Finding and Bringing the Presence of God

The Roots of Ozanam's Passion for Charity & Justice



Let us reflect on these words from our Lord Jesus Christ, recalling his unity and presence among us: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Lord Jesus, deepen our Vincentian spirit of friendship during this meeting. Make us responsive to the Christian calling to seek and find the forgotten, the suffering or the deprived so that we may bring them your love.

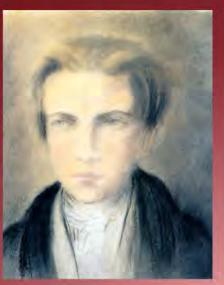
give them the privilege of seeing the poor, of being shown Our Lord Jesus Christ not only in holy pictures painted by great artists but of being shown Jesus Christ and his wounds in the person of the poor.

Letter to P Pendola, 19 July 1853



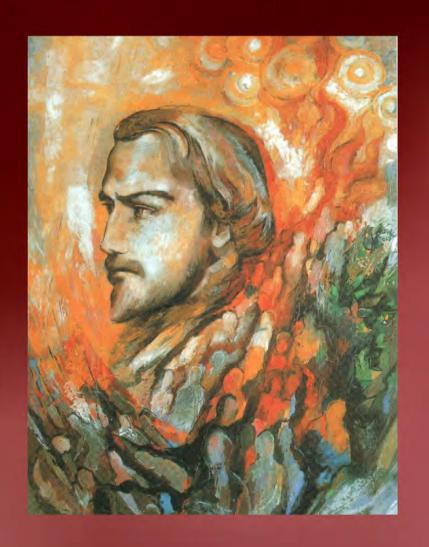
"I think I could become either a very wicked or a very virtuous man. I hope I have now chosen the latter and will be all my life at least a good Frenchman, a good friend and a good Christian."

Frederic Ozanam to August Materne June 5 1830 when he was 17 years old



Attained holiness as a layman through living the Gospel fully in all aspects of his life

Son & Student Friend & Founder Lawyer & Professor **Scholar & Author Husband & Father** Journalist & Politician French Citzen Catholic



"To relate the life of a saint and therefore promote his memory has a moral goal.

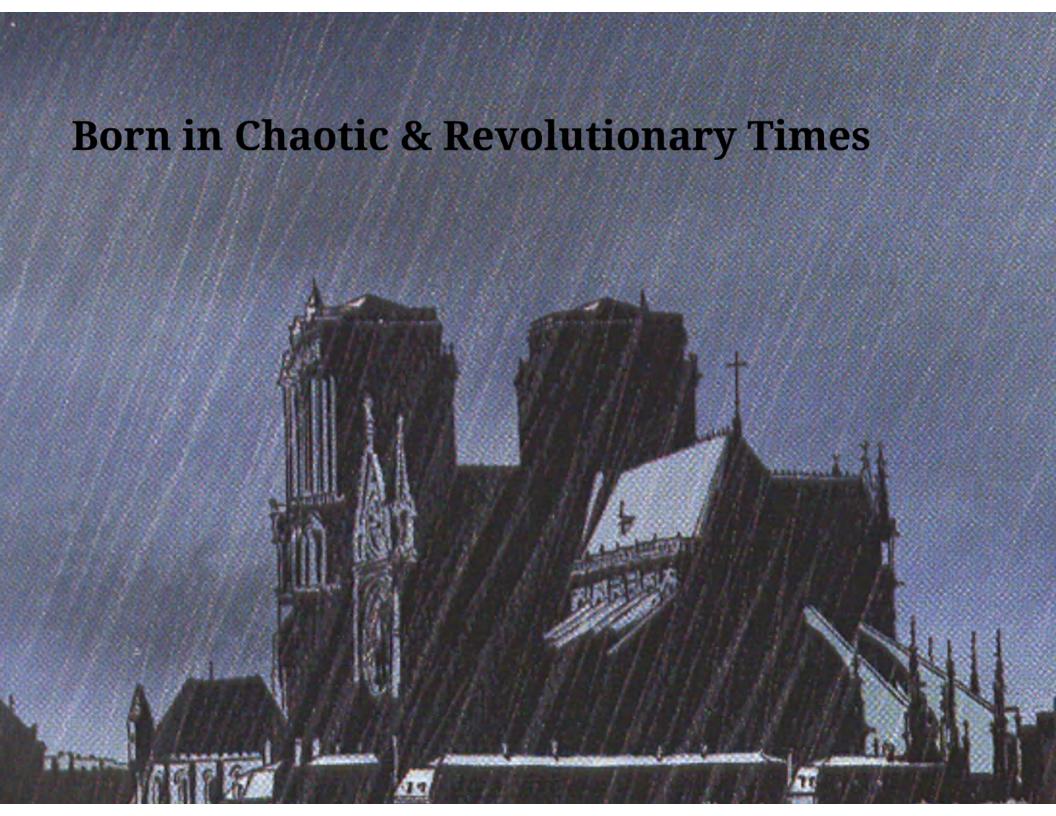
The content of the life of the saint depends on the values that a religious group wants to promote, those that it deems most necessary to its era.

