

Read

Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10
Psalm 40:2, 3, 4, 18
Hebrews 12:1-4
Luke 12:49-53

LIVING THE WORD

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time August 18, 2019



REFLECTION

There's a legend around St. Lawrence. Apparently he was so passionate about his faith that as he was being burned alive, he said, "I'm done on this side, flip me over." Many saints and martyrs have lived their faith with such vigor that their dedication to service and faith as well as their traumatic deaths inspire the faithful. Jesus surely inspired the early martyrs with today's Gospel, "I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing!" (Luke 12:49). There are so many inspiring saints who accepted their death in the name of Jesus that cause the faithful to pause and pray for their intercession. One such martyr is St. Maximilian Mary Kolbe. During World War II he offered to die in the place of another prisoner who was desperate to live for his family. (We honored St. Maximilian at Mass on August 14.) To confidently face death by the hands of the Nazi's in order for another to live is the ultimate sacrifice. Jesus died on the Cross so that we may be saved. May we live as passionately as the early saints so that all will know we are Christians by our love.



ACTION

Ask a family member or your godparents about your Baptism. What do they remember about that day? If you have not seen or talked to your godparents in a while, give them a call and thank them for saying yes so long ago. Share with them how you are living your faith out loud and about what social justice issues you are passionate. Ask them how they are living out their faith today. In reconnecting with your Baptism, hopefully you will feel grounded in your faith and more inspired to live out your baptismal promise to be "Priest, Prophet, and King . . . [living] always as members of [Christ's] body, sharing everlasting life" (*Rite of Baptism for Children*, 62).

 **Carrie Underwood**

"Something in the Water" 

[https://open.spotify.com/
track/10RQKVSr4rS0coExTmi4dF](https://open.spotify.com/track/10RQKVSr4rS0coExTmi4dF)

QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What saint inspires you in your faith journey?
- ❖ Why do you think your parents chose the godparents they did for your Baptism?



August 18, 2019

TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #120C

Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10

Psalm 40:2, 3, 4, 18

Hebrews 12:1-4

Luke 12:49-53

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

Jesus' words today are difficult to hear, and yet very necessary. Taking up Christ's mission may cause division among family and friends. This is especially true for teens with their peers. Saying yes to Christ will mean saying no to destructive behavior and habits, and may result rejection from friends.

Q FOCUS: *Say yes to Christ!*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week, we celebrate the optional Memorials of St. John Eudes and St. Rose of Lima, the obligatory Memorials of St. Bernard, St. Pius X, and the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Feast of St. Bartholomew. In the lives of all of the saints, and in a particular way our Blessed Mother, we find examples of what it means to say yes to Christ's mission of love.

Church Teaching Connection

Discipleship requires commitment to live as Christ's people. As disciples, we must live faithfully in our daily lives, knowing that doing so makes a positive difference in the world. "By living with the mind of Christ, Christians *hasten the coming of the Reign of God*" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2046).

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Luke 12:49-53

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

Jesus said to his disciples: "I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing! There is a baptism with which I must be baptized, and how great is my anguish until it is accomplished! Do you think that I have come to establish peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. From now on a household of five will be divided, three against two and two against three; a father will be divided against his son and a son against his father, a mother against her daughter and a daughter against her mother, a mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

In today's Gospel, Jesus speaks about the potential impact of Christian discipleship as a positive force in the world. He speaks of wishing that the earth were on fire—the fire of Christ's mercy and message of enduring love—the fire of the Holy Spirit. As members of Christ's Body, we may bring this fire into the course of our daily lives, as we interact with family and friends and make decisions about what we will do with our lives. Each of us has some part to play in putting God's love in action, and doing so may literally change the world!

Think of a recent experience in which you consciously acted as you did because of your faith.

► What happened?

The first step in this world-changing life is to say yes to Christ. The United States bishops have put it this way: "Jesus' call is urgent. He does not tell people to follow him at some time in the future but here and now—at *this* moment, in *these* circumstances. There can be no delay. "Go and proclaim the kingdom of God. . . . No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:60, 62) (*Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, page 11).

