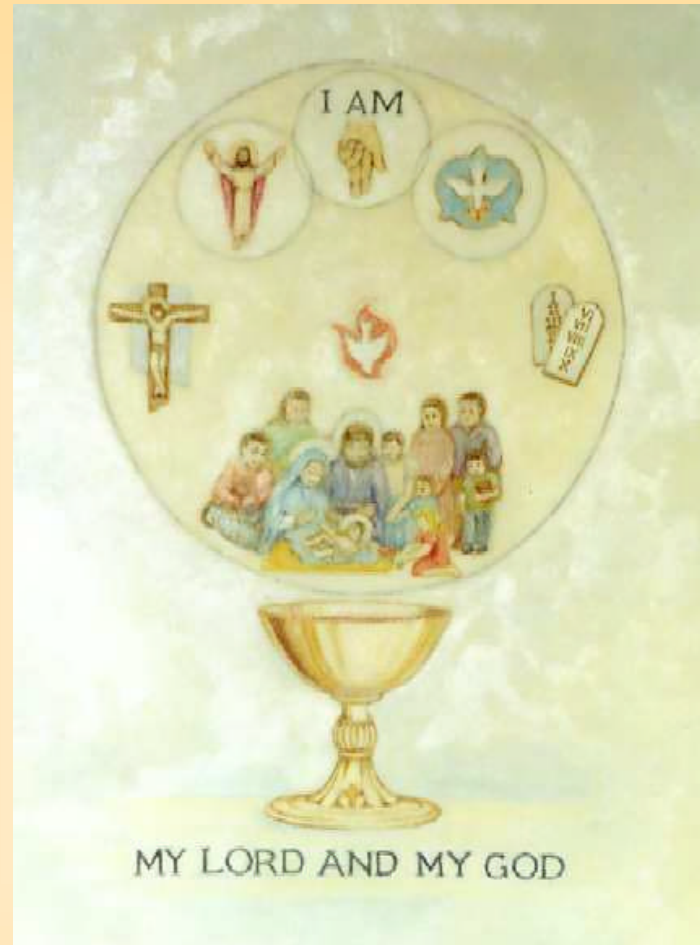


**ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS
SAINT VINCENT de PAUL**

**THE VOICE
OF THE
POOR**

THE REAL SOURCE OF LOVE



Web sites referenced in this presentation are:
<http://www.usccb.org/cchd/povertyusa/povfacts.html>
<http://www.usccb.org/cchd/povertyusa/povfact8.html>

CONSIDER AS YOU VIEW THIS PRESENTATION

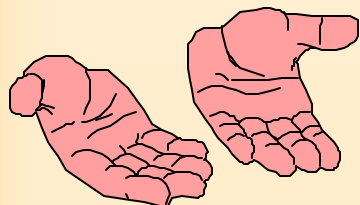
Christ's greeting with every breath He gives;

**“Hello! How are you? Be at peace. Do not
fear, I love you and I am with you!”**

Also, He asks that we,

**“Work at living our life such that those who
know us but do not know Him, will come to
know Him because they know us!”**

COMMITTEE MISSION



- TO UPHOLD CATHOLIC TEACHING AS STATED IN CHRIST'S SECOND COMMANDMENT "LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF". IN JOHN'S GOSPEL CHAPTER 9, VERSES 1-41, CHRIST SAID "OUR TRIALS (BLINDNESS FOR EXAMPLE) EXIST THAT GOD'S WORK MIGHT BE VISIBLE ON EARTH".
- OUR CHARGE IS TO FOCUS HUMAN VISION ON LOVE AND CONCERN FOR THE LESS FORTUNATE OF MANKIND SO THAT WE SEE AS THE FATHER SEES;

