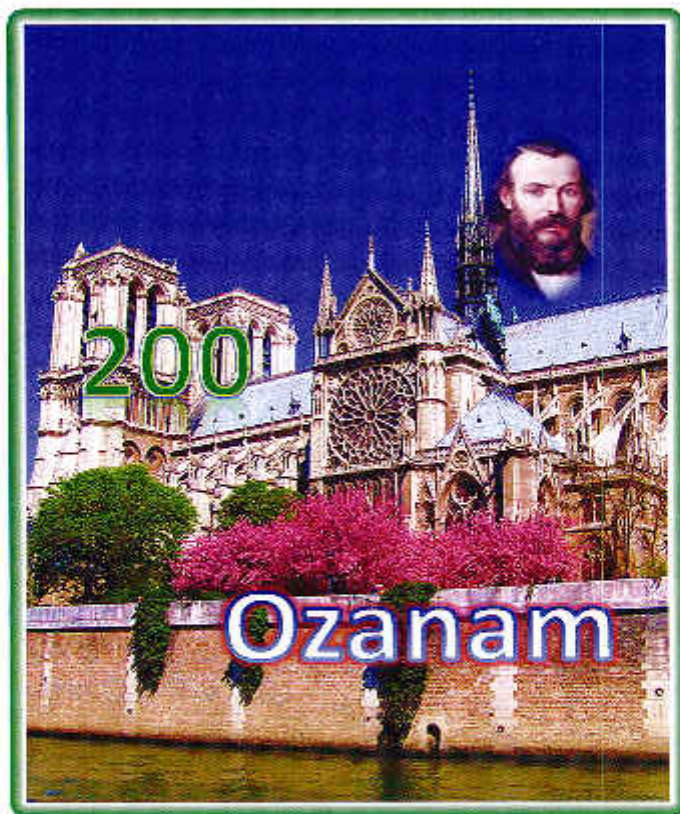


VINCENTIANA

57th Year - N. 2

April-June 2013



Two Centuries of Living Faith

CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION
GENERAL CURIA

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INTRODUCTION

HABEMUS PAPAM!

Pope Francis



Editor's Note

With the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI on February 11, 2013 and the election of Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio on March 13 as Pope Francis, this is a historic time for the Church. In a months time, we have experienced both the first papal resignation in 600 years and the first non-European elected to the papacy in 900 years. *Vincentiana* has asked for commentary from four confreres: G. Gregory Gay, Superior General; Éli Chaves dos Santos, Assistant Superior General from Brazil; Fabiano Spisla, President of CLAPVI and Visitor of Curitiba, Brazil; and Gustavo González of the Province of Argentina, who serves as provincial economo. This section concludes with an article on the invitation extended to the Superior General to attend Mass with the Holy Father. It first appeared in www.cmglobal.org

A Faithful and Faith-filled Shepherd

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.

Superior General

When Pope Francis was announced as our new Pope, I recall there was complete silence among those of us watching the television, because no one knew who he was. In the weeks prior to the conclave, the media was filled with predictions, profiles, and pictures of who the next pope might be, focusing on the Cardinals deemed to be "Papabile". For me, it was interesting to see that in all the frenzy of information and stories that raced across the media, never once was the name of Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the present Pope Francis ever mentioned. No pictures of him shown or the like: a work of the Holy Spirit? Let's hope so... I believe so.

The most striking initial impression of this Pope for me is his simplicity and desire to be among people, including his brother bishops, priests, religious, pastoral agents, his people, and especially the poor. He does not stand much on protocol, which can tend to distance our leaders from us. This attitude may be alarming for some Vatican officials and hierarchy. Yet, I believe we are witnessing something that people had hoped for: a Holy Father whose demeanor combines the spirit and way of both Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II. In the October 2012 Synod of Bishops in which I was a participant, a number of bishops and other participants spoke both in small groups and plenary sessions of the need for greater simplicity in the way the hierarchy presents itself to the public. That sentiment was constant theme in the Synod.

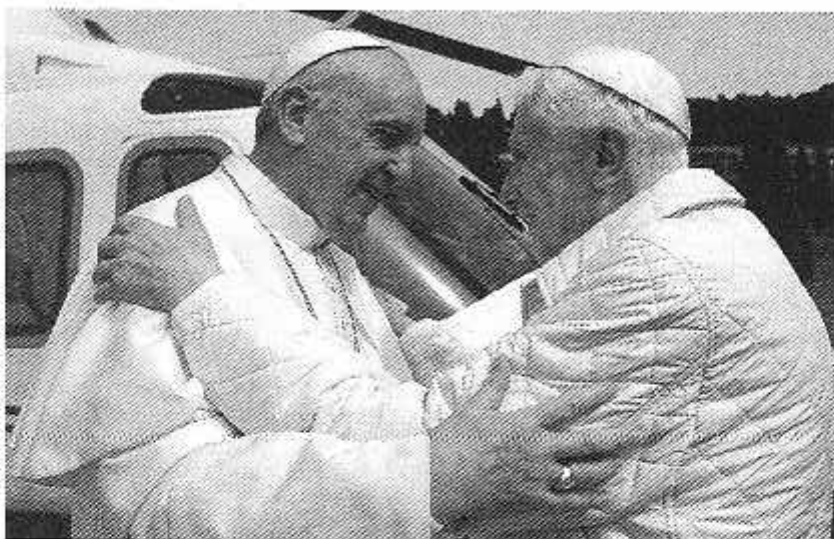
A bishop from the Philippines called on his brother bishops to exhibit greater simplicity in lifestyle and to be present to people as their pastors, not their princes. This is what many of the Catholic faithful want, except for those caught up in the 'pomp and circumstance' fanfare, which can create an impression of distance and superiority. This can lead to an external focus as a way of demonstrating the 'glory of God'. Yet, in my opinion, it distracts us from the glory of God found in the dignity of all God's people, especially the poor. I found most striking (as did many other people) that Pope Francis' first action was a humble request to all in St. Peter's Square and throughout the world to bless and pray for him before he would give his blessing. For me, that was a powerful symbol; asking God's people bless him in his leadership role as Universal Pastor of our Church. I have high hopes our Pope will be one for the people, especially for the poor.

I also find two other facts about the new Pope Francis to be quite significant: he is the first non-European Pope in nearly one thousand years, and one who comes from Latin America. This is especially noteworthy to me, as I believe that the Church in Latin America has attempted with great determination to inculcate the work of the Second Vatican Council into Church teaching as well as the everyday life of the people. This is most fitting, coming in the "Year of Faith" when we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the start of the Council. Through the leadership of Bishops' Conferences, the Latin American Church is unique in how it has integrated the documents of Vatican II into the life of the Church. Starting in 1968 and continuing, the Bishops' Conference met in Medellin, Colombia, Puebla, Mexico, Santo Domingo, and most recently, Aparecida, Brazil. In each of these settings, the Bishops of Latin America called people to integrate the teachings of Vatican II into their daily lives. They challenged them to embrace the new evangelization by accepting their faith as a permanent state of mission, recommitting their desire to live their baptismal promises to Christ and his Church.

This commitment actively involves both hierarchy and laity on a continual journey, as the Bishops of Latin America have demonstrated both in their documents and pastoral activity. I'm very delighted that we have a Pope who reflects this love of Vatican II, and is calling all of us as the People of God to participate more fully in the life of the Church, and actively seeks to express a preferential option for the poor. Needless to say, our Holy Father's lifestyle, words, and actions are not only a herald of hope to the Church and the world; they reflect quite well something else near and dear to my heart and yours: our Vincentian Charism. May God bless and strengthen Pope Francis in his new ministry as Chief Shepherd of God's flock.

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.

7 April 2013



Pope Francis greets Pope Emeritus Benedict at Castel Gandolfo on March 23, 2013

A Jesuit Pope, Latin American and New Directions of the Church

Éli Chavez dos Santos, C.M.

Assistant to the Superior General, Rome

With the election of Pope Francis, I would like to summarize and share some ideas of Fr. Libânio¹, which I find very interesting. They can help us understand this historical moment now in the Church's history, a time of questions and expectations.

Pope Francis succeeded Pope Benedict XVI. In general, when the Pope chooses a name, it takes on a special significance for his papacy. In a way, it bespeaks a kind of "inheritance". In choosing the name of

¹ Cf. Video: *A Jesuit pope, Latin American and the new directions of the Church*. This video was produced by the Loyola Center from a roundtable held in Belo Horizonte Brazil, April 20, 2013, with participation of renowned Brazilian theologian and Jesuit João Batista Libânio and Fr. Manuel Godoy. You can view it at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLZWc1VqF1U>

Pope Benedict XVI, then-Cardinal Ratzinger wanted to emphasize being a European. This is because he realized Europe was rooted in the Christian faith, and he sought to re-Christianize Europe so it would return to its 'roots'. Cardinal Bergoglio chose Francis, a name without papal precedent, as he followed a different path from his predecessors. Although a Jesuit, Cardinal Bergoglio chose a name identified with Franciscans, highlighting his originality.

Moreover, the new pope comes in after the resignation of Benedict XVI, which is really the first true resignation of a pope. The resignations of popes before Benedict XVI were often due to economic or political realities of the time. Pope Benedict's resignation 'splits' the theology of papal primacy, defined at Vatican I. Benedict's resignation was not an isolated act of a coward who flees and abandons the mission. Rather, it was a conscious and mature decision of a man who felt unable to continue the physical and spiritual demands needed of papal ministry today.

This attitude reveals the fragility and limitations of the papacy as an office. It definitely calls into question some previous religious and societal ideas of the pope as an untouchable, unquestionable, and sacred figure. This former 'theology of the papacy' ratifies the pope as infallible, with all glory, authority, and above any suspicion. It does not allow one to waver - how does a pope quit if he's seen as being a detached figure, a totality from 'above'? In my opinion, this theology of papal primacy, forged in recent centuries, is now being revised to a new way of being. The figure of the pope is now seen as one who is more human, with the strengths and weaknesses of an 'average'² man. In his act of his resignation, Pope Emeritus Benedict dismantled the traditional understanding of the figure of the Pope, and opened new pathways and possibilities for Pope Francis. Therefore, although at this time there is the loss of a certain papal aura of sacredness, Pope Francis, with a different mindset, can create a new understanding of what it means to be a successor of Peter in today's world.

The "buzz" around the new Pope has led many to look more closely at him and wonder what to expect. Cardinal Bergoglio is a man of great qualities, who has a great proximity to people, and especially a concern for youth as the future of the Church. He has management experience

²Fr. Manuel Godoy was surprised that the media highlighted several noteworthy gestures and attitudes of Pope Francis, seen as "common and normal". These include using public transportation, paying his hotel bill after the conclave and being a football fan. It is interesting to observe the emphasis on the normal, trivial things that millions of people usually tend to do. The fact that Pope Francis has done these things can also inform us just how 'abnormal' our conception of the life of a Pope can be!

as provincial in the Society of Jesus and Bishop of the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires. Compared with Pope Emeritus Benedict, there are big differences. Benedict XVI is a brilliant theologian, well-respected as the 'German doctor', an intelligent man who tried to solve problems utilizing the vast range of his theological vision. Yet, he had much difficulty in making this vision viable and solving these problems in the concrete reality of life today. Pope Emeritus Benedict could ably wrestle with problems in theory, but he had difficulty in tackling the practical aspects of many problems confronting the Church today. In his decision to resign the papacy, Benedict has acknowledged the complexity and difficulty of governing the Church in today's world. These factors, with his advancing age, gave him the courage to see he was in no condition to continue in command of the Church.

Pope Francis is a pastoral man. He has a good theological formation, but he is not an intellectual. He is a pastor, closer to everyday problems. Influenced by the populism in his native Argentina dating back to the era of "Peron", he is affected by the idea that power derives its authority from being closer to the people, both in physical and emotional proximity. His way of being simple and close to the people and the poor comes largely from his life experiences and the influence of the "Peronist" era in Argentina, rather than a critical understanding of liberation theology, which sees the poor as exploited and the core group in building a just society.

Furthermore, concerning certain perceptions (or "shadows" as they are often called) on his performance during Argentina's dictatorship, one needs to be realistic. It is easy today, in a quieter environment, to analyze the past, tense, uncertain, and difficult days with sometimes harsh judgments. Bergoglio was young and had no experience. He is not the same today; he has grown, changed, matured spiritually, and one can expect him to be different from the past. In the present, one can revisit some positions that may not have been brave and appropriate for the past. As for what positions he will take to reform the church, one must wait and see what he will do in time.

An analytical view will show that the Pope Francis must serve in a church environment marked by large and complex challenges, including the great centralization produced in the pontificates of John Paul II and Benedict XVI. In fact, this centralization of the Church is not new, but traces its origin to the *"Dictatus Papae"* of Pope Gregory VII in the eleventh century. This new papacy begins at a time when, due to the force of secularization, institutional religion has lost its normative force. Many people today ascribe to a vague religiosity. This institutional crisis of the Church has resulted in a loss of strength of ecclesiastical power. It also occurs within the context of a Church moving "East and South", giving it a configuration less European.

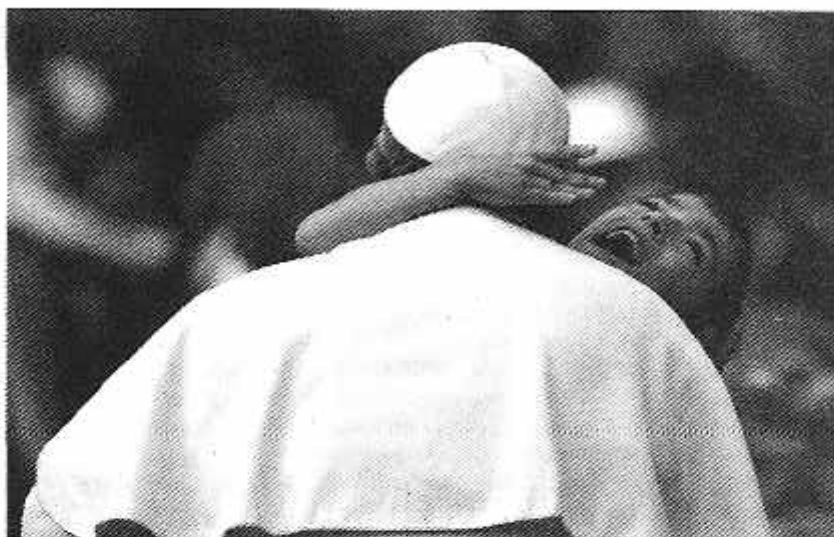
Given these and many other challenges, without underestimating the power of the pope, one can see that he is not a person who can change the Church overnight. Immediate institutional changes are needed and expected. However, it is more important to promote and strengthen movements of renewal and change within the Church. It is also essential to support and promote new initiatives and movements for change from theological, geographical, and cultural horizons.

Our expectations and concerns must also consider using objective data gleaned from the valuable tools of social sciences and theology to find ways to understand and live out our faith realistically to avoid being naive. However, on some level, our reflections will always be incomplete, because when it comes to belief, it is ultimately about living the virtues of faith, hope, and charity. Otherwise, our "human analysis" can appear harsh and pessimistic. What undergirds and gives vigor to the faith and the Church is the person of Jesus Christ, who sends his Spirit to renew and strengthen us.

It is necessary today to deepen our awareness and understanding of the theology of the Holy Spirit, which leads us to the historical Jesus. At various times in its history, the Church developed a mode of theological reflection that seemed to silence the role of the Holy Spirit and relegate the historical Jesus to a superficial level. A constant effort to engage the historical person of Jesus will help us develop a communal, historical, and concrete praxis for our faith, so we may discern new ways of fidelity and authenticity. In doing this, we can avoid the pitfall of living an "individualized religion" which only leads to isolation and the death of a true communal faith. To meet the challenges of our time properly, we must be willing and able to articulate and engage the two essential dimensions in the experience of following Christ: the person of Jesus and the community he called us to become, the Church.

Éli Chaves dos Santos, C.M.

3 May 2013



Pope Francis embraces a young boy with cerebral palsy
on Easter Sunday

Jorge Mario Bergoglio – “Our” New Pope Francisco

Fabiano Spisla, C.M.

Visitor, Province of Curitiba, Brazil President
of CLAPVI³

It was March 13, 2013. The Conclave was in progress, and we all had great expectations for the election of the new Pope. Suddenly, people gathered in St. Peter’s Square could not contain their excitement as they saw white smoke pour from the make-shift chimney on the roof of the Sistine Chapel, indicating the choice of a new pontiff.

The day before, I went from Curitiba to São Paulo to obtain my visa to travel to the United States for the International Visitors meeting. I stopped at the Church of St. Vincent de Paul in the region of Ipiranga. After lunch with two confreres, we talked while checking to see if there

³Editor’s Note: CLAPVI is the Latin American association of Visitors of all Vincentian provinces: “Conferencia Latino Americano De Provincias Vicentinas”. Founded in 1971, it is the oldest of all the Conferences of Visitors in the Congregation.

was any news from Rome. I retired briefly to relax. But moments later there was a knock at the door, and one of the confreres excitedly said, "We have white smoke". A new pope had been elected! My interest greatly increased. The news media, eager to report on the new occupant of the chair of St. Peter, set its camera on the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica where the announcement would be made.

Looking at the clock, I realized it was close to the time of my appointment for the interview to obtain my USA visa. Yet, the time between the white smoke and the actual announcement seemed to drag on, taking more than the clock showed. Perhaps it felt more like 'psychological time' than actual time. None of us wanted to miss the live announcement and to find out the identity of the new pope, but I also knew that I could not miss the appointment for my interview if I wanted to obtain the visa for the USA.

