

Summing up Ozanam
May 5, 2020

When we finished with Lent and Easter, I asked myself where I could go next in keeping in touch with you and sharing on themes of importance in our lives. Since we are in this Anniversary Year for the Vincentian presence and charisma in Emmitsburg, I thought we could together look at someone whose life embodies this charisma in the life and history of the church. I wanted to share with you someone who, while Vincentian, would look more like you than me. Frederic Ozanam embodied this Vincentian spirit. He loved and lived the Gospel mandate to love and serve the poor and to see the presence of Christ in them. All of this he did as a married layman, a father, a professor, and an advocate.

His way of holiness was not about going out to foreign missions. His mission was his home, his classroom, and his visits to the homes of the poor in his native land. His chapel was a room in his house where he could pray. It was his parish church. He lived and reflected on his charism in these areas. For Ozanam, his prayer, whether it was a rosary, or a meditation would lead him to service. His service would lead him back to prayer. His life revolved from prayer to service to prayer.

At his beatification John Paul II said these things: "I encourage you to join forces so that, as he wished to inspire you, the poor will ever be loved and served, and that Jesus Christ will be honored in their persons." I leave you with these words from the liturgical prayer for the feast of Blessed Frederic Ozanam on September 9, "O Lord, grant that we may, by following his example, fulfill the command of love to become a leaven of love in our world."

Blessed Frederic Ozanam, pray for us

Fr. Marty