

OZANAM MEDITATION

“Humble Simplicity”

Scripture Reading:

“God chose those whom the world considers absurd to shame the wise; he singled out the weak of this world to shame the strong. ...God it is who has given you life in Christ Jesus. He has made him our wisdom and also our justice, our sanctification, and our redemption. This is just as you find it written, “Let him who would boast, boast in the Lord. (2 Corinthians 1:27-31)

We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable. If the dignity of work is to be

protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected.

Frederic’s Ideals and Ideas:

In 1841, Frederic wrote: “Only one thing could hinder and destroy us: the adulteration of our primitive spirit, the pharisaism that sounds the trumpet before it, the exclusive self-esteem which belittles any power other than that of the elite, excessive customs and structure resulting in languor and relaxation or rather verbose philanthropy more eager to talk than to act, or again bureaucracies which impede our march by multiplying our machinery. And especially to forget the humble simplicity which has presided over our coming together from the beginning . . .”

Ozanam informed his fellow Vincentians that they should not only share “statistical statements crammed with enumerations of our successes, as important as such reports might be, but that they must also exchange our ideas, our inspirations, sometimes our fears, and always our hopes.”



Our Vision:

Systemic Change calls us to “implement coherent strategies, starting modestly, delegating tasks and responsibilities, and providing quality services respectful of human dignity.” A true hallmark of Vincentian pragmatism is “practical, concrete, and effective services, . . . underpinned by the absolute belief that each person is made in the image and likeness of God and is a temple of the Holy Spirit . . . All projects for the poor start modestly and grow into being.”

Sharing:

Have you included those we serve in designing and participating in any of the works of the Society?

Does that create challenges for us?

What are the opportunities?

Closing Prayer:

O God, give us creativity in helping the poor meet their basic human needs. Open our minds and hearts so that we might stand at their side and assist them to change whatever unjust structures keep them poor. Enable us to be brothers and sisters to them, friends who walk with them in their struggle for fundamental human rights.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