When the announcement did not come soon enough, I left and called for a taxi. The weather outside was dark clouds threatening rain, a real contrast with the white smoke in Rome. While waiting for a taxi that was slow to arrive, a lady yelled out her window, "*We have a Pope! He is an Argentine! His name is Mario Jorge Bergoglio!*".

At the same time, it was around 19:00 in Rome time, and in the Sistine Chapel, a voice belonging to Cardinal Bergoglio, Archbishop of Buenos Aires, said "I accept". After the positive response, he was welcomed by the other cardinals who thanked him for his courage in accepting the Papacy. Later, the new Pope would say to people who gathered in St. Peter's square: "You know that the duty of the Conclave was to give Rome a bishop. Well, it seems that my brother cardinals decided to pick someone from near the end of the world. And now I'm here with you tonight. So, let us begin this journey of the Church of Rome, the primary See presiding in charity to all the Churches. Let this be the start of a walk of brotherhood, of love, and trust between us".

When asked what name he would choose as Pontiff, he replied: "Francis". Why this name? From where did the inspiration come? This is what Cardinal Bergoglio said in his own words: "Some thought of Saints. Francis Xavier, Francis de Sales or Francis of Assisi. I'll tell you why. During the election, I had at my side a great friend, the Bishop Emeritus of São Paulo and prefect emeritus of the Congregation for the Clergy, Cardinal Claudio Hummes. When things became somewhat tense during the balloting, he comforted me. And when I received two thirds of the votes, there was applause at the election of the new Pope. And Cardinal Hummes hugged me, kissed me, and he said: 'Do not forget the poor'. And I kept thinking of the poor, the poor all over the world. So I thought, in order to remember the poor, I will take the name of Francis of Assisi".

And in his first address in his pontificate, Pope Francis tried to be one with the people, as seen before the traditional 'Urbi et Orbi' blessing, when the Holy Father made an unprecedented request of the people gathered there: "I ask you a favor: before the Bishop blesses the people, I ask you to pray to the Lord to bless me with your prayer. I ask your blessing as your Bishop. Let us do this by way of silent prayer from you for me".

While in Buenos Aires as Cardinal, Jorge Mario Bergoglio lived simply in a modest home. He took the bus to work each day, and also did so to encounter his flock when he went out to the slums for the celebration of Mass, and to minister to the poor.

In Buenos Aires, as the news spread of Pope Francis' election, people gathered, and there were many expressions of great joy. The Cathedral was packed with faithful who were thrilled. In a note to Argentina's President Cristina Kirchner, the Holy Father said: "It is our hope, that my Argentine people who have to take on the management and direction of the church, will enjoy a pastoral and fruitful time, as they undertake the great responsibilities of seeking justice, equality, fraternity and peace of mankind".

Surprise and celebrations in Argentina marked the choice of Jorge Mario Bergoglio. All over Buenos Aires, one could hear ovations, applause, cries and chants of the faithful who came to the Cathedral located in front of the historic square. In the streets, there was honking of car horns and shouts of people passing by in cars.

Some days after sending emails to friends in Buenos Aires for their reaction, I received this response: "This man chosen for the Papacy is humble and ready to serve the poorest of the poor. He is a man of God who walks with his people; a man of communion, mission, and hope; and a servant of the Gospel for the hope of the world".

While a couple of months have passed since the election of the Pope, there have been some very positive reactions. In Latin America, the tone among the people and in the Church is one of optimism. In the Vincentian Provinces of Brazil as well as the other provinces in Latin America, the initial reaction of confreres and members of the Vincentian Family has been very positive. The simplicity of Pope Francis and his love for the poor is very consistent with the life and charism of St. Vincent de Paul.

So the confreres and Vincentian Family in Latin America manifest joy at the election of Pope Francis. In the words of some Vincentian Family members who put together a statement: "In this Pope's pontificate, he has chosen to exercise it with the people, because only then can the people feel God's love and presence. As Jesus and St. Vincent de Paul worked to meet the needs of the poor, certainly this pontificate

will do so by demonstrating God's love and availability to others in the present moment".

In correspondence I have had with confreres, religious from other congregations, diocesan clergy and Vincentian Family members, all express tremendous confidence that this papacy will now usher in a time for renewal. They hope that now the Church can re-claim the path of prophecy by announcing the Good News and being that voice to cry out for justice and equality. In doing so, we become a living sign of the authentic testimony that embraces the mission of Christ, our Savior.

This feeling of optimism for the Holy Father is not confined to the continent of Latin America who is proud of their "native son". It is especially because the vision Pope Francis has for the world and how we can live together with all people. One lady summed up the comment thought of many quite well: "He is one like us. He is always humble, and he never puts himself in a position of superiority or distance from people".

Pope Francis is striving to be that true Good Shepherd who keeps the flock together seeking community and eliminating all forms of rivalry as well as anything that hinders the Church from becoming the true herald of Good News for the entire world.

Fabiano Spisla, C.M.

29 April 2013



Pope Francis washes the feet of youth on prison visit
Holy Thursday

He took the name Francis, but...

Gustavo M. González, C.M.
Province of Argentina

When they came on the eighth day to circumcise the child, they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, but his mother said in reply, "No. He will be called John". But they answered her, "There is no one among your relatives who has this name". So they made signs, asking his father what he wished him to be called. He asked for a tablet and wrote, "John is his name", and all were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing God (Luke 1:59-63).

"White Smoke" were two words that interrupted my daily activity. I rushed to finish what I was doing, and then I sat in front of the television to wait for the time of the announcement: to see and hear who had been chosen to fill the chair of Peter.

During the run-up to the conclave, the local media highlighted candidates coming from the various continents. We dreamed of a pope

from Latin America, and in fact, there were candidates named as possible "Papabile" from Latin America. In Argentina, we had our own candidate, but he was not a name considered to be well-known by experts worldwide. Ours was a desire, a dream, and we knew it was just that.

One day I heard an international Vatican expert (whose name I cannot recall), discussing a list of possible papal candidates which included the Argentine Cardinal. I thought to myself: "What a crazy idea to think it could be Bergoglio!". Then, the 'expert' said, "It is possible, but I do not think so... the Church needs someone younger". That, at least, was what the 'expert in the field' said, and when he was finished I believe that I also agreed with his opinion.

Suddenly, television cameras were fixed on the loggia of St. Peter's: the big curtains and the window opened. Cardinal Tauran uttered the first words in Latin: "*Vobis Gaudium Annuntio magnum; Habemus Papam*". "I bring you news of great joy: we have a Pope!". The cry in the Piazza of St. Peter's was enormous as many pilgrims gathered from all over the world, and I found myself caught up in this joy and excitement. But as Cardinal Tauran continued in Latin: "*Huc Reverendissimum Eminentissimum Dominum, Dominum Romanæ Georgium Ecclesiae Sanctae Mariam qui sibi nomen Cardinalem imposuit Bergoglio Franciscum*". "Bergoglio?... I said it out loud again... Bergoglio?". As I sat there amazed, and like most of my Argentine countrymen, my thoughts and words were mixed with much excitement, joy, and tears.

I stood in front of the TV, taking in all that was being reported. Suddenly, I thought to myself, "With all this news, what am I doing staying here? I'm going to the Cathedral. Our local Bishop was chosen from among the 115 cardinals to be the next Pope!". I guess the 'experts' are feeling a little humiliated tonight! The winds of the Holy Spirit reached far beyond any direction the media thought possible. One journalist would later admit that "In all of this, I think we had forgotten the supernatural factor".

On my way to the Cathedral, the joy in the streets was indescribable. People smiled with a certain familiarity. The Cathedral, little by little, filled up, and we constantly heard people praying, cheering, and applauding. There were people hugging, laughing, and talking on phones to share the news with their loved ones. It was a night of filled with excitement and joy.

There are so many similar things being written and said repeatedly about Pope Francis, that the words run like a fast stream to a river. The pure water that fills the river is akin to the same wonderful words repeated constantly in describing Pope Francis: his humility, simplicity, closeness to the poor, personal austerity, a man of hope, who is on a

true Mission. In addition, there are numerous anecdotes testifying to the small, but meaningful gestures he made to his people, as he traveled from city to village to country areas. His love for the poor comes from his love for Jesus Christ along with his deep spiritual life. He is close to God and close to people.

Vincent de Paul used to say that true religion is found among the poor. "Padre Jorge" as he was known, often sought out the poor. He went to Marian shrines to celebrate patronal feasts of Saints to be close to the poor, and those who lived their faith simply. He was always willing to partake in the Eucharist. As our Shepherd, Cardinal Bergoglio also visited our Miraculous Medal Shrine and accepted invitations from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to celebrate an important event or an anniversary. In the Cathedral of Buenos Aires, he shared in celebrations of the 150th anniversary of Vincentian presence in Argentina; along with our Superior General. In fact, his first priestly ordination as Archbishop of Buenos Aires was that of confreres for our province. Indeed, in 2010, one of his closest aides, the former Visitor of the province, Vicente Bokalic, was named auxiliary bishop of Buenos Aires.

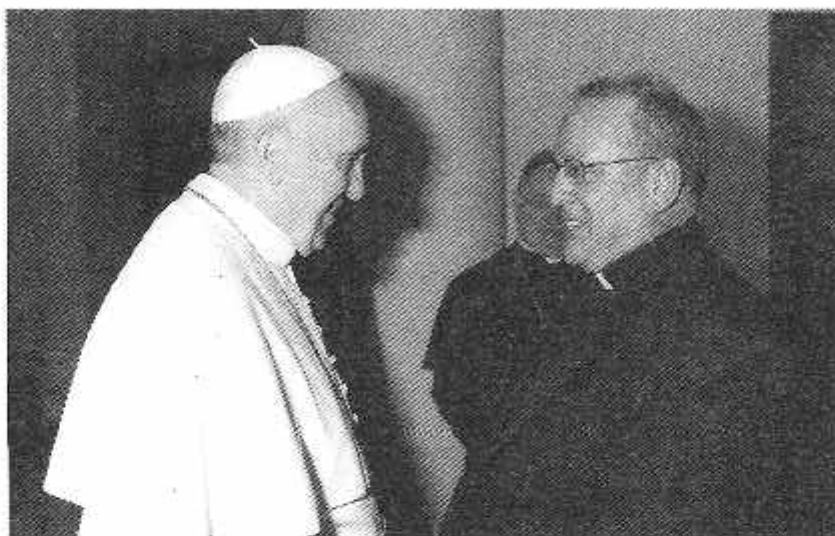
And if you ask our Lord: "What is it that you came to do on earth?". He would say, "To help the poor", and if we would ask, "What more?". He would respond, "To help the poor". Should we feel happy to be serving in the Mission with the same purpose as God, who committed his Son Jesus to become human? The above is a sample from a homily of our Archbishop, who is now our Holy Father. Padre Jorge, in his homilies, insisted (and he continues this theme today as Pope Francis) of the need to go to out to meet people, and especially to meet the poor. As Archbishop he would often say, "Jesus is like a stray. Rarely in the Gospels do we find him preaching in the temples. He liked to go on the road and to meet people". As Vincent de Paul was convinced that Jesus Christ came to evangelize, therefore, we have to go out to like Jesus to the by-ways to find the poor and talk of God.

Francis is not just the name of our new Pope. Like the saint who bears his name, he is a symbol of a Church that is poor, simple, evangelical, and devoid of all power. In the above passage from Luke's Gospel, we hear the words to Zechariah that "there is no one among your relatives who carry the name" (Lk 1:61). This "Zechariah effect" is similar to what was heard in the media with the selection of Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio. Like the scripture passage, with his election and taking the name of Pope Francis, "All were amazed". Francis is a 'reluctant' Pope, a man who, with his simple ways and missionary spirit, challenges you, and I to take a more radical following of Jesus Christ by way of Vincent de Paul.

"We had forgotten the supernatural factor", said the journalist in a revelatory remark. Like this honest journalist, we can often forget that God has different criteria for choosing whom he will to accomplish his divine plans. As St. Paul reminded us God chooses what the world considers weak to confound the strong (1 Cor 1:27). "*Nomen imposuit Franciscum Sibi*", we were told on March 13 from the loggia at St. Peter's. "He will take the name of Francis" they told us, but actually it could just as well have been the name Vincent.

Gustavo M. González, C.M.

30 April 2013



Pope Francis greets Fr. Gregory Gay after Mass in Casa Santa Marta on April 16

“Submit to the Holy Spirit... and go forward”: Superior General Joins Pope Francis for Mass

John T. Maher, C.M.

Editor, *Vincentiana*

The message was sudden and startling. “Sr. Marie Claire asks that you call Sr. Claudia at the Casa Santa Marta immediately”, it read. Fr. G. Gregory Gay, C.M., Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity, had just returned from Bolivia after a long and exhausting two week trip, and he was anxious for some much-needed rest. But the message was followed by a call with a simple, straightforward message: “The Holy Father is expecting you for Mass tomorrow at 7:00 am”. So a good night’s rest would wait until later!

Early the next morning, on Tuesday April 16, the Superior General made his way to the Vatican and was admitted through the gates to Casa Santa Marta, the Vatican’s official “guest house”, most recently famous as a residence for cardinals who took part in the recent papal conclave. It is now the new home of Pope Francis. Sr. Claudia, the

Sister Servant of the eight Daughters of Charity who staff the Casa, had procured an invitation for the Superior General at Mass. Fr. Gregory vested and took his place among several bishops and two Franciscans priests.

As it turned out, Mass that day was quite noteworthy. Pope Francis' homily, which surprised and delighted Fr. Gregory, was widely reported in the media, beginning with the Vatican Press Office. It was a weekday mass in Easter season with a reading from the Acts of the Apostles on the martyrdom of St. Stephen. The Holy Father used the story to reflect on the role of the Holy Spirit and our resistance in listening to the Spirit. Specifically, Pope Francis said, "The Holy Spirit upsets us because it moves us, makes us walk, and pushes the Church forward. Because of this, we wish to calm down the Holy Spirit, to tame it, and this is wrong. The Holy Spirit is the strength of God; it's what gives us strength to go forward. Nowadays, everyone seems happy about the presence of the Holy Spirit, but that's not really the case, and there still is a temptation to resist it".

Pope Francis cited the controversy over the effects of the Second Vatican Council as evidence of this resistance to the Holy Spirit. He described Vatican II as "a beautiful work of the Holy Spirit". But a half century later, the Pope asked, "Have we done everything the Holy Spirit was asking us to do? No. We celebrate an anniversary, we put up a monument... but we don't want to change, and what's more, there are those who want to turn the clock back".

Fr. Gregory said he found the Holy Father's homily refreshing and empowering, and that Pope Francis had spoken "like the true pastor he is, one with his people and the Church. It was very consistent with what I've experienced with the hierarchy of the Church in Latin America". Fr. Gregory noted that in his years as a missionary in the Republic of Panama and as the Visitor of the Province of Central America, "the Church is alive and vibrant in these countries because their leadership has discerned the workings of the Holy Spirit among the faithful. As a result, the evolution of lay ministry and the development of a 'preferential option for the poor' were championed by the Bishops of Latin American at regional meetings, starting in 1968 in Medellin and up to the present day". So the words of the Holy Father were not only familiar and pleasing to the Superior General, but they echoed a theme consonant to his life and missionary ministry in Panama and Central America.

As can be seen in the above photo, after Mass, Fr. Gregory had an opportunity to meet and speak briefly with the Holy Father. He told Pope Francis that he appreciated his homily. He also mentioned that Bishop Vincente Bokalic, who served as the Visitor of the Province of Argentina before being named the new auxiliary bishop of Buenos Aires

had expressed to him great gratitude at being able to live and serve among the poor as a bishop. Pope Francis smiled and said to Fr. Gregory, "You're both quite welcome".

As he strives to lead the Congregation of the mission, the Daughters of Charity, and the world wide Vincentian Family, Fr. Gregory noted that as he reads and reflects on the talks of Pope Francis, he believes the new Holy Father has "a truly Vincentian heart that loves the poor, and like St. Vincent, a willingness to seek Divine Providence by following the path set forth by the Holy Spirit". He concluded his recollection of this event by quoting the final thought of Pope Francis' homily at the Mass he attended on April 16: "*Submit to the Holy Spirit, which comes from within and makes us go forward along the path of holiness*".



N.B.: Quotes of Pope Francis at the April 16 Mass in this article were taken from the Vatican web site: <http://www.news.va/en/news/pope-2nd-vatican-council-work-of-holy-spirit-but-s>



Fr. G. Gregory Gay at Mass with the Holy Father on April 16.
He is third from the left

From the Editor

John T. Maher, C.M.

This issue of *Vincentiana* focuses its theme on the life and ongoing influence of Blessed Frederic Ozanam as we commemorate the 200th anniversary of his birth. For over two centuries Frederic's life, words, and works have inspired and guided people to follow the Vincentian charism. Celebrations of the anniversary of his birth were held in Milan, where he was born on April 23, 1813, and Paris, where he lived, worked and is buried (after having died in Marseilles on September 8, 1853). We focus not only on the "who" of Frederic, but on the "how and why", to shed light on the marvelous effect Frederic Ozanam had on his family, the society and Church of his time, and the extent of his influence today.

Fr. Ron Ramson, C.M., whose work, *Praying with Frederic Ozanam* is well known in the English-speaking world, reflects on a little-known aspect: the effect Frederic's decision to serve Christ in the poor had on his immediate family and on future generations. Readers will see a "osmosis" of the Vincentian charism, extending two generations in the Ozanam lineage to his grandson, Fr. Francis LaPorte, whose sought to revive the Catholic Church in France after World War II.

Fr. Teodoro Barquin, C.M., of the Province of Madrid discusses the genius of Ozanam, not just in his development of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, but the extent his intellectual and philosophical prowess laid the foundation to "restore the society under the guidance of the Church". Fr. Barguin makes a strong case both the writing and teaching efforts of Frederic Ozanam should be regarded as "the precursor to the present theology of the laity".

