

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

GOOD NEWS FOR ALL



The good news is: God's salvation is offered to all people; it is not limited to the faithful believers of His own people; it is for everyone, including foreigners.

This is the message found in the Book of Isaiah, long before the coming of Christ: **"Foreigners who have joined themselves to the Lord to honor Him, to love His name, to become His servants... I will bring them to My holy mountain."** Let us not forget that in the biblical world, the mountain is the place of encounter with God. If there is only one God, salvation concerns not only His children but all other peoples as well.

Pope Francis reminded us of this when he asked us to open the doors and reach out to those who are far away, even to the "peripheries." The Word of God must be proclaimed to all.

With Saint Paul's letter, we see the fulfillment of this Divine Plan. The Apostle Paul addresses Christians of Gentile origin. Their welcome into the Christian community was not without significant tension. Yet, increasing numbers of these foreigners were converting to Christ. **The very fact that the Gospel was received by Gentiles demonstrates that God calls all people. He desires to show Mercy to all because He wills that all be saved.** Following the example of Paul and all the great witnesses of the Faith, we are sent out to those who do not attend our gatherings. **Today's Church must open its eyes, ears, and heart to the cries of the whole world.** The Good News of Jesus Christ is for everyone.

The Gospel shows us that, with Jesus, this Good News is coming to pass. He, Himself has just encountered the disbelief of His own people. He withdraws to the region of Tyre and Sidon pagan territory, and it is there that he meets the Canaanite woman. Her race, her land, and her past all mark her as a stranger and an outsider. Yet, this pagan woman demonstrates integrity, humility, openness, humor, and, above all, an astonishing faith that wins Jesus's admiration. We heard her say: "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." This is an extraordinary lesson for the Jews and for the disciples.

We have just celebrated the Assumption; we might ask ourselves: what do Mary and this anonymous, scorned pagan woman have in common? Apparently, nothing... except Faith. **Mary and the Canaanite woman are united in Jesus Christ.** The Canaanite woman's faith is an openness of heart, a profound trust in the One she implores. When all seems hopeless, a mother still hopes. **The Faith of a foreign mother opens Jesus's heart to the pagans.**

Like the Canaanite woman, we beg Christ: "Have Mercy on us; have Mercy on our world..." He sends us forth to bring healing to those around us. **The remedy He gives us is far more than mere crumbs: it is the Gift of His Word and His Body; it is the Gift of His Holy Spirit.**

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

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