The virtues are more or less differently organized depending on the necessities of the times..."

from "The Foundation" by Charles Mercier

Finding and Bringing the Presence of God

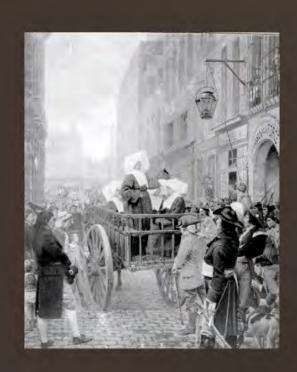






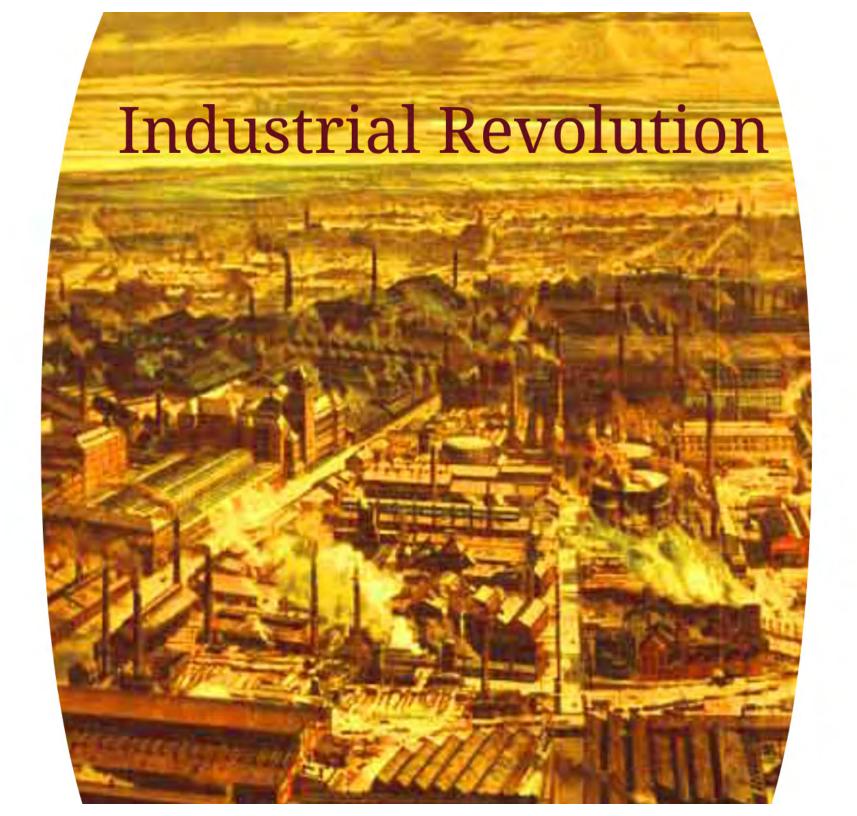
All Systems Distrupted

Political
Justice
Military
Religious
Economic
Charitable
Educational





Revolutionary regime ends 1799 by Coup d'Etat Napoleon declares himself Emporer 1804 begins reinstitutionalization & reforms deposed in 1814



Egalité fraternité Liberté Egalité

Finding and Bringing the Presence of God





The development of Ozanam's insights into the relationship of faith, charity and justice.

Fundamental concepts we can learn from Ozanam in organizing to reform systems that impoverish people.

Progression of Ozanam's Thought on Faith, Charity & Justice

Student Activist in Paris

"You and I are too young just now to take any part in the social struggle, but this does not compel us meantime to remain idle in the midst of the world suffering and groaning around us. A preparatory way is open to us before trying to aid in the public good; we may do good to a few before regenerating France; we may succor a few of her poor sons. a vast and generous association for the relief of the poor classes might be formed all over the country."

Letter to Ernest Falconnet July 21, 1834

1831 1835

Reputable Catholic Personality in Paris

The knowledge of social well-being and reform is to be learned, not from books, not from the public platform but in climbing the stairs to the poor man's garret, sitting by his bedside, feeling the same cold that pierces him, sharing the secret of his lonely heart and troubled mind. When the conditions of the poor have been examined, everywhere God has placed them. It is then that we know the elements of that formidable problem, that we begin to grasp it and may hope to solve it. LTEN Boyuvelle 1848



1848 1849

1836 1841

Young Lawyer & Professor in Lyon

"Let us work to increase and multiply," in become better, more icenter and stronger; the disorder in society becomes more and more apparent; the social problems, the conflict between poverny and riches, between self-interest which wants to take an deself-interest which wants to lake an deself-interest which wants to lake and self-interest which wants to lake and self-interest which wants to lake and self-interests...will be terrible if charry does not interprose, become a mediator, if Christians do not dominate with all the force of love."

-Ozanam in letter to E, Bailly Oct. 22, 1830



1849 1853

Disappointed but Loyal French Citizen

"What a stormy but instructive era!

We will perhaps perish in it, but let's us not complain about having entered it.

Let us principally learn to defend our convictions without hating our adversaries, to love those who think differently than we do, to recognize that there are Christians in all camps and that God can be served today as always."

-Ozanam April 9 1851 Letter to A. Dutieux



Student Activist in Paris

"You and I are too young just now to take any part in the social struggle, but this does not compel us meantime to remain idle in the midst of the world suffering and groaning around us. A preparatory way is open to us before trying to aid in the public good; we may do good to a few before regenerating France; we may succor a few of her poor sons. a vast and generous association for the relief of the poor classes might be formed all over the country."

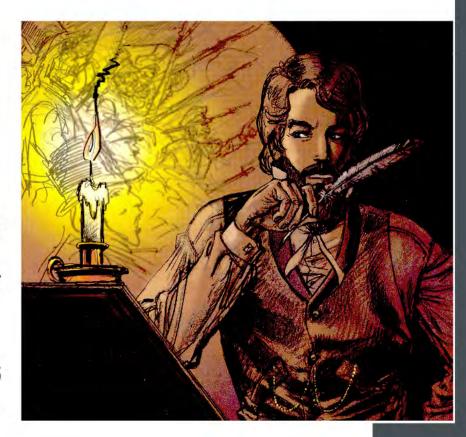
Letter to Ernest Falconnet July 21, 1834

1836 1841

Young Lawyer & Professor in Lyon

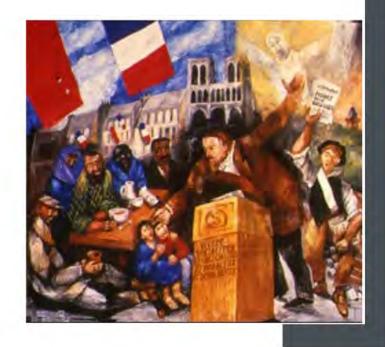
"Let us work to increase and multiply, to become better, more tender and stronger; the disorder in society becomes more and more apparent; the social problems, the conflict between poverty and riches, between self-interest which wants to take and self-interest which wants to keep...the confrontation between these two self-interests...will be terrible if charity does not interpose, become a mediator, if Christians do not dominate with all the force of love."

–Ozanam in letter to E. Bailly Oct. 22, 1836



Reputable Catholic Personality in Paris

The knowledge of social well-being and reform is to be learned, not from books, nor from the public platform but in climbing the stairs to the poor man's garret, sitting by his bedside, feeling the same cold that pierces him, sharing the secret of his lonely heart and troubled mind. When the conditions of the poor have been examined... everywhere God has placed them... it is then that we know the elements of that formidable problem, that we begin to grasp it and may hope to solve it. L'Ere Nouvelle 1848



1848 1849

1849 1853

Disappointed but Loyal French Citizen

"What a stormy but instructive era! We will perhaps perish in it, but let's us not complain about having entered it.

Let us principally learn to defend our convictions without hating our adversaries, to love those who think differently than we do, to recognize that there are Christians in all camps and that God can be served today as always."

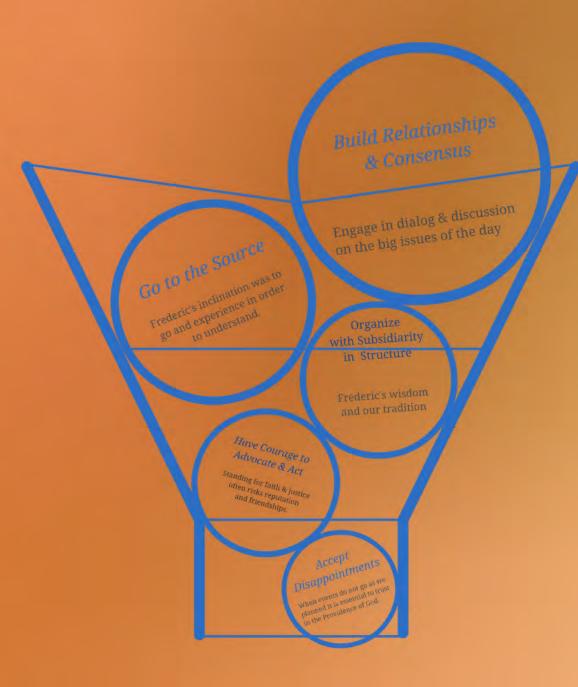
-Ozanam April 9 1851 Letter to A. Dufieux

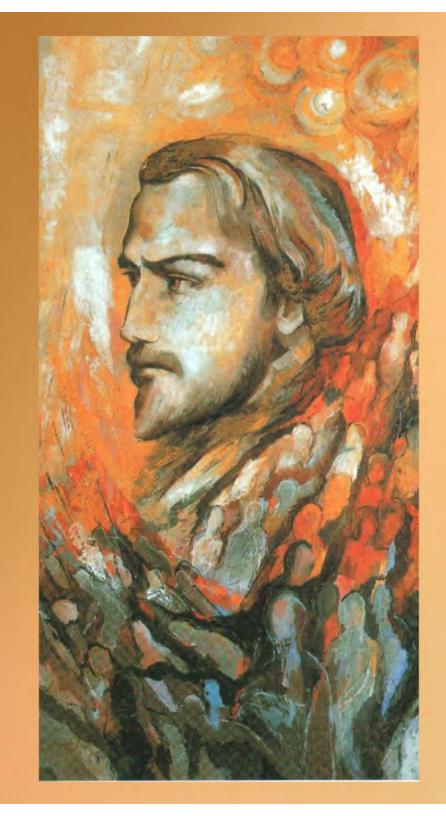


Finding and Bringing the Presence of God



Organizing to Find and Bring the Presence of God





Build Relationships & Consensus

Engage in dialog & discussion on the big issues of the day

ce

was to order



Frederic's inclination was to go and experience in order to understand.

