

Maria Legionis



Venite Adoremus Dominum

Maria Legionis

The Voice of the Legion of Mary

Edition 4 of 2023

€1.25c



Have the Mind of Mary - <i>Frank Duff</i>	3
The Star of Bethlehem - <i>F. E. Weatherly</i>	7
Our Lady Queen of the Legion - <i>Pat O'Donoghue</i>	8
Christmas - <i>John Betjeman</i>	10
How I Discovered the Virgin Mary - <i>Cainneach Rua, Presentata Curia</i>	11
Our Children Our Future - <i>Edana Dekkar; Maura Wall; Margaret Davin</i>	13
The 11th National Spiritual Directors' Conference - Uganda - <i>Nashaba Victor</i>	16
The Eucharist Extract from Pope Benedict XV1 - <i>Paul Moran</i>	19
Rosary Procession In Belfast, Northern Ireland - <i>Luke McCann</i>	20
Our Lady of Kibeho - <i>Philip Fleming</i>	22
Talk at Meeting of Legion Correspondents - <i>Br. Philip Neri- Dominican Student</i>	26
Explanation of Front and Back Covers - <i>The Editor</i>	31
Praises of Mary - <i>Miriam Phelan</i>	32
World News - <i>Paddy Fay</i>	33

INVITATION The Editor and Board of Maria Legionis invite readers of Maria Legionis, and other legion members, to submit articles and other contributions with a view towards publication in future issues of the journal. Ideally, submissions should be made by e-mail attachments (Word Documents or jpg images) to: concilium@legion-of-mary.ie and marked 'Maria Legionis.'

Hard copies of articles, marked 'Maria Legionis', may be sent to: Legio Mariae, De Montfort House, Morning Star Avenue, Brunswick Street. Dublin 7. *Thank you, The Editor.*



Published by: Maria Legionis, Presentata House, 263 North Circular Road, Dublin 7, Ireland, Tel: + 353 1 8387770.

Magazine enquiries - e-mail: marialeionis263@gmail.com

Annual Subscription, incl postage, €10.00 per 4 copies.

Design: MacArt, Dublin, Ireland, Tel: + 353 1 2852508. Email: macart@indigo.ie

Print: Perigord Group, Damastown Industrial Park, Mulhuddart, Co. Dublin. Tel: (01) 860 1122

Have the Mind of Mary



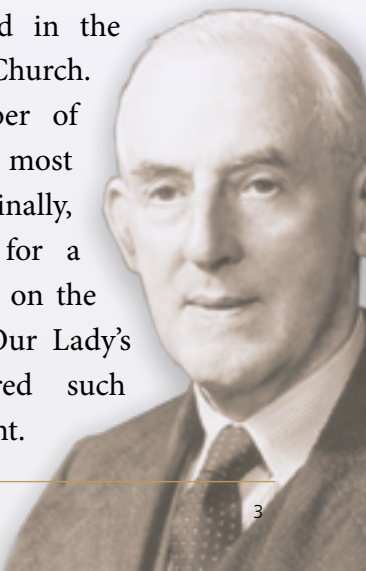
By Frank Duff



I get down to the bedrock of the Legion – the question of motive. I am going to dwell particularly on that part of the motive which concerns her whose name the Legion bears. Mary is a principal motive in the Legion; and, as the Legion sees things, she is completely essential.

The Vatican Council has been making history in many directions. One of them has been in regard to Our Blessed Mother. Some people have been saying that it has downgraded her. I am baffled when I hear such a suggestion. What justification can be seen in the legislation for an assertion of that kind? On the contrary the Council has risen to heights in regard to her. The *De Ecclesia* decree, which describes itself as the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, is the

first attempt the Catholic Church has ever made to get itself down on paper. It has given a whole section, Chapter 8 to the place of Mary in the Church. Those who have followed the proceedings of the earlier part of the Council will recall the holy disputation which arose among the Bishops in regard to whether Our Lady should be given a separate decree to herself or incorporated in the decree on the Church. A great number of the Fathers, most of them originally, were anxious for a separate decree on the grounds that Our Lady's dignity required such special treatment.



They regarded it as derogatory to give her a corner in a general document like that on the Church.

So strong was that feeling in regard to her that the Holy Father himself, as well as some other very distinguished figures, had to intervene to correct it. He pointed out that the contrary was the case; that her proper place was in the Constitution of the Church, and that to take her out of that setting would be prejudicial to her. Of course, this point of view is right. If Mary is in the Dogmatic Constitution, she has to be described in strict proportion to the Church. Doctrine cannot be subordinated to devotion. She cannot be exaggerated, but neither can she be minimised. Her role is constitutional and cannot be ignored.

