

FEAST OF THE BIRTH OF MARY **September 8**

Gospel: (Matthew 1: 18-32)

Suddenly the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream and said: "Joseph, son of David, have no fear about taking Mary as your wife. It is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived this child. She is to have a son and you are to name him Jesus because he will save his people from their sins." All this happened to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin shall be with child and give birth to a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel."

Reflection:

Frederic Ozanam died on the feast of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary, September 8, 1853. It seems fitting for this man to die on the feast of a woman to whom he had been greatly devoted all his life. Devotion to Mary, the mother of God, was part of Frederic Ozanam's life from childhood to death. He sought her intercession often. Kneeling at her altar, he prayed, "I place my intentions under the auspices of our Divine Mother..." Frederic believed in the power of Mary, the Mother of God. He often prayed to her for himself and for others. He believed in the power of Mary's intercession with her divine offspring. Devotion to her was woven into the various stages of Frederic's life and especially prominent in the poetic devotion of youth, the moral challenges of young adulthood, the transformation of becoming a parent, and the acceptance of suffering and death. Frederic invites us to consider our own devotion to Mary and our trust in her intercession. (Ramson, *Praying with Frederic*, p.68, 71)

Vincenzian Meditation:

"I am entirely yours, most Holy Virgin, that I may more perfectly belong to God. Teach me, therefore, to imitate your holy life by fulfilling the designs of God in my life. I very humbly beg you to assist me."-St. Louise de Marillac- (Gibson and Kneaves, *Praying with Louise*, p. 91)

Discussion: (Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence)

Have you ever felt the power of Mary, the mother of God, in your life? Do you need to ask her intercession for a significant situation now?

Closing Prayer:

O God, as we celebrate the birth of Mary,
-we ask for the grace to trust in her intercession.
Through Mary, source of our joy,
-we ask for the grace of healing the brokenhearted.
Through Mary, seat of wisdom,
-we ask for the grace of guidance in our lives.
Through Mary, mother of God,
-we ask for the grace to recognize Jesus in the poor.
Amen

