

**FEAST OF ST. VINCENT de PAUL**  
**September 27**

**Gospel: Matthew 5:1-9**

When Jesus saw the crowds he went up on the mountainside...his disciples gathered around him, and he began to teach them: *“How blest are the poor in spirit: the reign of God is theirs. Blest too are the sorrowing; they shall be consoled. Blest are the lowly; they shall inherit the land. Blest are they who hunger and thirst for holiness; they shall have their fill. Blest are they who show mercy; mercy shall be theirs. Blest are the single-hearted, for they shall see God. Blest too the peacemakers; they shall be called children of God...”*

**Reflection:**

For Vincent, love is always very concrete, very practical. It is love in practice. “Let us love God, my brothers and sisters,” he urges, “let us love God, but let it be with the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brows.” We are called to follow Christ as servants of the poor. Servants get their hands dirty. They labor long and hard. They engage in difficult tasks, visiting the sick and elderly in their homes, feeding street-people, serving the hungry, helping the widow and orphan. They are on the front lines ministering to the poor. As St. Vincent says, we must first do and then teach.

**Vincenian Meditation:**

St. Vincent tells us that “Love is inventive to the point of infinity.” I encourage you today to be very inventive. Because you are on the front line in laboring for the poor, you will be among the first to know their real needs. It will not be psychologists or economists, who study the needs of the poor by examining the data they receive. You will know ahead of them because the poor will tell you directly. Be inventive in meeting those needs. (Maloney, Go! On the Missionary Spirituality of St. Vincent de Paul, p.133-4)

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

**In what ways can you become “inventive to infinity” in serving the needs of the poor that come to you?**

**Closing Prayer:**

O God, your son Jesus preached the Good News to the poor,  
**-may we continue to be effective instruments of Christ to those most in need.**

O God, give us the strength and creativity we need to stand in solidarity with those who suffer,  
**-may our hearts be filled with compassion and love.**

O God, you call us to be followers of St. Vincent de Paul,  
**-grant us the grace to be “inventive to infinity” in serving the poor and suffering! Amen**

