

## FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

March 17, 2024

### Gospel: (John 12:20-33)

Jesus answered them, “Amen, Amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit... Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.”

### Reflection:

Serving means following; following Jesus means serving. Also, serving means entering into Jesus’ death – like Jesus we must also be the grain that dies to produce much fruit. When we follow Jesus into his service, we, too, have the pledge of receiving the same honor that the Father bestows on Jesus. We see Jesus by *being* Jesus. It’s that simple! And that challenging. We see Jesus in those who lay down their life in servanthood and others see Jesus in us when we are servants. (Living Liturgy, p.94)

### Vincenzian Meditation:

In the Manual of the Society, we read: If Jesus stands at the center of Vincenzian spirituality, the poor stand next to him. Jesus’ words, “*You always will have the poor with you,*” are the reason for *being* for Vincenzian existence. Blessed Frederic said: “Sons of Saint Vincent de Paul, let us learn of him to forget ourselves, to devote ourselves to the service of God and the good of men. Let us learn of him that holy preference which shows most love to those who suffer most.” Mercy is a facet of charity that calls us, first to identify in spirit with our suffering brothers and sisters. Mercy calls also for outward signs and actions. We weep with those who weep, we rejoice with those who rejoice. We empathize; we reach out in compassion. (US Manual, P.16-17)

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

**How do we see Jesus in those who lay down their life in servanthood and how do others see Jesus in us when we are servants?**

### Closing Prayer:

Jesus, we seek refuge in your loving heart and so we pray:

**-Jesus, keep us close to you.**

For the grace to be your servant,

**-Jesus, keep us close to you.**

For all members of the Society who model a life of service,

**-Jesus, keep them close to you.**

For our families and friends who teach us how to be compassionate,

**-Jesus, keep them close to you.**

For all those who are suffering, especially the sick and the dying,

**-Jesus, keep them close to you. Amen**

