

**A New Heart** Second Week in Ordinary Time Friday, January 23, 2015 8:15 AM  
**Heb 8:6-13;** Mk 3:13-19 (St. Vincent, deacon, martyr; Bl. Marianne Cope, virgin)  
(What is needed is a very deep and conscientious and intentional decision to turn one's life over to God and to live in a God-directed way.)

Today we are reading from the Letter to the Hebrews, and the author is reflecting on the history of the covenant. What he is reflecting is that the people never really lived out the covenant. For some reason God chose **the Hebrew people** to save them from bondage, gave them a land and a law, but to no avail. They didn't follow the law. And the reason, as on reflection, is that there was something fundamentally out of kilter. **The law was some ideal that didn't correspond to their actual condition or nature.** Therefore there were the prophecies that **God would change things, bringing a new heart, indicating a transformation of the human nature itself.** On this new heart the new law of God would be written. There would be then a new age in which this **transformed human nature would have a new kind of life.**

In early Christianity, which is reflected by the Letter to the Hebrews, it was believed that through Christ that would now take place. But of course in retrospect two thousand years later, **we see that the nature of human beings by and large has remained the same,** at least from the biological viewpoint, the psychologically point, **except for those saints and martyrs who avail themselves of the extraordinary grace that Jesus himself promised.** So this transformation is a much more difficult thing than the Letter to the Hebrews seemed to indicate, or probably foresaw.

**What is needed is a very deep and conscientious and intentional decision to turn one's life over to God and to live in a God-directed way,** which is at variance with the life of the world in general, in the life of most people. For a time it seemed that an alliance between the state and the Church would provide support for this kind of life, but that all became corrupted, so that didn't work either. So in a way **we are back at the beginning with the promise and with our response. What shall it be?**