Vith Subs

Organize
with Subsidiarity
in Structure

Frederic's wisdom and our tradition

trage to

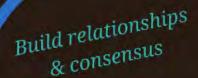


Standing for faith & justice often risks reputation and friendships.

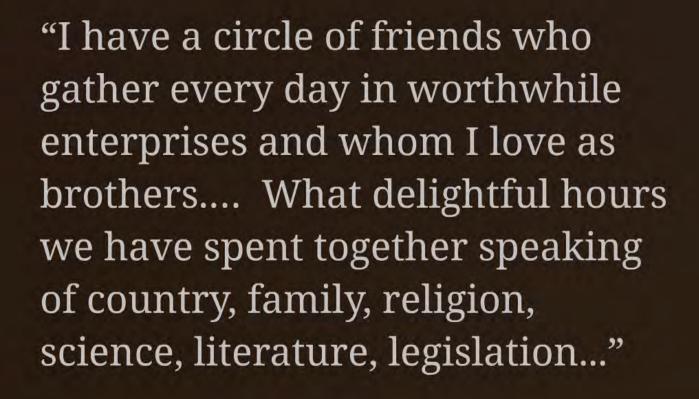
Accel



When events do not go as we planned it is essential to trust in the Providence of God.



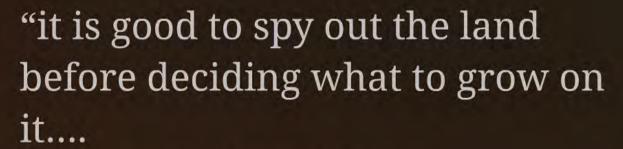
Engage in dialog & discussion on the big issues of the day



To his mother March 19, 1833

Build relationships & consensus

Engage in dialog & discussion on the big issues of the day



I must speak and listen;
I must have communication and contacts. Indeed it is impossible for me to do passable work without having talked about it and discussed it with someone."



To his mother March 19, 1833

Conference of History

"we meet every Saturday and there is an open field – history, philosophy, literature, everything has free play. The doors are open to all opinions and results in the liveliest discussions." To Falconnet January 5, 1833

Salon Discussion

"Men of genius chat familiarly with the greenest scholar, conversations of all kinds...

to his mother March 19, 1833

Lunch at cafes

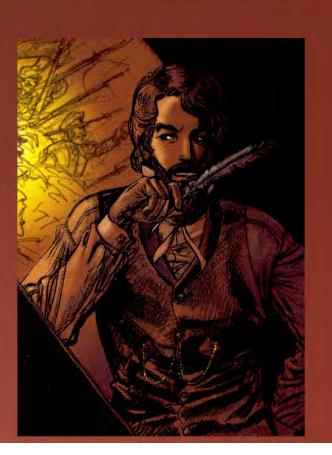


Bailly's newspapers

"I sit alone, knowing no more disagreeable company than myself. I appreciate now by its privation the whole value of the spoken word, how much more it cultivates thought than the

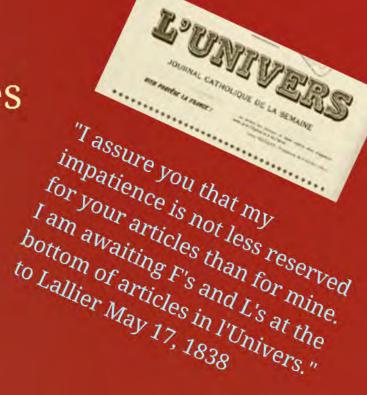
letters of the greatest writers.
I need conversation..."

a letter to Lallier April 9,1838



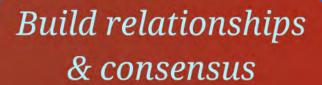
After leaving the university Ozanam & his associates were significant community leaders who stayed in contact with each other. Frederic:

- wrote editorials & newspaper articles
- regularly corresponded
- shared annual reports
- shared his university lectures
- lectured to workmen
- attended public talks
- met community leaders









Engage in dialog & discussion on the big issues of the day









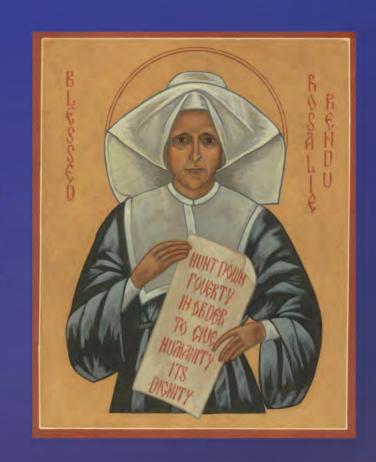






"What must we do to live our Catholicism?
Let us no longer talk so much about charity.
Let us put it into practice and go to the poor."

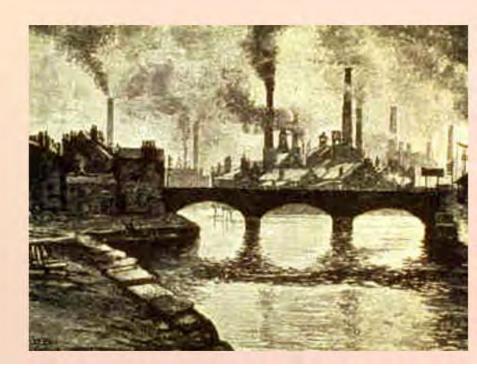
You will go to visit the poor ten times a day and ten times a day you will find God there. Sr. Rosalie Rendu



I visited Saint-Etienne (near Lyon) where I saw the apparel industry in all of its most laborious works, and carried away a sad impression, considering to what toil millions of men must apply themselves to put bread between their teeth, and procure opulent well-being for a small number of the fortunate;

and how the intelligence must be brutalized and the heart hardened in the midst of those machines and the immense deployment of material force.

