

Maria Legionis



Maria Legionis

The Voice of the Legion of Mary

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The Queen of Mexico and Empress of America - Frank Duff	3
The Face of Mercy - Fr. Bede McGregor, Concilium Spiritual Director	11
Joe Gabbett, an Early Legion Figure, Part 1 of 3 - Frank Duff	14
Praises of Mary	18
Youth Conference - Mary Went in Haste - Maria Fogarty	19
The Vincentians in Dublin Honour Frank Duff - Tommy McCabe	23
The Legion in the Philippines - By Michael and Maura McGauran	28
World News	34
Prayer for the Year of Mercy - Pope Francis	40

"Innocence" by W. Bouguereau.

"That face, also, must also have presented a thousand shades and variety of loveliness, in proportion as one or more virtues, or as one or another feeling, predominated for the time in her magnificent soul. Christian artists have spent their genius expressing these shades and variety in endless masterpieces."

THE KNOWLEDGE OF MARY - Fr. Januarius De Concilio

Chapter II POSITIVE PERFECTIONS OF MARY, ARTICLE I

A copy of the original hangs in Frank Duff's house



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THE QUEEN OF MEXICO AND EMPRESS OF AMERICA

Our Lady of Guadalupe

by The Servant of God, Frank Duff



Possibly by reason of the growth of materialistic ideas and consequent anxiety to buttress one's faith, there is a yearning for visible supports of that faith.

Alleged apparitions are eagerly credited and crowds rush to acclaim them before the Church has had time to adjudicate on them; and even when it has ruled against them. Authentic apparitions such as Lourdes or Fatima are by-passed by self-endorsed transactions like Garabandal and Palmar. The devotees of these latter propagate them almost with a ferocity, just as if the Catholic faith was vitally linked up with them. And this in the teeth of the Church's recommendation that we should wait and see.

What is really puzzling is the indifference shown by those devotees

towards the established apparitions. Apparently the special ingredient has to be novelty. Novelty outweighs authenticity. However I do not pursue that subject. My remarks have only been preliminary to the discussing of a shrine which – even though it is winning growing attention in America – is insufficiently known to us on this side of the world. Articles on it are few. One does not cross the Atlantic on pilgrimage to it, though the reverse traffic to Lourdes is immense. Yet it is something which stands for one of the greatest supernatural interventions of all time. I am referring to Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico.

A SPECTACULAR INTERVENTION

In what way was it historical? Well, it marked the entry of Our Lady into the history of Mexico in a primary way, in such fashion as to alter drastically every aspect of the life of the country. It converted Mexico at a stroke from total paganism to total Christianity, from division to unity, from hate to love. As a phenomenon it merits a place beside such momentous happenings as the conversion of Constantine which took Christianity out of the catacombs and made it the greatest force on earth. Surely then the devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe should receive more attention than it does. I discuss with you this subject.

BEGINNINGS OF CHRISTIANITY IN NEW WORLD

I start off by setting the stage for the dramatic happening. The official discoverer of America is Christopher Columbus, a native of Genoa. He awakened the interest of the King of Spain who provided the ships and the men. The journey took 71 days. He landed on San Salvador in the Bahamas on 1 October, 1492. He was then 40 years old.



When those brave explorers landed from their three vessels, of which the flagship was appropriately called Santa Maria, their instinctive procedure was to form a procession headed by a Franciscan priest bearing a crucifix.

They marched up the sandy beach; then set the crucifix in the sand and all sang the Te Deum.

This taking possession of the New World in the name of God must have been a deeply moving spectacle. It may be said to have typified the Spanish colonisations. Profane and pious motives mingled. It was said of them that they voyaged for the service of God and also to get rich.

But it is certain that others preceded Columbus to that continent. The American chronology credits Eric the Red, a Norseman, with having voyaged to southern Greenland in 982, and Leif Eriksen, also Norse, with having reached New England in 1001. But it would appear to be quite certain that St. Brendan the Navigator anticipated them all by about 450 years, first touching Newfoundland, then like Columbus landing on one of the Bahama Islands, then going on to the site of the modern Miami.

Furthermore, the traditions of Mexico tell of a man of immense stature coming in from the Atlantic about 700 A.D. and preaching to the Toltecs who were the predecessors of the Aztecs, what would appear to have been Christianity. He gave his name as Cuchulain and said he came from the Island of Saints and Scholars.

Remnants of his teachings survived for long among the people and later proved to be a big factor in the ready acceptance of Christianity.

THE COMING OF CORTES

I now come to the immediate prelude to the intervention of Our Lady. In 1519, Cortes, the Spanish Conquistador, landed in Mexico with a small force and by 1521 had



completely conquered the country. He found there a real civilisation. The population was about 8 millions of high-type people, ruled by an Emperor and possessing a detailed organisation comprising 38 states and a system of Courts of Justice.

Cortes recognised its grandeur, treated it as a nation, and integrated it into the Holy Roman Empire as an equal partner under the Emperor Charles V.

But its religion was a frightful form of paganism based on the idea of human sacrifice. It is recorded that on the great Aztec days of festival as many as 25,000 persons were offered up to the gods annually.

The conquest of the country was accompanied by the usual brutality of war. This was accentuated after the departure of Cortes and produced a fierce hatred of the conquerors. This militated against the positive element in Spanish colonisation which aimed

at the education, development and Christianisation of the native peoples. This characteristic was shown in the establishment of the Council of the Indies to safeguard the laws set up by the Emperor Charles V.

Nothing like this was done by any of the other European colonising nations who reduced the peoples practically to servitude.

AZTECS REMAIN IMPERVIOUS TO THE NEW FAITH

A special characteristic of Spanish colonisation was the effort to Catholicise the people. Priests were introduced in great numbers for that purpose and the result was the evangelisation of the countries. But at first this was rendered almost impossible in Mexico by the resentment of the people. In the ten years after the conquest few converts had been gained, and at the time of the event which I am going to describe it is said that a universal rebellion aimed at the wiping out of the Spanish was on the point of being launched. And it would have to be conceded that at that time the Aztecs were easily capable of killing every European on their soil.

It was a turning-point, a moment of supreme tension when something had to break. The fate of Mexico and perhaps of Spain were in the balance. The issue was decisively settled by the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe. This is what took place.

THE APPARITION

Thirty-nine years had passed since the landing of Columbus. On 9 December 1531, at that time observed as the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, a devout Christian Indian named Juan de Diego, aged 57, was on his way to Mass. He and his wife had been baptised by the very first groups of missionaries. His wife did not live long afterwards. He was an educated man of the middle class, possessing a fair property. On a hill at Tepeyac, a few miles outside Mexico City, he met a beautiful lady who addressed him in his own language in a pleasing accent typical of the educated people. She identified herself to him as "Holy Mary, Ever Virgin, Mother of the True God." With a complete simplicity he acknowledged her and listened to the commission which she gave him: "Go to the Bishop in Mexico and tell him that I desire a temple to be built here in my honour."

Unquestioningly he went to the house of Bishop Juan de Zummaraga, a Franciscan, gained admittance and delivered his message. You can guess how it was received, but a wrong inference must not be taken from this. The Bishop was a learned and a holy man but tales of apparitions must be viewed critically.

So Juan returned to the hill to see the lady whom he found awaiting him. He reported on his reception and asked that a more credible messenger than he would be appointed.



The Lady simply sent him back to repeat her message. Needless to say, he was regarded as a nuisance and turned away by the Bishop who told him that the lady should either come herself or else give a sign to prove who she was.

Again she was waiting and Juan repeated what the Bishop had said. The lady's rejoinder was that he was to go to the top of the hill, gather the flowers which he would find growing there and bring them to the Bishop. He went to the top which was not only rocky and barren but frozen at the time. He saw a wealth of exquisite roses which he gathered and brought back to the lady. She re-arranged them in his tilma or mantle with her own hands. Then he went to the Bishop and with difficulty gained admission. He found two other men with the Bishop.

He opened his cloak and the miraculous roses tumbled to the ground. But they seemed to make no impression on the Bishop who threw himself on his knees before the empty cloak which Juan was now holding open. He had reason for his astonishment and his reverence; for on the cloak was imprinted the image of the lady as Juan had seen her on Tepeyac Hill.

The Bishop had asked for a sign and one had been given to him. It was sufficient. The Bishop ordered a chapel to be built at the foot of the hill of Tepeyac to house the miraculous picture. This chapel, made of adobe, 15 feet by 15 feet in size, was constructed in 14 days by the Indians and Spaniards working together in a new-found unity. In the meantime the picture was kept in the Bishop's own chapel and then in the Church.

DEAD MAN BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE

During its solemn transfer to the new chapel, an Indian was accidentally pierced by an arrow and killed. The body was brought before the picture and at once life returned. He was one of those who subsequently devoted his life to helping Juan Diego to explain the picture and to teach the Catechism.

