

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Feast Day of Blessed Frederic Ozanam

09 September 2020

Every year, on September 9, members of the St Vincent de Paul Society from all around the world celebrate the Feast of Blessed Frederic Ozanam, our founder.

‘This year as we reflect on his extraordinary work and legacy, we are especially mindful of the call to walk even more closely with companions in the face of historic drought, bushfires, floods and the COVID pandemic,’ said Claire Victory, National President of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia.

‘Some are asking for a hand up for the first time in their lives. It is something many find challenging.

‘The writings of Frederic Ozanam provide us with the inspiration to respond creatively to anyone affected by difficult times,’ she said.

*The knowledge of social well-being is learned, not from books, nor from public debate, but in climbing the stairs to the poor man’s garret, sitting by his bedside, feeling the same cold that pierces him, sharing the secret of his lonely heart and troubled mind.*

*When we know first-hand the conditions of the poor in school, at work, in hospital, in the city, in the country, everywhere that God has placed them, then and only then can we begin to grasp the elements of poverty and hope we may resolve it.*

‘Frederic wrote those words in his correspondence with other members and it’s so important that we remain in communion with the people we assist, to understand them at a very personal level, to help them with their material and personal needs, and to advocate on their behalf.

‘I hope these words feed us all as we go about our work, quietly, persistently, with determination and compassion,’ Ms Victory said.

*The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia consists of 60,000 members and volunteers who operate on the ground through over 1,000 conferences located in individual parishes across the country.*

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