

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

COURAGE AND ENDURANCE IN FAITH



"Do At first glance, this Sunday's biblical readings are quite confusing. And above all, we risk misinterpreting them. To understand them, we must remember that they take us back to times of persecution. The prophet Jeremiah suffered greatly from the hatred of his adversaries, even in his home village. **He was accused of demoralizing his people. But the prophet speaks on behalf of God. Within him, it is like a fire that nothing can stop. They sought to kill him. But through a foreigner (an Ethiopian), he will be saved.**

We can see that today; things are no better. Many Christians suffer the worst horrors because of their faith in Jesus Christ. But like Jeremiah and many others, nothing can turn them away from the faith that dwells within them. **They have understood that Christ is "the way, the truth, and the life." He alone has "the words of Eternal Life."**

The Letter to the Hebrews (2nd Reading) was addressed to persecuted Christians. This letter shows them the great witnesses to the faith found throughout the Old Testament. It is, the author of this letter tells us, **"An immense crowd of witnesses surrounding us." But the most important thing for us Christians is to fix our gaze on Jesus. He is the Ever-Present Witness, the One who said: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mt 28:20).** He goes before us on the path we must follow. With Him, we can be sure of reaching the goal. By His obedience unto death on a cross, He obtained for us victory over all the forces of evil. This is now the triumph of God's love. This good news is a message of hope for persecuted Christians of all time. Once again, it is LOVE that will triumph.

In the Gospel, Saint Luke tells us about the fire that Jesus came to bring to earth. No, it's not destructive fire. It's the fire of passionate love that is in God. The fire lit by Jesus leads His disciples to radical choices. This is important for us. If our faith is limited to attending Sunday Mass, we're not taking any big risks. There may be ridicule in some workplaces, leisure settings, and sometimes even in families. But in many countries, those who convert to the Gospel of Christ are persecuted, imprisoned, and put to death. We hear countless testimonies of this every day. **To fulfill its mission, the Church needs Christians truly passionate about this LOVE that is in God. François Mauriac said: "If you are a disciple of Christ, many will warm themselves by this fire. But on the days when you are not burning with LOVE, others will die of cold."** So yes, let us here below allow our hearts to be set ablaze with this **LOVE** which is in God to communicate it to all those around us..

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Dean of Northwest Broward Deanery of the Archdiocese Miami – August 17, 2025