In 1533 a larger chapel was substituted and three years later a still bigger one. In 1709 the great Sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe was dedicated. In 1754 the formal approbation of the picture was given by Pope Benedict XIV. Referring to the event which the picture commemorated, the Pope quoted from Psalm 147: "To no other nation has such a favour been done."

Bishop Zummaraga had no doubts as to how the miracle should be utilised.

"Go to the Bishop in Mexico and tell him that I desire a temple to be built here in my honour."

From the first moment he realised Juan Diego's providential mission and his competence to fulfil it. He gave him complete charge of the shrine. A one-room addition was made to the east wall of the chapel to serve as modest living quarters for Juan and there he passed the rest of his life. His own house and property he gave to his uncle.



WORD SPREADS AND EIGHT MILLION CONVERTED

Word of the amazing occurrence began to spread through the country and the Indians in ever-increasing numbers came to see the image and to hear the story. From morning to night Juan repeated its details and explained the Catholic faith. In this gigantic task he was aided by other converts. The results were in keeping with the marvel itself. In seven years the entire population of Mexico, 8 millions, were baptised. The storm-cloud of rebellion was dissipated at a stroke. Understanding and unity between Indians and Spaniards took the place of insane hatred and Mexico set its feet on the way to full nationhood.

And now I specify some overwhelming circumstances which form unquestionable evidence of the authenticity of the picture.

The cloak which Juan was wearing and on which the image was imprinted was made of what was called ayate fibre. Only the upper classes wore cotton cloth. Ayate was made of a vegetable called the maguey. Juan's cloak was of two pieces sewn together with soft string. Its colour was white and on this untreated, rough substance the sacred picture was imprinted in brilliant colours. Despite the passage of 450 years, these remain vivid although for the first 116 years it had no glass protection. No, certainly the painting was beyond the capacity of any artist of the time in Mexico, apart altogether from the fact that it would have been impossible to paint on such a surface.

CRITICS AT WORK

Of course, as our human way is, the genuineness of the picture had to be put in doubt, just as in the case of the Holy Shroud. So later on it was suggested that the painting was the work of some celebrated artist of the old world. Not a shred of evidence was presented by those who made this suggestion; not even a name was mentioned. It is to be noted that the

picture bears no signature, such as is always put on his work by an artist. The tendency to doubt is greater than the tendency to believe. I think it is Saint Jerome who says that the Blood of Our Lord was no sooner vanished from the Hill of Calvary than critics began to question His Humanity and His Death.

But there is much more than this negative proof. Ayate, being a vegetable substance, decays. This process can be rapid according to the degree of wear. Without any use, the material could be expected to last for possibly 25 years. But in this case, after nearly 450 years the fabric is undecayed, strong as it was at its beginning, and the picture undeteriorated in the slightest.

More than that: The experts insist that it would be impossible to paint a picture of its kind upon such a surface. The paint simply would not take. More again, modern examination under a microscope does not show any trace of a paint or sign of the use of a brush. The image is photographic in its nature; a photograph is imprinted without either paint or brush or camera! And this takes place centuries before the art of photography was discovered. This human tendency to doubt did not cease to assert itself. Every successive scientific discovery was directed towards the picture in the possibility of bringing out inconsistencies.



First, the earliest microscope and the modern ultra-powerful developments of it were applied. Every new ray or chemical process was brought to bear. But, each exacting test, instead of detecting deception, only provided further evidence of authenticity.

REFLECTION IN EACH EYE

This most up-to-the-minute research has revealed what is perhaps the most striking feature of all. Inspection of the eyes of the image through a microscope show clearly the reflection, in each of the eyes, of persons in a room. These reflections are as faithful and as natural as they would be in normal eyes, having the same curvature and other characteristics.

It is as if Our Lady were standing in the room and without intervening apparatus is photographed on the cloak, her eyes naturally reflecting the scene before her. Three persons are thus shown, one of them being positively identified as Juan Diego. The others would be two of the following: Bishop Zummaraga, Juan Gonzales and Don Sebastian Y Fuenleal who had just been appointed General Administrator of Mexico.

A PHOTOGRAPH OF OUR LADY

This raises another point which may have an extreme importance. If this photographic quality really attaches to the eyes of the image on the cloak,

why should it be restricted to the eyes? Surely the inference must be drawn that the face is included in the photography? This would mean that it would be the only photograph of Our Lady which exists. All the visionaries of Our Lady have tried to describe her appearance in words, but how far does that carry us? Not far, because words can only convey an impression. A photograph is another thing, especially if it be one taken by Heaven.

Here is another angle to that "photograph." Critical observers say that it depicts Our Lady not as an Indian but as one belonging to the Middle East; or in other words as a Jewess – which is what she was.

One of the notable circumstances connected with the picture has been its preservation from the explosion of a powerful time-bomb concealed in a bouquet of flowers and placed before the picture in the earlier years of this century. This was planned by the persecutors of religion in Mexico who saw the greatness of the power opposed to them by the devotion to the picture. The bomb exploded with shattering effect, producing extensive damage around the Basilica. But the picture itself, including its frame and glass, were left unscathed although a heavy iron Crucifix in front of it on the altar was totally twisted out of shape. Thus the outrage recoiled on its perpetrators, for the greatness of this miracle of preservation served to increase the devotion which those evil men had intended to destroy.

RESULT: INDIANS EVANGELISE THEIR OWN PEOPLE

There is another significant lesson to be learned from this epic of the original conversion of Mexico. It was initiated and fostered by Our Blessed Lady, but the presentation of the faith was by Juan and his little group of Indian helpers. Our Lady brought them in because they knew the language and because the Indians had no doubts about them; they belonged to the people themselves.

One of them was the Indian who had been killed and restored to life during the installation of the picture in the new chapel. He had peremptory reason to give back that life to Our Lady in telling his people about her and her Divine Son. Perhaps the others who similarly helped had been similarly convinced through receiving great favours. Be that as it may, the conversion of Mexico in seven years depended on that group of apostles at Tepeyac who tirelessly explained the Christian story to the multitudes thronging in daily from all parts of Mexico. They came, they saw, they listened, they were conquered by Jesus and Mary. Then they went to the priests to be received into the Church which up to then they had hated.

Can we not see in that uniquely successful feat of apostleship the very essence of the Legion idea, the mobilisation under the auspices of Mary of the ordinary people in the work of evangelisation. It is the

principle of the leaven, proposed to us by none other than Our Saviour Himself, which can be used to permeate the entire mass.

It is an intriguing fact that only one place in the world receives more pilgrims than Guadalupe. Which is it? Lourdes? Fatima? Neither of them. It is Rome. Only the centre of Christendom receives more pilgrims annually than Guadalupe.

A PLEA FOR CHINA

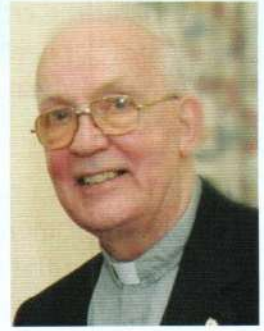
When one contemplates the immediate and wholesale character of the conversion which was wrought by that apparition, one is caused to yearn that some of the great areas of spiritual necessity of today would be made the subject of a kindred phenomenon, say a country like China where live 800 millions of worthy, simple people. If given a portent like that of Guadalupe, these would react as the Aztecs did and would force their way in millions into the Church.

Is there any method by which we can cause Our Blessed Mother to make such a visit? It would be her maternal wish. There must be something lacking from the human side. China is not only the largest community on earth but it is exposed to atheistic propaganda and is a possible peril to the world. So I repeat: What can we do to bring Our Lady to China?

THE FACE OF MERCY

BY FR. BEDE MCGREGOR O.P.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR TO THE CONCILIUM OF THE WORLD WIDE LEGION OF MARY



On reading the letter of Pope Francis, 'The Face of Mercy,' announcing the extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy from 8th December 2015, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, to the 20th November 2016, the feast of Christ the King, my immediate reaction was the conviction that this letter is of immense significance for the Legion of Mary throughout the whole world.

As we know, the original name of the Legion was for a time, 'The Association of Our Lady of Mercy.' Later the name was changed but the reality signified by the name has never changed. Mercy must be at the heart of the Legion as it is in the heart of Mary and in the heart of the Church. The Handbook reminds us: 'The very first praesidium of the Legion was given the title Our Lady of Mercy. This was done because the first work undertaken was the visitation of a hospital under the care of the Sisters of Mercy. The legionaries thought they were choosing the name, but who can doubt that in reality it was conferred by the sweet Virgin herself, who thereby indicated the quality which must ever distinguish the legionary soul.'

Of course, the great source and the face of mercy are seen primarily and essentially in Jesus. Pope Francis reiterates the simple truth that Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions and his entire person reveals the mercy of God. Especially we see the face of mercy in the figure of Christ on the Cross. We hear him cry out the infinitely precious words:

'Father, forgive them.'

