

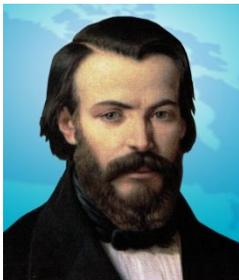
## The Seven Co-founders of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

There is no question about the inspiration and leadership provided by Ozanam, but who were his friends without whom the organization could not have been founded, much less have flourished? These founders were friends who had known each other for little more than a year. All seven originally resided outside of Paris. Their non-student mentor, Emmanuel Bailly, had already established himself in the city for several years, however. The young founders had much in common besides their provincial roots. Five of them were studying law. Four of them had fathers who were medical doctors. For the most part they came from families who were part of the professional middle class that arose after the French Revolution. The core group of friends consisted of Ozanam, Lallier, Lamache and LeTaillandier, and to varying degrees they would remain in contact throughout their lives. (Thirty years after Ozanam's death, Paul Lamache, the last living founder, would report that he still prayed daily for Frederic.)

The founders shared a strong Catholic faith, and the need they felt to defend it among their peers drew them to participate in the Conference of History, presided over by Bailly. This desire to defend their faith in public was evident through most of their lives. Five of them continued on a regular basis to contribute well-reasoned articles to local journals and major newspapers. The core group of four friends would each go on to be well-respected members of the communities in which they settled and continued to serve the poor through the Society they had founded. Although their stories are unknown to most members of that organization today, all the founders led remarkable lives of distinction.

### Founder Members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

- 1 Frederic Ozanam's (1813 – 1853)
- 2 Emmanuel Bailly (1794-1861)
- 3 Auguste Le Taillandier (1811-1886)
- 4 Francois Lallier (1814-1886)
- 5 Jules Deveaux (1811-1880)
- 6 Paul Lamache (1810-1892)
- 7 FELIX CLAVE (1811-1853)



Blessed Frédéric Ozanam

Frédéric was born on Friday, April 23, 1813, to Jean and Marie Ozanam. He was the fifth of Jean and Marie Ozanam's 14 children, one of only three to reach adulthood. His family, which was of Jewish origin had been

settled in the region around Lyon, France, for many centuries. An ancestor of Frédéric, Jacques Ozanam (1640–1717), was a noted mathematician. Jean Ozanam, Frédéric's father, had served in the armies of the First French Republic, but with the rise to power of Napoleon Bonaparte, and the founding of the First French Empire, he turned to trade, to teaching, and finally to medicine.

Frédéric was born in Milan, but brought up in Lyon. In his youth he experienced a period of doubt regarding the Catholic faith, during which he was strongly influenced by one of his teachers at the Collège de Lyon, the priest Abbé Noiroi. His religious instincts showed themselves early, and he published *Réflexions sur la Doctrine de Saint-Simon* a pamphlet against Saint-Simonianism in 1831, which attracted the attention of the French poet and politician Alphonse de Lamartine, born in the area. Ozanam also found time to help organize and write for the Association for the Propagation of the Faith, a lay Catholic organization founded in the city with the aim of supporting Catholic missionaries, many of which came from the area. That autumn he went to study law in Paris, where he suffered a great deal from homesickness. Ozanam fell in with the Ampère family (living for a time with the mathematician André-Marie Ampère), and through them with other prominent liberal Catholics of the time, such as Count François-René de Chateaubriand, Jean-Baptiste Henri Lacordaire, and Charles Forbes René de Montalembert

While still a student, Frédéric took up journalism and contributed considerably to *Baillly'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!"[7]

As a consequence, in May 1833 Frédéric and a group of other young men founded the charitable Society of Saint Vincent de Paul,[5] which already by the time of his death numbered upwards of 2,000 members. The founding members developed their method of service under the guidance of a Sister (now Blessed) Rosalie Rendu, a member of the Congregation of Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, who was prominent in serving the poor in the slums of Paris. The members of the conferences collaborated with Sister Rosalie during the time of the cholera epidemic. When fear had gripped the population, she organized the conferences in all the neighborhoods of Paris to care for the cholera victims, becoming well known in the city for her work, especially in the 12th arrondissement.[8] Frederic's first act of charity was to take his supply of winter firewood and bring it to a widow whose husband had died of cholera.

Ozanam received the degrees of Bachelor of Laws in 1834, Bachelor of Arts in 1835 and Doctor of Laws in 1836. His father, who had wanted him to study law, died on May 12, 1837. Although he preferred literature, Frédéric worked in the legal profession in order to support his mother, and was admitted to the Bar in Lyon in 1837.[8] Still, he also pursued his personal interest, and in 1839 he obtained the degree of Doctor of Letters with a thesis on Dante that then formed the basis of Ozanam's best-known books. A year later he was appointed to a professorship of commercial law at Lyon, and in 1840, at the age of twenty-seven, assistant professor of foreign literature at the Sorbonne.[5] He decided to give a course of lectures on German Literature in the middle Ages and in preparation for it went on a short tour of Germany. His lectures proved highly successful despite the fact

that he attached fundamental importance to Christianity as the primary factor in the growth of European civilization, unlike his predecessors and most of his colleagues, who shared in the predominantly anti-Christian climate of the Sorbonne at that time.

In June 1841, he married Amélie Soulacroix, daughter of the rector of the University of Lyon, and the couple travelled to Italy for their honeymoon. They had a daughter, Marie.

Candelas describes Ozanam as " ... a man of great faith. He valued friendships and defended his friends no matter what the cost. He was attentive to details, perhaps to the extreme. ... [H]e showed a great tenderness when dealing with his family. ...He had a great reverence for his parents, and revealed his ability to sacrifice his career and his profession in order to please them.

Upon the death in 1844 of Claude Charles Fauriel, Ozanam succeeded to the full professorship of foreign literature at the Sorbonne. The remainder of his short life was extremely busy, attending to his duties as a professor, his extensive literary activities, and the work of district-visiting as a member of the society of St Vincent de Paul.

During the French Revolution of 1848, of which he took a sanguine view, he once more turned journalist by writing, for a short time, in various papers, including the *Ère nouvelle* ("New Era"), which he had founded. He traveled extensively, and visited England at the time of the Exhibition of 1851.



### **Emmanuel Bailly**

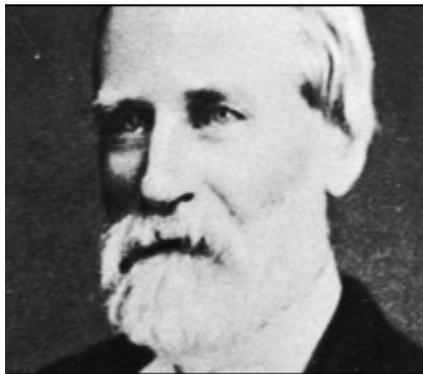
Emmanuel was born in Bryas, in Pas de Calais – near the northernmost tip of France – on March 9, 1794. The family of his father, Andre Joseph, had a deep devotion to the memory and spirituality of St. Vincent de Paul.

Emmanuel's father was a loyal friend of the Lazarists, as the French know St. Vincent de Paul's Congregation of the Mission – from the name of Vincent's original priory. The Lazarists entrusted the elder Bailly temporarily with a collection of Saint Vincent's original letters and documents during the Revolution. He treasured those items and returned them after the troubles ceased. Andre's brother, Nicholas Joseph (1764-1793), was a Lazarist priest who was killed during the Revolution. He was the last superior of the major seminary at Amiens before the Revolution. Fr. Bailly was captured while saying Mass and – while still vested – was thrown into prison. This young priest of 29 died in prison in Amiens on November 16, 1793.

Emmanuel attended seminary in Amiens, as had his older brother, Amable-Ferdinand- Joseph Bailly. Fr. Dominique Hanon was the new superior at the seminary of Amiens; he would later become Superior General of the Lazarists. Hanon took an interest in Ferdinand's education. This was not surprising as Hanon was the successor of the Bailly brothers' martyred uncle. Because at the time in France the Congregation did not legally exist – suppressed for the second time, as it was, from September 1809 to February 1816 – Ferdinand was

unable to become a Vincentian. He began to teach at the seminary in 1806, at age 21, although he was not ordained a priest until April 6, 1811. During this time, Ferdinand probably had his brother Emmanuel as a student. Ferdinand took vows with the Congregation in Paris on November 16, 1819, in the new Priory of Saint Lazare. He was the first Vincentian to do so after the Revolution. Unfortunately, he took his vows during the period between the nomination and formal approval of the new Superior General by the Holy See. This state of doubt about the validity of the vows, in addition to questionable management of finances, would contribute to Ferdinand Bailly's eventual removal from the Congregation.

Emmanuel Bailly received a good education in theology at the seminary at Amiens and also studied philosophy with the Jesuits at Acheul. He began a novitiate with the Lazarists but at same time his brother came to Paris to take vows at St Lazare, Emmanuel left the seminary and came to live in Paris. At age 25 he choose a vocation to serve the Church as a lay person.



**Auguste Le Taillandier (1811-1886)**

Auguste Le Taillandier was born in Rouen, Normandy, on January 28, 1811. He had only a younger brother, Charles. His father belonged to a family of merchants, who had been living in that region since the 17th century. His mother was of a noble family background. He attended the College de Jully from 1828 to 1831.

He and his family moved to Paris and there he pursued his legal studies. There he met Ozanam and the two became friends. He and Frederic lived together in an apartment not far from the Church of St.-Etienne-du-Mont after Frederic moved out of the home of the great scientist Ampere. Frederic described him as "a very amiable young man who is well informed and has sound common sense. ... The only fault I have to find with him is that he is not from Lyon."

Le Taillandier joined the Conference of History – a precursor to the Conference of Charity that gave rise to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. He did not seem to have been much interested in the lively discussions that so captivated his friends. In 1833 he told Ozanam that he thought rhetorical arguments were leading nowhere and that it would be better to join together in some charitable work, instead of discussions about history, literature and philosophy. Le Taillandier was actively involved in the first Charity Conference, in addition to other charitable actions, such as giving religious instruction to apprentices and making visits to prisoners and former prisoners. Le Taillandier adamantly opposed the division of the Society into separate conferences and was remembered as having wept during the debate about doing so in December 1835.

Having left Paris in 1837 to go first to Le Mans and then his home city of Rouen, Auguste was the first of the young founders to marry. He wed Marie Baudry on August 7, 1838. They bore four children, three daughters and one son.

In Rouen Le Taillandier became regional director of one of France's oldest and most distinguished insurance companies. He founded a conference in Rouen in 1841 and became its president. He was very popular among his conference brethren. As a mark of gratitude to their president, the members, assembled in Rouen's St. Godard Church, presented him with the gift of a stained-glass window that featured their president's portrait. Le Taillandier's name was found for many years on the board of directors roster for the local hospital. He was highly regarded by his fellow citizens and was awarded many honorary titles. He devoted his final days to his family, his friends, his Conference and his garden. Auguste died in Rouen on March 23, 1886.



### **Francois Lallier (1814-1886)**

Francois Lallier was born in the Burgundy-region town of Joigny, in Yonne, on June 22, 1814. Like many of the other founders' fathers, Lallier's father was a medical doctor. In his town, Lallier also had an uncle who was presiding magistrate and another who was a professor. Lallier met Frederic Ozanam at the University of Paris and remained a close friend until Frederic's death. Of all his friends, it was Lallier whom Ozanam chose to be godfather to his daughter, Marie.

Lallier was one of the most vigorous participants in the debates of the History Conference. From the beginning, he was always at Ozanam's side in initiating the formation of the Conference of Charity. He also was instrumental in establishing the Notre Dame Lenten Conferences, which are still presented today. In 1834 Lallier, Ozanam and Lamache approached Archbishop de Quelen with a proposal to offer this lecture series to draw the young Catholics of Paris to the cathedral during Lent.

An excellent lawyer, Lallier was renowned for his precise use of language, and he applied himself avidly to such work. In 1835 he was entrusted by Bailly with formulating the articles of the St. Vincent de Paul Society Rule. In 1837 he was appointed the Society's Secretary-General, charged with writing the circular letter to collect reports from conferences. During Ozanam's time away in Lyon, he relied on Lallier to advance his vision of the Society within the Paris Council and to exert influence on Bailly.

In 1839, after stepping down from General Council he married and returned to his home area to live in the town of Sens. Ozanam visited Lallier in Sens after Lallier's son, Henry, was born. After returning to Lyon, Ozanam sent greetings from early Conference members LaPerriere, Arthaud and Chaurand and related that, "Your son is the cause of great entertainment; he is already pictured clothed in his father's gravity." In 1842 Lallier lost a young and beloved daughter, Julie. Ozanam wrote Lallier a long letter of consolation, "wet with tears." It is one of 80 letters between these friends – correspondence that continued until just before Ozanam's death.

Lallier founded the first Conference in Sens in January 1844 in a little room near the Notre Dame gate. He reported that the membership of the Conference consisted of two. For a period of three weeks they continued to meet and pray and to conduct readings and the bag collection. "We kept asking each other if would be possible to find a third brother in order to form one of those gatherings which our Lord promises to bless, and in which three form a quorum." The third member arrived on February 13, 1844. By July 26 they would report to the Archbishop of Sens that they had 18 active members and were helping 16 families.

Lallier was well-respected as a lawyer in Sens. He began as a deputy judge and became presiding magistrate in 1857. In addition to working with the poor, Lallier had an active interest in archeology. In 1844 he was a founding member of the Archaeological Society of Sens, an ancient city with prehistoric mounds and evidence of Roman occupation. Several times he was the organization's president. He contributed regularly to its publication, the Bulletin – the most extensive contribution being an 1845 article about the Roman inscriptions on the wall enclosing the city. His interests also included directing and supervising archeological excavations of sites that included the local Roman arena and ancient mounds. He prepared reports on his findings and participated in archeological conventions.

