

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 12:49-53

I have come not to establish peace, but rather division.

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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflection

Fire of Life

Jesus is and always will be the Prince of Peace. But the peace Jesus gives is not an absence of conflict.

Quite the contrary, as we hear today. The peace of God is like a sword that divides families, and even churches. The division is caused by our refusal to embrace that costly com-

mitment to discipleship. The strife comes because of our refusal, not because of God's vindictive wishes. Jesus knew what that human refusal did to the prophets who came before him, such as Jeremiah. Jesus knew that such human refusal of fullness of life would deal him a similar lot. And sometimes it seems that in 2,000 years of Christianity, our human refusal still condemns Jesus to death, without having to point fingers at those outside the Church.

"I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!" Even though Jesus is wary of the baptism he is yet to undergo, which is his death, and even though he knows full well our capacity to refuse God's fire of love, he nevertheless continues to beckon us into this fire.

For the passion of God is a fire that does not destroy. The passion of God is a fire that brings life in overflowing measure. To let God's fire run through every vein of our being, we are to be committed totally. God's fire purifies, cleanses, and sets us ablaze. Jesus shows us what that blazing fire of love looks like.

..... Marie-Louise Ternier-Gommers, *Finding the Treasure Within*