Mercy identifies the very nature of God in relationship with the whole created order. We simply do not know God if we do not know his mercy. It is the quintessential Gospel. We have not yet truly heard or lived the Gospel if we have not opened our hearts and our lives to the mercy of God. Neither will we ever really know Mary if we do not see in some fashion that mercy defines her very being too.

She stood at the cross and she heard those words of her Son. They pierced her heart and she became the Mother of Mercy.

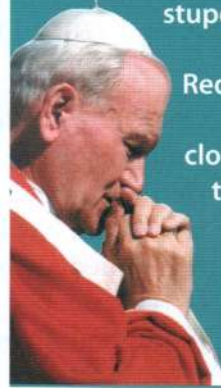
No one has ever understood as much as Mary that mercy is the key to understanding the very identity and mission of Jesus.



She knows what her Son meant when he said so often: 'I came to save sinners.' And the Legion like the Church, with the Church and in the Church stands by Mary at the foot of the Cross to hear and appropriate this primordial truth of the Gospel which is Divine Mercy.

Pope Francis quotes Saint John Paul II:

"The Church lives an authentic life when she professes and proclaims mercy – the most stupendous attribute of the Creator and Redeemer – and when she brings people close to the sources of the Saviour's mercy, of which she is the trustee and dispenser".

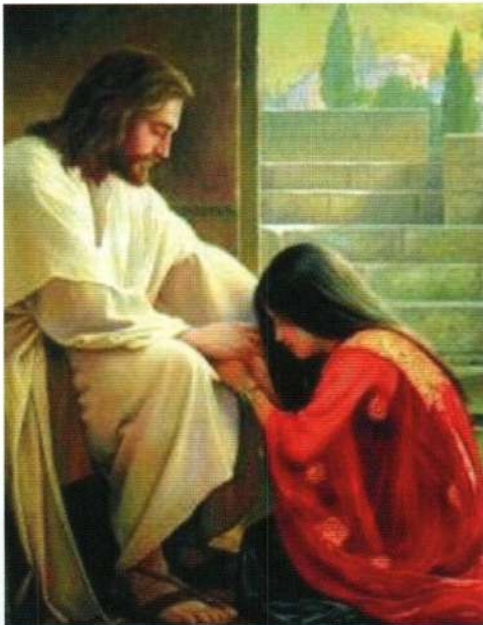


Much of what the recent Popes say of the place of mercy in the mission of the Church can and must be applied to the Legion too.

So, let me get back to Pope Francis. He writes: 'The Church is commissioned to announce the mercy of God, the beating heart of the Gospel, which in its own way must penetrate the heart and the mind of every person. The Spouse of Christ must pattern her behaviour after the Son of God who went out to everyone without exception..... It is absolutely essential for the Church and for the credibility of her message that she herself live and testify to mercy. Her language and her gestures must transmit mercy, so as to touch the hearts of all people and inspire them once more to find the road that leads to the Father.'

'The Church's first truth is the love of Christ. The Church makes herself a servant of this love and mediates it to all people: a love that forgives and expresses itself in the gift one's self. Consequently, wherever the Church is present, the mercy of the Father must be present. In our parishes, communities, associations, and movements, in a word wherever there are Christians, everyone should find an oasis in mercy.' I hope and pray that the Legion will be an oasis of mercy on all five continents, in every Diocese and parish where she is present and indeed wherever legionaries are to be found.

We are called by Mary to be an oasis of mercy, especially for those brothers and sisters of ours who are most in need of God's mercy. One of the truly wonderful aspects of the Church in the modern world is the inspiring and profound social teaching of the



Church; the application of the Gospel to the social, economic and cultural realities of the world. Especially we must underline her teaching and defence concerning the dignity of the human person from conception to natural death and in all other situations. Also noteworthy is the option for the poor which is so deeply rooted in the Gospels and we must never let it be obscured or neglected. Thankfully there are many groups who are committed to the corporal works of mercy and social justice and indeed every Christian must be involved at least to the extent open to them in the particular context of their state of life and circumstances such as health, age, work, children etc.

But the special focus of the Legion is on the spiritual works of mercy and especially the most fundamental option in the Gospels: the salvation of souls.

Jesus came first and foremost to save sinners.

One may have every other good and necessary thing in life, but if one is deprived in one's very soul then that is an eternal tragedy. Pope Francis has some truly illuminating things to say about the relationship between justice and mercy. In the meanwhile may I recommend that we all read and constantly reread chapter 39 of the Handbook: the words may be different from the letter of Pope Francis, but it has the same sublime music.

TALK ON JOSEPH GABBETT

BY THE SERVANT OF GOD,
FRANK DUFF
- PART 1 -



I have been asked to turn back the pages of history a little and to touch on a topic which many years ago, I attempted to treat.

The Legion, as I suppose every institution in history, had its roots and those roots lay in the ground for some time before they issued as the Legion itself and goodness only knows, indeed how far the providential preparation for the Legion went back. Because we have seen that this inconspicuous thing was intended to play a very significant part in the story of the Catholic Church. Now incidentally my purpose this evening would be to save from oblivion, so far as I could do so, a noble name. I am going to talk to you about Joseph Gabbett who was wrapped up in that pre-history of the Legion.

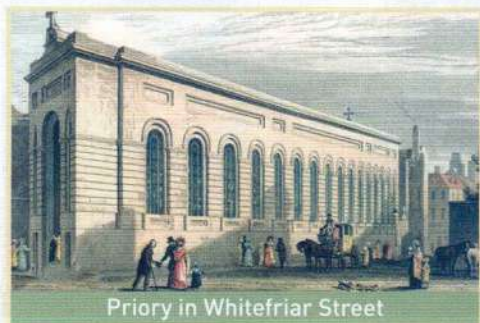
In October 1913, which is a time so far back as to seem prehistoric to many of the younger ones before me, I joined the St. Vincent De Paul Society.



We are a little bit more particular about handing out offices in the Legion today.

Early in the following year, that is 1914, we received a letter from another mighty figure whom some day or other, I must really talk to you about for the same purpose of exhibiting a great one of the past. It was Tom McCabe.

It was the Conference entitled Our Lady of Mount Carmel and it met in the Priory in Whitefriar Street. The President at the time was John T. Lennon, a wonderful person who died as secretary of that celebrated body known as the Revenue Commissioners. The secretary of the conference was Diarmuid O'Hegarty who was later one of the leaders of the rebellion. He died some years ago as Chief Commissioner of the Board of Works. I took his place as secretary of the conference at my third meeting.



Priory in Whitefriar Street

That letter was one of deep reproach. He took us severely to task for permitting to exist at our back door, a proselytising institution known as six and a half Whitefriar Street. It was one of those extraordinary businesses that the Protestants used to specialise in Ireland aimed at weaning the Catholics from their faith by inducements. This one had opened in 1878, during one of the minor famines of the country. It gave an excellent free breakfast every Sunday morning, the price being attendance at a service of which a bitter anti-Catholic discourse formed part. That was held every Sunday morning at 8 a.m. The attendance was about 150. When that letter was read, Brother Lennon said, "we must do something about it", and he asked for someone to accompany him to the place on a reconnoitring trip. I volunteered little knowing what it was going to lead me into.

At about 7.30 the following Sunday morning we were outside the door of the place and after that time the subjects of the place began to enter. I watched the proceedings spellbound. I had never seen in bulk, persons so degraded. True you would meet them around the streets singly, but together as a crowd the effect was overwhelming. I remember making a remark about them one time that you know when you pull a great big rock up out of the ground that has been lying there for a long time, you know all the strange things that begin to crawl out from under it. It was that same extraordinary effect of – my



heavens – the poverty of course at that time in Ireland was dire. You will understand that there were no benefits whatever for that type of person. The National Health Insurance Act for fully paid up people had only been passed in 1911. But over and above that evident demoralisation lay the still worse fact that the people who attended those places forthwith abandoned the practice of their religion.

Proselytism was at work everywhere. There were at least half a dozen institutions working away in Dublin, taking in every form of the people's necessities. Another big free breakfast centre was being carried on in the Metropolitan Hall in Abbey Street. That was receiving attention at that time from the said Tom McCabe and Tom Fallon. We were standing there and in a little while Brother Lennon contacted a lady going into the place and took her down the street to elicit some information from her. I remained watching and counting. A woman came to me and asked me was I interested in the place? I said, I was

She then pointed out to me a man standing fifty yards further down the street watching the place and she told me that he was Mr. Gabbett who had a special interest in that place and I should speak to him. I moved down to him and I told him why I was there.

If you ever had the curiosity to know what he was like, you will find a photograph of him on page eight of the June 1938 issue of *Maria Legionis*. He had a muffler around his neck. He amazed me by saying that he had all arrangements made to open an opposition breakfast the following Sunday morning. At this stage Mr. Lennon came back. I introduced them and Lennon's first remark was that already he had got permission from Father Michael O'Reilly, the Carmelite to use the schools in Whitefriar Street for the breakfast, but when he heard of Gabbett's proposed breakfast, he called off ours and we offered our help, financial and personal. The former, that is the finance, was declined. Gabbett explained that he was financing it by a penny a week subscription. Let me mention that he was a man, of what you would call aggressive independence, so it is really quite a wonder that he accepted the aid of ourselves but doubtfully he did and therein we embarked on an adventure which was destined to affect my own life very, very notably.

