

# WORD FROM THE PASTOR

## GOD IS PRESENT AT THE HEART OF THE FAMILY



Saint John tells us “The Word was made flesh,” but what does that mean? It took centuries to understand better what “The Word was made manifest” meant. This doesn’t just mean that God took on a human body, He not only took on our body, but also our intelligence, our will, our sensibility. And today, on the feast of the Holy Family, that He also wished to live in a family.

**The Word of God made FLESH is also the Word of God made PRESENT in the family. It’s EMMANUEL PRESENT IN THE FAMILY.** It is Jesus who saves, who is also in the family to save it. The fact that the Word of God wanted to live, to be carried in Mary's womb, to be born in a stable, and then to grow as

the reading says, to be strengthened, to be filled with wisdom, all this shows us how much He means to Him, the family is important. God is truly present at the heart of the family and present at the heart of family relationships.

This isn’t very surprising since He is the triune God. And the family is like an earthly image of the Trinity. In the family, people are different from each other, sometimes they make the experience a bit painful: sometimes it is said that it is a treasure, but at other times, it must support... Family members are called to live in communion. St. Paul urges us **“Let your love be without hypocrisy. Flee the evil with horror, and cling to the good. Be united in brotherly love, compete in respect for one another.** Do not slow down your spirit, but be zealous in the Spirit, serve the Lord, rejoice in hope, hold fast in trials, be diligent in prayer.” (Rom 12:9-12) One very specific way to honor this presence of God in the family is through prayer.

God is also at the heart of family decisions.

This is clearly seen in the readings given to us, especially those that speak of Abraham today. That’s a man of faith, faith is really put to the test. Families are called to build themselves up in faith. We also see this in the Gospel: Mary and Joseph are anxious to fulfill the "prescriptions" of the law, anxious to fulfill the will of God revealed to them. The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple is an important moment for Mary and Joseph: it is an opportunity to acknowledge that this child does not belong to them. That’s what Joseph and Mary are experiencing in this moment of the Presentation. **GOD IS PRESENT AT THE HEART OF FAMILY TRIALS.**

In all these trials, God is not absent. God forbid the day it gets complicated for us, fortunately. The act of believing doesn’t spare us trials, but it doesn’t multiply them anymore in our lives. So either we carry the door with Jesus, or we try to undo it all by ourselves and we are far more miserable.

To conclude, we can say that Jesus is Emmanuel. God with us, Jesus saving us. So today, let’s be aware of the presence of Jesus in our family lives, in family relationships. **GOD DESIRES TO HAVE A PLACE IN OUR FAMILY DECISIONS, AND HE PROMISES HIS PRESENCE IN OUR FAMILY EXPERIENCES.** Let us pray for all families that together they

reflect the holiness of God in the way they live in faith, love, charity, and forgiveness.

***Very Rev. Fr. Lucien Eugene Pierre Ph.D., Pastor, VF***

***Dean of Northwest Broward of the Archdiocese Miami – December 29, 2024***