Letter to Bailly Oct. 22, 1836



Travels to the Rhine in the October of 1840

Travels to see the environment to prepare his lectures on German literature in the Middle Ages at the Sorbonne.

"it was a case of literary conscience" -to Lallier



Priests of France do not be offended at the freedom of speech which a layman uses in appealing to your zeal as citizens!....

The time is come when you must go and seek those who do not send for you, who hide away in the most disreputable neighborhoods, have never known the Church or a priest...

'Aux Gens de Bien', LÈre Nouvelle, 15 Sept. 15, 1848

Let us go to the Barbarians

"Conquer distaste and dislike and turn to democracy, to the mass of people to whom we are unknown. Appeal to them not merely by sermons but by benefits. Help them, not with alms which humiliate, but with social and helping measures, which will free and elevate them.

Let us go to the barbarians..."

from a speech to Cercle Catholicque published in le Correspondant Feb. 10, 1848



For you to consider:

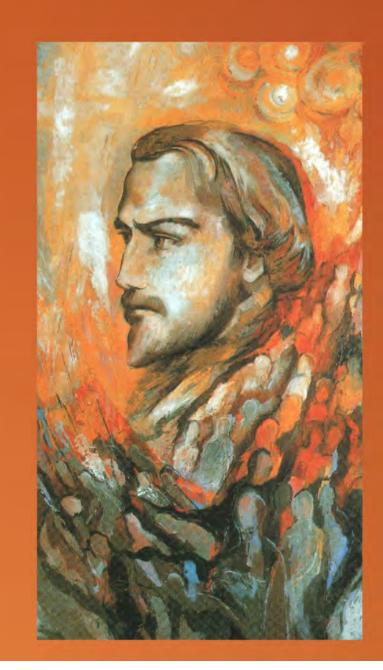
*Do we have conversations about the big issues effecting society today?

*When you see things first-hand, do you process those experiences with others?

*Do you find a place in the Vincentian Family to have those discussions?

*Do we avoid discussing the large questions because that may create divisions in the organization?

*Can these conversations change us and what we do?



Where two or three are gathered in my name....



Evolution of structure

Principle of Subsidiarity

The Society embraces the Principle of Subsidiarity as its basic standard of operation. Decisions are made as close as possible to the area of activity to ensure that the local environment and circumstances (cultural, social, political, etc.) are taken into consideration. In this way, the Society promotes local initiatives within its spirit. This freedom of action of Conferences and Councils, which has been kept faithfully since the origins of the Society, enables them to help the poor spontaneously and more effectively, free from excessive bureaucracy.

No work of charity is foreign to the work of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

(Rule Part I 1.3)

Founders return from Paris to Lyon

letters to Lallier May 17, 1838 & August 11, 1838

Organizing the conference in Nimes

I think knowledge of our organization and manner of acting is not of great use to you. Your city probably has different needs than the capital and provides different resources. Pravidence gives its own council through the circumstances around voto.

- In Leaner Commercials, L. LEM

Principle of Subsidiarity

The Society embraces the Principle of Subsidiarity as its basic standard of operation. Decisions are made as close as possible to the area of activity to ensure that the local environment and circumstances (cultural, social, political, etc.) are taken into consideration. In this way, the Society promotes local initiatives within its spirit. This freedom of action of Conferences and Councils, which has been kept faithfully since the origins of the Society, enables them to help the poor spontaneously and more effectively, free from excessive bureaucracy. Rule Part I 3.9

Where two or three are gathered in my name....



No work of charity is foreign to the work of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

(Rule Part I 1.3)

Organizing the conference in Nîmes

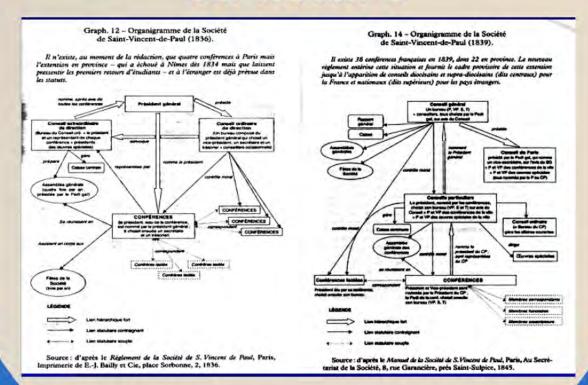
"I think knowledge of our organization and manner of acting is not of great use to you. Your city probably has different needs than the capital and provides different resources. Providence gives its own council through the circumstances around you..."