Gabbett was a native of Limerick. He had served in the British army for 21 years including a great deal of service in India. He was married with five children. At that time he was living in Camden Lane right opposite Sancta Maria. He ran a shoemaker's shop but his main work was military work – the making of the military boots which officers had to wear. He worked for a shop which has disappeared long ago, then celebrated

Jordan's of Grafton Street. He was what they called a dressing member of the Brown Scapular Confraternity in Whitefriar Street, that is that used to appear fully dressed up in all the robes on state occasions and incidentally I'll mention that Leon O'Broin's father was the secretary of the same confraternity and it was there in 1914 that I met Leon O'Broin as a boy of about 11 then sporting the fainne (emblem of Irish speaker). He was destined to become one of the great experts in the Irish language and in Irish history.

Gabbett moved later to 40, Lower Kevin Street and then to 40, South King Street. The shop is still in the possession of a shoemaker. I think Clegg is the name now over the door. All that time he was a pioneer and I might just throw in the remark that it was his sporting of the pin that first concentrated my own thoughts on the Pioneer Association. So the following week we attended at a place called 9, Cheaters Lane off Aungier Street. It was a stable with yard, space for two carriages and overhead room, for the driver-coachman and his family. Now we had that quite considerable premises for 10 shillings a week.

All was ready for the breakfast when we turned up. The bread had been cut and the tea was boiling gaily away, having been boiling gaily away since an early hour that morning. I might mention that Gabbett's tea was a celebrated brew and by itself would



attract custom to his establishment. It was a very good rich product, its colour was like that water that lies in rich loamy soil and it was said that it was as strong as whisky. The tables were all laid out and in a corner of the room was a shrine containing a statue of Our Lady and some vases with flowers. That statue had been bought from a penny per head collection taken up only from girls. Gabbett



wouldn't accept a donation from a man for it. The cost of that statue was three shillings and six pence, which was a significant figure in those days. That statue

was destined to be the first Legion statue and it is now in the showcase up in the offices.

Somewhere about 7.30 that morning Gabbett went down to six and a half, stood outside and announced to all the people entering that he had a breakfast waiting for them in Cheater's Lane. At once a large number turned away and came up to the place and they were given all they could each and drink.

A feature of the proceedings was Gabbett's discourse, rough, unpolished but Oh! so effective. He possessed the secret of successful preaching, patent sincerity, and the being completely understood. After the proceedings of the breakfast were over, the two of us, that is Lennon and myself stayed behind to sweep and wash up. Now after that I began

to come on Saturday nights to take part in the preparations for the meal. Lennon gave up after a while. He felt that he was not terribly strong and he felt the strain of this extra burden upon him. I continued on, on both of those evenings, there were only a couple of helpers so I was very useful to him. After a little while we widened out. We got classes going for boys and girls – Holy Communion and Confirmation and let me here interject, that those days were, contrary to popular imagination today, days of widespread religious neglect.

I had already begun visiting all around that territory on my own, giving no relief and finding it very advantageous. I developed the habit of dropping in on Gabbett when I was finished, and no matter what hour I dropped in, which would usually be about 10 p.m. I would find him working away as he had been all day long. I listened and he worked and talked. I watched his marvellous work because he was a supreme craftsman and out from under his hands without machinery of any kind, emerged the most finished products in the way of boots. He had a very great effect on me. I had never met anybody before who was so absorbed in religion. He could read very good stuff, but he could only write his name. That was then common enough. I was overwhelmingly impressed by him and I won his heart completely by making him a gift of some of Father Faber's books on which he was very keen.



Backdrop

Against this backdrop of the 21st century, Christians are commissioned to announce the Good News that Jesus Christ, our Saviour, has risen from the dead.

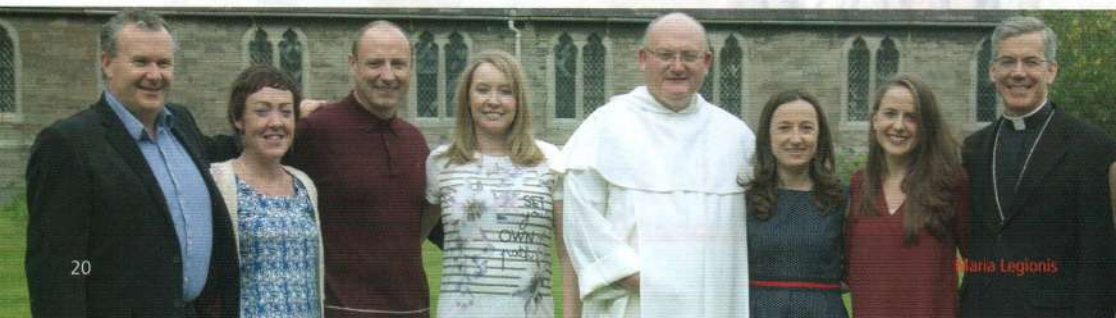
In 2012 Pope Francis' final words at World Youth Day, to over 3 million people on Copacabana Beach in Brazil, were **"Go and make disciples of all nations"**. As we well know, this is also Christ's final commandment to His Apostles before His Ascension. In today's world, how do we endeavour to respond faithfully to Christ's final commandment and to the Popes' call to evangelise?

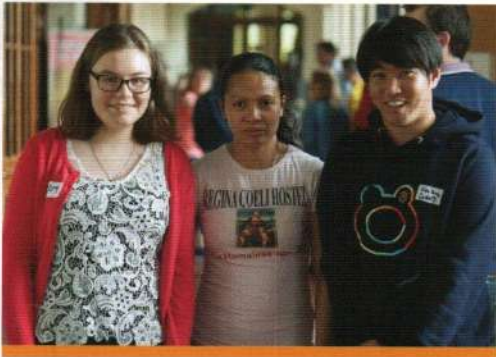
By its very nature the Christian faith is communal. A heart and mind touched by love and truth, cannot be kept to oneself, instinctively it reaches out, as a plant reaches toward the light in a shaded room. Belief in Jesus Christ communicates itself in many forms, permeating family, friendship, vocations, service and work. By way of the sacraments, the Holy Spirit radiates within us, touching every part of our daily lives, which in itself is evangelising our world. Sadly, the lies and deception engulfing our culture has led huge numbers of people to turn away from the Church, no longer attending Mass or receiving the sacraments.

In Ireland, the vast majority of those who have ceased the practice of their faith are baptised Catholics. The recent social and constitutional change in our country confirms without question that Ireland is mission territory!

To engage others in faith based discussion or to extend an invitation to return to prayer and sacraments requires spiritual preparation and most importantly formation. This is precisely why the Legion of Mary system, founded and developed by Frank Duff, is genius!

The system unites lay Catholics, providing formation through prayer, study and work, developing awareness and ability to share our faith with others, thereby witnessing to the Good News through visitation and acts of charity.





The Legion of Mary provides well-established opportunities and occasions for lay Catholics to engage and pray with people through various apostolic works in parishes and communities, visiting homes, hospitals, prisons, nursing homes, rehabilitation centres and homeless services to name but a few. The system's advocate is the Mother of God herself, this is simply an effective devotion to Mary lived out through regular prayer and apostolic work.

As each day passes, the need in Ireland for spiritual regeneration accelerates. What modern atheists, non-believers, and those who ridicule Christianity and the Catholic Church don't understand is that God is not in competition with the world or seeking to prohibit our freedom. The glory of God is a human being fully alive, entirely free and blossoming to his or her full potential. That full potential starts with the Good News of the Gospel. "By work well done we continue the work of creation and help make the world a better and more pleasant place to live in. It is the privileged task of lay Christians to permeate and perfect the temporal order, that is, all earthly affairs, with the spirit of the Gospel" Frank Duff, Servant of God.



The voice of the Legion of Mary

CATHOLIC YOUNG ADULTS CONFERENCE 2015

'Mary went in haste!'

