

AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH AND LIVED AMONG US

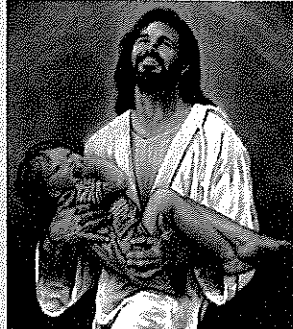
One new life brings the world new life, new hope, a new covenant. The Word of God, from the heart of God comes to our world to be the heart of the world, our heart. We rejoice, we celebrate. Happy Christmas to all!

With this pandemic there is much talk about how we will be "on the other side". This in terms of politics, economics and socially. It will undoubtedly be a different world; perhaps a new world. How do we prepare for it? How do we recognize it?

We need to ask the same questions about ourselves as church. Already before this pandemic we were aware of a crisis in the Church with falling number at Eucharistic and other liturgical celebrations. We experience the "greying" of our membership as less and less young people are interested. This is part of a wider social phenomenon particularly in the Western world, but also in the developing world. The world has become very secular with many people becoming unconcerned about God, religion or any spiritual observance. Many are disillusioned by the scandals in the Church and voted with their feet.

Pope John Paul in preparation for the millennium called for a new era of evangelization. "I have often repeated the summons to the new evangelization. I do so again now." He calls it "a fresh proclamation of the enduring truth." Pope Francis tells us, "The new paths of

evangelization must be developed in dialogue with these fundamental wisdoms making themselves manifest as seeds of the Word." [QA 14]



We have a great opportunity coming out of this pandemic to renew and reform the Church. The challenge is to find new ways of evangelization for the modern culture we live in that will reach out to young people, to those disillusioned and those never evangelized. What church will we give to our children? Our culture has changed so we need to inculturate the Gospel and the Church into our society in modern times, as has been done in other times in our history and in other cultures.

Renewal of the Church and our lives begins and ends in the person of Jesus Christ. Here we go beyond the externals of Church to the true Gospel values, to the underlying truth of the

sacraments to know and reclaim the essentials of Jesus' message. On this basis we will be renewed as Church and find new expressions of faith, new structures and new ways of living together as church. We will have the great gift of Christmas, new life, new energy, new vision. We can



find again our identity as church to reach out to the world to change it, to bring the Good News to all people.

Roger Purcell MSC, Director

