

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Turn your eyes, O God, our shield; and look on the face of your anointed one; one day within your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 39)

ANTIPHON: Lord, come to my aid!

RESPONSE: Lord, come to my aid!

LECTOR: I waited, I waited for the Lord and he stooped down to me; he heard my cry. **R.**

LECTOR: He drew me from the deadly pit, from the miry clay. He set my feet upon a rock and made my footsteps firm. **R.**

LECTOR: He put a new song into my mouth, praise of our God. Many shall see and fear and shall trust in the Lord. **R.**

LECTOR: As for me wretched and poor, the Lord thinks of me. You are my rescuer, my help, O God, do not delay. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! My sheep listen to my voice, says the Lord; I know them, and they follow me. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) With the Lord there is mercy; in him is plentiful redemption.

Or

I am the living bread that came down from heaven, says the Lord. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever.

TODAY'S READINGS Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10; Hebrews 12:1-4; Luke 12: 49-53

NEXT WEEK (21st Sunday of Year C) Isaiah 66:18-21; Psalm 116; Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13; Luke 13:22-30

Starting a family

Becoming a Parent

If you have a friend or relative who is thinking of starting a family, why not send them our pregnancy magazine *Becoming Parents – A Spiritual Journey*. The four issues include articles, prayers and meditations, written by leaders in the parenting world. The four issues are titled: A New Beginning, A Growing Awareness, The Home Stretch And a New Journey Begins. To order copies go to **Becoming Parents A Spiritual Journey – Majellan Media/** or call 03 9592 2777.



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God's fire purifies our hearts



Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ, what do we expect Jesus to bring into our lives? While we may list many things, we surely hope that our Saviour will bring peace and blessings to every one of us as His disciples and to the world.

We believe that our God is Emmanuel, God with us, and that He is almighty and His love everlasting. We believe that He creates us according to His image and likeness; and that He calls each to grow as a person of faith and into the fullness of our humanity.

Alas, what we see happening in our world today are wars, suffering, ongoing violence, increased injustice, inhumane conditions, and destruction of the environment.

In this week's gospel Jesus' teaching seems not to meet our expectations of peace and joy. Indeed, Jesus' words are rather startling. We hear Jesus say, "I have come to bring fire to the earth. . . Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division!" It sounds harsh and it unsettles us. Certainly, we know that Jesus himself experienced antagonism, rejection and a violent death.

The fire that Jesus sets on the earth is a purifying fire. It may indeed cause pain and suffering, as it did for Jesus. We are called to live our faith in Jesus Christ, allowing His life to penetrate ours as we continue to witness the gospel, despite whatever difficulties confront us. But Jesus would have

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us clearly realise that our commitment as His followers will sometimes meet with tension, disagreement, antagonism and even violence.

We are to persevere nonetheless, and to hold true and firm to our faith in Jesus and the defence of His teachings.

Jesus continues, "There is a baptism I must receive and great is my distress till it is over." Jesus, having become one like us in all things but sin, knows our human condition very deeply. For love of us and for our salvation, Jesus bore the cross on His shoulders and carried it to His crucifixion, so that we may receive and celebrate new life through His resurrection.

The peace that Jesus wants to share with us is the peace of love coming from God, not like the peace the world offers. It is a peace the world cannot give.

The fire the Lord has brought into the world is the fire that cleanses and purifies us, enabling us to move forward courageously and without fear to share God's love and peace, despite whatever opposition we may encounter.

Jesus brings the Good News that God is always with us. Saint Paul encourages us, "Let us not lose sight of Jesus, who leads us in our faith." So, stay firm in our faith and remain united with the Lord, because hope in the Lord never disappoints us.

God bless you all. Amen.