

Liturgical texts of Blessed Frederick Ozanam

Decrees from the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in regard to the date and the liturgical texts for the Memorial of Blessed Frederick Ozanam.

Prot. 1499/97/L

CONGREGATIONIS MISSIONIS

Instante Reverendo Patre Roberto D'Amico, Congregationis Missionis Postulatore Generali, litteris die 21 mensis maii 1997 datis, vigore facultatum huic Congregationi a Summo Pontifice IOANNE PAULO II libenter concedimus ut celebratio Beati Friderici Ozanam in Calendarium proprium eiusdem Congregationis inseri valeat, die 9 mensis septembris gradu memoriae ad libitum quotannis peragenda.

Contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Ex aedibus Congregationis de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum, die 23 mensis augusti 1997.

(+ Gerardus M. Agnelo)
Archiepiscopus a Secretis

* * * * *

Prot. 1500/97/L

CONGREGATIONIS MISSIONIS

Instante Reverendo Patre Roberto D'Amico, Congregationis Missionis Postulatore Generali, litteris die 21 mensis maii 1997 datis, vigore facultatum huic Congregationi a Summo Pontifice IOANNE PAULO II tributarum, textum latinum, anglicum, hispanicum, italicum ac gallicum Missae et Liturgiae Horarum in honorem Beati Friderici Ozanam, prout in adiecto exstat exemplari, libenter probamus seu confirmamus.

In textu imprimendo mentio fiat de approbatione seu confirmatione ab Apostolica Sede concessa. Eiusdem insuper textus impressi duo exemplaria ad hanc Congregationem transmittantur.

Contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Ex aedibus Congregationis de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum, die 4
mensis augusti 1997.

(+ Gerardus M. Agnelo)
Archiepiscopus a Secretis

9 September

Blessed Frederick Ozanam

Optional Memorial

Blessed Frederick Ozanam was born in Milan 23 April 1813, but spent almost his entire life in France. He was one of the founders of the Society of St Vincent de Paul for helping the poor, and was deeply involved in its expansion, being one of its vice-presidents. He was a professor in the Sorbonne in Paris, eminent for his learning, and through teaching cultural subjects he upheld and communicated the faith. He was a married man, an excellent father, and he made his family into a small church. He lived in deep union with God and was a model in the practice of Christian virtues. He died in Marseilles after a long illness on 8 September 1853. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II on 22 August 1997.

From the Common of Men Saints: those noted for works of mercy.

THE OFFICE OF READINGS

The Second Reading.

From the Letters of Blessed Frederick Ozanam

(Letter to Louis Janmot, 13 November 1836. From *Les lettres de Frederic Ozanam: Lettres de jeunesse*, pp. 243-244)

We have the poor in front of us

The saints were out of their minds when it came to love. Their love was limitless, embracing God, humanity, nature. Considering that God became man to live on earth, that a large part of humanity is poor, that nature itself, stupendous as it is, is poor in so far as it is liable to death, the saints also wished to be poor. It is a characteristic of love to wish to be like, as far as possible, what is loved.

And so, my dear friend, are we not going to do anything to become like those saints whom we love? Are we going to be satisfied with complaining about the present-day indifference, when each one of us carries in his heart a seed of holiness which, by our merely wanting it, could bloom? If we do not know how to love God as the saints loved

him, that is something for which we can be blamed. The same is true if our weakness is suggested as a reason for our being excused, since it seems that in order to love we must be able to see, and we see God only through faith, and our faith is so weak! But we see people, the poor, with human sight, we have them in front of us, we can touch their wounds with our hands, and make out the marks of the crown of thorns on their foreheads. So, we cannot not believe. We should throw ourselves at their feet and cry out like the apostle "My Lord and my God! You are our masters and we your servants. You are the sacred image of that God whom we do not see, and being unable to love in any other way, we love him in your persons". If in the Middle Ages a sick society could be healed only through a huge outpouring of love, especially by St Francis of Assisi, and if, later on, new sufferings called for the helping hands of St Philip Neri, St John of God and St Vincent de Paul, surely there is need today for charity, giving, patience, to heal the sufferings of these poor people, poorer than ever because they were refused food for their souls just when they came to lack material food.