Dr. Thomas O'Brien, DePaul University faculty, traces the writings and life of Frederic Ozanam to this era's development of Catholic Social Teaching. Dr. O'Brien develops his thesis not just through his foundation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, but by exploring his writing and teaching, both of which showed a willingness to engage a society and an academic community that was overtly hostile to the Church. Two key elements in Ozanam's outlook that O'Brien sees as 'markers' of Catholic Social Policy are: his preferential option for the poor (calling the Church to aid of those in need); and his development of a "historical hermeneutic" that acknowledged a need for a dialogue and positive interaction between Church and state.

Finally, this "Ozanam issue" presents an interview with Julien Spiewak, a young man who serves as Vice-President for Youth and Young Adults of the St. Vincent de Paul Society in Paris. Julien is a busy man;

he is often "on the road" animating groups of the Society all over Europe. He also serves as Editor of the magazine *Missions Etrangères de Paris*, a monthly publication of "MEP"; a group of French Missionary Priests who minister exclusively in Asia, and whose home is near the Daughters of Charity on rue de Bac. Julien's interview demonstrates that the work of Frederic Ozanam is carried on today in wonderful and amazing ways.

Several other noteworthy features to this issue include reflections on recently elected Pope Francis by several confreres who are either from or have worked in Latin America. A Jesuit who served as Archbishop of Buenos Aires before his election as Pope Francis, the Holy Father has demonstrated by his life, actions, and words that he truly possesses a 'Vincentian heart'. That's not just wishful thinking; in fact, his auxiliary bishop is our confrere, Vicente Boralic, who once served as Visitor of the Province of Argentina.

Fr. Robert Maloney's article "The Call to a New Evangelization" is a conference he gave to the Curia for a recent retreat day. It is published with the hope that it will stimulate as much dialogue and discussion within houses and provinces as it did with the confreres here in Rome. It is featured to help us reflect on our role as Vincentian evangelizers in this "Year of Faith".

Finally, the annual report of the "vital statistics" of the Congregation of the Mission in 2012 is presented for your review. This is the annual report the Secretary General makes to the Holy See; as always, it provides a sketch of the scope of the Congregation throughout the world. This, along with the "Tempo Forte" reports will serve to provide us with the highlights of what is happening in the Congregation of the Mission across the continents.

Special Note

I want to thank Fr. Ed Udovic of DePaul University, and Editor of Vincentian Heritage Nathaniel Michaud for permission to use Dr. Thomas O'Brien's article. It first appeared in 2012 (*Vincentian Heritage*, Volume 31, Number 1). I also want to belatedly and sincerely thank the Editors of "Anales", Fr. Paulino Saez Lopez, C.M., and Sr. Maria del Carmen Hernandez, D.C. "Anales" is a bi-monthly publication of the Vincentians and Daughters of Charity of Madrid. They gave permission to use two articles in the last issue of *Vincentiana*: "Vincentian Parishes and the New Evangelization" by Fr. Pablo Dominguez of the Province of Saragossa, and "Can there be a Vincentian Missionary Parish?" by Fr. Antonio Ruiz Garcia of the Madrid Province. I thank Fr. Paulino and Sr. Maria del Carmen for their kindness in allowing us to use these fine pieces of writing to help advance discussion on Vincentian parishes and the New Evangelization.

About Our Authors



Fr. THEODOR BARQUIN is a member of the Province of Spain, and entered the Congregation in 1948. He was ordained to the priesthood in May, 1956. He has written extensively on Vincentian spirituality and has given retreats.



Fr. ELI CHAVES DOS SANTOS, was elected as Assistant to the Superior General in 2010. Prior to that time, he served in Mozambique as a missionary and Director of the Daughters of Charity. His home is Brazil.



Fr. ROBERT P. MALONEY, a member of the Eastern Province USA, served as Superior General from 1992-2004. He has written several books and numerous articles on Vincentian Spirituality. He currently serves as founding chair of the Commission for the Promotion of Systemic Change and is President of the Franz Foundation, which has been very generous in funding projects for the Congregation.



Dr. THOMAS O'BRIEN is an associate professor of Religious Studies at DePaul University and teaches ethics and Catholic social thought. He received his Ph.D in moral theology from the University of Toronto. His areas of expertise include Catholic social theory, liberation theology, and applied ethics. He is in the final stages of publishing a book about applying Catholic social thought in the contemporary business setting.



Fr. RONALD W. RAMSON is a member of the Western Province, USA currently engaged in seminary formation work in Dallas, Texas. He entered the Congregation in 1952, and was ordained in June, 1959. He has written *Praying with Frederic Ozanam* and has given retreats, talks, and workshops on the Vincentian charism as seen in the life of Blessed Frederic Ozanam. He has served as spiritual advisor to the National Office of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

Tempo Forte Meeting Summary

March 2013

Dear Confreres,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be forever in our hearts!

The following is a summary of the Tempo Forte meeting held at the General Curia from March 3-8. On Sunday March 3, prior to the actual start of the meeting, we had a day of prayer and reflection given by Fr. Robert Maloney, who spoke on the theme of "New Evangelization and our Vincentian charism". He was also present a report from the Franz Foundation. We also welcomed Frs. Dan Borlik and Marcelo Manimtim, the Directors of the CIF Program in Paris, who came to update us on this most important ongoing formation program of the Congregation.

Upcoming events

- We discussed an invitation to participate in the meeting of the Society St. Vincent de Paul by sending confreres from the Curia to assisting them by celebrating the Eucharist with them at their annual meeting in Rome early in June.
- We continued our preparation for the International Visitors Meeting to be held in New York at St. John's University from 30 June - 13 July. We approved a new logo devised for this meeting by Alexis Cerquera Trujillo of the Province of Paris.
- We established the date for the meeting and workshop for new Visitors, which will be held in Rome from January 5-15, 2014.

News briefs

- Fr. Eli Chaves gave us a summary of the most recently held Executive Committee of the Vincentian Family leadership.
- We received a report from Fr. John Rybolt on his labors with the Vincentian history project, namely, the six-volume work he has undertaken. It is well underway: volumes one and two have been published; volumes three, four, and five have been written, and are being edited; and volume six is in its final draft before being sent for editing.
- In regard to the online catalog, we reviewed some concerns from one of the provinces regarding security and were assured by Fr. John Freund that the system will be very secure. The project is reaching its completion, and we hope to have it activated soon.
- We received a report from the Commission for the Promotion of Systemic Change, under the guidance of Fr. Robert Maloney. The new coordinator in 2014 will be Fr. Giuseppe Turati. Present at the most recent workshop in India was Frs. Maloney, Turati, and Zeracristos, with confreres, Daughters of Charity, and eighteen different branches of the Vincentian Family.
- We studied materials for the revised "Ratio Formationis" available from the committee, chaired by Fr. Gerard Luttenberger. It is now in the process now being translated (that is, the first chapter). Reports on this "Ratio" will be given to the Visitors at their meeting this summer in order to receive much appreciated input for the final document.
- We had a discussion on reconfiguration, having received a report from the provinces of Austria and Germany who have begun this process. We discussed the proceedings of a recent meeting of the National Conference of Visitors, USA on this matter, and reviewed the materials they presented at their meeting.
- In regard to CIF program in Paris, Frs. Dan Borlik and Marcelo Manimtim gave a report on current efforts and possible future directions for the program. At this meeting, we also approved Fr. Adam Bandura of the Province of Poland as an Assistant Director. He will work closely with the current directors. His appointment is effective in June, 2013.
- We studied the possible formation of a Vincentian Justice and Peace Commission, but due to concerns over available personnel and creating another structure, we did not move the proposal forward, and will continue to study possibilities. We encourage confreres to be actively involved in justice and peace commissions

of their dioceses and regions. Fr. Zeracristos, Assistant General serves on the justice and peace council of the Union of Superiors General in Rome. He was assisted by Fr. Alfredo Becerra, former Curia archivist.

- We studied economic matters, reviewing the different budgets from the international missions, and discussing provinces that are eligible for the mission distribution fund.

Franz Foundation

We had a report from the Franz Foundation under the direction of its new president, Fr. Robert Maloney. He spoke to us of the fundamental values of the Foundation, which has been very generous in supporting the many projects of the Congregation of the Mission. A number of new proposals have been put forth which we will study in the General Council. They include matters such as possible startup grants for provinces to help them become self sustainable; the formation of an emergency-response team for situations around the world; a means to support and empower Vincentian missionary parishes with start-up funding for new projects. These and other matters were presented to Fr. Maloney as President for consideration by the Foundation.

Office of Communications

We had a report from Fr. John Maher, Director of Communications.

The "CM-Global" website, that is, the international website for the Congregation, is well underway in its new form. It debuted on January 25, in the three official languages, with expanded content and easier navigation through the site. We decided to include the videos shown at the 2010 General Assembly "Listening to the Cry of the Poor". With regard to Vincentiana, we confronted the ongoing problem of finding translators, particularly in the French language. A possible solution and has been presented to the French-speaking Visitors for their input.

Fr. Maher also gave us a report on the 4 February meeting of the SIEV Board which he chairs. We heard of their plans to strengthen SIEV by seeking input from the Visitors at their July meeting. We also joined the SIEV Board in thanking Fr. Jose Carlos Fonsatti for his years of faithful service on the board when he served in Paris at the CIF program. Now that he has returned home to his native Brazil, we wish him well and are glad to know he is still available to consult with SIEV when needed.

It was proposed to the General Council that they offer quarterly reflections on our Constitutions, which Fr. Maher will then publish in *Vincentiana* and on the "CM-Global" web site. The new feature will be called "Meditation Moment", and it is hoped it will lead to dialogue and a fuller understanding among confreres of our Constitutions. The first theme of this meditation will be on "our vocation" (Part I, Nos. 1-9, Constitutions). Fr. Javier Alvarez will coordinate the compilation of ideas from the Council.

The Curia also approved in principle a workshop on the vital role communications plays in the life and ministries of the Congregation. It will focus on both a theoretical and practical point of view which will be presented to the General Curia. Fr. Maher will coordinate this workshop, which will be held in October.

International Missions & Mission Volunteers

We discussed the international missions, having received the reports from the El Alto, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands. The Solomons recently saw three members of that mission returned to their home provinces. In addition, two other confreres will leave this mission to return to their home provinces this year, so we are in urgent need of volunteers for the mission to work in the seminary and parish apostolates.

We received a report from a new mission in Angola that it is going well, and a third confrere, Fr. Jason Cristian Soto Herrera from the Province of Central American was named to accompany Frs. José María Nieto and Ramírez Martínez, the two confreres who serve there. We discussed the possibility of a confrere to accompany Fr. Mbalo Firmin, our confrere in Tunis. We named a third confrere, Fr. Jaroslaw Lawrenz, from the Province of New England to our mission in Benin, which at present has Frs. Rafal and Stanislaus, who are from the Province of Poland. Fr. Stephen Cantwell of the Eastern Province, USA has volunteered to serve in the Province of Puerto Rico and will begin in September. We received requests from four confreres interested in the possibility of serving in the international missions. Their requests are under consideration.

New "ONLUS" and VSO

We approved development of ONLUS, a European version of an NGO, and it will be established in Italy. We've asked Fr. Giuseppe Carulli to be the Executive Secretary of this ONLUS, which will serve as a complementary program to the Vincentian Solidarity Office (VSO)

which is under the direction of Fr. Miles Heinen. We received a report from Miles on the VSO, and he noted they are having a difficult time awarding micro-grants for projects in emerging provinces because of insufficient funds. Projects they fund are usually around \$5000 USD.

Visitors' Conference Meetings

The Superior General gave a brief report on his meeting with the National Conference of Visitors of the United States which he attended in this most recent visitation of the Western Province, USA. He spoke to them about various issues, including reconfiguration, collaboration, different levels in pastoral formation; the history project; and the translation project of the letters St. Vincent which is coming to completion.

We had a report from Fr. Varghese Thottamkara, Assistant General who is liaison with the Conference of Visitors in Asia (APVC). He mentioned they are sponsoring two seminars: one for confreres under five years of ordination; and a workshop on deepening our appreciation of the meaning of the Year of Faith. We received a report from the Visitor's Conference of Europe (CEVIM) regarding their meeting was recently held in Piacenza. Among the topics for discussion was the year of faith and new evangelization, along with the challenge of the transmission of faith in our times.

From Fr. Eli Chaves, Assistant General liaison with CLAPVI, the Conference of Visitors in the Provinces of Latin America, we learned that in February, they held a school of spirituality in Curitiba, Brazil with 15 participants. With regard to COVIAM, the Conference of Visitors in Africa and Madagascar, their next meeting will be in July for formators in Kigali, Rwanda.

General Curia Administration

- We discussed the introduction of system of correspondence protocol that is sent to and from the Curia to help us better organize and access current and past documents.
- We also discussed personnel issues, specifically a replacement for Fr. Juventino Castellero, who serves as Assistant Director of Communications and the Vincentian Family. Fr. Juventino will leave his Curia post for a new mission in January, 2014.
- We discussed the question of available space for guests in the General Curia. The number of rooms has shrunk to five or six, and strategized on how we might increase them by engaging in a simple building project to add two to four new guest rooms.

Curia Calendar

We did a review of our calendars for the next three months, a review of the scheduled canonical visitations for 2013; a finalizing of the dates of our General Council meetings in 2013, and planning the dates of our Tempo Forte meetings for 2013-2014.

In these next three months, the Superior General will be conducting a parish mission in his home parish, St. Stephen's in Bradshaw, MD, as it celebrates 150 years of existence. Then, he will go directly to Bolivia to celebrate Holy Week with the Daughters of Charity, including accompanying them for their "floating boat clinic" while visiting various villages along the river. Then, he will visit the confreres of the missions in Cochabamba and El Alto.

He will then go to Paris for the renewal of the vows of the Daughters of Charity on April 8. Later in April, he will visit the Province of Poland. In May, he will visit the mission in Tanzania, sponsored by the Province of Southern India, and then go to Northern France to visit the Daughters of Charity. He will also participate in the first meeting of the "Vincentian Family Collaboration Project" to be held in May in Paris. He will attend Union of Superior Generals meeting in Rome. In June, he and the Curia will prepare for the next Tempo Forte Meeting from June 3-7. Soon after, he will travel to St. John's University in Queens, NY, to take part in the International Visitor's Meeting.

May the blessings of the suffering and risen Christ guide and strengthen you not only in these grace-filled seasons of Lent and Easter but throughout this "Year of Faith", so that like our Holy Founder, we may all be Christ to one another!

Your brother in St. Vincent,

G. GREGORY GAY, C.M.
Superior General

FROM THE GENERAL CURIA

Superior General Announces Two Curial Appointments

Fr. Amaro to be Sub-Director
of the International Vincentian Marian Youth
Fr. Borlik to direct Center
for International Formation in Paris

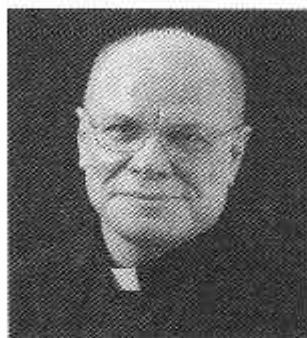
Father G. Gregory Gay, C.M., Superior General, has announced the appointment of two confreres to oversee specialized ministries in the Congregation. Father **Irving Gabriel Amaro Ramayo, C.M.**, of the Province of Mexico has been named Sub-Director of the International Vincentian Marian Youth (also known as VMY). Father **Daniel Borlik, C.M.**, of the Western Province, USA has been named Director of the Center for International Formation. The Secretariat of the International Vincentian Marian Youth is located in Madrid, and the Center for International Formation is based in Paris. Both are under the auspices of the General Curia.



Fr. Irving Amaro, C.M., was born in Mexico in 1969, entered the Congregation on July 28, 1986 and was ordained on January 25, 1997. Fr. Amaro has served in parish ministry and as a seminary formator. In addition to these duties, he has had extensive involvement with various branches of the Vincentian Family in Mexico, most notably the Ladies of Charity and the Vincentian Marian Youth. In addition to reporting to the Superior General who serves as Director-General of the

International VMY, Fr. Amaro will coordinate administration and outreach for this international organization. He will begin in September. Fr. Amaro will replace Fr. Pavol Noga, C.M., of the Province of Slovakia, who has served as Sub-Director since 2008.

Fr. Gregory Gay noted that "I am very grateful for Fr. Irving's generosity in accepting this assignment. I believe his experience in Mexico working with Vincentian Marian Youth will be a great asset in his work as Sub-Director". Fr. Gregory also thanked Fr. Pavol Noga for his service, noting, "Fr. Pavol has served as Sub-Director of the International Vincentian Marian Youth with great diligence and fervor. I am grateful for his hard work, and I know his efforts will continue to bear fruit long after his term ends".



Fr. Dan Borlik, C.M., was born in Baltimore, Maryland, USA in 1949, entered the Congregation on August 8, 1967, and was ordained on June 5, 1976. Fr. Borlik has served as a pastor, a seminary formator, a missionary in Guatemala, an instructor for intercultural studies, and a contributor to the "Little Rock" Scripture Series. Most recently, he served as Visitor of the former Southern Province, USA, which was reconfigured in 2010 into the Western Province. Fr. Borlik currently serves as Assistant Director of

CIF under Fr. Marcelo Manintim, C.M.

Fr. Gregory Gay noted, "I am thankful for the hard work of Fr. Marcelo in the last four years as Director of CIF. Under his leadership, the program has grown and been adapted to meet the needs of the world-wide Congregation. I am confident that Fr. Borlik will continue and build on the fine efforts started by Fr. Marcelo".

