

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

February 4, 2024

Gospel: (Mark 1:29-39)

When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to Jesus all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him. Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed. Simon and those who were with him pursued him and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you." He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come." So he went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

Reflection:

Jesus rose "very early before dawn" and went out to a "deserted place" to pray, to be in communion with God. He is able to turn his back on the adulation and keep his mission on a steady course because he does not lose sight of why he came—to preach the good news of salvation. He does not lose sight of his mission because he never loses sight of his Father. This is how we reorder ourselves—by praying, being in communion with God so that Jesus' mission is truly our own. (Living Liturgy, p.54)

Vincenian Meditation:

There is a balance in the activity of Jesus. There is prayer: liturgical prayer in the synagogue, and that is balanced by private prayer. There is hard work, and that is balanced by rest and relaxation with his apostles. We, as Vincentians, must have that same balance in our lives. St. Vincent wanted us to pray privately and to pray together: to work and to take time to be together in community. If we blend prayer, work and Conference life properly, then we will be balanced and effective Vincentians after the heart of St. Vincent. (McCullen, Deep Down Things, p.681)

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

In our lives as Vincentians, do we have a balance or an unbalance between prayer, service and community?

Closing Prayer:

For the grace to pray privately and to pray together,

-Lord, hear us!

For the grace to serve the poor with dedication and faithfulness,

-Lord, hear us!

For the grace to support and care for each other in our Conference,

-Lord, hear us!

For the grace to be balanced and effective Vincentians after the heart of St. Vincent,

- Lord, hear us! Amen

