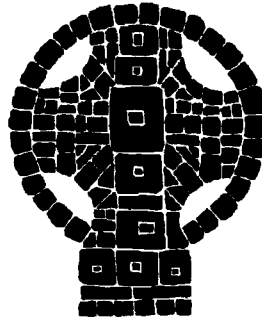


# VINCENTIAN REFLECTIONS

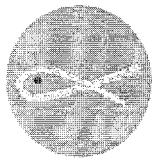


*Seek refuge in the  
name of the Lord.*

Zep 3:12

**Spiritual Meditations for Conference Meetings**  
*(Based on the Sunday Scripture readings  
and Vincentian Feasts)*

***Available on WWW.SVDPUSA.ORG***  
*(Click: Spiritual Resources)*



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*St. Vincent de Paul never wrote a book about his spiritual teachings. But we find the living voice of the saint in his letters and conferences in which he trained his followers for the mission of service to the poor.*

*The two fundamental sources of his teaching are the GOSPEL and LIFE. He wanted his followers to put the whole of the Gospel into the whole of their lives, and he never wearied of deepening both with all the faith that God had put into his heart. That is why all that Vincent says to us has the simplicity of our everyday life and the penetrating strength of the Word of God.*

*The Vincentian Weekly Reflections are therefore offered to all who strive to serve the poor in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul. The prayer and reflections are based on the Sunday Gospel of the Liturgical Calendar, together with the feast days of some of the saints of our Vincentian Family. Each reflection offers a time for prayer, silence and discussion so that our everyday life, like Vincent, can become penetrated with the strength of the Word of God. These Reflections are used as the Opening Prayer for Conference and Council meetings, and are a wonderful means for spiritual formation for all members.*

*This resource is produced quarterly and sent to the leadership for distribution to all Conferences. You may want to make copies for each member of your Conference, so that they may take them home for personal reflection during the week.*



## **HOW TO LEAD THE VINCENTIAN REFLECTIONS IN A CONFERENCE**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Leader describes to the group the process which is going to take place:

- Provide a copy for each member of your Conference for their personal reflection
- Stress that sharing is not compulsory and mention the need for confidentiality
- Ask, or assign, different members to read the different sections:
  - Gospel reading
  - Reflection
  - Vincentian Meditation

### **OPENING PRAYER/QUIETENING DOWN PERIOD**

Leader invites group to:

- Become relaxed and aware of God's presence with us
- "Let Go" of distractions and quietly pray to the Holy Spirit

### **READING OF THE VINCENTIAN WEEKLY REFLECTION**

- Each section is read aloud, slowly and prayerfully, by the different members
- Hearing different voices will allow different emphasis on words/phrases

### **QUIET PERIOD**

Leader invites everyone:

- To quietly reflect on the readings and notice if anything strikes them
- Introduces the Discussion Question suggested in the Reflection
- Allows 2-3 minutes of quiet

### **SHARING**

Leader invites members who wish to share on the Discussion Question, or on how the one of the readings struck them. Possibly not everyone will share, but time should be allowed for each person who wishes to share his/her thoughts.

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Leader closes the Prayer Reflection by beginning the Closing Prayer, and all answer the response(in bold).

**(This entire process should take about 10-15 minutes)**

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

**Gospel:**

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 Vincent 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**

