

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

CHRIST RESTORES THROUGH HIS GRACE AND MERCY IN HIS PERSON



My dear brothers and sisters, it has been four weeks since we celebrated Christmas with all these other events. These festivities prompt us to ask fundamental questions that can help us grow our faith in Jesus as the Son of Man and Son of God. Is the Christ in whom I believe really Jesus of Nazareth, Son of Mary, a Jew among Jews, born at a given moment in human history, as witnesses saw and heard Him and as they reported their experience? The public ministry of Jesus begins in the Gospel according to Saint Luke with this visit to the synagogue where He will comment on the prophet Isaiah. **We already see an aspect of His ministry: announcing the Word of God and commenting on it.** We understand a little better

the meaning of our Sunday liturgy because, when we are gathered as we are today, "as one man" says the Book of Nehemiah: "The people were gathered as one man", when we are thus gathered, we are gathered first to listen to the proclamation of the Word of God, as it was made by Ezra before the assembled people, as it is made in the office, in the synagogue every Sabbath, as it is made every Sunday at the Eucharistic celebration.

God gathers His people to speak to them, to tell them something, to announce Good News to them. **This Good News, the one that Jesus comments on in the Book of Isaiah, is that God who has decided once again to show Grace.** A year of Grace opens before us, **a year of Goodness, a year of Mercy.** The priest who has read the Gospel and is trying to explain it to you is also there to announce that **this year of Blessing**, this act of Mercy, this act of salvation is addressed to us today. This is what Jesus does in the Gospel of Saint Luke: "This Word has been fulfilled for us today". **The Word of God tells us again all of God's love for us, the promises made long ago.** In many ways, this expectation was manifested in the Jewish people, through the prophets. The People of God are returning from exile, from the ordeal where they have suffered!

The Word of God illuminates everything that has already been experienced. In each of us the dormant appetite for God is awakened, the Word of God gives it meaning. **Jesus comes to announce to us that the infinite love of God will take root in the soil of our heart, that our being will regain its consistency and that it will advance with the strength of God.** How many places of torment, how many people are prisoners in the world, Jesus comes to undo all these bonds of slavery. **By His presence, He sets us free. He came to bring Light to the blind. If physical light is necessary for our life, we have the desire to see clearly within ourselves, to find the unity of our life.**

Jesus comes to the depths of our existence to **give us Light again.** To the oppressed He comes to bring liberation. We do not want to remain spectators, but to become actors in the action of Jesus, in deep relationship with what is experienced in the world. We discover what we must live with Jesus, we want to work so that the newness of His work comes to pass in us. **The Holy Spirit that Jesus gives us, asks us to hear the Word of God announced by Jesus today, so that it may be realized.**

***Very Rev. Fr. Lucien Eugene Pierre Ph.D., Pastor, VF
Dean of Northwest Broward of the Archdiocese Miami – January 26, 2025***