

# A Message from Father Vincent

October 10, 2021

Dear Friends:

I hope you are all happy and well.

Last weekend was wonderful as we celebrated Respect Life Sunday and kicked off Respect Life Month. We thank our Respect Life Ministry and their presence at all the Masses to help us appreciate more fully the sanctity of life - from conception to natural death. Welcoming the Sisters of Life here at the parish was also such a blessing! You can learn more about the Sisters from their website [sistersoflife.org](http://sistersoflife.org). They are women of tremendous faith and their message is beautiful:

*God loves you for you. But in the ups and downs of life, it's easy to forget that. That's why Jesus invites you: Come. Look deeper. Re-encounter your own goodness. Receive the Love that frees you to live in the truth of who you are.*

This weekend, we hear in the Gospel the “Story of the Rich Man”. The rich young man is eager to inherit eternal life. We read that he ran to Jesus and knelt before Him. He greets Jesus as “good teacher” so we can assume that he has been listening to Jesus preach. The man wants to move beyond just hearing the word of Jesus. He has tapped into something that resides within each of us. Created in God’s image, we were made to know and to love our Creator. We were made to be in relationship with God. So, he asks the question, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

Jesus responds first with his own question. He asks the man if he has kept the commandments given to Moses. When Jesus asks if he keeps the commandments, he is asking, are you doing the bare minimum? Yet, moving beyond the minimum, we must tear down any obstacles that stand between God and us. To be in right relationship with God, we must rely entirely on Him, not ourselves. To accept God’s gift of eternal life, we must be like little children – utterly dependent on Him. We can’t be the one in control. And this is what Jesus is telling the rich man today. Jesus says that if he wants to have a deeper relationship with God – if he wants to go “all in” – then he must let go of his wealth. When Jesus tells the rich man to give everything he has to the poor and follow him, he is asking him to trust God completely. By giving away his earthly treasure, the rich man will find an even greater treasure. Jesus wasn’t making a bargain with the man. The “letting go” was the only way he would experience true charity and giving of self. This is the love that God wants us to experience with one another. This is the love for which we were created.

We read that the rich man “went away sad, for he had many possessions.” Jesus lamented, “how hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God.” He said this, not because wealth is a sin, but because it’s so easy for those with wealth to rely on themselves rather than trust in God. We don’t know what happened to the young man in Mark’s Gospel after his encounter with Jesus.

Change is never easy, but Jesus tells us that with God anything is possible. I like to think that the rich man went home and thought about what Jesus asked him to do. Even though he couldn’t fully commit that day, perhaps he was able to take a first step by letting go of one possession, and then another and another. What is the first step that we can make today that will move us toward giving our whole selves and trusting God completely? What can we do today so that we don’t walk away sad? Think about it. The riches will be great in Heaven.

*Just a few updates at OLM:*

- 1. I hope you are enjoying the new carpet in the Gathering Space. I received many compliments about it.*
- 2. Milling and paving of the portion of the parking lot directly in front of the Church (parallel to Pascack Road) will start on Tuesday October 12th. Although there will be limited disruption to parking for daily Masses, please be cautious if using the Pascack Road entrance/exit. The second phase of milling and paving will begin in the Spring.*
- 3. Television screens will be installed in the Church in the next few weeks so we can view the readings and music during Masses.*
- 4. The Knights of Columbus are hosting Oktoberfest here at OLM on October 16, 2021, from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m., in the school gym. This is the last weekend to purchase tickets. If the Knights don’t sell 100 tickets, we will have to cancel the event. Please consider coming. It will be a great night. The Knights will be in the Gathering Space all weekend, or you can register and pay in person at the rectory office. The cost is \$35 per ticket.*
- 5. The Rosary Challenge is going well! We will continue to pray the rosary each night at 7 p.m. during the month of October in the Church or via live streaming.*
- 6. Our Religious Education program started this past Monday! Thank you to Evelyn Paglieri and her staff for a successful start and the hard work that went into it. Thank you as well to our devoted catechists who are volunteering their time to pass the faith on to our children.*

I will end this message to you as I ended my homily last weekend with three simple words – **YOU ARE LOVED!**

With love and appreciation for each one of you,

*+ Father Vincent*