

## The Purifying Fire of Christ

People who read the five verses of Luke 12:49-53 tend to think that Jesus' intent was to cause division. However, Jesus' intent was not to cause division in the world, but to set the world on fire with His purifying fire. Jesus clearly stated that intention by saying, "I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing!" (Luke 12:49) However, one thing had to happen before Jesus could set His purifying fire upon the world – Jesus had to undergo His "baptism" in Jerusalem. Jesus continued, "There is a baptism with which I must be baptized, and how great is my anguish until it is accomplished!" (Luke 12:50) The baptism which Jesus spoke of is His suffering and death on the Cross, which is the source of His purifying fire.

Just as fire refines precious metals, Jesus' purifying fire cleanses and transforms people from sin, making them holy and brings them closer to God. Jesus was in anguish for He longed greatly to see the world transformed with His purifying fire. This process of purification leads people to a deeper relationship with Christ, for it helps them relate their own love and their own sacrifices to the love and sacrifice of Christ on the Cross.

In the Old Testament, the prophet Malachi foretold of someone who is coming with a purifying fire: "Who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand firm when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire, like fullers' lye. He will sit refining and purifying silver, and he will purify the Levites, refining them like gold or silver, that they may bring offerings to the LORD in righteousness. (Malachi 3:2-3)



In the Gospels, John the Baptist also foretold of someone who is coming with fire; he said: "I am baptizing you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the holy Spirit and fire." (Matthew 3:11)

Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He promised to send the Holy Spirit to His disciples. The work of purifying the world continues with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit purifies believers by exposing their sins, leading them to repentance and empowering

them with grace for spiritual growth and humble service to God and to our fellow men.

The division which Jesus mentions in Luke 12:51: "Do you think that I have come to establish peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division," is the inevitable consequence of the Gospel message that Jesus brought. There will be those who will accept it and there will be those who will reject it. There will be those who will live by it, and there will be those who will not. This acceptance and rejection will be a source of conflict and dissension among strangers, friends and even within families. I have seen many families torn with such conflict, and there is not one single way to resolve it. Each family situation is different, but every family member who has undergone the purifying fire of Christ must approach this conflict with the wisdom, compassion and understanding that God has given them.

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## PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today is potluck Sunday! This is a great activity for every one to foster fellowship in our church community. Lunch begins after the 10:30am Mass. Please bring your favorite dish to share. If you are celebrating your birthday in the month of August, we have ordered a birthday cake for you.

Our parish pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche in St. Augustine, Florida, will be from November 24-26. This peaceful and beautiful site is where the first recorded Catholic Mass in the United States was celebrated in 1565. Participants will arrange by themselves to carpool to the shrine on Monday, November 24. We have negotiated a discounted group rate at Hampton Inn with breakfast and free parking for our 3-day/2-night stay. Each room has two queen beds and costs \$155 plus tax per night. Participants will book the hotel rooms on their own. Please sign up with Long Che with your email, and we will send you an email with the booking link so that you can get the discounted rate.

Sunday School classes for the 2025-2026 schoolyear begins on Sunday, August 17. Copies of the class schedule are available in the church foyer and have been posted on the classroom door and the parish website.

The 10th year anniversary of the dedication of our church will be on November 19, 2027. One of our goals is to publish a church directory to commemorate our 10 years as a parish community. Two years ago, we began planning for a church directory by inviting Universal Church Directories to our church to take family photos. Because many families were not able to have their pictures taken, we negotiated with Universal to include family photos of families who were not able to have their picture taken at that time. Universal will include these family photos in our directory for \$15 per family picture. For privacy concerns, addresses and phone numbers will not be listed in the parish directory. If you would like to be included in our parish directory, Tommy Puk will be taking family photos beginning on Sunday, August 17. Please sign up with Tommy to have your picture taken. For privacy concerns, addresses and phone numbers will not be listed in the parish directory.

Attention altar servers and their parents: please sign up in the Altar Server sign-up sheet for August and September. The sign-up sheet is in the same binder as the Mass Intentions and Lectors sign-up sheet.

Prayer List: Xu Chunmei, Bian Meiyi, John Grissom, Chen Kun, Chen Shupeng, Ni Yufang, Lydia Chen, David Wang, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing and Xu Taicheng.
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Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	Sundays 9:00-9:30 AM	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)	Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 PM	Mondays 6:00 PM (English)
	By Appointment	
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)		<b>Eucharistic Adoration</b>
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	<b>Anointing of the Sick</b>	Sundays 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Tuesdays 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 7:00 PM (English)		
First Saturday 10:00 AM (Chinese)		