

Giving Easier than Receiving

Call to Prayer “There is a story told about Saint Vincent de Paul. Perhaps it's partly myth, but its challenge is real nonetheless. Vincent once gave an instruction to his religious community that sounded something like this. *‘When the demands of life seem unfair to you, when you are exhausted and have to pull yourself out of bed yet another time to do some act of service, do it gladly, without counting the cost and without self-pity, for if you persevere in serving others, in giving yourself to the poor, if you persevere to the point of completely spending yourself, perhaps someday the poor will find it in their hearts to forgive you. For it is more blessed to give than to receive and it is also a lot easier!’*¹



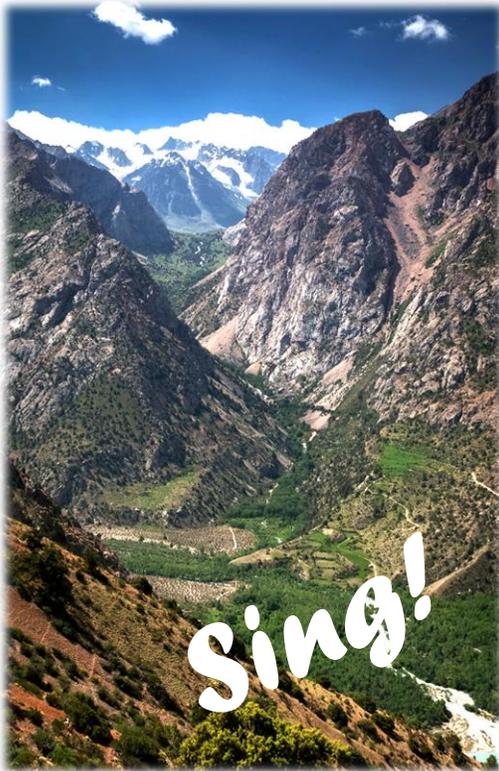
Leader: Jesus gave His life that we might live.

ALL: Let us readily receive God’s abundance with gratitude and joy.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn “Sing to the Mountains” Bob Dufford, SJ, vs. 1, 3



Refrain

Sing to the moun-tains, sing to the sea. Raise your voic - es,
lift your hearts. This is the day the Lord has made. Let all the
earth re - joice. Let all the earth re - joice.

to Verses Last time

Verse 1

1. I will give thanks to you, my Lord. You have
1. an - swered my plea. You have saved my
1. soul from death. You are my strength and my song.

Verse 3

3. This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us be glad and re - joice.
3. Death has lost and all is life. Sing of the glo - ry of God.

¹ Text: Based on Psalm 118. Text and music © 1975, Robert J. Dufford, SJ and OCP Publications. All rights reserved.
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Reading “There is a certain humiliation in needing to receive, just as there is a certain pride in being able to give. The things we often complain about are really our greatest blessings. What is worse than being too busy? Having nothing to do. What is more painful than having to give away something we own? Having nothing to give away. What is harder than being dragged out of bed to minister to someone in need? Being the person who is in bed and who needs someone to help him or her. What is harder than being brought to our knees by the demands of those around us for our time and energy? Being on our knees asking someone else for his or her time and energy. It is more blessed to be able to give than to receive and it is easier. ... There is a certain divine power, literally, in being able to give. The one who gives gets to be God or, at very least, to feel like God.”²

Response ALL: “All praise and glory to you, God, for your generous blessings.”

Reflection and Sharing

As we continue to celebrate this liturgical season and our history,
What personal gifts have I been given that allow me to assist others?
How have I shown respect and gratitude in receiving from others?



Reading Vatican Radio published a message from Pope Francis, of encouragement and thanks to members of the International Association of Charities (AIC) last year for the celebration of the 400 years since the foundation of the first Confraternity of Charity by Saint Vincent de Paul in Châtillon, France. In part, it reads: “*I am spiritually united to you to celebrate this anniversary and I hope that your beautiful work continues its mission of bringing an authentic testimony of God’s mercy to the poorest. ... the Charities were born of the tenderness and compassion of Monsieur Vincent for the ... marginalized. He saw the poor as the representatives of Jesus Christ, as the members of His suffering body. He understood that the poor, too, were called to build up the Church and to convert us. ... Vincent de Paul ... entrusted the care of these poor people to lay people and especially to women. AIC aims to promote the development of the most disadvantaged and to alleviate their material, physical, moral and spiritual pain. ... it is not only a question of meeting Christ in the poor, but that the poor perceive Christ in you and in your action.*”³

Prayer ALL: O God, remind us that “*Nobody is so poor that she has nothing to give and nobody is so rich that she has nothing to receive.*” These words of Pope John Paul II offer a powerful direction... Real human dignity is found in giving as well as receiving ... Let us never give anything without asking ourselves what we are receiving from those to whom we give and let us never receive anything without asking what we have to give to those from whom we receive.”⁴ We pray this in Jesus’ name through your Spirit. Amen.

References

- ¹ Rolheiser, Ron, <http://ronrolheiser.com/a-saint-and-compassion-fatigue/#.WMrffWagtMs>
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Vatican Radio, <http://famvin.org/en/2017/03/18/pope-commends-aic-on-400th-anniversary-aic400/>
- ⁴ Nouwen, Henri, Bread for the Journey, April 2, Harper One, 1997



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Prayer Texts

Luke 6:38 “Give and it will be given to you.” (English Standard Version)
2 Cor. 9:6-7 “... whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. (ESV)