

## THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

November 3, 2024

### Gospel: (Mark 12: 28-34)

One of the scribes came up to Jesus, and asked him, "Which is the first of all the commandments?" Jesus replied: "*This is the first: Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! Therefore you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. And this is the second, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.*"

### Reflection:

In this gospel a scribe approaches Jesus with the question, one about which of the 613 Jewish precepts is greatest. Jesus gets to the heart of things, and does more than just answer the scribe's question; he brings to explicit statement the whole underlying meaning of his ministry and what discipleship and inaugurating the kingdom of God is all about. Knowing the law and even keeping the law are not enough—what is required is whole-hearted love of God and neighbor. Jesus in addition to the commandment to love God above all else, tells his listeners to "love your neighbor as yourself." What links our relationship to God, neighbor, and self is love. Law is not kept for its own sake; ideally, law sustains and protects relationships in a loving way. (Living Liturgy, p.242)

### Vincenian Meditation:

The spiritual genius of St. Vincent lies in the success he had in marrying the two great commandments of the law. The historian, Bremond, tells us: "It is not his love of mankind which led Vincent de Paul to sanctity, but it is rather that sanctity made him truly and efficaciously charitable. It is not the poor who gave him to God, but God who gave him to the poor." The dynamism, the energy, the love which St. Vincent manifested to the poor did not come from any doctrinaire views on politics or sociology. The source of his energy and the clarity of his spiritual vision came from his contemplation of the words and actions of Jesus Christ in the pages of the Gospel and from his daily contact with Jesus Christ in the quietness of prayer. He became convinced that, once men and women are made new through their personal dedication to Jesus Christ, a new world will follow. (McCullen, *Deep Down Things*, p. 4688)

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

**How have you found the truth that "It is not the poor who give us to God, but God who gives us to the poor."**

### Closing Prayer:

O Lord, teach us how to love God with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength,

**-and our neighbor as ourselves. Amen**