The date of the changeover at CIF will occur in early 2014. Once that occurs, Fr. Borlik will be assisted by Fr. Adam Bandura, C.M., of the Province of Poland, who will serve as Assistant Director on a part-time basis. Fr. Adam resides in the provincial house in Krakow, and serves as vice-rector of their distinguished seminary.

2012 ANNUAL STATISTICS OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

MINISTRIES

Number of confreres involved in the ministries listed below. Each confrere is counted **only once**, considered under his principal ministry, as of **31 December 2012**.

MINISTRY	BISHOPS	PRIESTS	DEACONS	BROTHERS	STUDENTS
1. Parish (popular) Missions to the faithful		117		1	
2. Parishes	3	959	20	26	6
3. Pilgrimage sanctuaries		50		5	1
4. Seminaries and clerical formation		118	7	1	2
5. Missions Ad Genites	3	277	5	7	4
6. Daughters of Charity (Director, chaplain)	2	178	4	4	
7. Schools (primary, secondary, superior, professional)		167		9	
8. Social Communications (publications, radio, television)		17		2	
9. Special studies		79	7	2	18
10. Chaplains (military, immigrants, hospital, associations)	1	96			
11. Chaplains (Vincentian Lay Groups)		76		1	
12. Direct Service of the Poor		52	1	8	6
13. Manual work		7	1	21	
14. Administration	1	133		19	
15. Retired, ill, convalescing	3	291		22	
16. Other	18	121	6	11	9
17. Absence from the Congregation		174	7	6	
TOTAL	32	2963	51	144	44

P R O V I N C E S	H O U S E S & I N C O R P O R A T E D M E M B E R S B Y P R O V I N C E - 2 0 1 2										A D M I T T E D M E M B E R S & A S P I R A N T S B Y P R O V I N C E - 2 0 1 2					
	H O U S E S	B i s h o p s	P r i e s t s	D e a c o n s	P e r m a n e n t D e a c o n s	B r o t h e r s	S t u d e n t s w i t h V o t e s	T O T A L M E M B E R S	A D M I T T E D M E M B E R S				M E M B E R S O F T H E I N T E R N A L S E M I N A R Y		A S P I R A N T S	
									C P	C B	P	P D*	T O T A L	C P		C B
GENERAL CURIA	6	0	8	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AFRICA	49	6	310	3	0	13	12	344	159	7	0	0	166	21	0	112
Congo	9		51			1	6	58	20	1			21			
Ethiopia	5	3	41	1		3		48	1				1			7
Madagascar	10	2	76	1		6		85	40	6			46	7		12
Mozambique*	8	1	20			3		24	4				4			23
Nigeria	10		78				6	84	80				80	10		9
St. Justin de Jacobis	7		44	1				45	14				14	3		61
AMERICA	191	12	972	21	1	61	23	1090	94	2	0	0	96	37	1	94
Argentina	8	1	39				3	43	3	1			4	2	1	10
Brazil - Curitiba	7	2	70			3		75	4				4	1		4
Brazil - Fortaleza	3		41					41	7				7	2		2
Brazil - Rio de Janeiro	10	2	55	1		8		66	8				8	2		10
Central America	12	2	44			2	2	50	5	1			6	5		5
Chile	8		22			2		24	6				6	3		3
Colombia	24	1	136	10		9	4	160	6				6	6		4
Costa Rica*	4		12			3		15	1				1			4
Cuba	4		11			1		12					0			

Ecuador	6	31	2				2	35	4			4	2	3
Mexico	21	87	1		4	1	94	5				5	2	11
Peru	11	49	1		1		52	11				11		9
Puerto Rico	14	53	4		3		60	12				12	5	5
USA - Eastern	23	118	1		8	1	130	1				1		19
USA - New England	6	25			1		26					0		
USA - Western	20	134	1	1	16	9	161	19				19	7	9
Venezuela	10	45			1		46	2				2		
ASIA	68	4 530	11	0	15	5	570	191	2	0	0	193	27	0 230
China	3	29				1	30					0	1	
Indonesia	11	92	1		1	3	97	50				50	8	6
North India	13	90	2		2		95	44				44	3	80
South India	13	117	4		2		123	56				56	5	73
Orient	9	35			1		37	1	1			2	5	
Philippines	14	107	3		6		118	8				8	1	11
Vietnam*	5	60	1		3		64	32	1			33	4	
EUROPE	190	1102	12	3	51	4	1182	44	2	0	0	46	19	0 42
Austria	5	17			2		19					0		1
France - Paris	18	94	1		7	1	103	6	1			7	5	14
France - Toulouse	8	50			5		55	1	1			2	1	
Germany	3	14			1		15					0		
Holland	2	30					30					0		
Hungary	3	10					10					0	1	1

P R O V I N C E S	HOUSES & INCORPORATED MEMBERS BY PROVINCE - 2012										ADMITTED MEMBERS & ASPIRANTS BY PROVINCE - 2012							
	H O U S E S		Bishops	Priests	Deacons	Permanent Deacons	Brothers	Students with Novices	TOTAL MEMBERS		ADMITTED MEMBERS				MEMBERS OF THE INTERVAL SEMINARY		ASPIRANTS	
											CP	CB	P*	PD*	TOTAL	CP	CB	
Ireland	9		53						53						0			1
Italy - Naples	11	2	40	5		1	1	49	7					7		5		6
Italy - Rome	9	1	42		1	1		45	1					1				
Italy - Turin	12		58		2			60	2					2				1
Poland	27	2	256	4		3		265	16					16	1			
Portugal	10	1	48					49						0				1
Slovakia	6		32	1		3		36	5					5				1
Slovenia	8	2	39	1		2		44	1					1				
Spain - Barcelona	7	1	36			2		39	3					3	1			7
Spain - Madrid	14		91			12	1	104						0				1
Spain - Salamanca	13		69			9		78						0	1			2
Spain - Zaragoza	18		101			2	1	104	2					2	2			6
SS. Cyril and Methodius*	7	1	22			1		24						0				
OCEANIA	6	0	41	0	0	4	0	45	16	1	0	0	0	17	8	0		2
Australia	6		41			4		45	16	1				17	8			2
TOTAL	510	32	2963	47	4	144	44	3239	304	14	0	0	0	517	112	1		480

CP = Candidates to the Priesthood; CB = Candidates to the Brotherhood; P*;PD* = Priests/Permanent Deacons coming from a diocese or another Institute; * = Vice-province.

THE YEAR OF FAITH

The following is the text of a conference given
to the General Curia in Rome on March 3, 2013.

The Call to a New Evangelization

What does it say to us as members of the
Congregation of the Mission?

Robert P. Maloney, C.M.

1. The Call to a New Evangelization

In October 2012, 300 bishops from all over the world (accompanied by our Superior General!) joined Pope Benedict XVI in a Synod on the New Evangelization. The theme was not a new one.

Forty-five years ago, in 1968, the Medellín document, which had dramatic effects in Latin America, called for a re-evangelization of human existence¹. It envisioned a Latin American church that would be an evangelizer of the poor, committed to living in solidarity with them². The final document at Puebla, in 1979, continued this analysis of a renewed evangelization³. In 1992, the document of Santo Domingo, building on the experience of two decades, provided an extensive development of the contents of a "New Evangelization"⁴. By the time of Aparecida (2007), the term "New Evangelization" was taken for granted⁵.

Almost all commentators agree that Paul VI, while not using the term "new evangelization", is one of its principal architects. Here is the description of evangelization that he used in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*⁶:

¹ MEDÉLLIN, VIII, 8.

² MEDÉLLIN, XIV, 8.

³ PUEBLA, 340f.

⁴ SANTO DOMINGO, *Conclusions*, 23ff.

⁵ Aparecida, "Message to the Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean", 3.

⁶ *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 24.

Evangelization is a complex process made up of varied elements: the renewal of humanity, witness, explicit proclamation, inner-adherence, entry into the community, acceptance of signs, apostolic initiative. These elements may appear to be contradictory, indeed mutually exclusive. In fact, they are complementary and mutually enriching. Each must always be seen in relationship with the others.

In the documents of the Church in the years following *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, there are some emphases that are quite new. Not that they never existed before: we can find most of them, at least in some form, in Fathers of the Church. But as the Church interfaced with contemporary societies and cultures, there was a new emphasis on:

- the preferential option for the poor;
- the effects of sin on social structures;
- the systemic aspects of justice and injustice;
- life issues (war, peace-making, abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment);
- the erosion of family structures and sexual morality;
- integral liberation;
- and ecology.

Because *Evangelii Nuntiandi* was still fresh in the air as our Constitutions of 1984 were being prepared, it had a great influence on them. In fact, it is one of the few documents that our Constitutions cite specifically⁷. The Constitutions, as one might expect, cite St. Vincent, the Bible, and the Code of Canon Law, but they also cite *Evangelii Nuntiandi* three times:

C10 cites EN 14. The Constitutions apply to the Congregation of the Mission the statement that Paul VI applied to the Church, saying that "evangelizing is to be considered (our) own grace and vocation, and expresses (our) deepest identity".

C11 cites EN 23. This article of the Constitutions affirms that the Congregation's work of Evangelization in word and action should strive for this: that all should be faithful to "the kingdom, that is to say, the new world, the new order, the new manner of being, of living, of living in community, which the Gospel inaugurates".

C16 cites EN 53. This article of the Constitutions states: "Among the apostolic works of the Congregation, the foreign missions and missions to people in a similar state of evangelization have an hon-

⁷ *Constitutions* 10, 11, 16.

ored placed. In building up a new ecclesial community, missionaries should pay special attention to the 'seeds of the word' which may be found in the cultural and religious practices of the people".

I limit myself here to the Constitutions. The *Ratio Missionum* explicitly cites articles 9, 20, 27 and 62 of *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and contains many other allusions to the document.

To me, it is fascinating to analyze how strongly *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and the terminology of the New Evangelization have influenced not only our Constitutions, but also other official documents of the Congregation of the Mission in recent years. Our documents, over the course of the last 30 years, contain a number of significantly new accents on:

- Christ as the Evangelizer of the Poor;
- the link between evangelization and action for justice;
- searching out the causes of poverty and finding concrete solutions;
- specializing in the Church's social teaching;
- investigating the new forms of poverty;
- being evangelized by the poor;
- the poor as not merely the object of evangelization, but its subject;
- forming basic Christian communities;
- and the need for a global world view.

2. The call to a New Evangelization: What does it say to us, the members of the Congregation of the Mission, at the beginning of 2013?

The Synod, in its final message of October 26, 2012, presents a brief outline of what the New Evangelization asks of us. Paragraph 6 speaks of "an evangelization that is 'new in its ardor, in its methods, and in its expression' (John Paul II, Discourse at the XIX Assembly of CELAM, Port-au-Prince, March 9, 1983, n. 3)". Paragraph 12 in the final message adds: "(The second) symbol of the authenticity of the New Evangelization (is) the face of the poor. Placing ourselves side-by-side with those who are wounded by life is not only a social exercise, but above all, a spiritual act because it is Christ's face that shines in the face of the poor: 'Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me' (Matthew 25:40). We must recognize the privileged place of the poor in our communities, a place that does not exclude anyone but wants to reflect how Jesus bound himself to them. The presence of the poor in our communities is mysteriously powerful. It changes

persons more than a discourse does, it teaches fidelity, it makes us understand the fragility of life, it asks for prayer. In short, it brings us to Christ". This assertion of the Synod sounds wonderfully "Vincentian" to me!

In this part of the article, I would like to do two things. First, I will choose five phrases from the propositions approved by the recent Synod. I encourage you to meditate on them and chew over them. Usually, the propositions of a Synod are secret, but this time Pope Benedict XVI approved their publication. So, let's use them. Secondly, I will suggest what each of these phrases might say to the Congregation of the Mission today.

PROPOSITION 36:

THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

The principal agent of evangelization is the Holy Spirit, who opens hearts and converts them to God. The experience of encountering the Lord Jesus, made possible by the Spirit, which introduces one into the Trinitarian life, welcomed in a spirit of adoration, supplication and of praise, must be fundamental to every aspect of the New Evangelization. This is the "contemplative dimension" of the New Evangelization which is nourished continually through prayer, beginning with the liturgy, especially the Eucharist, source and summit of the life of the Church.

Therefore, we propose that prayer be encouraged and taught from infancy. Children and youth should be educated in the family and in schools to recognize the presence of God in their lives, to praise Him, to give thanks for the gifts received from Him, and to ask that the Holy Spirit guide them.

One of the most popular talks given at the Synod was that of Rowan Williams, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury. He emphasized the contemplative dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization. He stated: "Contemplation is an intrinsic element in this transforming process. To learn to look to God without regard for my own instant satisfaction, to learn to scrutinize and to relativize the cravings and fantasies that arise in me – this is to allow God to be God, and thus to allow the prayer of Christ, God's own relation to God, to come alive in me". Williams concluded: "That simply reminds us that evangelization is always an overflow of something else – the disciples' journey to maturity in Christ, a journey not organized by the ambitious ego but the result of the prompting and drawing of the Spirit in us. In our consideration of how we are once again to make the Gospel compellingly attractive to men and women of our age, I hope we never lose

sight of what makes it compelling to ourselves, to each one of us in our diverse ministries”.

Are we “contemplatives in action and apostles in prayer”, as Article 42 of our Constitutions calls us to be? Do we teach people to pray? Do we form others first to be ardent disciples so that they can then also be missionaries who are on fire?

PROPOSITION 7:

THE NEW EVANGELIZATION AS A PERMANENT MISSIONARY DIMENSION OF THE CHURCH

It is proposed that the Church proclaim the permanent world-wide missionary dimension of her mission in order to encourage all the particular Churches to evangelize... Such a world-wide mission will respond to the action of the Holy Spirit, as in a new Pentecost, through a call issued by the Roman Pontiff, who invites all faithful to visit all families and bring the life of Christ to all human situations.

I want to underline three points here. The proposition says that:

- a) The Church's mission is permanent and global. Article 12 of our Constitutions calls us (C 12, 5^o) to be ready “to go to any part of the world, according to the example of the first missionaries of the Congregation”.
- b) All the faithful have a missionary vocation. The first article of our Constitutions calls (C 1, 3^o) “the members individually and collectively... to help the clergy and laity in their formation and lead them to a fuller participation in the evangelization of the poor”.
- c) I find it very interesting that the proposition invites all the faithful to visit all families. Home visits are a part of our Family's tradition. The Daughters of Charity, from the beginning, visited the sick poor in their homes. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, right up to the present, sends its members to visit the homes of the poor. They go two by two.

PROPOSITION 31:

THE NEW EVANGELIZATION AND THE OPTION FOR THE POOR

Pope Benedict XVI teaches: “Jesus identifies himself with those in need, with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison. ‘As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me’ (Mt 25:40). Love of God and love of neighbor have become one: in the least of the brethren we find Jesus himself, and in Jesus we find God” (*Deus Caritas Est*, 15).

Today there are new poor and new faces of poverty: the hungry, the homeless, the sick and abandoned, drug addicts, migrants and the marginalized, political and environmental refugees, the indigenous peoples. The current economic crisis seriously affects the poor. Among the poorest in contemporary society are the victims of grievous loss of respect for the inviolable dignity of innocent human life. The preferential option for the poor leads us to seek out the poor and to work on their behalf so that they may feel at home in the Church. They are both recipients and actors in the New Evangelization.

The Church's accent today on a "preferential option for the poor" is surely an invitation to renew our own vocation. Note three emphases of Proposition 31:

1. It underlines the identification of Jesus with those in need. Basically, love of God and love of neighbor go together, as St. Vincent frequently emphasized.
2. The proposition highlights the new poor and the new forms of poverty.
3. It states, as do many of our own Vincentian documents, that the poor are not only the objects of evangelization, but also its agents.

That brings us to the next proposition on which I'd like to reflect with you, Proposition 47.

PROPOSITION 47:

FORMATION OF EVANGELIZERS

This Synod considers that it is necessary to establish formation centers for the New Evangelization, where lay people learn how to speak of the person of Christ in a persuasive manner adapted to our time and to specific groups of people (young people, agnostics, the elderly and so forth).

As you know, the formation of evangelizers is also an integral part of our vocation to follow Christ as the Evangelizer of the Poor. The first Article of our Constitutions says it very clearly (CR I, 2ⁿ). St. Vincent, too, says it clearly when he states: "In fact, by reason of our foundation, we are held, almost in equal measure, to carry out both the first and the second tasks (that is, evangelization of the poor and formation work)" (CR XI, 12). On other occasions, he even goes so far as to say that "we are equally obliged" to formation work and to preaching (SV VII, 361).

I'd like to thank you for all the work that you have done in the revision of the *Ratio Formationis* of the Congregation. I know how hard you, as well as the members of the Commission, have labored on this revision. I'm eager to see the final product.

Note, in Proposition 47, that the accent is placed on the formation of *lay evangelizers*. The proposition urges us to help them to learn to speak of the person of Christ in a convincing and enthusiastic way. In other words, it asks that they be *ardent*.

PROPOSITION 18:

THE NEW EVANGELIZATION AND THE USE OF THE MEDIA

The use of means of social communication has an important role to play in order to reach every person with the message of salvation. In this field, especially in the world of electronic communications, it is necessary that convinced Christians be formed, prepared and made capable to transmit faithfully the content of the faith and of Christian morality. They should have the ability to use well the languages and the instruments of today that are available for communication in the global village. The most effective form of this communication of the faith remains the sharing of the testimony of life, without which none of the "media" efforts will result in an effective transmission of the Gospel. Education in the wise and constructive use of social media is an important means to be utilized in the New Evangelization.