The problem which divides people today is not a political problem, it is a social one. It is a matter of knowing which will get the upper hand, the spirit of selfishness or the spirit of sacrifice; whether society will go for ever increasing enjoyment and profit, or for everyone devoting themselves to the general good, and above all to the defence of the weakest. Many people have too much and want still more. Others do not have enough, or do not have anything at all, and they want to take by force what is not being given to them. A war is threatening between these two groups, and looks like being a terrible one. On one side the power of wealth, on the other the force of desperation. We must get in between these two groups, at least to reduce the impact if we cannot stop it. Because we are young, because we are not wealthy, we can more easily fill the role of mediators, which, as Christians, we should consider obligatory. That is the possible usefulness of the Conferences of our Society of St Vincent de Paul.

You have already done well in setting up a Conference in Rome and, led by your wonderful instinct, you have visited the poor sick French people in the hospitals of that city. God will grant you the blessing already given to the original foundation: Increase and multiply. But increase is not enough; as the Society expands the link between each part and the centre must be strengthened.

Responsory

1 Jn 4:16.7

R. We ourselves have known God's love towards ourselves. * Anyone who lives in love lives in God and God lives in him.

V. Let us love one another since love comes from God.

R. Anyone who lives in love lives in God and God lives in him.

Alternative Reading:

From the Spiritual Conferences of St Vincent de Paul, priest.

(Saint Vincent de Paul: Correspondance, Entretiens, Documents, Paris 1920-25, Vol. XI pp. 32, 77, 392-393).

The Son of God is reflected for us in the poor

I should not look at a poor man from the country, or a poor woman, just as they appear to be, nor judge them according to the extent of their intelligence. Very often, in fact, they do not seem to have either the appearance or the intelligence of rational beings, being so crude and earthy. But turn the medal round and with the light of faith you will see that the Son of God, who wished to be poor, is reflected to us by these poor people. During his passion he hardly looked like a man, the gentiles took him to be a fool, and the Jews were scandalised at him. And yet, in spite of all this, he called himself the evangelizer of the poor: *Evangelizare pauperibus misit me* (Lk 4:18). God, what a wonderful thing it is to see the poor when we look at them in God and value them the way Jesus Christ did. But if we look at them with human reactions and worldly evaluation they appear despicable.

The Son of God, in the glorified state which he has from all eternity, cannot have human feelings. He therefore became a man and our High Priest so that he could show us compassion in our wretchedness. If we want to reign with him in heaven we must show compassion to his members on earth, just as he did. Our vocation urges us to serve the most deprived, the most abandoned and those most afflicted with bodily or spiritual misfortune. First of all we should feel deeply, from the heart, what others are suffering. Secondly, what we feel should be reflected on our faces and shown by our way of behaving, as was the case with our Lord. He wept over Jerusalem because of the calamities which threatened the city. Thirdly, we should speak sympathetically, letting the other person see that we share what they feel, what interests them, and their sufferings. Finally, they must be supported and helped, in whatever way is possible, in their needs and sufferings, as we try to relieve both, either totally or partially, because actions should, as far possible, reflect the heart's feelings.

God loves the poor, so obviously he loves those who love them. When one person loves another deeply, such a person also has affection for the other's friends and servants. We should devote ourselves lovingly to the service of the poor, since they are God's beloved. Then we will have reason to hope that God will love us because we love them. So, brothers, let us work with new love at serving the poor, and let us even seek out the poorest and most neglected. In the sight of God let us recognise that they are our lords and masters, and that we are unworthy to render them our little service.

Responsory

1 Jn 4: 19, 21; Rm 5:5

R. We are to love, then, because he loved us first. This is the commandment that he has given us: * anyone who loves God must also love his brother.

V. The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us.

R. Anyone who loves God must also love his brother.

The concluding prayer as at Morning Prayer.