Nominated for the National Assembly in 1848, Lallier wrote a position paper containing many of the progressive positions found in the writings of his friend Ozanam. The many other well-researched and reasoned articles by Lallier include essays on creation of a single taxing system (1850), abolition of slavery (1852) and universal suffrage (1865). Over these years he also published several articles on poverty in France and the relationship between poverty and economic systems.

Pope Pius IX honored Lallier with the title of Knight of St. Gregory the Great and recognized him as a distinguished "magistrate, writer and scientist who carried high and firm the flag of religion." The Cross of the Legion of Honor was awarded to Lallier in 1873 for his years of civic service.

In 1879, a few years before the celebration of the Society's Golden Jubilee, President General Baudon commissioned Lallier to write an account of the Society's origins. Lallier undertook this work and submitted an initial draft to the other surviving foundermembers: Le Taillandier, Lamache and Devaux. With their collaboration, a brochure was published in 1882 under the title, "Origins of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, according to the Recollections of its First Members."



### **Jules Deveaux (1811-1880)**

Like Lamache and Le Taillandier, Jules Deveaux hailed from the Normandy region. He was born on July 18, 1811, in the town of Colombieres, Calvados. His father, Marie Adrien Deveaux was a country doctor, probably of

peasant stock. After attending the College Royal in Caen, Jules came to Paris to study medicine, probably in 1830. It was there that he met Ozanam and his friends. He took part in the Conference of History but did not seem to have been very active in the debates, perhaps because he was studying medicine and not law.

He was one of the seven founders and attended the early meetings of the Society. He took up the collection of funds at the first meeting by walking around with his hat held behind his back. He then became the first treasurer of the Conference and later the first treasurer of the General Council. Jules may have worked with Sr. Rosalie Rendu before the formation of the Society. Regardless, it was he who, at the urging of Emmanuel Bailly, was delegated to approach her so that the newly formed Conference of Charity would be well-mentored in the work of charity.

Leaving Paris in 1839 after submitting his medical thesis, Devaux settled in Trivieres, Normandy. After his mother's death, he temporarily abandoned medical practice to travel, especially in Germany. He tried to found the first Conference there but did not succeed. He married Louise Alice Pasquet in Paris on April 30, 1848, and they had at least one son, who recorded some of his father's memories. The remainder of his life is not well-known. He died in Paris on October 27, 1880.



**Paul Lamache (1810-1892)**

Paul Lamache was the oldest of the six students who came together to form the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. He was also the last living member of the group. Born at Saint- Pierre Eglise in Normandy on July 18, 1810, he belonged to an ancient family of landowners and administrators. On the fringe of Norman nobility, the Lamache family had experienced major hardship during the Revolution.

Paul's brothers were sent to study with the Jesuits at St. Acheul. Paul, however, won a scholarship and attended the secular College of Rouen. He was known to be a bright student and leader of his classmates. In this secular environment his faith was frequently tested, but he was fortunate to have found a mentor in the headmaster, a Monsieur Faucon, and several good priests as advisors. After graduating, Lamache considered studying mathematics at the Polytechnique de Rouen but ended up going to Paris to study law.

Lamache arrived in Paris in 1830 just after Charles X abdicated, ending the revolution of 1830. In 1832 he met Frederic Ozanam and Francois Lallier. A devout Catholic from the provinces, Lamache was delighted to find like-minded students; he had experienced the same alienation and isolation as they had. During these college years, Lamache enjoyed the support and friendship of his younger sister, Justine, who moved to Paris to study at the Convent of the Ladies of Thomas-de-Villeneuve, as did older sister, Virginia. Although Justine never entered the order, she also never married and lived a life devoted to service of the needy.

Joining the History Conference, Lamache took an active part in its debates. He then joined the Charity Conference and took part with Ozanam and Lallier in organizing the Notre Dame Lenten Conferences and met at least once with Archbishop Quelen for this purpose. While always being in the core group of friends, Lamache never took on a role of leadership or held office. Yet he remained an active Vincentian in multiple cities for almost 60 years.

Paul had a keen interest in history and while attending law school published several papers. After receiving his law degree, he went on to complete a doctoral degree in law in 1838. He did his internship as an attorney in Paris and then tried to follow the career path his father desired. Despite very good recommendations, when he applied to become a substitute magistrate, he was unable to secure a position. Instead, he was offered an appointment as a judge in the colonies. This presented him with a moral dilemma. He was strongly against slavery, as was Ozanam. Certainly, it would have been a topic of debate and conversation among these intellectual students. The magistrates in the colonies were not under the structure of the French judicial system but rather that of the French Navy, which was closely aligned with the interests of the wealthy landowning slaveholders.

