

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)



Matthew 16:21–27

‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself.’

At that time: Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, ‘Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.’ But he turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.’

Then Jesus told his disciples, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.’

Reflection

Peter struggles to accept what Jesus is saying. He wants a version of discipleship that is safe, comfortable, and free from suffering. Jesus challenges him because following God is not always about choosing the easiest path; it is about choosing the right one. When Jesus speaks about taking up our cross, he is not asking us to look for suffering. He is inviting us to put love before selfishness, even when it costs us something. Sometimes that cost is our time, our comfort, our popularity, or our own plans.

This is at the heart of what it means to be part of the Vincentian family. Whether it is visiting someone who is lonely, standing up for someone who is excluded, or giving up our time to serve others, we often discover that the most meaningful things require sacrifice.

Jesus reminds us that success is not measured by what we gain for ourselves but by how faithfully we love God and our neighbour. When we choose compassion over convenience, we are taking up our cross and following Him.

Materials needed

- Comfort zone/Growth Zone sheet (printed, or drawn)

Activity

Ask everyone to write on the shared sheet:

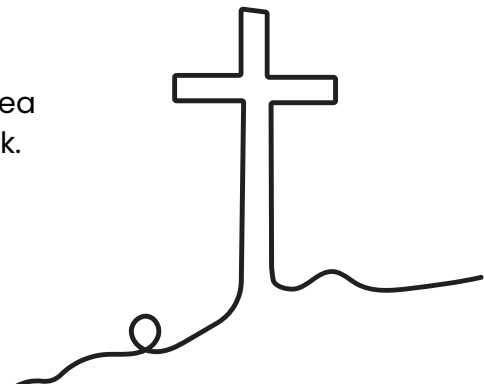
- In the Comfort Zone: things that are easy for them to do, such as helping friends, volunteering for certain tasks, or being kind to people they know well.
- In the Growth Zone: ways they could stretch themselves by putting others first, such as talking to someone who is often left out, giving up some free time to help others, volunteering for a new responsibility, or standing up for someone who needs support.

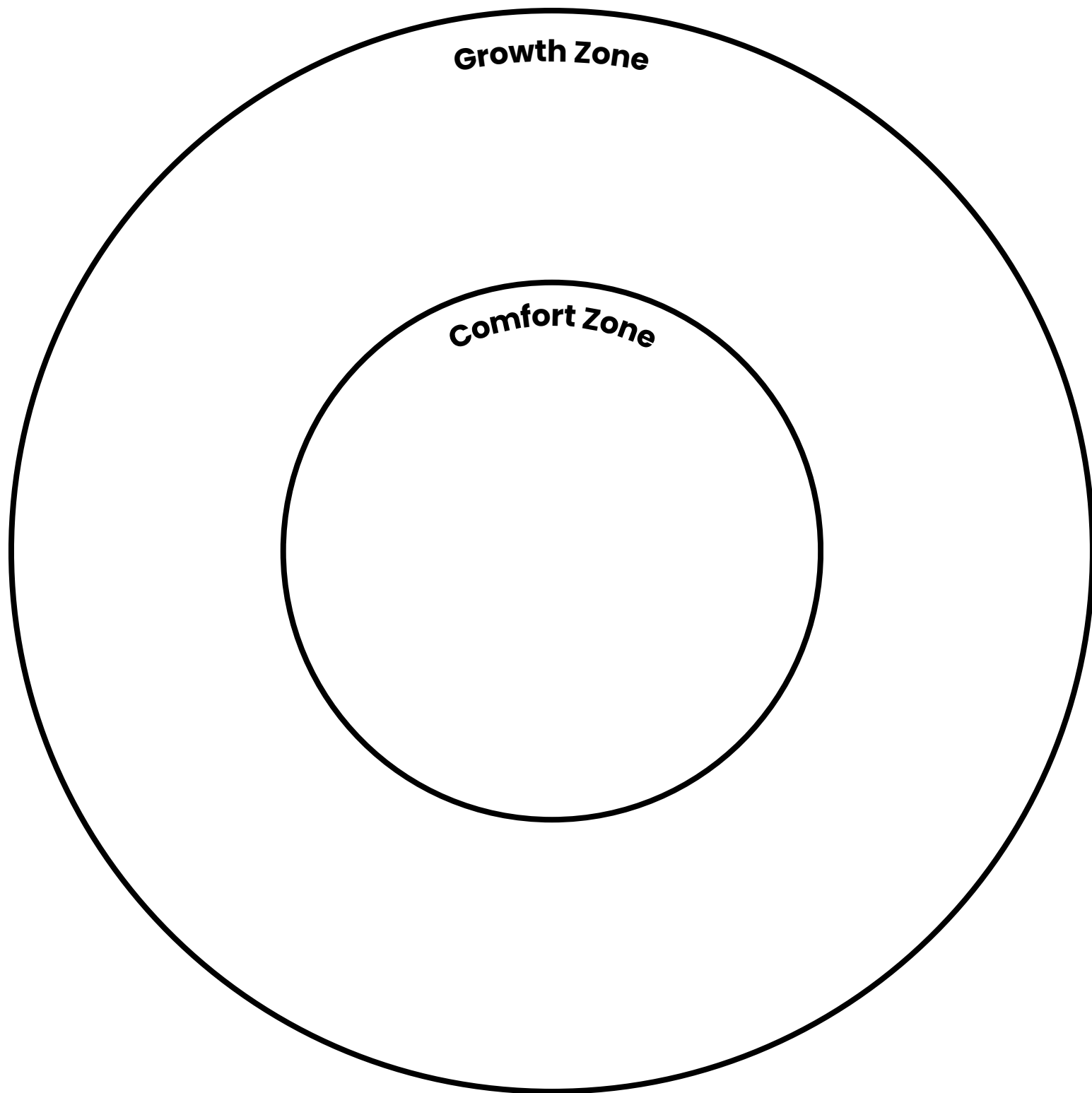
When everyone has contributed, look at the sheet together and discuss:

- What differences do you notice between the two circles?
- Why can it be difficult to step into the growth zone?
- How does taking small steps outside our comfort zone help us follow Jesus and live the Vincentian call to serve others?

Call to Action

Finish by inviting each person to choose one idea from the Growth Zone that they will try this week.





Growth Zone

comfort Zone