Proposition 18 emphasizes the use of the media in the New Evangelization, in particular the use of online media. If we look at Proposition 18 together with Proposition 51 on Youth, the emphasis of the Synod is quite strong. The Synodal fathers recognize that one of the signs of the times is that the young, for better or for worse, are online much of the time. In a way, the young are the indigenous people of the online world. We are the "immigrants" in that world. Online language is a language that we have acquired, but will always speak with an accent. The young, on the other hand, learned it as their native tongue. As a result, in the New Evangelization, we really *need* the young. We must encourage them to know and love Christ, and to communicate to others their enthusiasm for Christ. In doing so, they will use a language that they themselves know quite well, a language that we are handicapped in using.

May I suggest to you, that this emphasis of the Synod on youth is a topic that merits much reflection, discussion, and concretization?

There are so many other things that we might be able to say about the Synod. Its emphasis on *Lectio Divina* and its frequent citation of

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW

Frederic Ozanam as a Model for Today's Youth



An interview with
JULIEN SPIEWAK

Vice-President for Youth, International Confederation
of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

John T. Maher, C.M.,
with Julien Spiewak

Editor's note

In featuring members of the Vincentian Family who embrace and live the Vincentian charism, *VINCENTIANA* presents an interview with Julien Spiewak, 28 years of age, who is Vice President for Youth at the International Confederation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris. As the interview will show, Julien is always on the go, putting his youth and passionate commitment to the Vincentian charism to good use by inspiring young people all over the world.

Tell about your background, family, education, and your current employment.

I have lived in Paris almost all of my life, although my parents were from the Bourgogne region of France. My parents divorced when I was very young, and after my father returned to Bourgogne, my mother raised me and Vincent, my twin brother in Paris. He, my mother, and I all live in the same apartment building, although on different floors. So it is nice to be able to visit them with such ease! I graduated from the University of Paris (West) with a degree in Communications. I earned a Master's degree in Communication Science with a concentration in photography from the University of Paris (North). I am a professional photographer, and have worked for a studio and art gallery. My work has been featured in magazines and art catalogues.

Currently, I am Editor of a monthly magazine called *Mission L'trangers de Paris*, published by a religious community of French priests of the same name who work in Asia exclusively as missionaries (they are known as the "MEP" Fathers, due to their initials). Since 2008, I have served as Vice President for Youth at the Confederation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. It involves much work and travel, but I truly love spreading the message of our founder Frederic Ozanam to young people all over the world.

What led you to become involved with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul? When did you start, and how long have you been a "Vincentian"?

I am 28 years old. When I was 17, while attending Sunday Mass at the Church of the Holy Spirit in the 12th arrondissement where I live, a member of the youth conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul spoke after communion and asked those present to consider becoming members. He spoke of the needs of the poor in our midst, and it stirred up in me a desire to do something more than I had been doing. So after Mass, I volunteered, went to my first meeting of the youth conference of the Society in the parish, and was assigned to visit a woman who was ill, alone, and caring for three children. I made a commitment to visit her weekly, and I learned much about what she was going through, and how difficult life was for her. By visiting and listening, we became friends, and here it is eleven years later, and I am still visiting her.

A few years later, in 2007 to be exact, I became president of the youth conference in the parish, and began to give talks at Mass similar to those that drew me to the Society. I also represented my region nationally at a youth conference of the Society in Salamanca, Spain.

There, I met young people from all over Europe, and I discovered how enthusiastic others were for the charism. In 2008, I was offered the position of Vice-President for Youth at the International Confederation of the Society, and so here I am! My only regret is that I am not able to be as active as I was in the Holy Spirit parish where I started, but I still serve there when I can.

Describe your work, travels, and your impressions of the youth conferences of the Society.

As I mentioned, I serve as Vice-President for Youth at the International Confederation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. It has been exciting to undertake this job. I have visited many places across Europe, Asia, and South America. I go to help found youth conferences of the Society, or if they already have conferences in place, I organize regional meetings to support and strengthen them in their work. I enjoy seeing youth conferences of the Society start up and grow!

In South America, the youth conferences of the Society are dynamic and growing. In Brazil, where I will attend World Youth Day in July, there are over 100,000 young people involved in the youth conferences. At a meeting in Aparecida, there was so much spirit and enthusiasm that I couldn't help but think that if Frederic Ozanam were with us today, he would be very proud of what is being done in these countries by the young people of the Society. They truly have put the vision Frederic Ozanam had for the Society. They put the charism into action.

In Asia, the youth conferences of the Society are active in many countries. Two of the more dynamic areas are the Philippines and India, where the young people are very involved and are supported by the priests, sisters, and the Vincentian Family. In the Philippines, the youth conferences sponsor regional meetings and youth camps. In India, the youth conferences are also growing at an amazing rate, despite the lack of financial resources. Despite the great poverty present in India and other places in Asia, the determination of the young people wishing to serve is inspiring. We have active, vibrant, and growing youth conferences in Indonesia and Thailand.

We had our first regional meeting for the Middle East in Lebanon in December 2012. Our numbers there are smaller, but the youth in these conferences are fervent and dedicated. We had ten Lebanese youth join us, eight young people come from Baghdad, and four from Egypt. We had Syrian youth who travelled despite the danger posed by their civil war. The Egyptians were from various areas of their country, and had not yet met prior to this gathering due to the political and religious situation in Egypt. Now they have made contact and can move forward.

For this meeting, I had some of the letters of Frederic Ozanam translated into Arabic, so they could be read and discussed by the group. The result was amazing! The young people were deeply moved by Frederic's words; they said that they found them to be as relevant to them today as they were two centuries ago. They came away from this gathering not only with a better knowledge of the charism, but an awareness of themselves as a group belonging to the Society. Although a 'minority' in their countries, their enthusiasm and commitment was truly electric.

In Europe, we still have much to do, as the involvement of young people in the Society is much lower than in Asia and South America. Here, it reflects the apathy people exhibit toward religion. However, I do see growing involvement in France, particularly in Paris, where over 300 youth are active in the Society. However, there are places that serve as models for the Society in Europe, such as Ireland, England, and Wales. In those places, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is active and vibrant, with active, committed young people. Ireland and England have a unique approach to recruitment: they advertise and emphasize the numbers "18" and "33" that represent not just the age group we seek, but the actual year of the Society's foundation – 1833.

How do you motivate young people to become and stay involved with the work of the Society?

While it may seem fairly easy to attract young people because of the timeless message of Frederic Ozanam and the Vincentian charism he espoused, it is not always easy to keep them involved in the Society. The reasons for this vary according to customs, country, and continents. There are many demands on young people today, so when they are under pressure, some can feel as if the work of their conference or the Society is just "one task among so many" to be done.

That is why we emphasize the Society is a place where we gain spiritual nourishment, personal support, and the strength that comes from both our charism and the community we share. The demand for service is always present, but we must help youth discover our charism, our spirituality, and that we are a big family. In my talks, I emphasize that we are all friends, and what we do is not social work, but the continuation of a living movement of nearly two centuries.

When you view the Society as a family that offers friendship and community through our spirituality and Vincentian charism, it creates a lasting bond. We show our youth that it is not just the work, but relationships that develop through our meetings that keep us together. We are meant to be true friends in the Vincentian way, and so our work, meetings, testimonies, prayer, and time together should connect

us more deeply to God, to one another, and to those we serve. We are not just an organization but a community, and one for the good. If a member decides to stop coming, we always emphasize that the person is welcome back at any time. Once our youth truly discover the way of Frederic Ozanam and our charism, it is hard to go back to their old ways of work and life. The Society provides a wonderful place from which we all draw strength.

What does Ozanam mean to you personally? How does his life inspire you?

When I think of Frederic Ozanam, I am reminded of St. Augustine's phrase about God: "Ever ancient, ever new". Ozanam's thinking was revolutionary for his day, but contemporary for our day. Although they are almost two centuries old, Frederic's words and ideas are still relevant today. I think that Frederic's enthusiasm, his desire to effect positive change, and willingness to engage the realities of his day in a Christian manner is a wonderful example. And to think it was the life and charism of St. Vincent de Paul that inspired him is even more amazing. Frederic took St. Vincent and applied him to his time, and we see how well this still works today.

Frederic Ozanam inspires me because I believe he did not mean to found an organization, but a movement, one that continues today. His ability to understand and identify with the needs of the ordinary person, his compassion for workers, and his desire to make a difference at a time when there was great hostility to the Church and disregard for the poor inspire me today. The emphasis of the Society as a way to serve the poor, and a place for community and spiritual growth is what creates enthusiasm and commitment among youth. As their small conferences grow and evolve into larger groups and regional gatherings, I realize it is the charism at work.

What events are you planning this 200th anniversary year to recall Ozanam's life and work?

I am actively involved in planning and participating celebrations for this anniversary year. On the weekend of April 19-21, to coincide with the April 23 date of Frederic Ozanam's 200th birthday, celebrations were held jointly in Milan and Paris. I was part of the group that organized the Paris conference, held at the prestigious Social & Economic Council, which attracted many members of the Society from all over the world. There were over three hundred young people who attended from Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and South America. The weekend ended with Mass at the Cathedral of Notre Dame celebrated by Cardinal

Vingt-Trois, Archbishop of Paris, who read a message from our Holy Father, Pope Francis.

There are celebrations planned in the year ahead in Ireland, Brazil, India, and the Philippines. I expect our youth conferences to be involved in planning and participating of these events, and I look forward to sharing in them as well. I will also be doing tours of significant places in Paris where Frederic Ozanam and Sr. Rosalie Rendu lived and served the poor. I wrote a guidebook on the history of these sites, and so I expect to be leading pilgrim groups to them from time to time.

One event I am especially thrilled to be part of is World Youth Day in Brazil this July. Last year, we successfully petitioned World Youth organization to add Frederic Ozanam to the list of official "intercessors", for World Youth Day, so his name will appear in programs, liturgies and prayer services. It will be a great way to not only commemorate the 200th anniversary of his birth, but to invite young people the world over to join us in the Society. To view this on the web, go to: <http://www.rio2013.com/en/world-youth-day/patrons-and-intercessors>

What can the Church and the clergy of today learn from the life of Frederic Ozanam?

I think we can all learn a great deal from the life and example of Frederic Ozanam. As I said before, his words are inspiring across generations and in any language. But just as importantly, we can learn much from his simplicity and willingness to engage the laity. As we hear of the "new evangelization" today, Frederic Ozanam is a real model for the Church and clergy. He did wonderful things for the good of people. His legacy was not starting a charitable organization, but a movement to promote service, spirituality, and community. It was not created by the Church for the Church, but by the laity. It is a dynamic movement, always in demand.

I think today's clergy need to remember that the 'preferential option for the poor' goes back to the time of Jesus and St. Vincent. Frederic Ozanam saw a time of need and applied the Gospel and Vincentian charism to meet that need. Today, young people are often led by popular media and society to believe that their work, status in life, acquisitions, and personal happiness come first. What Frederic Ozanam's writings and his dynamic movement of the Society show us is that we are a community of God's people who truly discover our deepest selves when we serve.

What I would also like to share here is what I experienced and what I hear from so many of our young people: in following the way

of Frederic and the charism, we receive much more than we give. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a movement, a community, a way of service like none other. It keeps me centered to remember who I am and who I am called to be.



Julian visits with a woman on a recent trip to India.

THEME:

Reflections on the Life of Frederic Ozanam

The Family: The 'Other' Ozanam Legacy

Amelie, Marie, Laurent, Frederic, and Francois

Ronald W. Ramson, C.M.

Opening Comments

On 23 April 2013, the Vincentian Family celebrated the 200th anniversary of the birth of Blessed Antoine-Frederic Ozanam. In collecting data for Frederic Ozanam's canonization, those involved in the process were concerned primarily with his person; in particular, two questions that must be answered. Did Frederic Ozanam demonstrate a life of heroic virtue? Can this be substantiated by witnesses or other sources? Once this, *de facto*, was achieved, Frederic Ozanam was declared "Blessed" at World Youth Day in Paris on 22 August 1997 by Blessed Pope John Paul II in Notre Dame Cathedral. Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, Archbishop of Paris, implored the Holy Father to advance Antoine-Frederic Ozanam to beatification.

Many of us in the Vincentian Family know of the life and exploits of this remarkable and holy man. Daily, we still reap the benefits of his accomplishments, and are inspired by his word and example. Frederic was truly a man for others, one who mastered the arts of multi-tasking and organization. His star shines brightly in the galaxy of our Vincentian saints, blessed, and heroes.

But what about his wife Amelie and their daughter Marie? What about his older brother Alphonse and his younger brother Charles? These people were all mentioned in the process of canonization, but little, if anything was included about them after Frederic's death and

burial. Whatever happened to them? An in-depth look at his wife Amelie and daughter Marie reveal to us two extraordinary women whose true character did not emerge until after Frederic's death. They are exemplars for us as was Blessed Frederic. They are Ozanams!

In this article, I will center attention on Amelie, her grandson and one of her great-grandsons, and Marie and her husband Laurent.

Mme. Marie-Josephine-Amelie Ozanam

L'Industrie, the ship carrying the Ozanams left Livorno, Italy at the end of August, 1853. Frederic's biographer, Father Henri-Dominique Lacordaire, tells us that God granted Frederic calm weather and gentle waves as they crossed the sea. Frederic was able to rest on the deck and enjoy the sea-air. When he saw the shores of Provence, he experienced a sigh of relief in seeing his beloved France again and the certainty of dying in his beloved country.

Upon arrival at the port of Marseille, Friday, 2 September 1853 with its one hundred and ten passengers on board, a deep peacefulness enveloped him, a gift that he had once described to Amelie as the greatest of all of God's graces to him. Upon disembarking, Amelie immediately rented a house at 2 rue Mazade, located in a pleasant part of the city. Marseille was home to her family ("Soulacroix" was her maiden name); Amelie had been born and raised in Marseille.

Frederic said to those who met them that he had completed one journey, only to begin another. He was returning Amelie to them. God would do with him what he willed. The family Ozanam were not alone. Amelie's mother, Zelic Soulacroix, Frederic's two surviving brothers, and several members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul were there to assist in any way.

On 5 September, some confreres and members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul accompanied the priest of the local parish as he brought Frederic viaticum; they witnessed him receiving Extreme Unction. These men were deeply moved by Frederic's calm gentleness as he welcomed death. After administering the sacraments, the priest thought that he needed to give Frederic words of encouragement as he faced death. Frederic immediately replied: "Why would I fear God? I love him so much".

He would have liked to have seen Paris again, the City of Light where he had so many dear friends and which held so many fond memories, but this was not to be.

Frederic died 8 September, Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, someone very dear to his heart. A funeral service, held at Marseille was celebrated by Father Jean-Baptiste Lcautier, priest of Saint-Charles, and then the body was transported to Lyon, the beloved

city of the Ozanam family. Here, at the Church of Saint-Pierre, where Frederic had received his First Holy Communion, a service was held. Many in Lyon wanted Amelie to have Frederic's body buried there with a promise of a monument, but she said "I preferred to keep him near me in Paris". From Marseille, Frederic's remains were taken to Paris, where Mass and a final commendation were celebrated at the Church of Saint-Sulpice on 15 September. The coffin was placed in the subterranean chapel beneath the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Workers renovating an area of this church wanted no part in having a coffin there; they complained to the priest, who requested that Amelie remove the body to another location. The Ozanams had lived in walking distance of the church and frequently attended daily Mass there. Amelie knew of her husband's reverence for the vocation of priesthood and those priests who had given their lives for the faith. She had Frederic's body transferred from the Church of Saint-Sulpice to the crypt of des Carmes where it now rests. Frederic's remains are entombed in the room adjacent to where the skulls and bones of the priest-martyrs are located.

The building and the arca surrounding the Church of Saint-Joseph-des-Carmes was holy ground. The church dated to 1620, and had served as a prison for priests who refused to take the required civil oath during the revolutionary days. One-hundred -sixteen priests were massacred from 2-7 September 1792.

What was evident is the specialness of Amelie Ozanam; she was a woman of strong character and personality. There was a real spunkiness about her that surfaced immediately after Frederic's death and burial. Amelie's mother, Zelie, the Ozanam family, Fr. Alphonse, and Dr. Charles told her to have him buried in the Montparnasse Cemetery and to do it immediately. In their opinion, Amelie's hope would never be realized, but she would not give in.

Thanks to the assistance of Father Henri Lacordaire, O.P., and Mr. Hippolyte Fortoul, a former fellow student of Frederic in Lyon and later in Paris and Minister of Public Instruction, Amelie was able to have Frederic's remains entombed in Chapel of Saint-Joseph-des-Carmes. Amelie wrote, "Early in the morning, my brother-in-law Charles and Monsieur. Fiot had the coffin transferred to the Carmelite Church where it was received by the Dominican Fathers and placed in the crypt. There I felt it would remain". Auguste Fiot had entered the Dominicans in 1847 and went by the religious name of Brother Thomas.

However, the crypt was inside a male monastery where women were not allowed; it meant that she could not visit her husband's tomb. Amelie was determined to get this restriction lifted. She did not bother proceeding through indirect channels; by-passing all red tape, she appealed directly to the pope. At the end of 1855, with her mother and

daughter, she had an audience with Pope Blessed Pius IX and received such permission! "Pius IX, so kind to me and so moved by the death of Frederic, immediately granted my request..." (Amelie Ozanam).

Pius IX had met Frederic and knew of his scholarship and ministry with the poor through the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. Frederic, in turn, admired the Holy Father and all he had been doing. Upon their return to Paris from Rome, Amelie had some work done on the area where he was entombed. A staircase was built to give easy access to the crypt; Amelie and Marie now were able to come and go as they pleased, to pray and place flowers at the tomb whenever they wanted. Some decorations and inscriptions for the tomb were added.

