

JANUARY 22, 2026 FATHER STEVE DEMAIO

And today we have Jesus, right, we have him surrounded by people. And I find the prayer for me is that Psalm. The beautiful Psalm that we have, Psalm 56. That, “This I know, that God is for me.” “In the Lord I trust, in God I trust, I am not afraid.”

And I do a lot of work with young people, a lot of confessions, a lot of retreats, a lot of different things with young people. And I recognize that over and over and over again, how often they think the opposite. That we don't have a God who is for us, that we have a God sometimes against us. Or a God who is absent, a God who is indifferent, a God who doesn't prepare, a God who doesn't provide. Right? That we have a God who is far from us.

And I think over and over and over again, we see in the scripture that that's a lie, that it's not true. That we have a God who draws close, we have a God who cares, we have a God who provides, and we have a God who is not scared of our diseases, he's not scared of our sin, he's not scared of our humanity. We see a God here in Jesus who has compassion. Who draws close, who allows people to touch him, who allows people to be healed.

And so I think it's a great reminder for us, especially as we celebrate this feast day of Saint Vincent, the martyr, who even in persecution, even facing his own death, he could still believe, and to trust that God was for him. Even in his suffering, God is for him. Even in his pain, God is for him. And I hope that that could be my prayer as well.

Because in our own life, in my life, I know that I am up and down. We see in the first reading with David, with David and Saul, that I don't put my trust—I can love people, but I don't put my trust in people. Because

I know that they could one day be on my side, and then on the next, no. That there could be generosity, and then there could be jealousy. That there could be a time for great hope, and camaraderie, and friendship, but then, because we are sinful, because we are weak, because we are human, that there could be unforgiveness, that there could be hurt, that there could be pain.

And so the call for us, I think, is that we can love people, but my trust is always in God. That when I walk, that when I preach, that when I live, that I walk with this Jesus who wants to draw close.

And I know for me in my own life, there was a point where I was quite far from God. That I wasn't necessarily going to church, that I wasn't participating, that I wasn't treating people the way that they should be treated. And so I know how patient how God has been with me, I know how he has drawn me, and invited me, and brought me closer and closer to his Son.

I know that he has removed from me, perhaps not physical infirmities, but a lot of spiritual, a lot of pride, a lot of difficulties that I've faced throughout my life. And so there was a moment in my life where I really felt the invitation to draw close. To not be afraid of what I've done, to not be afraid of the sin, but to really draw close to this Jesus, who is not afraid. Right, who is not afraid of our uncleanness. Who is not afraid of our disease. Who is not afraid of our sin.

So we can really pray with the Psalmist, and say, "My God is close, I praise him, I trust him, I am not afraid."

And so when we think about Saint Vincent, right, all the men and women throughout history, who laid down their life, because they believed. They believed in the risen Christ, they believed that he was alive, they believed that they provided. And so even in the great

suffering, even in the confusion— I think in today's day and age we have so much confusion, so much doubt, so many things that seem as if God is far, God is absent. And it's hard for us to say, “God is for me.” “God is for you.”

And I think sometimes the hardest part is recognizing that yes, God is for me, but also God is for that other person. God is for the person who is in front of me. God is for my family member who I'm not getting along with. God is for that person who is not treating me the way that I would want them to be treated. God is for this young person who doesn't seem to want to accept the Gospel message.

And so, over and over again, there is a call for us to rest, to go into prayer, to ask God for his mercy, and to recognize that, just as Jesus welcomed the great multitude, from places like Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, Tyre, Sidon, they weren't all his people. But little by little, he was opening up, to say, yes, all— all nations. All are children of God, all are welcome, all are invited.

And so may we be the people who follow in the footsteps of Jesus, who continue every day to ask for his grace, so that we can have that same heart. Here in the Eucharistic celebration, he gives us his life, he gives us his heart, so that we can become like him. So that we can have his power, to cast out demons, to cure unclean spirits. For it's not just him who lives, it's “He who lives in us.”

And so I think the overall refrain for our life can be, “In God I trust, I am not afraid.” And so no matter what you're going through in these days, no matter the pain, or the confusion, or the disease, or the sin, or whatever it is, during this new year, through the intercession of Saint Vincent, may we come to really know this God who is for us. This God who I can place my trust.

So even if there's people in our life who are jealous, or treating us poorly, or who have changed, that I can still wake up every day, and try to live with the heart of Jesus. That every day I can approach him, so that he can heal me, that he can give me his grace, that he can give me his power, and then I can be sent out, to live that faith in the world.

That I am called to move from place to place, and whether that be in your workplace, or in your family, or at school. Wherever you find yourself, that is the place to live the faith. That is the place where demons will be cast out, and that we will find healing.

So I just invite you, especially during this new year, that we ask God for his grace, every day. That he draws close to us every day, and may we draw close to him every day. That he gives us his power every day, and may we receive that, and live with that.

So, through the intercession of Saint Vincent, may we be willing to say, "It is you, God, I place my trust, for I know you are a God who is for me."