



# ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

**THIS SUNDAY August 18 & BEYOND”**

**“Be on the God side of Fire and Division”**



Fire and division are the stark words from Jesus in Sunday's Gospel (good news) reading in Luke chapter 12, verses 49-53. If you've just lived through a forest fire in areas where there are smaller communities (like Paradise, California), the concept of fire is immediately

negative, destructive. Standing back from such difficult experiences and memories, we can see, though, that there are reasons that fire can be described as helpful, even necessary. Like on a very cold night, with no electricity, and you need warmth. Or when you are shaping iron.

The same thing is true of division. And sometimes the two can be understood in the same illustration or context. For instance, when purifying precious metals, fire provides the necessary melting so that extraneous minerals can be separated from the gold or silver you are smelting. And the end result is more “pure” precious metal, and thus more valuable.

The Bible contains the images of fire and division in both these ways. And that includes the reference to the Holy Spirit as fire for our lives, to live passionate and “on purpose” lives for God. God is also a demanding God, and so fire FOR US, and for His Church, also means constant vigilance for discipline to remain “on fire” for the Lord.

I am making use of a reflection provided by Dr. Scott Hahn as he ties together very quickly and succinctly some of these thoughts for our Sunday lessons.

“Our God is a consuming fire, the Scriptures tell us (see [Hebrews 12:29](#) exactly as “*for our God is a consuming fire*”; [Deuteronomy 4:24](#) also, “*For the LORD your God is a devouring fire, a jealous God*”). And in this week’s Gospel, Jesus uses the image of fire to describe the demands of discipleship.

“The fire He has come to cast on the earth is the fire that He wants to blaze in each of our hearts. He made us from the dust of the earth (see [Genesis 2:7](#)) and filled us with the fire of the Holy Spirit in [his] Baptism (see [Luke 3:16](#), [the baptism with which he baptizes, besides water baptism]).

“We were baptized into His death (see [Romans 6:3](#)). This is the baptism our Lord speaks of in the Gospel this week. The baptism with which He must be baptized is His passion and death, by which He accomplished our redemption and sent forth the fire of the Spirit on the earth (see [Acts 2:3](#)).

“The fire has been set, but it is not yet blazing. We are called to enter deeper into the consuming love of God. We must examine our consciences and our actions, submitting ourselves to the revealing fire of God’s Word (see [1 Corinthians 3:13](#)).

“In our struggle against sin, we have not yet resisted to the point of shedding our own blood, Paul tells us in this week’s Epistle [to the Hebrews]. We have not undergone the suffering that Jeremiah suffers in the First Reading this week.

“But this is what true discipleship requires. To be a disciple is to be inflamed with the love of the God. It is to have an unquenchable desire for holiness and zeal for the salvation of our brothers and sisters.

“Being His disciple does not bring peace in the false way that the world proclaims peace (see [Jeremiah 8:11](#)). It means division and hardship. It may bring us to conflict with our own flesh and blood.

“But CHRIST is our peace (see [Ephesians 2:14](#)). By His Cross He has lifted us up from the mire of sin and death—as He will rescue the prophet Jeremiah (see [Jeremiah 38:10](#)).”

Dr. Hahn’s reflection is the classic teaching throughout the history of Christianity regarding Sunday’s words from Jesus. May you hear them again this week, and if not with us in Church, then perhaps on your own as you find time to read. And as you hear them and read them, may the Lord fill you with his Fire that you may love him and serve him without diversion or distraction!

Fr. Robert G. Eaton, Interim Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Jeremiah 23:23-29   Psalm 82   Hebrews 12:1-14   Luke 12:49-56

## CALENDAR

### SUNDAY: Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

8:30a Low Mass (Church)  
10:30a Solemn High Mass (Church)  
AA Meeting  
7:00p Little Apple Group (Parish Hall)

—*The entrance to the church is on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue*—

*Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.*

TUESDAY:           Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY               AA Meetings  
8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)  
8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)

SUNDAY              The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost  
8:00am Low Mass  
10:30am Solemn Mass  
AA Meeting  
7:00p Little Apple Group (Parish Hall)