

The Living Word of God: A Call to Hear, Receive, and Act



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a question that must be placed before every Christian, not once, but daily: When God speaks, do we listen?

For the tragedy of our time is not that God has fallen silent, but that His Word is too often unheard, unopened, or set aside. Yet Sacred Scripture proclaims with clarity: “The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword” (Hebrews 4:12). God is not distant. He speaks—now, today, into the concrete reality of your life.

In the language of the Bible, the Word of God is not merely speech. The ancient understanding of *dabar* reveals that God’s Word is event, power, and reality itself. “God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light” (Genesis 1:3). When God speaks, creation comes into being, history is shaped, and hearts are changed.

This Word reaches its fullness in Jesus Christ. As we are taught in the Gospel of John: “In the beginning was the Word... and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:1,14). The Word is not only spoken, but also a Person. To encounter Scripture, therefore, is not to study a text alone, but to meet the living God who addresses you.

For this reason, the Church teaches, especially in *Dei Verbum*, that Scripture must be the very foundation of spiritual life. Without the Word, faith weakens. Without the Word, prayer becomes empty. Without the Word, the Christian life loses direction. A Bible left unopened is not simply neglected—it is a voice refused. This truth must shape our life as a Church.

In the sacred liturgy, Christ Himself speaks when the Scriptures are proclaimed. The Liturgy of the Word is not a preliminary moment; it is a real encounter. As the prophet declares: “So shall my word be... it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose” (Isaiah 55:11). Those who proclaim and preach must do so with reverence and conviction, aware that God uses their voice to reach His people. But this encounter must not remain within the walls of the church. It must enter your homes, your decisions, your daily struggles.

Therefore, I ask every member of this parish—without exception—to take up the Word of God with renewed seriousness:

- Each day, read at least one passage from the Gospel, even if only for five minutes. “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4).
- After reading, remain in silence for a few moments, allowing the Word to speak to your heart. “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening” (1 Samuel 3:9).
- Carry one word or phrase with you throughout the day and let it guide your actions. “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105).

Do not postpone this. Do not wait for a better time. Begin today.

At the same time, we must correct a serious misunderstanding that weakens faith: the false division between the Old and the New Testament. Some imagine a God of wrath in the Old and a God of love in the New. This is not the faith of the Church—it is a distortion that echoes the ancient error of Marcionism.

There is one God—faithful, consistent, and merciful—whose plan unfolds across all of Scripture. “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). When we neglect the Old Testament, we do not purify our faith, we impoverish it.

The Scriptures reveal a pattern that speaks directly to our lives: God calls His people to go out—from slavery, from sin, from all that diminishes them—and to go into the fullness of life He promises. Yet between these two moments lies the desert. Many of you are living in that “middle” now.

You are not where you once were—but you are not yet where you desire to be. You struggle with fatigue, uncertainty, family burdens, or spiritual dryness. At times, like Israel in the wilderness, you may feel the temptation to turn back. “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt” (Numbers 14:2). The past can appear safer than the freedom God offers. This is the great danger: to prefer the security of what enslaves over the risk of what saves.

Rebellion in the wilderness was not merely disobedience—it was a loss of trust. The people forgot what God had done. They allowed fear to speak louder than the Word. And so, their journey stalled. We must not repeat this pattern.

For even in the face of human weakness, one truth remains: God is faithful. As the Psalmist warns and invites: “Today, if you hear his voice, harden not your hearts” (Psalm 95:7–8). The history of salvation is not ultimately the story of human failure—it is the story of divine fidelity. This fidelity is the foundation of our hope.

Hope is not optimism. It is the decision to trust that God is leading us, even when the path is unclear. “We walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). Without hope, the heart grows weary, and life loses direction. But with hope, even the desert becomes a place of transformation.

Dear brothers and sisters, the Word of God is not optional. It is not reserved for a few. It is the daily bread of every believer. If you listen to many voices and not to God’s, confusion will grow. If you fill your mind with noise and not with Scripture, your heart will become restless. But if you receive the Word, meditate upon it, and live it, your life will be anchored in truth. Therefore, I say to you plainly: Open the Scriptures. Read them. Pray for them. Live them. Do not be content to know about God—come to know Him. Do not remain hearers only become doers of the Word (cf. James 1:22).

Entrusting you to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who received the Word with faith and bore it into the world, I impart to you, my blessing.

May the Word dwell in you richly (cf. Colossians 3:16), and may it bear fruit in your lives.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Vilaine Philius

Pastor