**"THAT ALL ARE CREATED IN HIS LIKENESS" and
"CHRIST DIED FOR EVERYONE WE WILL EVER MEET".**



NATIONAL COUNCIL

REGIONAL COUNCIL

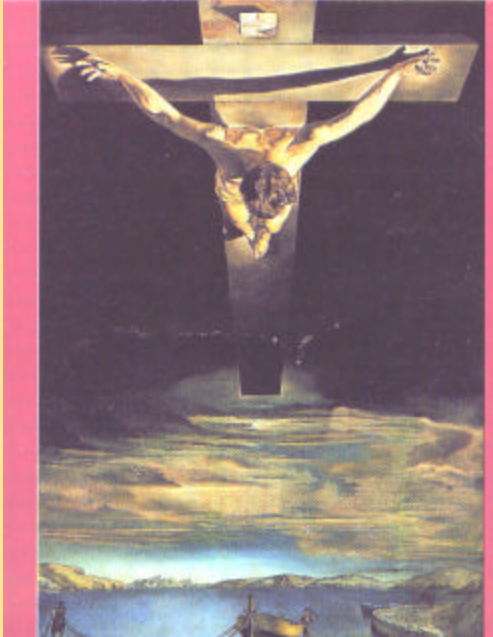
DIOCESAN COUNCIL

DISTRICT COUNCIL

**A VOICE OF THE POOR
COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS
IN EVERY COUNCIL OF
THE ORGANIZATION**

POVERTY

Society's view.



- Acceptance of the belief that a person is of “less value” because of monetary status or inability to work productively as judged by society. The government definition of poverty versus monetary status can be found at website <http://www.usccb.org/cchd/povertyusa/povfacts.html>

Where is it?

- In every country and community in the world.

When does it exist? - In every stage of life from birth till death.

POVERTY CONTINUED

- Why does it exist?** - Those blessed with the world's goods are unwilling and/or unable to share with those who are not so blessed!
- Complications**
- Improper, poor and/or a total lack of nurturing of the young!
 - Government policies, and
 - Individual views which in effect “Require that the poor stand in our shoes and think like we think”!
- Comfort Zone** - It is typical for people, especially those hampered by low self esteem, to feel that they must not venture out from where they are as things might get worse.

POVERTY CONTINUED

Boxes - We tend to judge people and place them in a box which in our mind defines them. Our judgement should be on the experience which they are living. We must learn to work to revise the primary conditions which promote poverty.

Children - The United States is second to Mexico for the highest percentage of children in poverty. All other nations of the richest fifteen have a smaller percentage of their childhood population below the poverty level. Refer to website for more data.
<http://www.usccb.org/cchd/povertyusa/povfact8.html>

POVERTY CONTINUED

Enabling - An argument is made that providing any type of assistance to the “less fortunate” in effect enables them to remain in that condition. Christ demonstrated that this is not a valid argument. The difficulty is that we tend to provide our help through our governmental systems in a machine-like manner devoid of “LOVE” or even concern whereas he provided assistance out of His “LOVE” which was readily recognized by those He helped.

- CAN WE EMULATE HIS WAY OF LIFE?

POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Jesus Christ** - Focus and act on Christ's real love for others. His entire life demonstrates love, forgiveness and mercy.
- Dignity** - The human person, who stands above all things has rights and duties which are universal and inviolable. All persons should have ready access to all that is necessary for living a genuinely human life: for example, food, clothing, housing, ... the right to education, and work...at just costs and wages!

POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Compassion** - We who are blessed with material goods must learn compassion for those who are not so blessed.
- Understanding is not possible! Even if we honestly try, we can not stand in another's shoes and therefore can not understand their plight.
- Judgement** - Mother Teresa said "If one is busy judging, you have no time for love"!

TARGET FOR IMPROVEMENT

Personal - Work at adjusting our individual attitudes to focus on Christ and how he lived and treated all he met.

- Work at developing compassion for those who have been assigned a “less fortunate” place in life.

- Work at accepting the fact that God’s work on earth happens through each of us. Come to believe those whom we see as “less fortunate” are in fact “less fortunate”. They are not “less valuable”.



• CAN WE LEARN TO REACH OUT AS CHRIST DID?

TARGET FOR IMPROVEMENT

Just Wage - Based on the government definition of poverty, the minimum annual income needed by a family of four in 2001 was \$17,650.00. To meet that level in a job providing a full 40 hours of work each week, the minimum hourly wage must be \$8.49 per hour. However, most low wage jobs are not scheduled for full time and typically provide less than 30 hours per week. Such jobs therefore, must pay an substantially higher hourly wage if they are to support a family. In addition, part time work provides no benefits such as insurance, sick leave, etc.



COME JOIN US



- In the picture at left, Christ is seen knocking at our door. Our door does not include the exterior door handle. *This means we must take an action to allow Him to enter.*
- *The door is His passage into our conscious thought and action.* Will we invite Him to enter and provide us with His guidance? Can we offer Him our time and talent for the job of assisting in His ministry of love and concern for the “less fortunate” among us which He so eloquently demonstrated by His life?