Founders return from Paris to Lyon

letters to Lallier May 17, 1838 & August 11, 1838



Evolution of structure

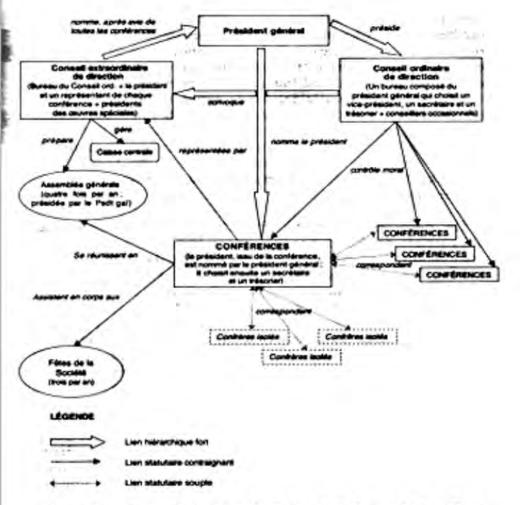


"I reject an excessive centralization which would enlarge Paris to the detriment of the departments, the cities to the detriment of the country, and which would bring back inequality among those whom the law makes equal."

from letter to electors of Lyon - 1848

Graph. 12 – Organigramme de la Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul (1836).

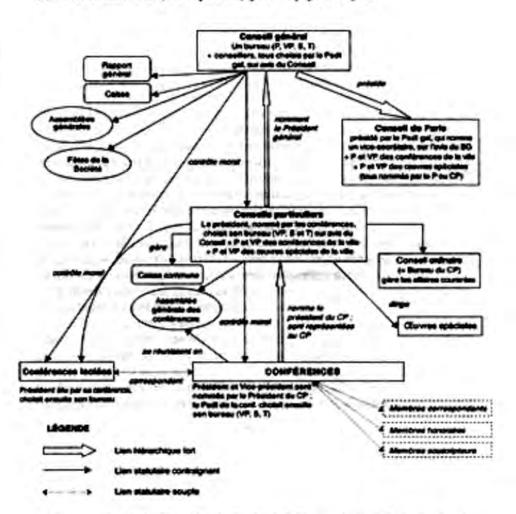
Il n'existe, au moment de la rédaction, que quatre conférences à Paris mais l'extension en province – qui a échoué à Nimes dès 1834 mais que laissent pressentir les premiers retours d'étudiants – et à l'étranger est déjà prévue dans les statuts.



Source: d'après le Règlement de la Société de S. Vincent de Paul, Paris, Imprimerie de E.-J. Bailly et Cie, place Sorbonne, 2, 1836.

Graph. 14 – Organigramme de la Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul (1839).

Il existe 38 conférences françaises en 1839, dons 22 en province. Le nouveau réglement entérine cette situation et fournit le cadre provisoire de cette extension jusqu'à l'apparition de conseils diocésains et supra-diocésains (dits centraux) pour la France et nationaux (dits supérieurs) pour les pays étrangers.



Source : d'après le Manuel de la Société de S. Vincent de Paul, Paris, Au Secrétariat de la Société, 8, rue Garancière, près Saint-Sulpice, 1845. "I reject an excessive centralization which would enlarge Paris to the detriment of the departments, the cities to the detriment of the country, and which would bring back inequality among those whom the law makes equal."

from letter to electors of Lyon - 1848

Where two or three are gathered in my name....



Evolution of structure

A CONTRACTOR OF THE PROPERTY O

Principle of Subsidiarity

The Society embraces the Principle of Subsidiarity as its basic standard of operation. Decisions are made as close as possible to the area of activity to ensure that the local environment and circumstances (cultural, social, political, etc.) are taken into consideration. In this way, the Society promotes local initiatives within its spirit. This freedom of action of Conferences and Councils, which has been kept faithfully since the origins of the Society, enables them to help the poor spontaneously and more effectively, free from excessive bureaucracy.

No work of charity is foreign to the work of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

(Rule Part I 1.3)

Founders return from Paris to Lyon

letters to Luller May 17, 1838 & August 11, 1838

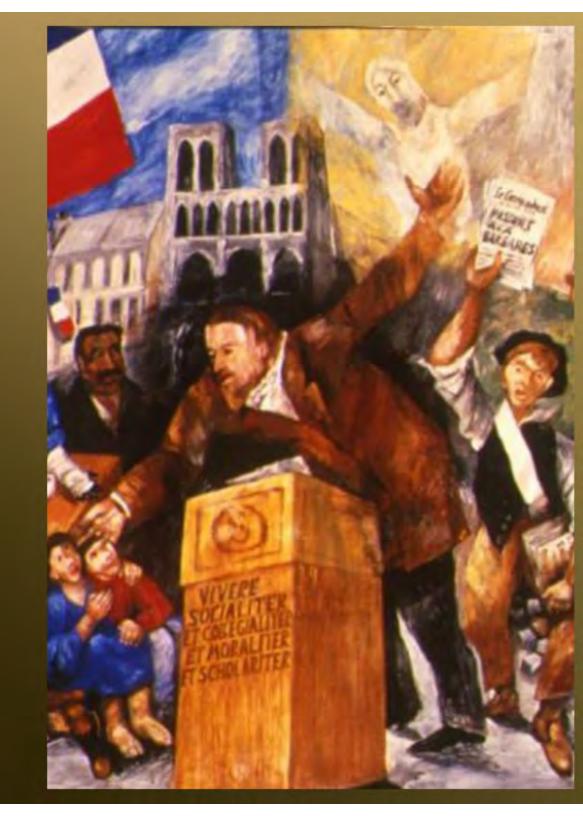
Organizing the conference in Nimes

I think knowledge of our organization and manner of acting is not of great use to you. Your city probably has different needs than the capital and provides different resources. Pravidence gives its own council through the circumstances around voto.