Saturday 29th August 2015

Registration | 10.00

Opening Prayers & Rosary | 10.30

Opening talk | **Mary went in Haste....are you with her?** *Fr. John Harris OP*

Holy Mass | *Fr. Pat Lombard*

Lunch | 13.00

Moving in haste....**Challenges & Opportunities** for young people in the Church today,
followed by **Q&A session** Primate of All Ireland *Archbishop Eamon Martin*

Catholic issues 'on the move' **Workshops:**

1. **1916....**what inspired the Capuchin response? *Fr. Bryan Shortall OFM Cap*
2. **What is a soul** and why should we bother saving one? *Fr. Paul Churchill*
3. **Computer use& prayer life....**is there a potential conflict? *Fr. Terence Crotty OP*
4. **Seeking Spiritual Happiness** as exemplified by St. Anthony of Padua! *Fr. James Mary*
5. **Adoration....**what's happening? *Fr. Michael Maher*
6. **New age and occult....**do we really know what we're dealing with? *Rosemary Swords*
7. **Sharing your faith....**with friends & street contact! *Br. Philip Mulryne OP*

Confessions & Adoration in Chapel

Dinner | 18.00

Mary moulding a young Catholic life (talk) | *Moira Burke*

Mary's Docility (talk) | *Franciscan Sisters* of the Renewal

Stations of the Cross and Holy Hour | *Franciscan Sisters* of the Renewal

Social evening @ 21.30 | Refreshments & live acoustic session with *Cormac Buckley*

Sunday 30th August 2015

Opening Prayers | 09.45

Witness to the faith | Testimonies from.... *Alan, Karen, Fergal, Aoife*

The real challenge - **Saving Souls** (talk) | *Fr. Mark Kirby*

Holy Mass | *Papal Nuncio Archbishop Charles Brown*

Lunch | 13.00

Panel discussion led by *Fr. John Harris OP* on the "New Evangelisation"

Closing Address

End | 16.30





St Peter's Parish Phibsborough, Dublin Honours Frank Duff



Frank Duff was born in 97 Phibsborough Road on 7 June 1889. This road is now part of St Peter's Parish which is run by the Vincentian priests. He founded the Legion of Mary on 7 Sept 1921 and it is now in over 170 countries and has 3 million active and 10 million praying members. Frank Duff prayer leaflets were distributed by legionaries to all after Holy Mass along with a book entitled "Frank Duff As I Knew Him" by Fr Thomas O'Flynn C.M. a former Spiritual Director of the Concilium, the governing body of the world wide Legion.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul was founded by Blessed Frederic Ozanam in 1833. Members of the local conference of St. Vincent de Paul also honoured Frank Duff as he was a member of the society before he started the Legion. Bags for the collection of clothing and non-perishable foodstuffs for the needy were distributed by them afterwards.

After blessing the Frank Duff room, his Grace blessed Miraculous Medals which were then offered to all along with explanatory leaflets by Sr. Angela Hender and Sr. Elma Hurley from the company of the Daughters of Charity. This is part of the mission of the group which was founded in 1633 by St. Louise De Marillac and St. Vincent de Paul. Our Lady appeared to St. Catherine Laboure from the Daughters of Charity on 27 November 1830 in Rue du Bac, Paris, and gave her the mission of distributing the miraculous medal to all. Frank Duff urged all to have devotion to the miraculous medal and to expect miracles.

His Grace thanked Fr. Paschal Scallion CM of St. Peter's, for the warm welcome extended to him by all. He acknowledged the close links between Frank Duff and the Vincentian community and noted that Frank Duff often went to confession in St. Peter's Church. The Congregation of the Mission, generally known as Vincentians, was established by St. Vincent de Paul in 1625 for the evangelisation of the poor. Vincentians now total 3000 and serve in 86 countries.



No. 97



Frank Duff



Blessed Frederic Ozanam



St. Vincent de Paul



St. Louise de Marillac



St. Catherine Laboure



His Grace, Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin, concelebrated a joyful family Mass along with 12 priests in a packed St Peter's Church Phibsborough, Dublin on 23 August 2015. In his homily he recalled the extraordinary contribution of the Servant of God Frank Duff to the Church, whose ideas on the role of the laity were "progressive and revolutionary."

Afterwards he dedicated and blessed a parish meeting room in honour of Frank Duff.



TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY OF THE YEAR 2015

Family Mass and dedication of
Frank Duff Room

Homily Notes of Most Rev. Diarmuid Martin
Archbishop of Dublin
Church of Saint Peter, Phibsborough,
23rd August 2015

Today's Gospel reading from the sixth chapter of Saint John's Gospel comes at the end of a series of readings we have been hearing over the past few Sunday's about Jesus as the bread of life.

These readings are about faith and how our faith is nourished by closeness to Jesus. The readings are about how in the Eucharist Jesus becomes present in our own deepest being, as essential nourishment and sustenance for our life's journey.

The teaching of Jesus about the bread of life in the sixth chapter of Saint John is one of the most beautiful and deepest chapters of all the scriptures. But, as we heard in today's Gospel, that teaching was rejected by those listening to Jesus. Some reject it outright: "This is intolerable language", they answer. And on this occasion it is not just the crowd that

rejects Jesus, but even some of his own disciples: "Many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him," the Gospel adds.

Those who stay with Jesus are the ones who realise that there is only one true way: "Lord who shall we go to", they say. They realise that alone Jesus has the message of eternal life, a message of "spirit and life" which will change their lives here on earth and make them understand the meaning of life - in this world and in the next - in a different and hope-filled way.

We sometimes become discouraged by the fact that today more and more people find it hard to believe. Today's Gospel shows that this was the case even in Jesus' own time. Doubts and rejection of Jesus have always been part of the history of the Church.

It is obviously a concern today to see that many people in Ireland do not live out their faith as perhaps they did in the past. However, if we deny that reality we only delude ourselves. But neither should we lose heart. Let us look at how Jesus dealt with rejection by the crowd and by some of his own disciples?

What does that reaction of Jesus teach us about how we should live our Christian lives as individuals and as Church, and especially as Christian families, in today's challenging times?

In the face of rejection, Jesus does not try to accommodate his message to the crowd. He does not try to pacify his listeners who find his message intolerable. Indeed if anything he provokes them. It is Jesus himself who challenges them: "There are some of you who do not believe", he says and he begins talking about himself as coming from above, as being from heaven, something they are even less willing to hear.

In today's world there is a temptation on the part of many in the Church to feel that if people have difficulties in believing then we should try and make belief easier, try to remove the things which people find hard to accept and create a religion to which anyone who wants to be "more or less" a good person, can "more or less" belong to the disciples of Jesus.

Rather than attempting to water down the

message of Jesus we should present the message of Jesus in its fullness and challenge and provoke people to respond more fully and more generously to that message. Challenge, yes: but we must remember however that we challenge those who find it hard to believe not by condemnation or polemics, but by being witnesses in our own lives to what belief in the love of Jesus can do and what it can bring to society.

In doing that, however, we must be clear that the challenge of following Jesus is never about a "more or less", it is not about compromise or adapting to public opinion surveys, but about real commitment and about conversion. The challenge is not about a book of rules and moral norms; it is about a person, Jesus Christ, who came among us to witness to a God who is love, so that we can be truly loving people. When I say that you cannot be a believer in Jesus "more or less", in a vague manner, I am not saying that belief is only for the perfect. God's love breaks into our world when we recognise our human weakness. We are all sinners. God is never revealed through arrogance.



This morning we will dedicate and bless a room here at Saint Peter's which recalls Frank Duff. Frank knew this Church well and came here often for confession and had many links with the Vincentian community here.



Frank Duff was a man who made an extraordinary contribution to the life of the Church. His ideas on the role of the laity were progressive and indeed revolutionary. Yet Frank's entire life style as a person was far from that of revolution or publicity-seeking, but one of immense humility and total dedication. The first thing however that we notice about Frank Duff was that he was a man of extraordinary humility.

Frank Duff was a layman and never dreamt of being anything other than being a layman. He was immensely proud to have been invited to an Ecumenical Council as a layman. He understood that being a lay person should in no way mean being a sort of second-class Christian. He saw that each of us, lay or cleric, is in the first place called to holiness and that holiness is in no way the privilege of the ordained, or the automatic right of any category within the Church.

His vision of the role of lay people in the Church was not fully understood by Church authorities here in Ireland. He was a person absolutely loyal to the Church, but in no way a yes man. He never gave up when he had asked to see the then Archbishop of Dublin, Edward Byrne, in March 1927 and was finally received in January 1935 eight years later. (That makes even me look good!).

The Irish Church needs a new generation of strong and articulate lay men and women. It needs a strong laity which is not inward looking or caught up simply in Church structures and activities or narrow Church politics.

Conformist Catholicism is not the answer to the challenges the Church faces; simply repeating doctrinal formulas is not the answer; an inward-looking Catholicism – liberal or conservative – is not the answer. We need a new generation of Catholic lay men and women who, like Frank Duff, are articulate in understanding their faith and feel called to bring the unique vision which springs from their faith into dialogue with the realities of the world.

Frank noted in his time a fear on the part of the Church authorities of trusting the insights of lay people. At the same time he knew that trust in lay people needed to be accompanied by intense formation of lay people in spirituality, in prayer and in theology and social concern. Frank saw the strengths and the weaknesses of the Church in Ireland. He stressed the need for education in the faith and clearly recognised the inadequacies of the structures of faith formation. He was acutely aware decades ago how the institutional structure of the Catholic Church in Ireland

which outwardly appeared so robust, in fact had within itself an innate debilitating factor, namely: the lack of faith formation for and trust in lay men and women.

