



Ozanam: Looking with Optimism at the Modern World

The basic issue between conservative and liberal Catholics in Ozanam's France was not a political one, but rather one of defending what the attitude to be taken by the Church toward modernity. On the one hand, should there be a withdrawal from or reconciliation with it?

An unyielding defense against modernity, or a search for new applications of Christian principles? To regard change with pessimism and resist it, or to look with optimism and hope at the possibilities of development?

Ozanam made a clear and consistent choice in the liberal direction of bringing the Church to a more positive view of the modern world. This put him out of step with the prevailing conservative mood of French Catholics. But it would anticipate the more universally Catholic view that would surface in the social encyclicals and more recent pronouncements like those of Vatican II.

Source:

Frédéric Ozanam - A Layman for Now by Shaun McCarty, S.T.

http://famvin.org/wiki/Frédéric_Ozanam_-_A_Layman_for_Now_-_Shaun_McCarty,_S.T.