Amelie Ozanam was only thirty-two years old when Frederic died. At such a young age, it would be understandable had she considered remarriage; she certainly was eligible, but she did not. She said, "Having spent two-thirds of my life in the intimacy of such a remarkable man and holy man and such a good friend, I feel the need of still living with him by his memory and all that is connected with his memory that is dear to me" (*Disquisition*, p. 1005).

Amelie devoted her life to overseeing the education and upbringing of their daughter Marie Josephine, along with promoting good causes, including Peter's Pence, the missionary work of Cardinal Charles Martial Lavigerie, Archbishop of Algiers, and founder there of the Missionaries of Africa (1868), and the "Oeuvre du Bon-Pasteur" of the Archdiocese of Lyon.

Amelie became close friends with Jeanne-Adelaide Recamier, the wife of her doctor. The doctor, Joseph-Claude-Anthelme Recamier, was chief physician and at Hotel Dieu de Paris, and a renown medical expert and professor at the College de France. Even today, terminology he coined at that time is used, such as the use of the word "metastasis".

Jeanne-Adelaide Recamier was the mother of four children. Amelie and Marie were frequently invited to the doctor's home, and also to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Leon Cornudet. Before Blessed Frederic died, he had entrusted his daughter Marie to Leon as her protector. Leon was an active member in the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, and Frederic knew him well. At one period of time, both had been co-international-vice-presidents of the Society.

Mlle. - and Mme. - Marie Josephine Ozanam

Marie Ozanam, the apple of her father's eye, was eight years old at her father's death. She grew up to be an attractive young lady, and at eighteen, she met Laurent Laporte from Lyon, who had come to Paris to study law at the Sorbonne, just as her father had done years before.

The couple met at one of the Sunday social gatherings of young people the Recamier family frequently had at their home. General Maximilien Recamier was the son of Dr. Recamier. Marie and Laurent fell in love, but Amelie and Mrs. Gabrielle Recamier thought that the couple was moving too fast and too young to marry, although Marie was eighteen and Laurent twenty-one. It was decided that the two lovers separate for a time.

Laurent went off to the Holy Land with his cousins; however, absence and distance can and did the heart grow fonder! On his return, he and Marie were determined to marry. In their thoughtfulness, the couple solemnized their engagement in the crypt before the tomb of her beloved father in Saint-Joseph-des-Carmes. They pronounced their marriage vows 16 July 1866 in the Church of Saint Sulpice, where her father's funeral had been held thirteen years earlier.

More on Amelie Ozanam and Laurent Laporte

After Frederic's death, Amelie found herself in a strained financial situation. To ease the circumstances, she and Marie moved in with her mother, Zelie Soulacroix.

During the Franco-Prussian War in 1870 and its repercussions in Paris, Amelie Ozanam fled the city with her mother Zelie to Ecully where the Laporte family owned land. They were refugees while her home was taken over by the "Federes", but when Amelie returned, to her amazement, she found most of her keepsakes intact except papers of Father Alphonse Ozanam and the memorable teachings that her deceased mother-in-law, Marie Ozanam, had written during her work with the "Association of Night Watchers" who ministered to the dying at Lyon, and the letters of Blessed Frederic. The "Federes" had burned anything remotely religious.

What became evident in exploring the life of Amelie Ozanam is that she had a sense of the uniqueness of her husband Frederic, and thus wanted to preserve his legacy for posterity. We see this in Amelie's quest for the letters that her husband had written; she knew that the number would run in the hundreds; and friends willingly sent her what they had. Thus, the family was able to recoup most, but not all of numerous letters. Canon Eugene Galopin, priest of the Diocese of Autun, also assisted by gathering copies from those who refused to part with their originals. The Ozanam archives were a family treasure, kept in a special room of one of their homes.

Marie's husband, Laurent Laporte, like his father Claude Laporte, counselor in the Court of Appeals in Lyon, became a successful magistrate in Paris. Laurent had a large complex built in 1880's and divided it into apartments to bring family and friends together. In 1885, Ame-

"He had a practical sense about him; he was human, warm, and prudent. He inspired at the same time respect and trust. He was neither chaplain nor friend, but 'father' who allowed us freedom to make our own decisions. His listening, his acceptance without judgment, permitted everyone to speak to him. We always appreciated his sensitivity, his joy, his peace, in spite of his physical handicap. His faith made him see the positive in each one and in the events of the world.

"The rejected people of society, the losers of society, prisoners and prostitutes were comfortable with him. His humility and simplicity made him approachable to all. For all that Francois was to us, we say a great thanks!"

The last written tribute is from a close worker-priest friend, Father Henri Lesourd. He left an inspiring memory of the last time he saw Francois. It took place at the Little Sisters of the Poor. "Just before leaving on a trip 29 October, I said to him 'in any case, you are with the Lord' and he replied, 'I hope'. He said it in his usual tone of voice simply and humbly; that was him".

"I believe Francois became more and poorer in spirit according to the Gospel. That is what I have come to see over the years from the long friendship of more than fifty years. It's the root of his courage and of everything he did. These are some examples I can recall:

- When he was professor in the seminary of Reims during the time of Cardinal Suhard;
- At the time of JOCF (Young Christian Women's Workers);
- At the time of the birth of the women's teams of the Mission de France;
- At the time of his short stay at the Porte d'Italie (the Paris metro stops in the area).

His trust was not in himself. He knew how to discreetly and efficaciously serve as a true brother. I saw him daily at the seminary of Pontigny (1963-1967). Before the Lord, St. Francis of Assisi, his patron, will acknowledge him as one of his own. I am certain of this, or as he would say, 'I hope'. Saint Francis, and Charles de Foucauld, will welcome him. They both love him! And his prayer of abandonment was our last prayer together when I left on that day for my trip.

"My Father, I abandon myself to you. Make of me what will please you provided that your will is done in me, and in all creatures. I desire nothing else".

Frederic Ozanam and Great-Grandson

Frederic Ozanam had a deep concern for the workers of Paris and beyond. He spent hours speaking to the workers in the crypt of the Parisian Church of Saint-Sulpice. Frederic critiqued well the unjust and inhuman working conditions of the working class as seen in his lectures at the Sorbonne. He had first-hand knowledge of these people from his home visits in Paris, Lyon, or wherever he came into contact with them. In 1848, he wrote a series of articles addressing social justice issues with recommendations on how to improve the plight of the workers and way to encourage their advancement.

Little did great-grandfather Frederic know that one day he would have a great-grandson, a priest, Father Francois Laporte, who would be so drawn into the mainstream of the worker-priests' movement, the active involvement of women, and the promotion of Christianization. As great-grandfather Frederic was principal founder of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, his great-grandson, Francois, was a charter member of the Mission de France and Mission de Paris.

As great-grandfather Frederic held the position of professor of literature at the Sorbonne, Francois held the positions of professor of theology and econome at various seminaries of France beginning at Reims, and later at Pontigny. Blessed Frederic would have been proud of the entire Laporte family, especially of his great-grandson Francois Laporte!

A Few Final Comments

Even a cursory sweep of Frederic's life reveals he was a great organizer and motivator; in but most importantly, like Jesus, he was a man for others. Although he lived but forty-years, he accomplished more in his lifetime than many whose lives are double that lifespan. Also, I find that each of the Ozanams has something to say to us. My hope for the future is to furnish some content on these individuals and show how remarkable they were on their own ways.

Frederic Ozanam had a deep fondness for priesthood stemming from his own long period of prayer, reflection, and discernment in his early twenties. He wondered: "Should I join the Dominican Order at the invitation of Father Jean-Baptiste-Henri Lacordaire or not?". Father Mathias Noirot helped Frederic finalize his decision: marriage.

Frederic's love for the priesthood can be attributed, in part, to his love for his oldest brother, Father Alphonse Ozanam, as seen in their vibrant correspondence. Frederic wrote a good number of letters to "Alp" as he called him. In his letters, Frederic reviewed the role of priests in significant terms: what he thinks that priests should be doing

in order to confront pertinent issues and advance the status of the church in France.

In correspondence to friends such as Leonce Curmier, Frederic refers to priests as "the guardians and doctors of souls to give our errant and famished spirits the holy word for nourishment and the hope of a better world" (Letter, 23 February 1835). At the age of twenty-five, Frederic began editing the *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith* headquartered in Lyon. Here surfaces Frederic's endearment for the foreign missionaries and their heroic lives. He spoke often of priesthood in writing to Dominique Meynis, executive officer of the Propagation of the Faith, a correspondence numbering over one-hundred letters!

Much has been written about the life of Blessed Frederic Ozanam. In my opinion, some of the earlier articles and biographies contained significant gaps, often due to the unavailability of all Blessed Frederic's writings. Sometimes, much of what was written seemed to be a rehash of what others already have presented, rather than new material as a result of deeper research. The more I personally uncover in the life of Blessed Frederic Ozanam and his family, the more I see how little I really know. I believe that we are just starting to unearth the depth of this incredible layman; we all still have much to learn! Blessed Frederic Ozanam is one of God's treasures to the Vincentian Family!

Acknowledgements

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Frederic Ozanam, Grand Apologist of the Faith in the 19th Century

Teodoro Barquín, C.M.

In April 2013, Vincentians all over the world celebrated the bicentennial of the birth of Blessed Frederic Ozanam. The Council General International of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris organized a celebration of this event, greatly important to the Conferences of Charity and for the entire Vincentian Family. Like all anniversaries, this one also must be observed in profound gratitude for the preservation of the spirit of this grand thinker and principal founder of the Society. His life must be the subject for reflection in order to live his spirit in the future. As his close friend, Jean Baptiste Henri Lacordaire said, "*Ozanam was the Saint Peter of the dark Upper Room*". Besides being a great defender of the Faith in 19th century France, it is justice owed that makes Ozanam stand out as a singular figure in this "Year of Faith" in the Catholic Church.

Frederic Ozanam is known for the work of charity he left as his legacy to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Nevertheless, he is not as well known for that which should constitute the dynamic force of all his pressing ideas and goals, as well as his lifelong vision, that is: *To be a missionary of the faith in the world of science, missionary of the faith in the heart of the Society*. That is where, little by little, Frederic wished to be and the destination at which he brilliantly arrived. Toward that end, he formulated the central plan of his life. To the point, we can say that the vision and commitment of the plan of his life was to bring about the renewal of society under the guidance of the Catholic Church. The proclamation of his plan encompasses an extremely ambitious charge – nothing easy, even utopian – but it shows the youthful aspirations of Frederic Ozanam were motivated by the sweeping force of his faith.

In a letter close friend and confidant Alexandre Dufieux, Frederic wrote, "*I have desired, without doubt, to consecrate my life to the service of the faith, but I consider myself a useless servant, a last minute worker*". And that is what he did. After being granted a Licentiate in Letters in 1829, he consecrated his life in service to the Truth, promising to make

a "demonstration of the Catholic religion by way of the antiquity of historical beliefs, religious and moral". The conditions that happened to bring him in his years as a student to the Sorbonne impelled him to the quest for the truth.

At that time, professors used their academic positions as a platform to expound on their rationalist ideas, often in opposition to the Catholic Church. Confronted by that situation, his faith demanded a militant and even combative attitude. A great master of speech since his younger days at university, Frederic knew how to valiantly defend the fundamental truths of the Faith. He presented the Catholic Church as a paradigm for the restoration of society in his time. On his lifetime agenda, Frederic positioned his faith as the point of origin to obtain the principal objective of his actions. In an 1852 letter to his friend Charles Hommais, he declared:

"I am profoundly convinced of the interior reasoning of Christianity. I call on this daily experience that causes me to encounter, in the faith of my infancy, all the strength and all the light of my now mature age, all the sanctification of my domestic happiness, the consolation of my sorrows".

In this same letter, is found one of his most famous quotes: "We have two lives; one to look for the Truth and defend it, and the other to practice it".

For Frederic Ozanam, just as for Vincent de Paul – his master and patron – the key to their thinking resides in their profound faith, the faith they always considered a corollary to charity, without which, faith makes no sense. For that reason, when he directed himself to his young friends, Frederic's counsel turned into a reprimand:

"The earth has gotten cold; it is we Catholics to whom corresponds the task of cheering on the vital warmth that dies out; it is us to whom corresponds the responsibility of initiating anew the great work of regeneration; it is us to whom corresponds the renewal of the era of the martyrs. Do we remain inert in the middle of a world that suffers and mourns? And we, my dear friend, shall we do nothing to resemble those saints whom we love?".

In that epoch of incredulity in which the ecclesial institution was deprecated, Frederic's solidly anchored faith reaches its fullness in the bosom of the Church, or "**my Church**" as he loved to say. Faith and Charity are one, and the same can be said for that Church in which the poor consider themselves the stars, because they reveal the face of Christ. "They are, for us, the images of that God we do not see, and since we know not how to love in another manner, we must love him in his people".

Frederic Ozanam was a wise man, in the broadest sense of the word. But in him, the enthusiasm for wisdom is equal with his desire to put this wisdom at the service of Christian Truth and, even better, to demonstrate by his efforts and in his university teachings, the natural alliance between faith and modern science. In 1830, at the age of 17, he revealed the first-fruits of his literary work "*The French Bee*", publishing, in five presentations, a study of "*The Truth of the Christian Religion*", examined through the testimony of all beliefs.

As all professors do, Frederic dreamed of a grand work to put forth the best of his ideas and beliefs. This opus was to be called "*The History of Christian Civilization among the Germans*" and the "*Establishment of Christianity in Germany*". In his own words, it deals with "*a grand thing*": it lays open Christianity by "*civilizing the barbarians with his teachings, conveying to them the inheritance of antiquity, creating – with the religious life – the political life, the arts, philosophy and the literature of the Middle Ages*". A second volume would be called: "*The State*" or the "Constitution of the Empire, from Charlemagne to Hohenstaufen and the Letters", with discussion of the formation of monastic schools and flowering of ecclesiastic literature. Both volumes were united with the common title of "*Germanic Studies*", and in 1849, the Gobert Grand Prize of the Academy of Inscriptions and Fine Arts was bestowed on this work.

The great thinkers and apologists of our time live in a society dominated by crude, prejudicial, and even dangerous ideas, more so than those which floated in the environment in which Frederic Ozanam lived in his years as a student and professor at the Sorbonne. This context offers a consideration to examine his thinking, doctrine and determined disposition, the model apologist of current truth. One such person, well versed in the thinking of Frederic Ozanam and having labored in his Archdiocese of San Francisco, California as Spiritual Advisor to the Conferences (and later as successor to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as Prefect of the Congregation for the Defense of the Faith namely, William Cardinal Levada, declared recently at a gathering of those who seek to defend the Catholic faith:

"There has been no one to so eloquently articulate prayer, charity and intellectual clarity (apologetics) in defense of the Catholic faith in the 19th century, as Blessed Frederic did. And for that, he well merits being proclaimed today 'the patron of all apologists', since with his intercession; the combination of intellectual clarity and his testimony to charity make him an axis for the new evangelization".

Lacordaire had said of Frederic that "God desired for him a clerical heart in a life as man of the century. In the France of our time, no Christian loved the Church more than he, none felt more for its needs, nor

cried with more bitterness for the faults of its followers. None developed a more authentic and profound apostolate”.

Frederic Ozanam and the young group of founders quickly became aware that for the beloved Church in France, the ‘first daughter of the faith is charity’ and without it faith has no reason to exist. From that conviction came the Conferences of Charity preceded by the Conference of History. The first platform was created for venting passions against the enemies of the Church, and then developed into a group whose founders charged its batteries to kindle the faith with the light of charity. They began by recognizing that the worst poverty in the French society of their time was not material poverty – even though they knew it existed – but the poverty of faith. For above the material, intellectual and cultural miasma, society was immersed in a deep poverty of faith. For that reason, Frederic and his companions saw poverty in a wider range of needs and convinced themselves that all of those needs should be kept in consideration for the planning of new activities regarding the founding of the New Society that he described in one of the initial meetings as being:

“A Catholic, but laical Society; humble, but numerous; poor, but overloaded with those to console; and above all – at a time in which charitable associations have a mission so great to fulfill in behalf of awakening the faith, for support of the Church – the pacifying of the hatreds that divide mankind”.

Since its start, this association markedly bore immutable elements that stayed with Frederic Ozanam throughout his life and were incorporated into the principal objectives of the Conferences of Charity. And those elements were:

- “The plan to restore society under the guidance of Catholicism;
- the vision of an association of friends committed to work toward that goal;
- the decision to make charity and love the fundamental standard of life so as to strive through these for holiness;
- and without stipulating it explicitly, the self-contemplation by each member as a simple, but zealous, Christian, that is to say, a Lay person”.

For that reason, the vocation of the Vincentian, in the eyes of Ozanam was nothing more than to live the Gospel, in the way of profound faith and charity as a layperson.

For the lay concept of Church which he lived, defended and left for our legacy in his masterpiece called Conferences of Charity, he is regarded as the *“precursor of the present theology of the Laity”*, faithfully

following the one who was his mentor, St. Vincent de Paul, who was a precursor of the same concept in the 17th century Church. His great love for the Church, his engagement of the laity which he lived all his life, and passed on to us today, has continued and has been ratified by the present-day Church.

A current author, seen as an authority on Vincentian spirituality and history, noted in one of his recent writings: "*The Conferences of Charity were, in the 19th century, the appropriate lay version of the Congregation of the Mission*". In the opinion of Lacordaire, no one other than Frederic Ozanam knew how to comprehend and expound on the role of the laity in the Church, especially in an era when the Church still had not taken a position on this particular subject. Today, the Church has taken a forceful position on his matter, beginning in Vatican II under Pope Paul VI, and continued by Pope John Paul II in his exhortation *Christifideles Laici*.