A missionary priest on the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, Fr. Jerome Lamache had shared much with his brother about the evils of slavery. Jerome was a priest dedicated to ministering to the black slaves, and he set up institutions to evangelize them and improve their lives. He also wrote and distributed a brochure outlining anti-slavery principles, including those promulgated in the 1839 encyclical by Pope Gregory XVI against slavery. The final chapters of Fr. Lamache's brochure included many moving personal stories he had collected from people subjected to slavery. When the brochure was distributed, Fr. Jerome was held for 24 hours, while the military patrolled the streets to prepare for a slave uprising. Fr. Jerome was expelled from the colonies, but the pamphlet went into a second printing and was distributed in France.

Paul Lamache worked to end slavery in the French colonies with such notables as Victor Schoelcher and the Duke of Broglie. In 1843 Lamache published a major L'Correspondant article titled, "Slavery in the French Colonies." He wrote of slavery as a religious issue – and a serious disgrace to Catholics because the practice had been abolished earlier in England and other Protestant countries. Abolition in French territory was finally achieved by the Republican Assembly in 1851.



**FELIX CLAVE (1811-1853)**

He was born in southern France on July 8, 1811, probably in the Province of Haute-Pyrenees. Often he is described as being from Toulouse, but – if that is the case – he was there only a short time. His father, Guillaume Clave, may have been from a noble family, but if so, the Claves had experienced setbacks. The elder Clave made his living operating a series of boarding schools. Before Felix's birth his father was teaching in

Bordeaux. Because of Guillaume's loyalty to the monarchy, however, he lost this position and returned to the Pyrenees. His loyalty was rewarded with a position as Principal of the College of Dax, where he stayed for one year before opening his own boarding school in Bordeaux in 1821. Felix was undoubtedly one of his first students.

This school became a well-regarded and successful institution, but after some unknown difficulties Guillaume chose to settle in Paris in May 1830. He experienced some obstacles in setting up his school in Paris because the education officials required him to have a Bachelor of Science degree in addition to his arts degree. He was admitted to the university and was allowed to open a school while he pursued his degree, which he received in 1838. His school, called the "Clave Institution," was located close to the Church of St. Philippe du Roule, and Guillaume taught the children of prosperous tradesman. About half of the students were boarders. The student body is largely young Spaniards and Mexicans. This may be explained by the likelihood that Guillaume spoke fluent Spanish and that the second of his daughters, Petronille Mary-Louise Celina, married a prosperous Mexican, Don Manuel Zulayeta, in Paris in February 1833.

As a university student, Felix was an adherent of the utopian-socialist St. Simonian teachings, but he was won over by the arguments of Ozanam and the other Catholics who took part in the Conference of History. What course of study Clave pursued is unclear; many sources say it was law. Clave associated himself with Ozanam's friends and was present at the first meeting of the Conference of Charity. Clave remained an active member while he lived in Paris. When a new pastor, Fr. Faudet, came to St.-Etienne-du- Mont within a year of the founding of the Conference, Mr. Bailly gave an indication of his regard for Felix by choosing him to meet with and explain to the priest the nature and workings of the Conference of Charity that existed within his parish bounds. Fr. Faudet was a little uncertain about the novel group but accepted an invitation to attend a conference meeting. He left the meeting a dedicated supporter of the new Society.

After the initial 1835 split of the first conference into two groups – one at St.-Etienne-du- Mont and one at St. Sulpice – Clave formed the third conference at St. Philippe du Roule with the help of the pastor, Fr. Maret. This parish was a distance from St. Sulpice and was close to where Clave and a number of other early members lived. This third conference was a significant step in the organization's development because it was more than just a division of the original group. It demonstrated that the structure could actually be duplicated in new parishes. Assistance in organizing this new conference was provided by a team of visitors consisting of Frederic Ozanam and Francois Lallier.

Clave's career seemed uncertain after university. Some of his writings were published, and he may have assisted his father by teaching at the boarding school. He regularly attended daily Mass at St. Philippe, and it was there around Easter of 1838 that he met an attractive woman, Marie de Nicolai, a woman above his social class. Their mutual attraction would come to an unhappy end when she discovered that he was the son of a mere schoolteacher and without wealth or position. It was this woman's close companion, Marie Capelle (after marriage to be known as Marie Lafarge), who would later destroy Felix's reputation and cause his name to be associated with the 19th century's most sensational criminal case.

