

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time – 17th August 2025

Headings	Gospel (Luke 12:49 - 53)	1 st Reading (Jeremiah 38:4 – 6, 8 – 10)	2 nd Reading (Hebrews 12:1 – 4)
Context	This section of Luke's gospel describes the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem, where he will be put to death. He sets out what it means to be his disciple. He seeks followers who will be willing to give up everything to follow him.	Jeremiah was accused of aiding the enemy by deflating the morale of the defenders of Jerusalem. His enemies lowered him into a cistern where he could have died. Ebed-Melech pleaded with the king to save him. The king ordered him to be lifted to safety.	The 'cloud of witnesses' evokes the stories of the heroes of biblical history, told in the previous chapter. They continue to participate in the salvation of the world. Their example can make readers determined to persevere.
Key verse	"I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already".	"My lord king, they said, these men have done a wicked thing by treating the prophet Jeremiah like this".	"Let us not lose sight of Jesus, who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection".
Key themes/ messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire is a symbol of God's presence and love. The baptism Jesus mentions is a figure of his Passion, where he will be immersed in suffering and death. Loyalty to Jesus may cause division, even in families. Loyalty to him comes first. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In his writings we learn a lot about the life of the prophet, including the suffering he endured in his ministry. There are similarities between the life of Jesus and Jeremiah. People speculated that Jesus could be Jeremiah come back to life (Mt 16:14). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The author exhorts his readers to be inspired by the heroes of faith in their efforts to be faithful to their calling. They should be inspired especially by the example of Jesus who endured suffering but was victorious. It is worth enduring to win the prize.
Questions/ application to our lives	<p>How can you build unity in your family and put Jesus first at the same time?</p> <p>What advice would you give to a friend who is experiencing tension in his/her family because he/she is trying to put Jesus first?</p> <p>In relation to the fire that Jesus came to bring to the earth, are there signs that it is blazing?</p> <p>What signs indicate that it is or is not blazing?</p>	<p>Why do you think that the preaching of Jeremiah was so unpopular that people wanted to kill him? What signs assure us that the words of a prophet are from God?</p> <p>Do you think there is prophecy being spoken today and if so, where?</p> <p>If you knew a prophet today, how would you encourage him to speak the message?</p>	<p>The 20th century has been a century of numerous saints. How influential has this "cloud of witnesses" been on your own practice of the faith?</p> <p>What struggles make it difficult for you to persevere? What means does God give us to overcome in times of struggle? How do these reflections give you fresh hope?</p>
Further reading	Catechism 766, 607, 696, 1225	Catechism 147, 578, 1816, 2471	Catechism 598, 1161, 2658, 2683