But if she were dealt with in a separate decree, this could easily be waved aside as one of second rank. The stronger its terms about her, the more it would be regarded as a merely devotional document, a gesture compelled by popular feeling. This would accomplish the opposite from that intended. Finally, the matter was seen in full perspective and Our Lady was given a glorious place in the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, such that we may call it her charter.

So, Our Lady holds a key position. She is inseparable from the Catholic Church. You cannot take her out and yet leave the Church intact. It would cease to be the Catholic Church. Her position is primary.

Neither may she be diminished. If one brings her down below what is declared in that decree, it interferes with the doctrinal structure. You know that quotation in the Handbook about the web; that if you break a string in it, you mar it. Similarly, if you pervert a doctrine, you throw the Church out of plumb. The Church is the handiwork of God Himself, a delicately contrived thing. Everything in it is in due balance and proportion. If man tampers with it, he will damage the structure and as a consequence he will hurt himself.



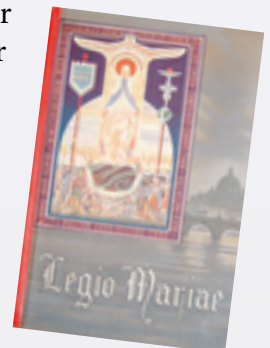
I propose to you the same idea in regard to our Mother Mary. In St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians (2:16) he enjoins us to have the mind of Christ. Here I adapt that saying: have the mind of Mary. Union with her must be the study of the legionaries. We must so unite ourselves to her that we enter every aspect of her life, including the higher realm of her mind.

The mission of Mary is essentially maternal. She was constituted in the mind of the Trinity before all time as a mother. She was to bring forth the Lord and give Him to His mission, and that she did. As part of the plan, she brings forth all His members, united to Him and to her and to each other, and she takes care of their lives. She is most truly a mother to them in every respect. She seeks to expand those members, every man indeed, to nothing less than the full stature of Our Lord. This is the phrase which is used in another of the Epistles of St. Paul (Ephesians 4:13) to describe the purpose of the Church. It is the Holy Spirit who accomplishes this wonder. He uses Mary as a co-operator, thus making her a true mother to men. So, it is her very function to develop us into the complete likeness of Christ, reproducing all the aspects of His life and participating fully in His redemptive work. As part of Him, we must obviously be doing all the things in which He engaged Himself. Mary is armed with all the means to fulfil her mission. It is the culmination and completion of that maternity for her to associate men to it.

In another of its tremendous strokes the Council insists that all apostleship is but an extension of the motherhood of Mary; it is a part of her giving of Christ to the world. It follows that nobody can take part in apostleship or persevere in it except with her. Therefore, we must seek her concurrence in it. We should be

familiar with that idea because the Legion is built upon it. Now it is taught by the Church as doctrine. Mary sustains us in that apostleship. To be successful in it we must have some comprehension of that arrangement. While we do gain graces from things which we do not perfectly understand, an understanding multiplies those graces exceedingly. We must never be satisfied with the vague but always press on to the definite; to an ever-greater realisation of what Our Lord and Our Lady are doing in our lives. Just in the measure that we consciously enter into that apostolic union with Mary will it be fruitful for ourselves and for others.

One efficacious way of doing this is to join the Legion. This single operation provides the basic ingredients for apostleship viewed as a participation in Mary's motherhood of souls. In the first place it teaches Mary, a necessity in the light of the legislation of the Council on her. Catholic apostolates often err by supposing in their members a foundation which does not exist. They do little about telling their members that their work depends on Mary. The end of this is disastrous. One should never take anything for granted.



All that is needed to step into the Legion is good will, followed of course by an act of that will. After that the system of the Legion looks after the willing one and shepherds the legionary along. It instils into the legionary the doctrines and motives on which the work is built. It supplies and organises the work; this is all-important.

According to the Legion formula the work must be done for Jesus, and in such an intense spirit of union with Mary that it is virtually she who performs the work. I repeat that this co-operation must include the higher aspect; we must have the mind of Mary. As a very part of her apostolate, we must seek to enter into her way of thinking. We must imagine how she would look on people. What would be her train of thought in a particular situation? Is this so difficult? Many would say yes, but it is not so. Let us think of our own mothers for instance. See the sort of love for the child that is at work there. Exalt that wonderful thing still higher to the pitch of sheer idealism. With that as a basis, imagine what the mother-love of Mary must be like. We must draw that love into ourselves and share her desires.

What are her desires for the world?



The Council teaches that she is the Mother of all people, not merely of those in the fold, or of those who love her, but of all people; those who do not know her, even those who hate her. In the soul of every one of these mortals there is the germ of love for their mother. That germ exists for the purpose of being brought to life, but unfortunately human neglect leaves it underdeveloped.

Pope Paul insists that every Catholic must be taught this role of Mary towards all men. When they have learned, they must pass on that knowledge to all men. In other words, instead of keeping Mary from those outside the Church as if she were a barrier in their way, we must do the opposite. She is the essential means of giving them grace.

In the Legion Promise we ask that she unite herself with her soldier and her child. That she desires and seeks. Whatever falling short there may be, it will not be from her side. If we aspire to draw into ourselves her quality of mind, certainly she will be eager to give it to us. Even on the human plane we will find it of inestimable assistance to our piety and way of acting if we thus try to fill ourselves with what we would imagine to be her thoughts. She is of course very far above us. She is the Immaculate Conception.

This means that she has a life in her which is definitely beyond human realising. It is something which has carried her to the very borders of the divine. So, she is an extraordinary being, living according to a unique dispensation. But it would be an error to think that this has transported her out of our ken, or made her more distant, or less our mother. That is not the case. Those wonders which have been wrought in her have brought her closer to us. This assemblage of graces has made her the ideal woman and all the more our Mother, for that was the purpose. We are capable of presenting to our minds some sort of image of the ideal mother. That image will fall very short of Mary but it reaches affectionately towards her, and that is what counts.!

St. Louis Marie de Montfort states that Mary can never be outdone in generosity. She will always beat us in that department. The saint says that for the egg which we give her she will give us in return an ox. That is an immense disproportion of gifts which loses its full meaning in English; there is a play of words which is only understandable in French. Now this maternal generosity or rather prodigality of hers emboldens us to hope for things which are not only beyond our natural capacity to possess but even beyond our present power to imagine, or even for which to ask.



The Star of Bethlehem

By F. E. Weatherly

*It was the eve of Christmas,
The snow lay deep and white,
I sat beside my window,
And look'd into the night,
I heard the church bells ringing,
I saw the bright stars shine,
And childhood came again to me,
With all its dreams divine.*

*Then, as I list'ned to the bells,
And watch'd the skies afar.
Out of the East majestical,
There rose one radiant star;
And ev'ry other star grew pale
Before that heav'nly glow,
It seem'd to bid me follow
And I could not choose but go.*

*And onward, upward shone the star,
Until it seem'd to me,
It flashed upon the golden gates,
And o'er the crystal sea;
And then the gates rolled backward,
I stood where angels trod;
It was the Star, the Star of Bethlehem
Had led me up to God.*



Our Lady Queen of the Legion



by Pat O'Donoghue

On the eve of the feast of Our Lady's Queenship, with the praesidium's Spiritual Director being on holidays, the need for an allocutio brought to mind the more obvious references to Our Lady's Queenship in the Legion system: the recital of the Hail Holy Queen prayer as part of the Legion prayers and of course the short act of consecration at our annual Acies ceremony: 'I am all yours my Queen, my Mother, and all that I have is yours'.

Yet it seemed appropriate to know what other references there might be in the handbook. With an electronic version of the handbook to hand, what would once have been a tedious and time-consuming exercise was reduced to mere seconds. What a surprise when the search returned no less than 49 references to 'queen' or 'queenship'!

One doesn't have to wait long to find a reference to Our Lady as Queen in the handbook; the third paragraph of Chapter 1 declares: *'The legionaries hope to render themselves worthy of their great heavenly Queen by their loyalty, their virtues, and their courage.'* A little further along, when referring to the attendees of the first ever meeting of the Legion, we read: *'Well, their Queen was there before they assembled.'*

In the handbook, Our Lady features

under many titles as Queen: Queen of Heaven and Earth, Queen of the Rosary, Queen of the Apostles, Queen of Purgatory, Queen of All Hearts, Queen of Angels and on seven occasions as 'Queen of the Legion'. Chapter 18 describes the statue as Mary being the Queen present among her soldiers. Further along in that chapter we are urged to speak clearly when giving our work report; the handbook asks if we could imagine Our Lady mumbling and it exhorts us with the line 'Imitate your Queen!'. Regarding whether the Legion prayers can be offered for a special intention, we are told to offer them for the intentions of Our Blessed Lady, the Queen of the Legion. 'In the Legion, Mary is Queen' pronounces Chapter 28 on the Government of the Legion.

