

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

BE MESSENGERS OF HOPE AND DIVINE HEALING OF CHRIST



Brothers and sisters in Christ, we are called to be messengers of Christ; The Lord addressed Isaiah when he was only 20 years old; and he asked him this question: "Where shall I go?" Who will be our messenger? And Isaiah answered, here am I; send me. Among his own people Isaiah became a prophet of the Lord.

"Whom shall I send and deliver my message?" This is also the question that has challenged the actors of the Health Pastoral. Everyone in his own way tries to live the Word of Christ every day: "I was sick, and you visited me..." This day gives us the opportunity to honor all those who are in contact with sick

persons, at home, in hospitals, at retirement homes, at the Evangelical Service of the Sick.

This pastoral service among the more fragile isn't just the business of a few. It should be the concern of everyone. We are all called and sent. In the Second Reading, we have Paul's testimony. What made him an apostle of Christ was not primarily his oratorical qualities or his missionary journeys, nor his concern for the poor and downtrodden. The real starting point was his encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus. He saw Him living in the midst of His people. **Christ called to follow: "This is by the grace of God I am Who I am."** We, too, are the fruit of this grace too, not just by our human qualities but by the faith we have received. Christ is always with us; like Paul and many others we have the responsibility to pass on what we have received.

The Gospel tells us about the calling of the first disciples. Pressed by the crowd, the demand of God was so great, and Jesus needed help. It's important because the thread of the Word must reach everyone. This help, He will ask from the fishermen who have placed their boats at his disposal. He will then invite them to step out into the broad and cast their nets to catch fish.

Today as ever, Christ invites us to step forward into the broad. On this day, He directs us specifically towards the most fragile. **THE GAZE OF FAITH** we learn to recognize when we are gathered in His name. He is also present at the heart of this world through Christians who are committed to responding to His call: catechists, entertainers accompanying children and young people. He counts on us to, in turn, become apostles. We have a concrete example through the ABCD we can all contribute and become a messenger of hope and Charity of Christ. But we must never forget that without Jesus, these nets would remain empty. If we neglect prayer and the Sacraments, our efforts will be in vain. You will comb for days and days for nothing. **Christ invites us to draw close to Him and to receive the food He offers to nourish our FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE. He assures us of His presence every day and to the end of our lives.**

***Very Rev. Fr. Lucien Eugene Pierre Ph.D., Pastor, VF
Dean of Northwest Broward of the Archdiocese Miami – February 9, 2025***