The small mindedness and lack of trust in lay faithful of a part of the establishment of the Archdiocese of Dublin at the time of Frank Duff should be a lesson to all in the Church today of how easy it can be to become trapped in our own narrow vision. We all – conservative or liberals - have to be aware of the constant danger of becoming fearfully or arrogantly trapped in our own little world and in our own vision of the Church. Such stubbornness will only lead us to the position of “the crowd” in today’s Gospel who refused the teaching of Jesus because it did not fit into their categories.

We need our parishes to become centres of formation in the faith. Here in this diocese in the coming years we will be focussing on formation for families and young people. I am sure that in the years to come the Legion of Mary will be in the vanguard in the formation of a new generation of trained, voluntary

catechists and pastoral animators who will place themselves at the service of parishes to make them truly places of faith education.

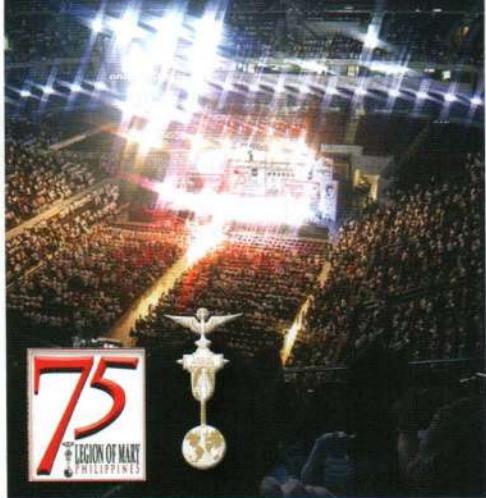
I know of the recent work of the Legion of Mary in visiting all the houses of this parish. We need a robust laity; we need especially strong families where the fundamental essence of our faith is lived and transmitted and prayed. I do not call for a strong laity simply as a substitute for the challenge of having fewer priests. A strong laity is not a substitute for the fall in the number of priests; it is the answer to that need. Vocations to the priesthood will emerge from healthy Christian families and from strong faith communities. Frank Duff stands still as a model of robust lay leadership in the Church. He was a humble man, yet in no way obsequious; he respected authority yet could be formidable challenger of authority. His life was focussed in one direction only: he knew, as we heard the true disciples say in today’s Gospel reading, that there was nowhere else to go except to follow Jesus, and day after day he sought to faithfully follow that path.



The Voice of the Legion of Mary

CELEBRATION OF THE DIAMOND JUBILEE OF THE LEGION OF MARY IN THE PHILIPPINES

By Michael and Maura McGauran, Concilium representatives



*The Senatus of
the Northern Philippines
hosted this Celebration.*

We arrived in Manila, on **Friday July 17** and were met by a delegation of legionaries, Senatus officers and some 20 young legionaries from Pasay Comitium who placed garlands on us and the whole colourful episode was recorded by so many cameras. On Saturday we were met by Liza Infante, the Senatus Vice President, for Holy Mass at the Church on Epidanio de los Santos Avenue and then on to lunch with the Senatus Officers who subsequently left to finalise preparations for the Diamond Jubilee. The Senatus officers and some of the Council officers had been in the Arena from 3.30 a.m. on Sunday morning.

Legionaries had arrived from different parts of the Philippines and abroad – the officers and members from the Senatus of Mindanao, Western Visayas, Cebu and Bicolandia; and from Papua New Guinea, Middle East and Guam.

On Sunday, Cleo and Dave brought us to the Arena. Dave is the President of Makati Comitium. Upon arrival one was instantly aware of a sea of white – legionaries queuing. Approximately 12,000 legionaries attended.



*Celebrations commenced with
a procession highlighting the Image
of Our Lady of Antipolo*



Patroness of Peace and Good Voyage. Young Legionaries from the directly attached Junior Curiae of the Senatus carried 10 banners of white and red. Legionaries from the Regia of Antipolo transported the Image and carried it during the procession. This mirrored the statue procession at Lourdes.

Legion Prayers were led, at exactly 8 a.m., by Mgr. Celso Ditan, Spiritual Director of the Senatus of Northern Philippines.



The President Olivia G Gellangarin delivered a very elegant Welcome to all present and was followed by messages from the Senatus present, Foreign Councils and Michael and Maura McGuaran Concilium representatives.

The Legion of Mary in the Philippines was inaugurated on 21 July 1940, by Fr. Manuel Gracia, Fr. Michael

Doherty, Joaquina Lucas and Pacita Santos. The Legion grew so rapidly that by the second Acies the number of praesidia represented had increased from 12 to 58. Subsequently a Comitium was formed. Concilium granted permission for the first Senatus in 1946.

Holy Mass was concelebrated at 10 a.m. with 5 Bishops and 32 priests present; the main celebrant was Most Rev. Broderick S Pabillo DD, Auxiliary Bishop of Manila.





The Bishop welcomed and recognised the presence of the other Bishops and clergy. He said Holy Mass is the summit of the whole celebration that we have today, because the Mass is the reason and centre, it is about our thanksgiving to God for the whole of the Legion. God is concerned about governance: "I myself will send a shepherd – a shepherd who will lead my flock."



During lunch we were seated with some Bishops, some of whom spoke in astonishment at the great numbers of the Legionaries present. They did not expect to see present such a great force of those known as 'the silent workers of the Church.'



The Catena led by Lilibeth Maranan, Senatus Secretary was fervently prayed.



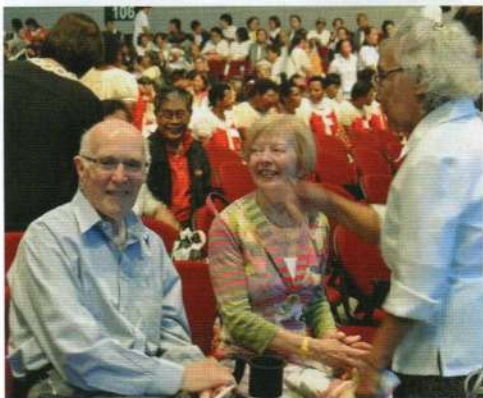
The second part of the program commenced with entertainment and production numbers with each major Council performing in very colourful costumes, native dancing and singing. The Boys and Girls Town from Silang Comitium rendered a lovely interpretative dance based on Totus Tuus.

Towards the end, the theme song entitled "I Am All Yours and All that I have is Yours" with music composed by Pipo Cifra and topical lyrics by his father Diony Cifra - former Senatus President was sung by Mel and Lorna Cifra (Diony). The arena lights were dimmed and all cell phone lights lit up the arena- it was

like a starry night. Official 'Closing Remarks' by Liza Infante were followed by the Concluding Prayers led by Glenn Ricafrente-Senatus Treasurer.

**Celebrations concluded at
3.30 p.m.**





After the event, we met Marjorie Marabal from Cagayan de Ouro, Secretary, Senatus of Mindanao. Cagayan de Oro is called city of golden friendship. Rose Manus former President of the Senatus of Mindanao also attended and we had an exchange of pleasantries. We also had the chance to meet former President of Senatus of Northern Philippines, Billie Malicay who told us about visiting 745 legionaries in a prison – who are serving life term sentences. The legionaries in Paranaque Comitium work in the prison helping mental cases and cleaning after other prisoners.

On Monday, July 20, Liza Infante accompanied us to Mass at St. Maria Goretti Church and gave us a tour of Manila including the Cathedral, the National Shrine of the Patroness of the Philippines, the Immaculate Conception, the Augustinian Church and guided us along with six Papua New Guinea (PNG) legionaries to sites where Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis said Mass during their visits and other places of interest like the University of St. Tomas, the Pontifical Catholic University of the



Philippines. Manila is chaotic where traffic is concerned. After the tour of “old” Manila, we attended Liza Infante’s praesidium Our Lady of the Annunciation and remained for the meeting; fifteen attended including some young professionals. Home visitation with the purpose of Block Rosary of Fatima devotion, sick visitation, bringing of the Sacraments to the aged, sick and disabled, street contact and recruitment are all part of their apostolate. Refreshments were provided after the meeting as a welcome treat to their visitors, ourselves and the PNG legionaries.

On Tuesday, July 21, Olivia Gellangarin picked us up at 3 p.m. and together we set off for the Legion House where we met the PNG legionaries who were staying there (20 in all, 5 brothers and 15 sisters). Papua New Guinea has a population of 7.5m - 60% are catholic. They owe their faith to the French missionaries. Particularly mentioned was Fr. Gollie and they gave us an account of their work. Also present were legionaries from Palawan (8), Saudi Arabia (2) and the Senatus Officers (of the Northern Philippines).

At the meeting too was Rollie de Chavez former President of the Senatus of Cebu. She had worked closely with Pacita Santos in the first Curia, Maria Milagrosa. Rollie is now attached to the Senatus of Northern Philippines as extension worker for San Pablo Comitium.

Among the topics discussed was the Majuro Islands (under Guam), the 3 praesidia and Home visitation was among the works of apostolate being carried out. They were visited by Guam Comitium and will soon have Majuro affiliated as confirmed by Imelda Zimara, President.

