

## FROM FR. JASON



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Just a reminder to all Faith Formation 1<sup>st</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> grade parents that we kick off the year with our Orientation Meeting tonight (Sunday, September 22, 2024) at 7:00 pm in the Church. Let us accompany with prayer all our Faith Formation families and catechists all year long! We are all in the battle everyday as we juggle busy schedules and many commitments, but especially our young families. May they be given the grace to put God first and show us the way to strive for holiness!

Let us not forget one of the greatest lessons of Christ in today's Gospel. "If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all." He started the greatest competition ever: **to be first in being the last.** What a great way to holiness. This Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, the Church celebrates the

Memorial of St. Vincent de Paul. Talk about being the servant of all. Here is an excerpt from [A writing of St Vincent de Paul](#) from the Office of Readings for this Memorial.

"Even though the poor are often rough and unrefined, we must not judge them from external appearances nor from the mental gifts they seem to have received. On the contrary, if you consider the poor in the light of faith, then you will observe that they are taking the place of the Son of God who chose to be poor.

Although in his passion he almost lost the appearance of a man and was considered a fool by the Gentiles and a stumbling block by the Jews, he showed them that his mission was to preach to the poor: He sent me to preach the good news to the poor. We also ought to have this same spirit and imitate Christ's actions, that is, we must take care of the poor, console them, help them, support their cause.

Since Christ willed to be born poor, he chose for himself disciples who were poor. He made himself the servant of the poor and shared their poverty. He went so far as to say that he would consider every deed which either helps or harms the poor as done for or against himself. Since God surely loves the poor, he also loves those who love the poor. For when one person holds another dear, he also includes in his affection anyone who loves or serves the one he loves. That is why we hope that God will love us for the sake of the poor. So, when we visit the poor and needy, we try to understand the poor and weak. We sympathize with them so fully that we can echo Paul's words: I have become all things to all men. Therefore, we must try to be stirred by our neighbors' worries and distress. We must beg God to pour into our heart's sentiments of pity and compassion and to fill them again and again with these dispositions.

It is our duty to prefer the service of the poor to everything else and to offer such service as quickly as possible. If a needy person requires medicine or other help during prayer time, do whatever has to be done with peace of mind. Offer the deed to God as your prayer. Do not become upset or feel guilty because you interrupted your prayer to serve the poor. God is not neglected if you leave him for such service. One of God's works is merely interrupted so that another can be carried out. So, when you leave prayer to serve some poor person, remember that this very service is performed for God. Charity is certainly greater than any rule. Moreover, all rules must lead to charity. Since she is a noble mistress, we must do whatever she commands. With renewed devotion, then, we must serve the poor, especially outcasts and beggars. They have been given to us as our masters and patrons."

Peace,