- In Lemma Commercial, I, 1914

Have courage to advocate & act

Standing for justice often risks reputation and friendships.



"I am not a man of action; I was born neither for the tribune nor the public squares.

If I can do anything, however little, it is in my chair; or perhaps in the quiet of a library, where I may extract from Christian philosophy, from the history of Christian times, a series of ideas which I unfold to young men,

... to rally them in the midst of the confusion of the present and the terrible uncertainties of the future."

Letter to Foisset March 22, 1848

I am less ready than anyone to face up to the questions which are going to be debated,
I mean those questions of work, wages, industry and economy, of greater concern than any political controversy.

I scarcely know anything about even the history of modern revolutions.

Letter to Foisset March 22, 1848



Have courage to advocate & act

Standing for justice often risks reputation and friendships.



"I will support the rights to work; the independent work of the laborer, of the artisan, of the merchant who remains master of his work and salary; the association of workers among themselves or of workers and contractors who voluntarily join together their work and their capital."

"I will defend the sacred principle of property. But without touching this foundation of all the civil order, one can introduce a system of progressive tax which would lessen the consumption taxes.

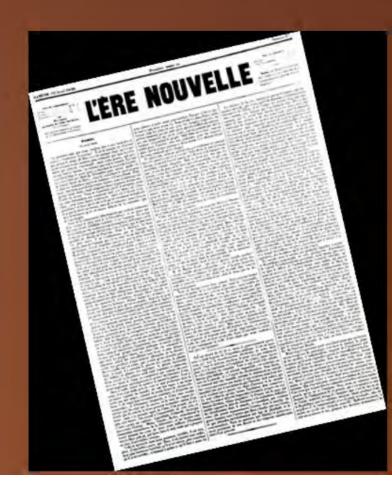
"In the Christian system, punishment does not only have the repression and atonement for crime as a goal, but also the rehabilitation of the guilty. All that which renders this rehabilitation more difficult and especially impossible is contrary to the ethical vows and spirit of Christianity."

–Ozanam, Letter to citizens of Lyon April 1848

Ozanam, Fr. Lacordaire & Fr. Maret launch L'Ere Nouvelle in April of 1848

Articles by Ozanam include:

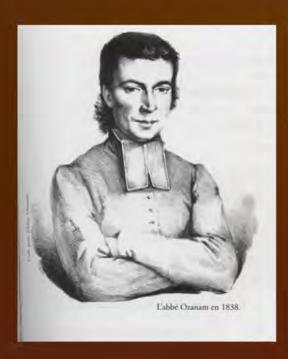
- -The Causes of Poverty
- -The Help that Honors
- -On Alms
- -The Organization of Work
- -The Origins of Socialism
- -To Decent People



If a greater number of Christians and especially of Churchmen had concerned themselves with the workers, during the past ten years, we would be more sure of the future...

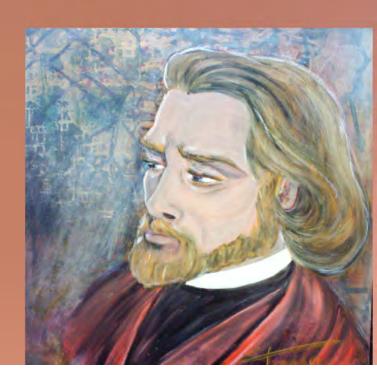
Parish priests must renounce their little bourgeois parishes, élite flocks in the middle of a huge population which they do not know.

Frédéric his brother abbé Alphonse Ozanam, April 12, 1848



Do not be afraid when the evil rich, wounded by your speeches, will treat you as communists, just as St Bernard was treated as a fanatic and a madman.

'Aux Gens de Bien', Lère Nouvelle, Sept. 15, 1848



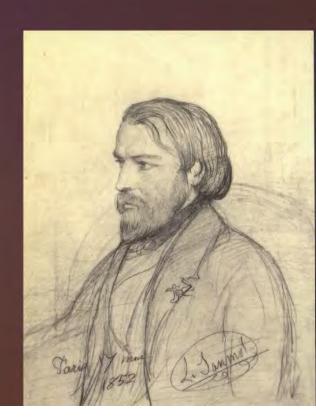
"And yet, you who know me so well, who have received the outpourings of my heart, who have followed every step of my career, - you are now ready, at the bidding of a newspaper, to doubt my faith!

A layman without any authority or mission, who does not even sign his name, accuses me with betraying our cause through treason, cowardice and self-interests and even goes so far as to accuse me of apostasy. Thereupon you take alarm, and begin to fear that I no longer believe in hell. You put me in the painful position of having to bear testimony to myself.

to Dufieux July 14, 1850

Have courage to advocate & act

Standing for justice often risks reputation and friendships.





The Socialists are also critical:

"and it is being said 'What can you accomplish in the company of men who know how to comfort misery, but who do not know how to prevent it?

Will you not prefer to have a part in those greater associations that strive to tear up the whole evil from its roots, to regenerate the world, to restore the disinherited?"



"That language is not new. The Saint Simonians and others addressed it to us fifteen years ago, when we founded the Society of St. Vincent de Paul....

But when we contrast what we have accomplished in cooperation with those men, with the needs we have helped, the tears we have dried, ...of crimes perhaps prevented and the anger which we have softened, we do not regret the choice God inspired us to make."

