

Reflection on the Rule: June – First Meeting

2.4 The Spirituality of Blessed Frederic Ozanam

The spirituality of one of its founders inspires Vincentians profoundly. The Blessed Frederic Ozanam:

- *Sought to renew faith, among all people, in Christ and in the civilising effect of the teachings of the Church through all time.*
- *Envisioned the establishment of a network of charity and social justice encircling the world.*
- *Attained holiness as a layman through living the Gospel fully in all aspects of his life.*
- *Had a passion for truth, democracy and education.*

2.5 The Spirituality of St. Vincent

Having been placed under the patronage of St. Vincent de Paul by the founding members, members of the Society are inspired by his spirituality, manifest in his attitudes, his thoughts, his example and his words. For Vincentians, the key aspects of St. Vincent's spirituality are:

- *To love God, our Father, with the sweat of our brow and the strength of our arms;*
- *To see Christ in the poor and the poor in Christ;*
- *To share the compassionate and liberating love of Christ the Evangelizer and Servant of the poor;*
- *To heed the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.*

Reflection:

Vincentian Spirituality is often rightly called an “*active contemplative*” spirituality—and that is very much in keeping with the spirituality of both Frederic and Vincent. As we think about the most impactful moments of our experience as Vincentians, we likely think both of moments of contemplation (a particularly meaningful reflection at a Conference meeting or a prayer that we shared with a neighbor) and moments of action (the time we were able to deliver beds to a family sleeping on the floor or Thanksgiving dinner to an elderly neighbor). It is the union of these two types of experiences, as well as the relationships we share with our fellow Vincentians and the people we serve, that paints the complete picture of Vincentian life.

Vincentian Meditation:

As we learn more about the spirituality of Vincent and Frederic, we see that they have been models for our active and contemplative work. They challenge us to find the balance between:

- Charity and justice
- Prayer and action
- Growth in personal holiness and service to those in need

Finding our balance is an ongoing challenge. It is important to frequently assess where we fall on the spectrum of these focus areas. Are we “in balance?”

Reflecting on Vincent's call to “*love God by the sweat of our brow and the strength of our arms,*” when was a time when you were able, by your own effort, to make a difference in someone's life?

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank you for giving us Vincent and Frederic as role models. Help us to always remember to see You in the people you send to us and to remember our call to bring You to our brothers and sisters in need. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen