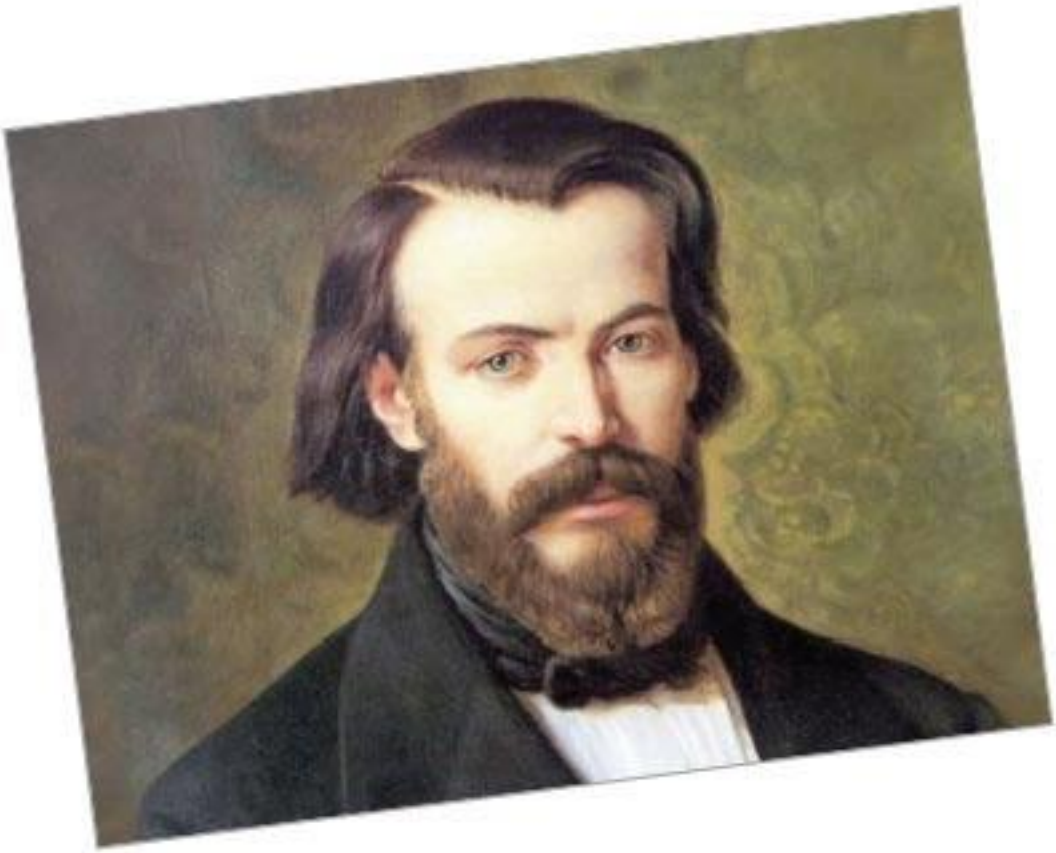
Council General International

Novena prayer in memory of Bl. Frédéric Ozanam



Written by brother Philippe Menet (France)

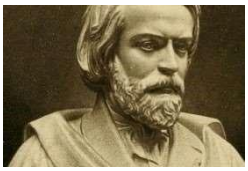
INTRODUCTION

The International General Council invites all confreres and consecrated persons worldwide to take part, from 1 to 9 September, in the novena in honor of Blessed Antoine-Frédéric Ozanam, principal founder of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul; it thanks the French confrere Philippe Menet for preparing these texts and trusts that this shared prayer will obtain abundant graces, in particular the canonization of Blessed Ozanam.

Juan Manuel Buergo Gómez
17th President General

SEPTEMBER 1ST O Lord, help us to listen more attentively to your Word

Biography by Amélie Soulacroix, his wife
A life totally filled with God through prayer.



"His piety was keen: he would get up around 7 or 8 in the morning, and I never saw him go to bed at night or rise in the morning without making the sign of the cross and praying. In the morning, he would read the Bible in Greek and meditate for half an hour..."
"He never undertook anything of importance without praying. Before beginning his classes, he used to kneel down and ask God for the grace to do nothing to obtain applause but to do everything for the glory of God and the service of charity. He never failed to say this prayer when he had to speak in public, and he wanted me to say it with him..."
"Until the end of his human existence, he would adhere to his practices of piety..."
OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY AND GLORY BE

SEPTEMBER 2nd

O Lord, help us to relieve all kinds of poverty. Letter #136 to François Lallier (November 5th, 1836)

"Our Christian duty is to intervene between these irreconcilable enemies: those who have nothing and those who have too much… To make charity accomplish what justice alone cannot do…" "We are worthless servants; we are servants and our wages are paid only if we work in the Lord's vineyard, where we are assigned…"
OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY AND GLORY BE

SEPTEMBER 3rd

O Lord, help us to bear witness to your love Letter #29 to Auguste Materne (April 19th, 1831)

"Primacy of the law of love: the only rule by which to regulate our acts is the law of love: "Love of God and of our neighbour", a magnificent law recognising three principles of human actions, the infinite, immense, boundless love of God; the love of our neighbour, which is linked to the love of God; and finally, the love of oneself, subject to the other two… Oh! My dear friend, let this command of love be our law, and trampling under foot all vain glory, our hearts will be consumed with love for God, for men and for true happiness. Then, we shall be excellent Catholics, excellent Frenchmen, we shall be happy."
OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY AND GLORY BE

SEPTEMBER 4th O Lord, let our hearts find You through the poorest.
Letter #175 to François Lallier (May 17th, 1838)

"A patron saint is not a trivial sign… a life which must continue, a heart which must restore his heart… a model on earth and a protector in heaven... By appropriating the thoughts and virtues of the saint, the Society could escape from the personal imperfections of its members, and make itself useful in the Church and give reasons for its existence."
OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY AND GLORY BE

SEPTEMBER 5th O Lord, lead us on the path of Holiness.
Letter #97 to Léonce Curnier (May 16th, 1835)

"It is not a fragile boat we should employ to travel the earth; they are wings, two wings which bear the angels up: faith and charity… Grace must direct us... [...] loving unto death, fighting to the end… Let us not count on an easy victory: God had made it difficult for us so as to make our crowns more glorious."
OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY AND GLORY BE

SEPTEMBER 6th O Lord, teach us to look upon our neighbour as our brother."
Letter #137 to Louis Janmot (November 13th, 1836)

"It is for love to assimilate the things loved into itself…"
"…the poor we see with the eyes of flesh; they are there and we can put finger and hand in their wounds, and the scars of the crown of thorns are visible on their foreheads... we should fall at their feet and say: …You are for us the sacred images of that God whom we do not see, and not knowing how to love Him otherwise, shall we not love Him in your person..."
OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY AND GLORY BE

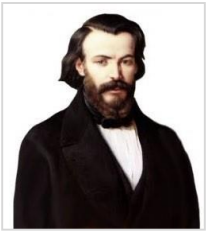
SEPTEMBER 7th O Lord, send us your Spirit to serve you better. Letter #141 to Pierre Balloffet (January 23rd, 1837)

"I do hope that at least this Society of St. Vincent de Paul, founded in such an unforeseen way and expanded so providentially, with so many good examples and so much joy, aimed at doing a little good, will continue to thrive with divine blessing."
OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY AND GLORY BE

SEPTEMBER 8th O Lord, lead us in our need to know the needs of others.
Letter #121 to his mother (July 23rd, 1836)

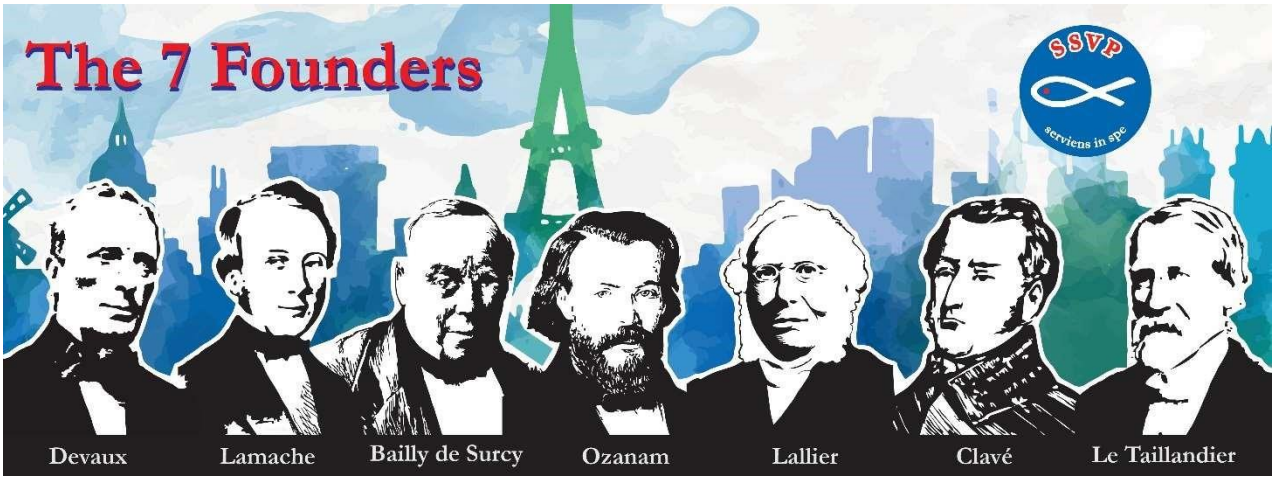
"Their works of charity: Last Tuesday, the Feast of St Vincent de Paul, we all assembled… The reports show that the Society comprises about 200 members visiting 300 poor families, and distributing every year upwards of 4,000 francs in relief to the poor at their homes in the four corners of Paris. Furthermore, we have a house for apprentices in the printing trade, where we accommodate, feed, and instruct ten poor boys… For instance, several dying persons were induced to make their First Communion…Some persons who had been living together a long time, were encouraged to be married in the church...» "Now I am strongly convinced that for charitable work, we should never be anxious about financial resources, they will always come…"
OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY AND GLORY BE

SEPTEMBER 9th O Lord, we thank You for all the gifts received." Letter #157 to Auguste Le Taillandier (August 21st, 1837)



"May each of us, as he increases in years, increase also in friendship, piety and zeal to do good! May our whole life be passed under the patronage of those to whom we have dedicated our youth: Vincent de Paul, the Blessed Virgin, and Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY AND GLORY BE

PRAYER

Lord, you made Blessed Frédéric Ozanam a witness of the Gospel, overwhelmed by the mystery of the Church. You inspired his struggle against poverty and injustice, and gave him tireless generosity in the service of all who suffer. In his family, he was an exceptional son, brother, husband and father. In the world, his burning passion for truth illuminated his thinking, his teaching, and his writings. Within our Society, which he founded as a universal network of charity, he instilled the spirit of love, courage and humility, inherited from Saint Vincent de Paul. His short life was marked throughout by his prophetic vision of society, together with his many virtues. For these many reasons, we thank you Lord, and if it is your will, grant the grace of a miracle, through the intercession of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam.
May the Church proclaim his sanctity, so providential for the present times!

Through Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.