'Les Origines du Socialisme', Ère Nouvelle September 11, 1848 "let no one say that... we aim to perpetuate it (poverty): the same authority which tells us that we shall always have the poor amongst us, is the one that commands us to do all we can so that there are no more poor."



The Alms in L'Ere Nouvelle December, 24 1848

Accept Accept disappointments

When events do not go as we when events do not go as we planned it is essential to trust in the Providence of God.



Bishop Affre killed June 27, 1848

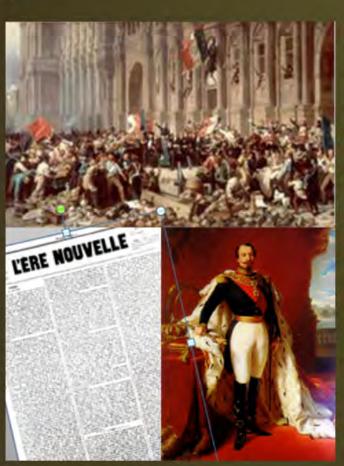
Rioters storm assembly in June 1848

Louis-Napoleon (Napoleon III) elected president.

April 1849 last issue of l'Ere Nouvelle

"I cannot associate with those who condemn so bitterly the present age; this is another way of condemning Providence."

-Ozanam 1848



Writing to his mother-in-law on the eve of Easter 1849

"When the head is worn out with work, and the heart is by controversy and disappointment,

one leaves the petty rivalry of men and contact with wicked passions to aspire to the peace of these holy days."







The "long view" of God's Providence

"I believe in its progress throughout Christian times.

I do not fear the falls and the gaps which may interrupt it...

For this reason, then, I thank God for those stormy years,...
I have entered upon a course of study in which I have found security.
I learn not to despair of my own century by returning to more threatening epochs, and beholding the perils which have been traversed by that Christian society of which we are the disciples, we know how to act as champions.

I do not close my eyes to the storms of the present day; I know that I myself may perish therein..."

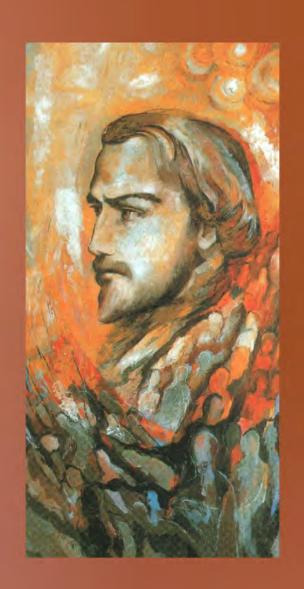
For you to consider:

*How do we discern when discussions should move to action and what actions to take?

*What are the challenges involved when we organize efforts with decision making at the lowest level?

*Do we find and bring the presence of God into our projects of systemic change?

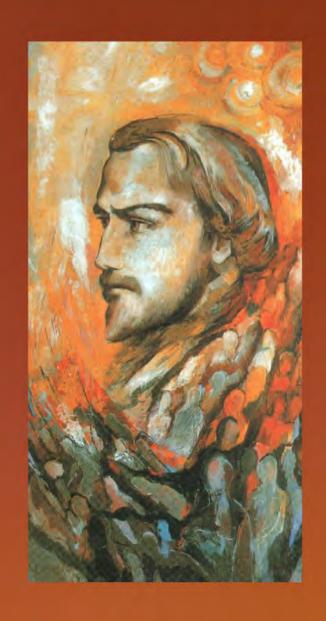
*How do you keep the "long view" of God's Providence when efforts don't succeed?



"To relate the life of a saint and therefore promote his memory has a moral goal.

The content of the life of the saint depends on the values that a religious group wants to promote, those that it deems most necessary to its era.

The virtues are more or less differently organized depending on the necessities of the times..."



Organizing to Find and Bring the Presence of God

Build Relationships & Consensus

Engage in dialog & discussion on the big issues of the day

Accept Disappointments

When events do not go as we planned it is essential to trust in the Providence of God

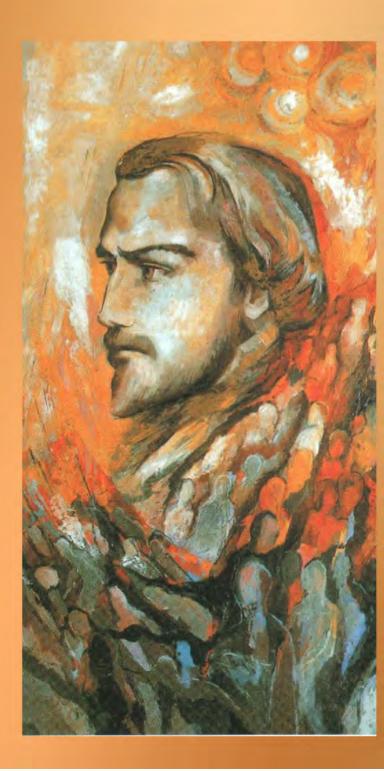
Go to the Source

Frederic's inclination was to go and experience in order to understand

Have Courage to Advocate & Act

Standing for Faith & Justice often risks reputation and Friendships Organize with Subsidiarity in Structure

Frederic's Wisdom and our Tradition





The Roots of Ozanam's Passion for Charity & Justice

