

**TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**  
**September 29, 2024**

**Gospel: (Mark 9: 38-48)**

John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw a man using your name to expel demons and we tried to stop him because he is not of our company." Jesus said in reply: "Do not try to stop him. No man who performs a miracle using my name can at once speak ill of me. Anyone who is not against us is with us. Anyone who gives you a drink of water because you belong to Christ will not, I assure you, go without his reward. But it would be better if anyone who leads astray one of these simple believers were to be plunged in the sea with a great millstone fastened around his neck."

**Reflection:**

We often have strict, legitimate criteria for who can belong or not. In this gospel the apostle John is bringing to Jesus' attention that someone who "doesn't belong" was doing what Jesus did. Jesus lays down a simple, clear rule: anyone who is doing good in Jesus' name cannot also speak ill of Jesus. Jesus has a simple rule for who belongs in his company—"whoever is not against us is for us." This is a contrast between generous leadership and petty discipleship. Jealousy and pettiness thwart the advancement of God's kingdom and they must be cut out. Jesus keeps us focused on what is essential: God's kingdom. (Living Liturgy, p.218)

**Vincenian Meditation:**

It is difficult to see Christ in the poor. Sometimes, it is even more difficult to see him in someone in our own Conference. Our Lord keeps saying to us: If you find it difficult to see Christ in the poor or in the person who annoys you in your own Conference, begin by trying to be Christ to such people: to say nothing, to do nothing which Christ would not say or do. That calls for faith. Let us not be discouraged at our failures in our service of the poor or by our failures in fraternal charity. With the grace of Jesus Christ we must keep trying. (McCullen, *Deep Down Things*, p. 444)

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

**Does "jealousy and pettiness" exist in our Conference...how can we change?**

**Closing Prayer:**

For the grace to be true Vincentians, we pray:

**-Lord, help us to find you in the poor and in each other.**

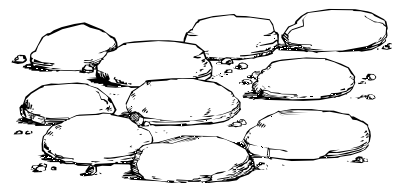
For the grace to be open and honest with each other,

**-Lord, heal our jealousy and pettiness.**

For the grace to let go of our prejudice and judgmental attitudes,

**-Lord, teach us how to forgive each other. Amen**

MK 9:40



**WHOEVER IS NOT AGAINST  
US IS FOR US.**

MK 9:40