

## What is Jesus inviting us into?

My dear friends, this is indeed a critical question for our times. Bishop Gruss and the Diocesan Mission Leadership Team have spent a great deal of time and prayer considering this question. All adults, and most teens and even pre-teens, can notice that the world, our country, our schools, our careers, and even our church are very different from what they were not so long ago.

When a child begins preparing to receive the Eucharist for the first time, parents and the church help them see through a different set of lenses. These lenses help them see, with eyes of faith, the transformation of ordinary bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. These lenses not only show us the Eucharist but also who our neighbor is and our need to forgive and be forgiven. They are lenses that guide us along the right path and keep us from danger. They are, in fact, the lenses that help us ensure we aren't so focused on winning the war in this world that we lose it all in the next.

Throughout history, so many people have shared these same lenses that led to a common view of the world—not that everything was perfect, but that many shared a similar viewpoint. Bishop Gruss recently shared the following with the Priests and Deacons of the Diocese:

*“We are dealing with the first culture in history that was once deeply Christian but that by a slow and thorough process has been consciously riding itself of its Christian basis. Our society is full of many - including those baptized and raised with some exposure to faith - who believe that they have seen enough of Christianity to see that it has little to offer them.”*

Simply put, so many of us have let these lenses deteriorate. Whether they have fallen out of their frames, are covered with dirt and grime, or have been tossed aside altogether, so much of society lacks not just lenses showing a common frame of reference but a common goal.

But there is still reason for hope.

# We were born for this moment!

We celebrate the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Our Lord, our God, came to our world and our humanity, and he didn't do it by accident. St. Paul wrote in Galatians 4:4-5 *"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to ransom those under the law, so that we might receive adoption."*

As Paul states, Jesus was born in the proper time and place because it was the time for him to do his work of redemption. Each of us might wish to have been born in a different time or place, but we are here because we were made for this time. This is not because time is easy for us but because each of us has a gift or talent made for this time.

But all this comes to a single and central point. There is room in our lives for one King. Like the disciples of old, we must listen to the voice of Christ alone – not getting bogged down or lost in our own opinions or perspectives. We pray to hear the voice of God, not to pray simply before doing something, because that is how we are supposed to begin. We pray to know and follow the voice of Jesus. Thereby, we know what to do. In John's Gospel this week, we hear, *"For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."*

For the next four weeks, we will explore the once-common view of the world through lenses that show the fullness of truth and life. Each week, we will examine the reality of our world, our hope, and our future.

**CREATED**

**CAPTURED**

**RESCUED**

**RESPOND**

I look forward to journeying with you. In Christ's Love, Deacon Todd