

Spiritual Readings for January, 2020 (Frederic Ozanam)

First Reading

While still a student, Frédéric took up journalism and contributed considerably to Bailly's *Tribune catholique*, which became [*L'Univers*](#), a French Catholic daily newspaper that adopted a strongly [ultramontane](#) position. Ozanam and his friends revived a discussion group called a "Society of Good Studies" and formed it into a "Conference of History" which quickly became a forum for large and lively discussions among students. Their attentions turned frequently to the social teachings of the Gospel. At one meeting during a heated debate in which Ozanam and his friends were trying to prove from historical evidence alone the truth of the Catholic Church as the one founded by Christ, their adversaries declared that, though at one time the Church was a source of good, it no longer was. One voice issued the challenge, "What is your church doing now? What is she doing for the poor of Paris? Show us your works and we will believe you!" (quote taken from ["Blessed Frederic Ozanam", St. Vincent de Paul Society, Australia](#))

Second Reading

Frederic Ozanam wrote:

"Yours must be a work of love, of kindness, you must give your time, your talents, yourselves. The poor person is a unique person of God's fashioning with an inalienable right to respect.

"You must not be content with tiding the poor over the poverty crisis: You must study their condition and the injustices which brought about such poverty, with the aim of a long term improvement." (quotes taken from ["Blessed Frederic Ozanam Conversation - St. Vincent de Paul Society, Australia](#))

Enclosed is a description of an important event in the life of Frederic Ozanam

1. Please discuss this event in Frederic Ozanam's life
 - Does this even still challenge us today?
 - Is the Archdiocese and the Toronto Saint Vincent de Paul today meeting the challenge that Ozanam faced in 1831 – yes, no, so-so?
 - How can we do better, if needed in practical terms?
2. Ozanam said that in his day there was a poverty crisis. Does a poverty crisis exist today: Are we still “tiding over” (a good thing) or aiding long term improvement?
3. Discuss, share, pray over the story and quotation as it effects your personal life and conference.