

Fire

Jesus said, "I have come to light a fire on the earth. How I wish the blaze were ignited."
(Luke 12:49)

A man came running to Jesus and after some discussion told him that he had kept all the commandments since his childhood (Mark 10:17-22). He sought consolation and confirmation, but instead Jesus told him to sell all and give it to the poor so that he would have treasure in heaven. "At these words the man's face fell" and he went away sad.

The spark was there but not yet the fire!

The monk said to his elder: "I follow our rule, I fast, I pray, meditate in silence, and make the effort toward purity of heart; what more should I do?" The elder stood up and stretched his hands to heaven and aglow with the Lord said "Why not become totally changed into fire?"

The elder was already deeply committed to the Lord and in his "thoughts a fire blazed forth." (Ps 39:4)

But what is it that kept the young man hanging on to all that he had? What kept him back from the kind of spiritual progress Jesus suggested? Probably the same that keeps us from making greater strides in fervent amendment a fear of the difficulty that might be encountered, fear of the stress of change, a fear of having to let go of worldly possessions.

Must not all of our anxious wavering cease?

"Is not my word like fire, says the Lord, like a hammer shattering rocks?" (Jer 23:29)

Let us turn all occasions to spiritual profit by thinking, meditating, and acting upon them. When we hear of or personally experience good examples, let us be on fire to imitate them through our own uniqueness.

"Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you may judge what is God's will, what is good, pleasing, and perfect." (Romans 12:2)

If I only seek what is easiest and remain lax, I will continually experience mediocrity because the values of the world gradually weaken me. Instead, "we who are receiving the unshakable kingdom should hold fast to God's grace, through which we may offer worship acceptable to him in reverence and awe. For our God is a consuming fire." (Heb 12:29)

Keep focused on Jesus for it is he, "who baptizes with the Holy Spirit and fire." (Matt 3:11)

