

**TWENTY-THIRD WEEK OF ORDINARY TIME**  
**September 10, 2023**

**Gospel: (Matthew 18:15-20)**

Jesus said to his disciples: *“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church. If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector....Amen, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”*

**Reflection:**

Giving and receiving corrections is one of the hardest things we can do. Some strong motivation usually has to be present in order for corrections to be given or received and true reconciliation take place. There may be many motivations: to save face personally, to please another, to get another to change behavior that simply annoys us, etc. The last line of the gospel gives us a clue as to what underlying motivation is really the strongest: “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.” Our strongest motivation urging us to charitable correction is the fact that we share a common identity of being the body of Christ. We ourselves aren’t the reconcilers; it is the power of Christ action through his body. (Living Liturgy, p. 232)

**Vincentian Meditation:**

People had often reproved Vincent for his harsh, almost driven streak, and commented about his steep mood swings. Defensive, Vincent would argue that he was the way he was and could not change. But during one intense period of prayer, Vincent threw himself on God’s mercy, recognizing at last that only God’s power could calm his harshness and ease his sharp mood swings. Many years later, Vincent recounted this crucial moment: “I turned to God and earnestly begged him to convert this irritable and forbidding trait of mine. I also asked for a kind and amiable spirit. And with the grace of Our Lord, by giving a little attention to checking the hot-blooded impulses of my personality, I have been at least partly cured of my gloomy disposition.” (McKenna, Praying with Vincent, p.68-69.)

**Discussion:** *(Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence)*

**Do we need to confront some unchristian behaviors in our Conference?**

**Closing Prayer:**

Lord, where two or three are gathered in your name, be in our midst,

**- and give us the grace to give and receive corrections.**

Lord, give us the grace to pray for our own conversion,

**- so that we will have the kind and amiable spirit of Vincent. Amen**

