

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

CHRIST IS OUR UNIVERSAL SAVIOR



My brothers and sisters in Christ, the word of God in our liturgy this Sunday announce good news of the utmost importance: for God, there are no boundaries, no exclusions. This message is taken from the 2nd Book of Kings: it tells us the story of Naaman, a foreigner, an enemy of Israel. We know that everything started badly. But once healed of his leprosy, Naaman shows his gratitude. He goes to meet the prophet. We have heard his beautiful profession of faith and his desire to join in true worship. This Old Testament story tells us that God's salvation is offered to all men, even those who are far from Him. It is to this good news that we must bear witness throughout our lives.

The Gospel gives us a precise testimony to this superabundant Love that is in Jesus: it shows us the ten lepers who come to meet Him. These poor men are outcasts from society. They must keep their distance. When Jesus passes by, they come to beg for healing. We know what happens next: **all ten are healed; but only one returns to Jesus. He considers it more important to give thanks than to go immediately to meet the priest.**

Saint Luke specifies that this man was a Samaritan, an outcast from the Jewish community. He could not therefore go and meet the priest. So, he returns to Jesus, who welcomes him. This event reminds us that Christ did not come only for his people. The mission begins with them, but it must continue throughout the world. It is universal. **Like Naaman, the Samaritan returns glorifying God. He, the stranger, was the only one to take this step.**

Reading this Gospel, we are reminded of ourselves: how do we behave towards God? Do we think of thanking and giving thanks for all His blessings? We are often like blind people: we are so accustomed to God's blessings that we barely notice them. Every Sunday, we celebrate the Eucharist, which purifies us. It brings together into one people very different men, women, and children. It makes us open to those who would like to enter it. Every year, we welcome children to catechism who are asking for baptism. Adults also take this step.

We give thanks for this gift of God offered to all; and we beg Him: **“Bring back to you all your scattered children...” Grant that we may not hinder Your will to save all men but adhere to it with our whole life.**

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