

# Ministerial Region of the Good Shepherd Parish

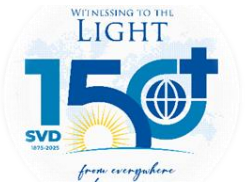
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Assistant Priest: Fr Joe Jacob SVD



## Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary time – Year C 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> August 2025

### Fire watch

You're having lunch in the company or school cafeteria. As you head for a place to sit, you pass by her, the quiet one who is always alone; or you see him, the guy who's clumsy and awkward in dealing with other people. She



or he, as always, is sitting alone. You stop for a moment. You see that friends are holding a place for you at their table. You smile and gesture to them *No, thanks, I'm good*, and ask if you can sit next to her or him. You get that look from your stunned friends across the room, you *have got to be kidding . . .!* You know you'll hear about this later. But you soon realise the good of your small act of kindness.

Or at dinner with friends one evening, someone starts in on some group: migrants, Muslims, kids, whoever. What he or she says is simply not true. You know better. Calmly and quietly, you share the story of someone in that group you have encountered who impressed you by their kindness or wisdom or diligence. Yeah, you're taking a chance that you could escalate the tension at the table, but at what point do we challenge such unfair and demeaning stereotypes?



***More often than not, we experience the “fires” of division that Jesus speaks of in today’s Gospel not so much as destructive conflagrations but as small “brush fires” that challenge us to put aside our own comfortable non-engagement to speak up for the defamed, to challenge the expectations of others in order to bring a sense of belonging to the forgotten and rejected, to let go of our own hurts and angers to forgive and heal a broken relationship. May we follow Jesus by putting out some “fire” of division in our world with the water of compassion; may we find the courage in the example of Jesus to bring a measure of peace where division and conflict reign.***