The result is something allegorical that the principal founder of the Conferences of Charity (whom Lacordaire classified as a great lover, admirer and faithful servant of the Church in 19th century France) would so strongly assert himself for the preservation of that lay character in all his works. He demonstrated it clearly when he elected, for his state in life, to better the Church by serving as a simple lay person than as a minister of the priesthood. He greatly cherished his role as a lay man in the Church. And to its defense, he devoted himself to this work of the Church completely throughout his life, dedicating all his human resources from his place in society.

In this Year of Faith, Frederic Ozanam could well be proclaimed the *Patron of Apologetics and Apologists*, for his labor in defense of the Truth and the Faith, and for his love for the Church within his special Lay standing, without lessening the summit of his ministerial nature.

Pioneer and Prophet: Frédéric Ozanam's Influence on Modern Catholic Social Theory

Thomas O'Brien, Ph.D.

Dozens of books and articles recognize Antoine Frédéric Ozanam as one of the earliest and most prolific influences on the body of literature known as Catholic social theory¹. Thomas A. Shannon credits Ozanam with being one of a number of Catholic social reformers appearing on the scene in France in the early nineteenth century, who “critiqued the law of supply and demand and the so-called iron law of wages because they degraded the worker”². The “Right Reverend New Dealer”³, John A. Ryan goes even further in the book he wrote with Joseph Husslein, *The Church and Labor*, and names Ozanam along with Bishop Wilhelm Von Ketteler⁴ as one of the “two great precursors in our modern Catholic social movement”⁵. Albert de Mun, a Catholic social reformer in the late nineteenth century⁶, calls Ozanam’s Society of St. Vincent de Paul “the great school of experience in which we first learned to serve

¹ Various referred to as “Catholic social thought” and “Catholic social teaching”.

² THOMAS A. SHANNON, “Reform Novarum”, in KENNETH R. HIMES, et al., *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2004), 131.

³ This was the epithet used to describe Ryan by Charles Coughlin. Ryan took the insult as a complement and would regularly refer to himself with this term later in his life.

⁴ The theoretical connections between Ozanam and Von Ketteler are also mentioned in MELVIN WILLIAMS, “Catholic Sociological Theory – A Review and Prospectus”, *The American Catholic Sociological Review*, vol. 4, no. 3 (October 1943), 139.

⁵ JOHN A. RYAN - JOSEPH HUSSEIN, *The Church and Labor* (New York, N.Y.: The Macmillan Company, 1920), 1.

⁶ De Mun is mentioned in numerous works alongside Ozanam. See, for instance, C. JOSEPH NEUSS, “Thomas Joseph Bouquillon (1840-1902), Moral Theologian and Precursor of the Social Sciences in the Catholic University of America”, *The Catholic Historical Review* 72:4 (October 1986), 617.

the cause of the people. Out of them sprang the whole Catholic Social Movement of the 19th Century⁷. In fact, it was members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, like Guisepppe Toniolo, professor of political economy at the University of Paris, who were consulted for technical assistance by Pope Leo XIII as his team drafted *Rerum Novarum*⁸.

Evidence for Ozanam's influence on Catholic social thought is both copious and compelling; however, there is relatively little recent analysis of his life and work in academic theological literature. In English, the bulk of the literature is dedicated to pious hagiographic biographies, most of which were written early in the last century. There are also a few serious historical works, most notably Thomas Auge's outstanding *Frédéric Ozanam and His World*⁹. Very valuable collections of his writings also exist in English, like Louis Baunard's, *Ozanam in His Correspondence*¹⁰. Nevertheless, scholars seeking to insert themselves into an ongoing critical academic dialogue about Ozanam's life and work will find precious slim pickings, at least insofar as these discussions are being carried out in the English language.

It is my intention with this modest essay to begin a contextual theological analysis of some key elements of Ozanam's beliefs and practices, especially as these influence the birth of Catholic social theory and its subsequent developments. More specifically, this article is going to focus on two facets of Ozanam's thought that will either directly influence, or indirectly prefigure seismic shifts in the way the Catholic Church thinks about itself and the social, political, and economic worlds it inhabits.

The first facet has to do with practical theology and the preferential option for the poor. Ozanam was one of the earliest of the nineteenth-century Catholic Action reformers who claimed that Christian discipleship demanded direct involvement in the critical issues facing French society. The Church, according to Ozanam, should not be standing on the sidelines, or worse, allying itself with oppressive and anachronistic powers that were perpetuating the suffering of the people. He was also convinced that this call to discipleship was not reserved for a few elite

⁷ Albert de Mun quoted in Rev. HENRY LOUIS HUGHES, *Frederick Ozanam* (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1933), 53.

⁸ DAVID L. GREGORY, "Antoine Frédéric Ozanam: Building the Good Society", *Legal Studies Research Paper Series*, Paper #10-0029, October 2005. Found online at: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=827389 (accessed 2 June 2010).

⁹ THOMAS AUGE, *Frédéric Ozanam and His World* (Milwaukee, WI: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1966).

¹⁰ LOUIS BAUNARD, *Ozanam in His Correspondence* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2005).

individuals who constituted a professional clerical class within a larger, passive Church, but rather, was a call that went out to all Christians, sacerdotal or lay. Service to the poorest of the poor was, for Ozanam, the clearest and most compelling sign of Christ's presence in the life of the Church. This kind of service was not something that could be accomplished by proxy, as if Christians could hire this task out to someone else. It was the kind of service that required direct immersion by all Christians in the lives of the poor and suffering.

The second facet of Ozanam's thought examined in this essay is methodological and concerns his use of an historical hermeneutic to interpret the appropriate standpoint of the Church towards a rapidly changing and seemingly hostile world. I will relate Ozanam's utilization of this historical hermeneutic to later developments in Catholic social theory, like Pius XI's implicit recognition of doctrinal development in the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*¹¹, and John Courtney Murray's construction of an historical hermeneutic to explain the trajectory of Catholic social thought and begin his lifelong defense of religious liberty.

This discussion will conveniently lead into the final facet of Ozanam's thought that will be analyzed in this article, which is his support of religious liberty. Ozanam's defense of religious liberty was part and parcel of his larger commitment to liberalism and democracy. It was Ozanam's conviction that liberal democratic notions of religious liberty were not only not detrimental to the Catholic Church, but actually could benefit the Church overall if these ideas were embraced by the hierarchy. At the time, of course, the Church endorsed only the confessional state – one that established Catholicism as the official religion of the state¹². Ozanam argued convincingly for a pluralist vision of

¹¹ Pope Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, para. 40. Found online at: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno_en.html (accessed 10 February 2010). "Yet since in the course of these same years, certain doubts have arisen concerning either the correct meaning of some parts of Leo's Encyclical or conclusions to be deduced therefrom, which doubts in turn have even among Catholics given rise to controversies that are not always peaceful; and since, furthermore, new needs and changed conditions of our age have made necessary a more precise application of Leo's teaching or even certain additions thereto, We most gladly seize this fitting occasion, in accord with Our Apostolic Office through which We are debtors to all, to answer, so far as in Us lies, these doubts and these demands of the present day".

¹² For more information about the Catholic Church and the confessional state see JOHN CONLEY, "Dignitatis humanae and the Catholic Society: The Confessional State as a Perennial Possibility", in PETER A. PAGAN AQUILAR - TERESE AUER (eds.), *The Human Person and a Culture of Freedom* (Washington, D.C.: American Maritain Association; Distributed by Catholic University of America Press, 2009).

religious liberty using a logic that foreshadowed the one used successfully by John Courtney Murray more than a century later¹⁵, which would eventually find its way into official Church teaching by way of Murray's drafting of *Dignitatis Humanae*, the Declaration on Religious Liberty at Vatican Council II¹⁶.

Historical Background

The Catholic hierarchy's class alliance, and occasional interchangeability with the elite social, political, and economic classes of Western Europe began during the final centuries of the Roman Empire and deepened throughout the Middle Ages. In France, the Reformation and the Enlightenment eroded the power of the *ancien régime* – the feudal monarchs and the privileged aristocratic classes of the Valois and Bourbon dynasties, who believed themselves to be rulers of the masses by divine fiat. Although the Church did embrace some version of reform at the Council of Trent after decades of stubborn denial that its policies and practices had become increasingly corrupt and intolerable; it, nevertheless, continued to cling to its old alliances with the aristocratic classes for centuries to come. By the time Ozanam arrived in Paris in the early nineteenth century, this unholy alliance was slowly beginning to unravel as Western Europe took its final steps away from feudal monarchical governance and towards constitutional democratic states¹⁷.

Of course, during Ozanam's era (1813-1853), France was still reeling from the upheavals of the French Revolution (1789) and the relatively short, but traumatic, reign of Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte (1804-1814). Because of its very cozy and public affiliation with the royal family of Louis XVI, and to the feudal aristocratic class in general, the Catholic Church naturally became a target of the revolutionaries in 1789¹⁸. The memory of those days of panic, fear, and persecution at the hands of the bloody Jacobin executioners still lingered for the Church two generations later when Ozanam began his academic career. If anything, the Church in the early 1830's had become even more entrenched in its alliance with the royal family and the landed aristocracy¹⁹.

¹⁵ For more information see, KRITHI PAULSICHIEK, *John Courtney Murray and the Dilemma of Religious Toleration* (Kirksville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1994).

¹⁶ See: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat_ii_decl_19651207_dignitatis-humanae_en.html (accessed 11 December 2011).

¹⁷ GREGORY, "Building the Good Society", 7.

¹⁸ ANGE, *His World*, 6.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

The Revolution was France's first flirtation with republican governance, but not its only, or last. This chaotic and fragile experiment would come to an end when Napoleon Bonaparte crowned himself emperor, thereby, at the same time, challenging papal authority over royal appointments. After Napoleon, the monarchy was restored and remained in place until 1848, when France would once again enjoy a brief period of republican rule. However, four years later Napoleon's nephew would take the emperor's throne and not relinquish it until the Franco-Prussian War in 1870 when France would finally end the monarchy and permanently establish democratic rule¹⁸.

Given this admittedly sketchy overview of French history, it is still clear that Ozanam lived during a liminal period that had already tasted the forbidden fruits of self-rule, but had not yet entirely shed the last vestiges of monarchy and aristocratic dominance. For this reason, French society during the early-to-mid-nineteenth century was fundamentally divided¹⁹. There were many who desired to live under a republican government that was constitutionally secular and independent of Catholic oversight and meddling. On the other hand, there were powerful and entrenched forces that thrived in the established context of a medieval aristocratic government allied, as it was, with the moral authority and historical constancy of the Catholic Church. It was, therefore, often very unclear to Catholic liberals like Ozanam how to appropriately divide their loyalties, or whether or not their loyalties really needed to be divided. A few visionaries like Ozanam eventually realized that one could be a faithful Catholic and still embrace liberal political structures and causes.

When Ozanam arrived in Paris in 1831 at the age of 18, the Catholic Church was viewed by a majority of his professors and peers at the University of Paris as hopelessly conservative and mired in medieval nostalgia²⁰. Universities like Paris and the Sorbonne were seedbeds for liberal democratic philosophies and progressive political organization. Catholicism, therefore, was openly reviled and denounced as anachronistic in almost every venue imaginable²¹. Lectures in Paris, in a variety of disciplines, normally included some mention of the ways in which the Church had been a detrimental influence on society and the individual, and how modern French society needed to liberate itself from this stifling and oppressive ecclesial yoke.

¹⁸ GREGORY, "Building the Good Society", 30.

¹⁹ SCOTT P. KELLEY, "Subsidiarity and Global Poverty: Development from Below Upwards", *Vincentian Heritage (Special Issue on Vincentian Higher Education and Poverty Reduction)* 28:2 (2008), 162.

²⁰ AUGÉ, *His World*, 8.

²¹ GREGORY, "Building the Good Society", 8.

Ozanam entered this fray and quickly distinguished himself as an articulate defender of the Church, not as an institution permanently entangled in deteriorating medieval structures, but rather, a Church that reached out to the people, seeking bonds of solidarity and embracing the rule of all by all²². It turned out that this was a fortuitous moment for Ozanam to make such an argument as the popular Louis-Philippe had just ascended the throne in 1830 and immediately instituted modest policies of self-rule for local governments²³. This cast the monarchy and its allied Church in a new and more flattering light among liberals and the intellectual class. Over the next eighteen years, until the revolutions of 1848, Ozanam would take advantage of these positive contextual resources in order to plant some of the first seeds that would eventually blossom into the Church's social theory some sixty years later.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Ozanam was an exceptional young man in many respects, and his biographers spill gallons of ink instilling in their readers this sense of his unusual intelligence, boundless ambition, and sincere piety. Soon after arriving in Paris, he distinguished himself both in the classroom and in extracurricular debates as a formidable intellectual force, who combined encyclopedic knowledge with incisive logic and unparalleled reasoning skills²⁴. He also quickly assumed a leadership role among a minority of Catholic students who were keen to defend their faith in this hostile and oppositional climate²⁵. Ozanam had a burning passion for intellectual debate, and this hunger drove him to organize colloquia in which he could engage faculty and fellow students in lively discussions concerning a very wide ranging sample of topics. With the help and mentoring of his good friend Emmanuel Bailly, the editor of *La Tribune Catholique*, who agreed to act as host, Ozanam gathered a group of scholars for regular ongoing debates in what would become known as the Conference of History²⁶.

According to Ozanam's biographers, it was out of the debates of the Conference of History that the inspiration for the Society of St. Vincent

²² ALGER, *His World*, 10, 83.

²³ GREGORY, "Building the Good Society", 26.

²⁴ ALGER, *His World*, 14-15.

²⁵ SILAUN MCCARTY, S.T., "Frederick Ozanam: Lay Evangelizer", *Vincentian Heritage* 17:1 (1996), 7.

²⁶ SISTER M. EVELINE, O.P., "The Social Thought of Frédéric Ozanam", *The American Catholic Sociological Review* 2:1 (March 1941), 48.

de Paul first developed²⁷. It quickly became the tradition of the Conference of History for the debates to ultimately settle on the relative merits of the Catholic faith in relation to whatever historical topic was being discussed. Ozanam and his compatriots would defend Catholicism, while other groups would represent the more mainstream intellectual position that the Church was generally a corrupt, oppressive and retrogressive force in history²⁸. One fateful day, in the middle of one such debate, Ozanam was challenged by a fellow student to provide evidence that the Church was a benevolent force, to which he replied by reciting a litany of events in Church history that highlighted ways in which the Church had unequivocally made the world a better place. Ozanam's opponent was not satisfied and argued that the Church might have been a good force at one time, but questioned how it could be construed as a positive contemporary force. Ozanam answered by pointing to the many good and charitable works being done in the name of the Church by the clergy and the various religious orders. Finally, the student said, "Ozanam, Christianity has done wonders in the past, but what is it doing now in Paris for the poor? Show us what practical benefit the working man reaps from your religion and we too will believe in it"²⁹.

According to his biographers, Ozanam was silenced by this challenge and he convened a small group of Catholic scholars several days later in order to come up with a satisfactory answer this question³⁰. "After this, the 'Conference of History' became the 'Conference of Charity' which eventually was named the 'Conference of Saint Vincent de Paul'"³¹. Their response to the challenge came in concrete form through the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a confraternity of lay Catholics who would visit poor, working-class families and perform charitable works, like delivering food and gathering fuel for wood-burning stoves. The purpose of the society was to give lay Catholics an opportunity to live out their vocation of discipleship to the poor. It also encouraged its membership to recognize the person of Christ in the poor they were serving³². Also, the Society gave members first-hand experience with the most miserable living situations in the realm, and therefore, served as a laboratory for erstwhile, comfortable intellectuals of the upper and

²⁷ ALBERT PAUL SCHIMBERG, *The Great Friend: Frederick Ozanam* (Milwaukee, WI: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1946), 56-57.

²⁸ BAUNARD, *His Correspondence*, 56-57.

²⁹ HUGHES, *Ozanam*, 51.

³⁰ SCHIMBERG, *Great Friend*, 60-61.

³¹ McCARTY, "Lay Evangelizer", 8.

³² JAMES PATRICK DERUM, *Apostle in a Top Hat: The Life of Frédéric Ozanam* (Garden City, N.Y.: Hanover House, 1961), 72.

middling classes to have direct experiences with those classes for whom they were claiming to be advocates³³. For these reasons, the Society, while not quite yet a genuine option for the poor in the contemporary sense of the phrase, had certainly graduated beyond the distant, condescending and abstract approaches of the merely charitable associations common during Ozanam's day³⁴.

There are also other reasons that Ozanam's foundation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is important for both the birth of Catholic social thought sixty years later, and for the development of ideas about practical theology in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Most importantly, the foundation of the Society marked the beginning of what would become known as the Catholic Action movement, which eventually spread across Europe and North America and became one of the key elements in a Catholic renaissance among the laity in subsequent generations³⁵. Essentially, Catholic Action and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul were movements in which lay people felt inspired and were concretely empowered to take on roles which had been traditionally reserved for those who belonged to a kind of professional class of sisters, brothers, and priests evolved over the centuries³⁶. Due to the fact that the Society and other Catholic Action movements began as charitable organizations, and because there was no scarcity of work to go around due to rampant and pervasive poverty in French society, there was very little quibbling, let alone organized opposition to these organizations on the part of the official Church.

However, at the same time, but in a very different vein, this type of organization was very much in the spirit of liberal democratic theory, which claimed that all people were competent to play essential social and political leadership roles from which they had been unjustly excluded by an elite class during the Middle Ages³⁷. Certain groups of people in Western Europe, who had been content up until this time to passively allow a small privileged class to rule and manage all aspects

³³ For a description of these conditions see, *Ibid.*, 64.

³⁴ JOHN LOOBY, "Ozanam and Marx", *The Irish Monthly* 84, no. 964 (December 1953), 476-477.