We spoke too with Danny Ochoco, the former first president of Dubai, now Southern Arabia Comitium, now attached to the Senatus of Manila is working as an extension worker in one of the directly attached praesidia in Christ the King Parish.

We joined David and Ronan of Makati Comitium on apostolic work on Wednesday. The proposed crowd contact did not happen because of the monsoon rains. We met Jen and Louise from Seat of Wisdom Praesidium who took us with them on a 'bar apostolate for street girls.' The legionaries befriended the girls and encouraged them to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Then followed a praesidium meeting at St John Bosco centre at 8 p.m. Queen of Peace Praesidium, Libi presided and fifteen attended. They do home and block rosary visitation and put a lot of emphasis on recruiting juniors.

Four praesidia meetings were taking place at the same time. Fr Nestor the Spiritual Director, an SVD priest attends to nine praesidia. At 9 p.m. the members of the four praesidia gathered for a joint Allocutio given by Father "a legionary can never be weak - the prayer on the Tessera links everyone - our watchword is pray and be on guard - prayer strengthens us".

On Thursday July 24 we were picked up at the hotel by Olivia Gellangarin, Mgr. Ditan and Glenn Ricafrente. They brought us to a nursing home for priests to meet Monsignor Augusto Laban. Mgr. Laban was a former Spiritual Director of the Senatus of Northern Philippines. He had been invited to the ceremonies of the Diamond Jubilee celebration but was unable to attend. He is now 86 years. He spoke about his visit to Ireland and Knock in 1995.

After saying 'Good Bye' to Msgr. Laban, the Senatus officers brought us to the airport and we arrived very much in time for our flight.

What a wonderful occasion this was, spiritually with the Spirit of Our Lady pervading every single moment. It was a singular privilege to be the Concilium emissaries and share so much with our Legion Sisters and Brothers





EUROPE

ALBANIA: The apostolate involves visiting hospitals, Shelters for the Elderly and Mother Theresa homes for children. The priest is brought to people who are dying and also to other families. The catechism is taught. A visit was made to Albania from the 21st May to 1st June 2015 by a Spiritual Director and two legionaries from Malta Regia. Meetings were held with the Shkoder Comitium Officers and the Officers of Bajza Curia, which has ten praesidia, the majority of whose members are farmers and villagers. A Congress was organised with 200 legionaries in attendance. A Congress was also organised for Lezhe and Sape Curiae with an attendance of 300 legionaries.

CYPRUS: Nicosia legionaries visited a clinic for the aged, speaking to many residents who rarely receive visitors and giving them Miraculous Medals. They also did crowd contact and met many Buddhists, telling them of God's love and Mary's Motherhood and showing them where to find the local Catholic Church. Many of them are now going there to pray.

GREECE: The praesidium in Rhodes has 17 active and 15 auxiliary members. Works include home visitation, visiting the sick and helping families with problems. Some Legion literature was sent to the English-speaking praesidium in Thessalonica, which is made up of non-Greek members. A difficulty for the praesidium in Athens is

the distance members have to travel to the weekly meeting.

ITALY: Rome Senatus reports that the Holy Father Pope Francis on one of his parish visits greeted a group of legionaries and said: "I value the work of the Legion of Mary because the Legion has fighting spirit. Keep on fighting the good fight." A new praesidium was established at Cerenova in Rome. Renzo Tarter, Senatus Secretary, and his wife, also a member of Senatus, represented the Legion at the recent Conference convened by the Pontifical Council for the Laity at which the President of the Pontifical Council, Mons. Stanislaw Cardinal Rylko, stressed that movements are called to adhere closely to the spirit and methods of their founders. In Milan Regia, a Filipino praesidium reported 21 Baptisms, 16 First Holy Communions, 28 Confirmations, and three marriages regularised. Ten members of an enclosed order of nuns became Adjutorians. A new praesidium has been set up in Acqui Terme Curia, Ovada. In Padova Comitium, a religious painting competition for elementary schools was organised by a praesidium in Lana Curia in the Austrian Tyrol. Catechesis and home visitation feature in the reports of the Nigerian praesidia in Padova and Verona.

MALTA: Malta Regia celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Legion in Malta with a Marian Pilgrimage. A new praesidium was set up in Valetta. A Curia reported that a family was received

into the Church. A young woman was persuaded not to have an abortion, and one person returned to the Sacraments after a lapse of forty years. An open air youth Mass had an attendance of between 130 and 150. Sixty juniors attended a three-day Retreat. Mass was celebrated to mark the 75th anniversary of the Legion in Gozo. The Mass was televised. All parishes in Gozo have the Legion. Contact was made by legionaries with 1,300 tourists of all faiths and none. Fifteen Spiritual Directors attended a meeting organised by the Gozo Comitium.

PORTUGAL: In Lisbon Senatus spiritual and psychological support was given to people suffering distress after having being declared bankrupt. Legal support is given to elderly people with Social Welfare problems and in making their Wills. In the Parede Curia the Rosary is recited in a Dialysis Clinic. In Portela legionaries visit the Parish Day Centre where they lead the Rosary and distribute Holy Communion. The Azores reports catechesis, promoting the Scouts and involvement in all the pastoral programmes. A praesidium distributed Miraculous Medals to over 1,000 street contacts. In the Setubal district a Prayer Group for vocations is organised. Members of a praesidium of 25 active and 25 auxiliary members accompany the priest and parish sister on visits to the sick, do street contact, and care for children while the parents go to work. In Coimbra Regia, legionaries in Beja Curia teach catechism to 33 children. Cascais Comitium reported transport is provided to bring special needs persons to Mass. Visits are made to schools to

enrol children in Catechism classes. Extension resulted in three new praesidia in the Regia of Porto. 100 attended a Congress in the Braga Comitium, where a new junior Curia was established.

SPAIN: Both men and women are contacted in the Red Light district by legionaries in Madrid Senatus. Drug addicts are also met. About 100 legionaries, representing every attached Council, and three Spiritual Directors attended the Senatus Congress. Madrid praesidia visit hotels, contacting staff and clients, offering leaflets with Mass times. Two praesidia of University students contact fellow students. In Barcelona Senatus, Holy Communion was distributed in prisons and prisoners' families were helped. A talk was given on the late Pacita Santos and the setting up of the Legion in Barcelona in 1955. A praesidium in Bilbao Senatus engages in street contact, which includes speaking to prostitutes; one such person abandoned prostitution. Visitation is also made to the blind and to Alzheimer sufferers. Perpetual Adoration features in a report. Basauri Curia has two book barrows.

CENTRAL AMERICA

COSTA RICA: All the ten Comitia attached to the Senatus of San Jose report the setting up of new praesidia. The sick are visited at home and in hospital.

EL SALVADOR: Works undertaken by legionaries in the San Salvador Senatus include teaching catechism to all categories of people from pre-baptismal to marriage. They accompany the priest

to the homes to administer the Sacraments to the sick and dying, and for the blessing of homes. Street contact is done and the legionaries conduct Bible-study groups. A Peregrinatio Pro Christo was organised in Chalatenango. Legionaries from Guatemala joined in the project, which had a total of 115 legionaries. As well as visiting homes, they set up 19 new praesidia.

NICARAGUA: The Regia of Managua reports a gradual growth in numbers, particularly of juniors and young adults. Most of the juniors become senior legionaries. The young adult members visit jails and help the drug addicts. Legionaries organise the May procession at the request of the Archdiocese. The attached Comitium of Granada celebrated its 60th anniversary. The attached Comitium of Leon held its fourth Congress with a very good attendance of mostly young people.

PANAMA: An attached Curia has been raised to Comitium status with 12 praesidia and three Curiae attached. The women's prison is visited. Works with young people and children are undertaken.

WEST INDIES

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: The Senatus of Santo Domingo held a successful Conference for Spiritual Directors in September. All praesidia work in parishes, visiting homes, the sick and teaching catechism, many visit the local jails. One Comitium reported 173 Baptisms, 244 First Communions, 131 Confirmations and 306 sick people brought to see a doctor. Another Comitium helped with the

regularisation of eight undocumented immigrants. Forty five legionaries participated in the annual Holy Week project organised by the Senatus. Legionaries, at the invitation of the priest, go to areas he cannot reach and conduct the Easter Triduum. This year they appointed one or two pairs to work in each of the 16 communities selected. 1,140 homes were visited to encourage attendance at the Triduum. There were total attendances of 640 to 1,000 at each of the Paschal Ceremonies. Praesidia in the Senatus of Santiago de los Caballeros participate in the Diocesan Pastoral Plan, visit the sick, bringing them Holy Communion, organise Retreats for those in irregular marriages, give instruction to youths for Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, and do prison visitation. A Comitium with six Curiae, one of which is composed entirely of men, reported on 13 men in prison being prepared for Holy Communion and who are now preparing other prisoners to receive the Sacraments.