Once we have answered yes to Christ's urgent call, we make a commitment to living as faith-filled and faithful people in our daily lives, and we don't look back—we know that saying yes to Christ means that we will have to say no to things that are not consistent with Christ's message of love. We make the commitment to Christ with our eyes open, as a response to the powerful love of God, which we are compelled to accept and to share.

► Have you made a conscious decision to follow Jesus' urgent call?

► What has this meant in your life?

► What sorts of actions and activities have you had to turn away from on account of your faith?

► What sort of actions and activities do you turn toward on account of your faith?

Even in saying that we have a role to play in bringing the fire of Christ's love to the world, we know in our hearts that there is a flip side to consider. The more committed to Christ we are, the more likely it is that we will meet rejection and experience tension with people who are not committed to Christian living. While some may experience the division among family members that Jesus describes, it is more likely that we will find such divisions among friends. They may not understand our commitment to go to Mass, pray, avoid sinful situations, or serve others. They may find our insistence on treating others with respect annoying. Friends may tease us when we refuse to make fun of someone, or be frustrated when we want to include someone who is not part of our circle. We hear today that such rejection is not only possible, it is probable. Saying yes to Christ and to Christ's mission is not always easy. It is, however, a powerful way of life, and one that may have lasting impact for us and on the world.

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 14.

Have you faced rejection because of your commitment to Christ?

What helps you when you are teased because of your commitment to Christ?

How is discipleship a powerful way of life for you?

Act on the Word

Setting the World on Fire

Create a handout with the questions below, or have blank paper on hand. Also have pens, markers, and if possible, computers or tablets and a printer.

In this activity, you will invite your group to think about the special contribution each can make by offering his or her talents and gifts in daily life. Use the talking points below to start this exercise. There are as many ways to set the world on fire as there are people. Each of us has particular gifts and talents, things that come naturally easy to us. When we use these gifts in our daily lives, in our interactions with others, and in service to those who are in need, we give people a glimpse of the magnificence of God. We also find ourselves more energized and able to do what we have committed to do when we draw on our natural abilities and talents.

Think about the things that come naturally easy—things like relating to others, or organizing tasks, or learning new information, or getting things done.

Reflect on these questions as a way to begin to think about the special qualities you bring to life, relationships with family and friends, tasks at school, athletics, and activities.

- ▶ What do you naturally do well? What things come easy to you? When do you lose track of time?
- ▶ When do you find yourself “in a zone,” when you want to simply keep going, or continue doing what you are doing?
- ▶ Are you good at planning things, analyzing information, or thinking ahead?
- ▶ Do you enjoy learning, or gathering information? Do you have a special appreciation for the past, or do you enjoy dreaming about the future?
- ▶ Do you easily relate to other people? Are you always finding ways to include others in social gatherings?
- ▶ Do you feel when others are hurting, or bring a positive outlook to situations?
- ▶ Do you enjoy telling stories? Are you good at communicating ideas or plans with others? Do you sometimes get impatient to get things going?

- ▶ Are you a responsible person? Are you driven to accomplish something every day?
- ▶ Do you want to make a difference in the world, or desire to bring healing or solve problems when they exist?
- ▶ How do you or might you bring these gifts and talents to your relationship with others? How do you offer these talents to your school, parish, or in service? How might you use these talents to “set the earth on fire” with Christ’s love (Luke 12:49)?

Invite your teens to reflect quietly and then to share in small clusters of three or four. Ask them to make some concrete commitment to act on what they have discussed.

Saying Yes and No

Play quiet, instrumental music during this reflection.

Invite your teens to reflect quietly on the call to say yes to Christ. By making this commitment, what must they say no to? What rejection or tension do they face as a result of their commitment to Christ? Where do they find strength in order to remain firm in faith?

Following their reflection, invite the group to share in pairs or small groups as they feel comfortable.

Closing Prayer

*Almighty God,
you have made yourself known
through the life, death, and Resurrection of your Son.
When following him is difficult, strengthen us.
When we are rejected, deepen our union with you.
When we are tempted, hold us close.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday’s Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.ltp.org/lwgr. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.