³⁵ HUGHES, *Ozanam*, 144.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 143.

³⁷ It should be noted that many proponents of Catholic Action were erstwhile opponents of liberalism and democracy. See MARGARET LYON, "Christian Democratic Parties and Politics", *Journal of Contemporary History* 69:2 (1967), 71. "In contrast to the socialists, who worked for both political democracy and social progress simultaneously, the first sponsors of the Catholic movements were alienated almost as much by the egalitarian aspects of democracy as by the atheism of continental socialism".

of society, were now taking matters into their own hands and establishing new ground rules for how decisions would be made and who would be in charge of executing those decisions. It turned out that this was as true for the society of the Church as it was for the larger civil society of France.

In many important ways, lay people in this Catholic context were analogous to the proletariat class that was being written about in the emerging egalitarian political and social theories of the day³⁸. By organizing and acting on their own behalf and for the benefit of the dispossessed classes in society, they had nothing to lose but the chains of medieval class oppression. Therefore, the foundation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul can be characterized as something that is both fundamentally conservative, insofar as it was a charitable outreach to the poor, while, at the same time, it was also something that was radically progressive and disruptive to the status quo due to the fact that it organized lay people in a way that supplemented and supplanted those who occupied positions traditionally reserved for an elite religious class.

1848 and the New Era

For the sake of brevity and coherence, this article will focus on only two relatively short, but dramatic and productive periods in Ozanam's life. It is important to stress at this point that Ozanam produced theologically rich work throughout his life that would contribute bountifully to the nascent Catholic social movement. The reader should not conclude from the organization of his work in this essay that he was productive only during his college years and then again late in his life, and that he was otherwise silent or distracted.

During the fifteen years between the founding of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and the outbreak of revolutions around Europe (approximately 1833-1848), Ozanam expended a great deal of time and energy in the academy. He finished his degree in law and suffered through a brief, though distinguished law career in Lyon before being brought back to the University of Paris by a friend and former professor to take oral and written examinations for a competitive appointment in literature³⁹. To his own surprise, he won the competition and began a lifelong vocation as an academic in the discipline he cherished most, medieval literature. In his late 20's Ozanam experienced a period of questioning concerning his dilemma over whether to pursue the

³⁸ LOOBY, "Marx", 475-478.

³⁹ AGGE, *His World*, 55.

priesthood or married life⁴⁰, which he finally put to rest by marrying Marie-Josephine-Amélie Soulacroix in 1841, and fathering his only child Marie in 1846⁴¹. Throughout this fifteen year period, he continued to shepherd the Society he helped found in his college years and watched it grow exponentially as it became an international, and then, eventually, a global movement⁴². In his role as the figurehead of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, he encountered and created alliances with a number of key figures in Catholic liberalism and the materializing Catholic Action movements. Some of his closest collaborators throughout his life were: François-René de Chateaubriand, neo-Catholic and pioneer of French Romanticism⁴³; André-Marie Ampère, physicist and mathematician⁴⁴; Jean-Baptiste Henri Lacordaire, a priest, journalist and political activist⁴⁵; and Charles Forbes René de Montalembert, a publicist and historian⁴⁶.

To fully appreciate the importance of 1848 for Ozanam and Catholic social thought, one must begin by examining events in 1846 when Pius IX was elected Pope. This was an event that gave liberal Catholics enormous hope because everyone expected Pius IX to inaugurate an era of openness and reform⁴⁷. This new Pope held very liberal views and his election was met with great fanfare in the streets of Rome. The new Pope was seemingly loved by all, and in his first few official pronouncements he did not disappoint as, to the consternation of conservative forces in the Vatican⁴⁸, he granted amnesty, reform of the civil and criminal code, and limited self-rule⁴⁹ to the citizens of the Papal States. Ozanam was elated by the election, and during a bout of illness he was sent to Italy by his doctor where he visited Rome and enjoyed an extended audience with the Pope on two separate occasions⁵⁰. He reported that the Pope knew of the Society of St. Vincent

⁴⁰ SCILBERG, *Great Friend*, 123.

⁴¹ EMMANUEL RENNER, *The Historical Thought of Frédéric Ozanam* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press of America, 1959), 14.

⁴² AUGE, *His World*, 25.

⁴³ McCARTY, "Lay Evangelizer", 16.

⁴⁴ EVELINE, "Social Thought", 55.

⁴⁵ AUGE, *His World*, 81.

⁴⁶ BAUNARD, *His Correspondence*, 280-290.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 242.

⁴⁸ ROBERTO DE MATTEI, *Pius IX*, John Laughland, trans. (Herefordshire, U.K.: Gracewing, 2004), 21.

⁴⁹ BAUNARD, *His Correspondence*, 254.

⁵⁰ For more detail on this meeting see KATHLEEN O'MEARA, *Frédéric Ozanam: Professor at the Sorbonne* (New York, N.Y.: Christian Press Association Publishing Company, 1911), 193-208.

de Paul and that he was pleased with the way it was invigorating the faith of lay people throughout the world. Ozanam returned to France convinced that the Church was well on its way to a thoroughgoing liberal reform⁵¹.

Soon after Ozanam's return to France, in the first few months of 1848, liberal democratic revolutions broke out in France, Italy, and other parts of Europe⁵². In spite of the new liberal leadership of Pius IX, the Catholic Church was targeted by the revolutionaries because of his refusal to sever relations and declare war on Catholic Austria⁵³. In France, the once popular Louis-Phillipe was deposed in disgrace as his administration was viewed as ineffectual and tainted by corruption⁵⁴. In Rome, the Vatican was besieged by revolutionaries angered over Catholic Austria and because the Pope had not granted complete democratic self-rule in the Papal States. Riots broke out and revolutionaries attacked the Vatican. On 15 November 1848, Pius IX's close friend and secretary of state, Pellegrino Rossi was stabbed to death on his way up the Cancellaria⁵⁵. Soon afterward, Jean-Baptiste Palma, a papal prelate, was shot in the head while standing at a window within the walls of the Vatican⁵⁶. A few days later, the Pope was spirited away in an elaborate ruse, narrowly avoiding a similar fate. Pius IX lived in exile for the next year in Gaeta⁵⁷. When he returned to the Vatican, he was a changed man who set about the task of halting all liberal reforms, and eventually condemned all versions of modern thought and political organization in the encyclical *Quanta Cura*, with its addendum, the *Syllabus of Errors*⁵⁸.

Meanwhile, in France, Ozanam was hard at work trying to defend liberalism and democracy as ideas that could still be held by faithful Catholics in spite of the damage done to the Church and its allies by the revolutionaries. Through the publication of a journal titled *The New Era*, Ozanam attempted to convince the Church that it should throw its influence behind the working class and the revolutionary forces, while, at the same time, trying to convince the revolutionaries that Catholicism was actually their ally in this fight for liberty⁵⁹. In a series of articles

⁵¹ DERUM, *Top Hat*, 172-173.

⁵² BACNAED, *His Correspondence*, 282-283.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ AUGÉ, *His World*, 34.

⁵⁵ HUGHES, *Ozanam*, 87-88.

⁵⁶ DE MATTEI, *Pius IX*, 31.

⁵⁷ OWEN CHADWICK, *Oxford History of the Christian Church: A History of the Popes, 1830-1914* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1998), 93.

⁵⁸ AUGÉ, *His World*, 120.

⁵⁹ MCCARTY, "Lay Evangelizer", 9, 27.

defending the separation of Church and State he made historical arguments that prefigure those made one hundred years later by John Courtney Murray and the Vatican II Declaration on Religious Liberty he drafted. Unfortunately for the future of Catholic social theory, Ozanam failed to convince either side that the other was their true friend in this conflict⁶⁰. Ozanam and his compatriots achieved no reconciliation of any kind between the Church and the liberals, and the Church sank back into another extended, and more damaging period of conservatism and dependence on the waning aristocratic powers in Europe.

In spite of his failure to reconcile leaders of his Catholic faith tradition with revolutionary representatives espousing liberal democratic principles, Ozanam did leave future social Catholics with the important legacy of his historical hermeneutic – the conviction that historical context can influence Church teaching, and the simple yet subversive understanding that Church teaching develops over time⁶¹. Ozanam was a student of early medieval history, and he likened the Church's social and political situation to the one Christianity faced during the fall of the Roman Empire, when barbarian tribes were overrunning the seemingly impenetrable eastern borders and pouring into Roman-occupied lands in droves. Ozanam argued that the contemporary Church should take a lesson from the Church of that era and "leave Byzantium and go to the barbarians". He claimed the Church should:

...leave the camp of statesmen and Kings who are slaves to selfish and dynastic interests, who made the treaties of 1815, the Talleyrands, and the Metternicks, for the camp of the people and the nation. Go over to the people, is, following the example of Pius IX, to interest ourselves in the people, who have needs and no rights, who justly claim a larger part in the management of public affairs, who demand work and food; who do not read the *Histoire des Girondins*, who do not give banquets to reformers, and who most certainly do not dine at them; who do follow false guides, but for want of better. To go over to the people is to cease to play the part of the Mazzinis, of the Ochsenbeins and the Henri Heines, and to devote ourselves instead to the service of the mass of people, in rural as well as in urban areas. It is in that sense that to go over to the barbarians signifies to go over to the mass of people, but it is to withdraw them from their barbarity, to make them good citizens and good followers of Christ, to elevate them in morality and truth, to make them fit for, and worthy of the liberty of the children of God⁶².

⁶⁰ BAUNARD, *His Correspondence*, 291.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 283-284.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 255.

One hundred years later, John Courtney Murray would enlist the same kind of historical argument in order to affect a similar kind of liberal reconciliation between the Catholic tradition and the American political experiment⁶⁵. Murray's context mirrors Ozanam's to the extent that both were trying to demonstrate that the Catholic tradition was not essentially hostile to liberalism, or even to the notion of the separation of Church and State. Both argued that the Church had mistakenly tied itself to an "invalid" monarchical conception of governance, and that it needed to free itself from this fateful alliance in order to regain credence in the eyes of the people⁶⁵. Murray argued that a closer reading of Thomas Aquinas demonstrated that the great medieval scholastic would advocate a church-state doctrine more or less identical to the one written into the American Constitution⁶⁷. Ozanam would argue that a closer reading of the early years of the Holy Roman Empire demonstrated that the Church would be better served by siding with the rebels than clinging desperately to the hopelessly anachronistic institutions of dying empires⁶⁶. The main difference between Murray and Ozanam was that Murray faced much friendlier historical circumstances, and his argument eventually was enshrined in Church doctrine in the document on the "Declaration on Religious Liberty" at Vatican II.

The Catholic Church during Ozanam's era had not yet entertained the idea that its doctrine could possibly be conditioned by historical circumstances. Ozanam's advocacy for the development of doctrine was subtle, and it was possibly an element of his theology that even escaped the author's notice. However, by suggesting that the Church's alliance to medieval royal structures was merely an historical expedience, and that the Church should rethink its position in relation to modern political, economic, and social sensibilities, Ozanam was challenging the doctrine of the confessional state, which at the time would have been considered sacrosanct. His claim that the Church should embrace the modern concept of the separation of Church and State was tantamount to claiming that longstanding doctrines of the Church, even ones carrying the highest authority, were open to debate and change. This, of course, was not something the Church of his era was prepared to acknowledge.

By the middle of the next century, when Murray was making his doctrinal development arguments based on an analysis of Leo XIII's

⁶⁵ JOHN COURTNEY MURRAY, *We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1960), 109.

⁶⁶ AUGÉ, *His World*, 87.

⁶⁷ MURRAY, *These Truths*, 295-336.

⁶⁸ BAUNARD, *His Correspondence*.

Rerum Novarum, the Church had taken a reactionary position against any liberal theologies claiming that the doctrine of the Church was not constant, and that the Church's social teaching, in particular, demonstrated significant development over time⁶⁷. Murray was silenced for a number of years after the publication of the last in his series of articles in *Theological Studies*; however, less than a decade later he was asked to draft the Declaration on Religious Liberty at the Second Vatican Council. The idea that Church doctrine develops over time became mainstreamed implicitly in that moment, and although there is no direct evidence that Murray studied Ozanam's work extensively, he, nevertheless, paved the way for the kind of historical hermeneutic employed by Murray to ground his argument for religious liberty.

Conclusions

When most social theorists today discuss Frédéric Ozanam, they are rightfully drawn to his strong defense of wage justice, worker's associations, and the generally miserable plight of the working class. This focus makes perfect sense because these issues ultimately became central concerns of *Rerum Novarum* and subsequent Catholic social tradition. These issues also became part of a constellation of causes taken up during the progressive era of Western democratic capitalism and are now written into the laws of most developed nations. However, Ozanam's influence on Catholicism and Western culture runs deeper than his ardent advocacy for these key labor issues. In subtler and less explicit ways, Ozanam's method of historical argument, and his commitment to standing with the poor through direct experiences with the poorest of the poor, have an arguably more profound effect on future developments in the Catholic social tradition.

When Ozanam was challenged by his peers in the Conference of History to demonstrate how Catholicism was changing the lives of contemporary Frenchmen, he instinctively understood this as a challenge to both his own insulated and comfortable existence, as well as the Church's own aristocratically coddled position in French society. He interpreted the challenge as one that called him out to the dirty, garbage-strewn ghettos of Paris where he and his friends would encounter the very real human byproducts of industrial capitalism. He could

⁶⁷ JOHN COURTNEY MURRAY, "Leo XIII on Church and State: The General Structure of the Controversy", *Theological Studies* 14 (March), 1-30; "Leo XIII: Separation of Church and State", *Theological Studies* 14 (June), 145-314; "Leo XIII: Two Concepts of Government", *Theological Studies* 14 (December), 551-567; "Leo XIII: Two Concepts of Government: Government and the Order of Culture", *Theological Studies* 15 (March), 1-33.

have chosen to interpret this challenge differently. He could have taken the challenge as a call to be more pious, more liturgically oriented, or more involved in the political machinery of the Church and its relationship to the State of Louis-Phillipe. All of these would have been valid, even, in some ways, more likely responses to such a challenge. However, Ozanam chose an option for the poor instead, which resulted in an organization whose praxis was distinguished from other Catholic charitable outreaches of his day. Ozanam's option was one that would prefigure the kinds of preferential options called for a century later by liberation theologians⁶⁸, and eventually by the Pope himself⁶⁹.

Although Ozanam referred to his work as "charity" there are many ways that his vision for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul transcended mere charitable giving and foreshadowed the preferential option for the poor that later appears in Catholic social thought. Most importantly, Ozanam insisted on putting a human face to the otherwise distant and anonymous practice of charity. Ozanam's humanization of the poor anticipated the theme of human dignity in later Catholic social theory, demanding members to go out and meet poor families and, in so many ways, adopt them and make their struggles the struggles of the Society members. The Society's approach to the poor also anticipated the theme of solidarity in bringing together people of different classes who were artificially alienated from one another by sinful social, political, and economic structures, and giving them the opportunity of experiencing their genuine and deep filial bonds under their common divine parent⁷⁰. With the common good constantly in mind as the distant goal of the Society, Ozanam forged an orthopraxis among the poorest of the poor in mid-nineteenth-century France that would impel the Church forward, away from medieval conceptions and towards a more mature approach embodied in the concept of poverty and charity and the preferential option for the poor⁷¹.

⁶⁸ GUSTAVO GUTIÉRREZ, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973), 130.

⁶⁹ Pope JOHN PAUL II, *Familiaris Consortio*, Para 47. See: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_19811122_familiaris-consortio_en.html (accessed 11 December 2011).

⁷⁰ HUGHES, *Ozanam*, 60.

⁷¹ Benedict XVI stressed these aspects of the option for the poor contributing to the common good and universal solidarity in a recent address: Pope BENEDICT XVI, "Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Fathers of the General Congregation of the Society of Jesus" (Clementine Hall, Vatican City, 21 February 2008). See: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2008/february/documents/hf_ben_xvi_spe_20080221_gesuiti_en.html (accessed 11 December 2011).

In addition to his pioneering orthopraxis, his style of historical argumentation also anticipated critical theological advances – again, over one hundred years in the future. While Protestant theology became more sophisticated with its recognition of the historical development of Christian doctrine and practice early in the twentieth century⁷², Catholic theology ran into the roadblock of Vatican resistance to such ideas, not lifted until the time of the Second Vatican Council. Immediately before Vatican II, a number of Catholic theologians began using an historical hermeneutic in order to explore the implications of doctrinal development⁷³. Some of those theologians paid a steep price for their curiosity, as with the theology of John Courtney Murray, who was silenced for a number of years for demonstrating doctrinal development in papal social teaching. The arguments Murray was making were remarkably similar in structure to the ones Ozanam made in 1848 concerning how the Church only needed to look to its own history in order to discover inspiration for allying itself with democracy and the downtrodden, and to abandon its misguided attachment to its medieval aristocratic past. In a similar way, Murray claimed that the Church only needed to study its own Thomistic natural law tradition in order to find theoretical justification for the doctrine of the separation of Church and State.

Frédéric Ozanam is a pioneer in Catholic social theory for more reasons than his support for workers associations, living wages, and democratic structures. His Theological and practical commitments also foreshadow seismic shifts in Catholic social theory one hundred years into the future. In all aspects, Ozanam is both a pioneer and a prophet for modern Catholic social thought.

⁷² See ERNST TROELTSCH, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (New York, N.Y.: Macmillan Company, 1931).

⁷³ Murray was joined by other Catholic theological luminaries like Bernard Lonergan, Karl Rahner, Yves Congar, Henri de Lubac, and especially Marie-Dominique Chenu in their use of historical argument to support reform of Church teaching and practice.

VINCENTIANA

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of the
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