HAITI: A Comitium attached to the Senatus of Haiti celebrated its 50th anniversary this year and another, its 60th anniversary. One Curia has an apostolate to street children. Legionary works include visitation of homes and hospitals, meeting people of many creeds and none, visiting the sick and aged at home and bringing Holy Communion to them and doing works of service. Visiting prisons and street contact are also undertaken. The apostolate results in many receiving the Sacraments, some returns to the Church and resolution of family conflicts.

PUERTO RICO: Reports to the Senatus show that legionaries look after the sick on admittance to hospital and stay with them as needed, day or night. A lady of 96 returned to the Sacraments months before death. Two autistic children were prepared for First Holy Communion. Weekly visits are made to the jails. Legionaries organise ten Patricians groups and staff a book barrow. A legionary was asked to give two talks to candidates for the Diaconate. The Curia in the Virgin Islands has four praesidia. Legionaries in Caguas participate in the Diocesan Plan. One of their works is visiting the Alzheimer Centre.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: Works undertaken include street contact and home and hospital visitation. Many lapsed Catholics returned to the practice of the faith. Religious Instruction was given to 94 students in three non-Catholic schools, with six being prepared for Confirmation. A new junior praesidium started in a Catholic school with an initial membership of 14.

ASIA

HONG KONG: Great numbers were present at Mass, concelebrated by His Eminence Cardinal Jon Tong and 13 priests in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, to mark the 65th Anniversary celebrations of the founding of the Legion in Hong Kong by Fr. Aedan McGrath SSC in 1949. The Cardinal was high in his praise of the Legion. Two Concilium officers, Pat O'Donoghue and Michael Walsh attended. The Concilium officers also visited Macau with Sally Chan and were

warmly welcomed by Most Reverend Joseph Lai, Bishop of Macau, and about 20 legionaries. Legion Envoy Teresa Su, from Hong Kong, started the Legion there in 1952. The Hong Kong Comitium appointed Sally Chan as an Incola Mariae in Macau, where she has made many visits to parishes and schools.

INDIA: Karnataka Senatus legionaries travel long distances to visit remote outstations. Home/family visitation is done with outreach to all religions. The three Causes of legionary candidates for Beatification are promoted. The foundation praesidium in Pala in Kerala Senatus celebrated its 75th anniversary. Book barrow apostolate in Mumbai Senatus enables contact with people of all faiths. 200 attended a day for juniors. Sunday catechism, RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) classes, visitation of Catholics and non-Catholics at home is carried out. A legionary visited the four praesidia in Nepal from 13 – 19 April. She held a training day for officers, 55 legionaries attended the Acies. Fifty one praesidia have been set up in Pondicherry Senatus since this council became a Senatus. Two mini-Peregrinatio Pro Christo projects took place. 1,800 families were visited and the Legion was rejuvenated. Suicides were prevented and those with addictions helped. Kottar Regia reports progress on extension, visiting of councils and carrying out of Exploratio Dominicalis projects. The newly printed Tamil Handbook was launched on 8 February 2015. Tiruchy Comitium reports the enthronement of the Sacred Heart in 112 homes.

Chennai Comitium reported over 1,000 attended the annual gathering at Our Lady of Vellankani shrine. In **Thoothukudi Comitium** legionaries visited 48 prisoners, 12 were encouraged to go to Confession. Legionaries in **Visakhapatnam Comitium** visit the sick, patients with Aids, leprosy and cancer, and prepare children and adults for the Sacraments. They also helped areas affected by cyclone damage. Three new praesidia, each with 15 members, started up.

KAZAKHSTAN: The sick and lonely are visited. The two reporting praesidia have memberships of 8 active and 38 auxiliaries in one and 6 active and 25 auxiliaries in the other. They travelled to Astana to participate in night adoration and the priest encouraged the legionaries to invite other parishioners to come.

MYANMAR: Every praesidium has copies of the Frank Duff prayer in Burmese and Edel Quinn is also promoted. They held a two-day workshop on Child Protection at which 30 legionaries attended.

PAKISTAN: The Curia in Karachi consists of 26 praesidia. It is hoped to divide into two Curiae. Most praesidia have in excess of 20 members and much support is given to the parishes. Homes, hospitals and bereaved families are visited and youth ministry is undertaken.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: In preparation for the Acies all Councils in Port Moresby held a Retreat. The Legion is given a 30 minute slot weekly on Radio Maria. A project organised by the Madang Regia resulted in five new praesidia. Many people contacted in

hospital who were not practising the faith and were living with partners were followed up after discharge from hospital. Fourteen legionaries from a Curia in Mount Hagen visited the Senatus of Northern Philippines in Manila with their Spiritual Director, Rev. Fr. Felino.

PHILIPPINES: Legionary works in **Bicolandia Senatus** include home, hospital and jail visitation, plus teaching catechism to Elementary and High School students. Parents of the First Communion children were taught catechism. A number of reports to **Cebu Senatus** show people under instruction with 19 adults and 25 children preparing for Baptism. Two legionaries successfully comforted a person intent on committing suicide. A Recollection Service was conducted in a women's Correction Centre. Legionaries in the junior Curia brought 30 children to Confession. Juniors also organised a very successful Kids Rosary Crusade in October and accompanied seniors when teaching catechism in Public Schools. **Mindanao Senatus:** Several cases of cancer cures through the intercession of Frank Duff were reported, also many marriage validations. A praesidium of 15 members based in the Civic Offices evangelises among their fellow workers and do crowd contact on the street. Congratulations to the new Regia in Pagadian City in Mindanao. Reports to the **Northern Philippines Senatus, Manila**, showed legionaries prepared 50 Cadets in the military camps for Confirmation and a non-sectarian school in a military camp allowed legionaries to hold catechism classes,

resulting in 20 students receiving first Holy Communion. Sr. Rolita has been appointed as extension worker to the San Pablo Comitium for one year. Home and jail visitation is carried out. In one jail legionaries helped prisoners to do the Stations of the Cross and many inmates received the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Promotion of the three Causes of legionary candidates for Beatification is on-going. A large variety of works reported to **Western Visayas Senatus** included visiting hospitals and homes, also Block Rosaries and Exploratio Dominicalis. The works were blessed with good results, including Baptisms and conversions. As a result of Jail visitation there were seven converts and a convicted murderer received the Sacraments. A junior praesidium visited a sick child in hospital; this child was baptised before he died; his older sister was taught how to pray the Rosary. A Mormon became a Catholic and received the Sacraments before he died and a Jehovah Witness family was converted to the Catholic faith.

SRI LANKA: Legionary works include Promotion of the Rosary and Enthronement of the Sacred Heart. The junior Curia has 10 praesidia. Sick and elderly, funeral homes and orphanages are visited. Book-Barrow apostolate is on-going. In Lanka Comitium much home visitation is carried out, adults and children are prepared for Sacraments and 150 were enrolled in Sacred Heart Confraternity. Galle Comitium which suffered great damage after the tsunami are making valiant efforts to build up the Legion.

SYRIA: A new praesidium was established in Latakia. Four senior and three junior praesidium annual reports

were presented. Works include Pilgrim Statue visitation, visits to shelters, help with reconciliation of troubled families, securing a wheelchair for a handicapped person and sewing vestments for priests. Juniors are carrying out many good works of service. Prayers for the legionaries in this country would be appreciated. We are all aware of the ongoing sufferings of the people of Syria and we must understand that not all Councils are in a position to report. It is heartening, nevertheless, to find legionaries continuing their work to the point of heroism and setting an example to us all. We must not forget them in our prayers at this time

TAIWAN: Since June 2014 nine new praesidia, including one junior, have been set up in Taiwan Senatus. There is one praesidium on Pen Hu Island. Through the efforts and prayers of the legionaries some lapsed Catholics have returned to the Church and a patient in hospital was baptised before he died. Recently baptised adults were introduced to Church services and contact is kept with them.

THAILAND: Legionaries work in close co-operation with priests, particularly in the remoter areas. Lapsed Catholics are invited to return to the Sacraments. One adult convert was reported and a person lapsed for 30 years returned to practice. People of all religions and none are met through home and hospital visitation. Catholic children are taught in state schools. A Curia which prayed to Frank Duff for new members reports good success. A junior Curia with 40 members works among fellow students at secondary school and university. The Good News and Miraculous Medal are distributed.



Pope Francis has announced an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy in the Universal Church. This Holy Year of Mercy will begin on 8 December to commemorate both the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and the 50th anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council, which called the Church to proclaim the Gospel to the world in new ways, bringing God's mercy to everyone.

The Year will conclude on 20 November 2016.

Pope Francis' Prayer for the Year of Mercy

Lord Jesus Christ,

you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father,
and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him.

Show us your face and we will be saved.

Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money;
the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things;
made Peter weep after his betrayal,
and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.

Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us,
the words that you spoke to the Samaritan woman:
"If you knew the gift of God!"

You are the visible face of the invisible Father,
of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy:
let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.
You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness
in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error:
let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.
Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing,
so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord,
and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor,
proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed,
and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy,
you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

Amen.