MORNING PRAYER

Scripture reading

1 Cor 13:4-7

Love is always patient and kind; it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offence, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.

Short responsory

R. Blessed are those who care for the weak: * in the day of misfortune the Lord will deliver them.

Blessed are those who care for the weak: in the day of misfortune the Lord will deliver them.

V. The Lord will make them live happily on earth,
in the day of misfortune the Lord will deliver them.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Blessed are they who care for the weak; in the day of misfortune the Lord will deliver them.

Benedictus ant.

People will know from this that you are my disciples if you have love for one another.

Intercessions

We trustingly direct our prayer to the God of mercy and love, so that zeal for the evangelization and service of the poor may spread in his Church:

Grant us your love, Lord.

God of goodness, help us fill this new day with works of charity for others,
- so that those whom we meet may receive from us a share of your love.

You have made us sharers in Christ's prophetic mission,
- help us to proclaim, in what we do and say, the wonders of your love.

Teach us to do good to everyone in your name,
- so that the light of your Church may always shine out on the human family.

Help us to cooperate in building up a new world,
- so that Christ's justice and peace may reign over all the earth.

Forgive us, Lord, if we have not recognised you in the poor, in the unhappy, in the marginalised,
- and if we have slighted your Son in these brothers and sisters of ours.

Send your Spirit to us,
- so that our charity may be genuine and free of hypocrisy.

Our father

Concluding prayer

You raised up Blessed Frederick, God,
as someone blazing with the spirit of your love,
so that he could encourage a group of lay people in helping the poor:
help us, who see his example,
to carry out your commandments of love,
and become like yeast in the mixture of the human race.

(We make our prayer through our Lord...).

EVENING PRAYER

Scripture reading

1 p 3:8-9

You should all agree among yourselves and be sympathetic; love the brothers, have compassion and be self-effacing. Never pay back one wrong with another; instead, pay back with a blessing. That is what you are called to do, so that you inherit a blessing yourself.

Short responsory

R. You will be my disciples, * if you love one another.

You will be my disciples, if you love one another

V. Everyone will know this:

if you love one another.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

You will be my disciples if you love one another.

Magnificat ant.

Anything you did to the least of my brothers and sisters you did to me. Come, blessed by my Father, and take possession of the kingdom prepared for you since the beginning of the world.

Intercessions

We have come together to remember Blessed Frederick Ozanam and, mindful of his love for our poorest brothers and sisters, we pray to our Father with hearts filled with joy, saying:

Make us witnesses and heralds of your salvation.

Join together in charity those who share the same bread of life,

- so that your mystical body, the Church, may be built up by unity and peace.

Since you love all human beings, bring us, in line with your commandment, to make ourselves available for helping others,

- so that the brightness of salvation may shine more intensely on everyone.

Enlighten governments with your wisdom,

- so that they will enact just and holy laws.

Help those who are discriminated against by reason of nationality, colour, social standing, language or religion,

- and see that they are accorded the recognition due to them.

Protect those consecrated to the service of others,

- and help them carry out their mission in freedom and peace.

Many persons have dedicated themselves to recognise and love your presence in the poor,
- may they contemplate your unveiled glory in your eternal kingdom.

Our father

CONCLUDING PRAYER

You raised up Blessed Frederick, God,
as someone blazing with the spirit of your love,
so that he could encourage a group of lay people in helping the poor.
Help us, who see his example,
to carry out your commandments of love,
and become like yeast in the mixture of the human race.

(We make our prayer through our Lord...).

9 September

Blessed Frederick Ozanam

MASS

From the Common of Holy Men and Women: for those engaged in works of charity.

Opening prayer: as above.

Liturgy of word

The readings of the day are used. In individual cases, the following texts may be used.

First reading

1JN 4:7-16.

Responsorial psalm

102:1-2, 3, 13, 17-18a.

R. (v. 8) The Lord is compassion and love.

Alleluia

JN 13:34.

GOSPEL

LK 10:25-37.

(The scripture readings used above are from The Jerusalem Bible)