; trans. *NPNF2* 7.126)

Ambrose of Milan: Are we to believe that he has commanded discord within families?... He does not say that a father is to be rejected by his children, but that God is to be set before all... You are not forbidden to love your parents, but you are forbidden to prefer

them to God. Natural children are true blessings from the Lord, and no one must love the blessing that he has received more than God by whom the blessing, once received, is preserved.” (Ambrose, *Exposition on the Gospel of Luke* 7.134-36; trans. T. Tomkinson [adapted])

### Questions for Discussion and Reflection (20<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C)

1. Why do the princes of Israel seek to kill Jeremiah? (Hint: go back and read the entire chapter, Jeremiah 38, in context)

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2. Why does Jesus speak about his death on the cross as a “baptism”?

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3. What is the “fire” that Jesus has come to “cast” upon the earth?

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### For Further Study

1. Pablo Gadenz. *The Gospel of Luke*. Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. Pp.
2. Saint Ambrose. *Exposition of the Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke*. Translated by Theodosia Tomkinson. Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2003. Pp. 291-92.