In the section on the praesidium function, Our Lady is described as the Queen of the Legion, the Cause of our Joy who will make the occasion one of special happiness.

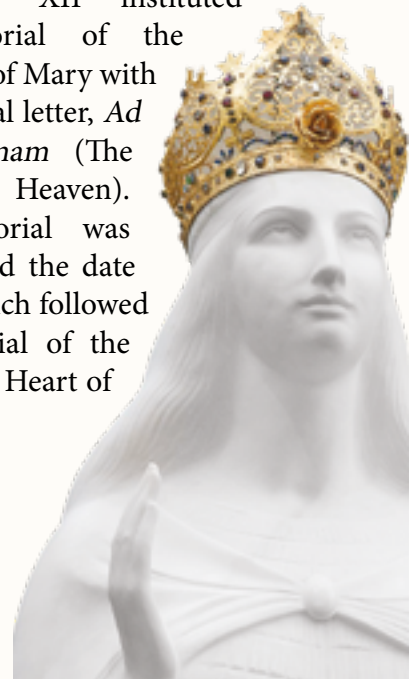
Our Lady as Queen, while not officially declared by the Church until relatively recently, was believed in by her members from the earliest times. St. Ephrem, a Doctor of the Church, referred to Mary as his queen as early as the 4th century: ‘Majestic and Heavenly Maid, Lady, Queen, protect and keep me under your wing lest Satan the sower of destruction glory over me, lest my wicked foe be victorious against me.’

Early Church Fathers used what is referred to as “typology” to establish clearly the continuity between the Old and New Testaments. For example, King Solomon is a prefigurement, or “type” of Christ because he was a peacemaker, filled with wisdom, and because he built the Temple. Saint Augustine, in his commentary on Psalm 127, states that our Lord is “the true Solomon” and that “Solomon was the figure of this Peacemaker.” The true Peacemaker is Christ, and just as Solomon built the Temple, so our Lord built the true Temple of His Body, the Church.

Following this form of typology, the Book of 1 Kings states: “Then Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah, and the king stood up to meet her and paid

her homage. Then he sat down upon his throne, and a throne was provided for the king’s mother, who sat at his right. She said, ‘There is one small favour I would ask of you. Do not refuse me.’ The king said to her, ‘Ask it, my mother, for I will not refuse you’” (1 Kings 2:19–20). If King Solomon, an Old Testament type of Christ, honoured his Queen Mother’s requests and sat her on a throne next to his, then so much more does our Lord, the true King of Kings, do so with His mother. Therefore, in Heaven, Jesus’ mother is seated on a throne next to His, and like Solomon, Jesus says with certainty to her: “Ask it, my mother, for I will not refuse you.”

It is for these reasons, that on October 11, 1954, four years after the proclamation of the Assumption, Pope Pius XII instituted the Memorial of the Queenship of Mary with his encyclical letter, *Ad Caeli Reginam* (The Queen of Heaven). This memorial was first assigned the date May 31, which followed the Memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.



However, in 1969, Pope Paul VI moved the date to August 22, eight days after the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In large part, this was done to create an octave of anticipation and to show that the Assumption necessarily results in the Mother of God being also the Queen Mother of Heaven and Earth.

As Queen, Mother Mary not only intercedes on our behalf, she also acts as her Son's mediator. From her heavenly throne, the Queen Mother of Heaven and Earth is entrusted with the distribution of the grace of God. She is not the source, but she is privileged to be the instrument of distribution, as is recognised by the invocation in the Legion Prayers: 'Mary Immaculate,



Mediatrice of All Graces, Pray for us'. As a loving mother, nothing pleases her more than to lavish every good thing upon her children on earth. She longs to gather all of her children together in Heaven, with and in her divine Son.

As we honour the Queen of Heaven, let us ponder the Church's ever-deepening understanding of her role. As the Church has increased its comprehension of Mary's exalted role through the centuries, so we must individually make this discovery throughout our lives. Let the preponderance of references in the Legion handbook to Our Lady as Queen help us to keep her before our eyes, not just on the feast day of her Queenship, but throughout the year.



Christmas

By John Betjeman

*And is it true
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Became a Child on earth for me?
No love that in a family dwells
Can with this simple Truth compare
That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine.*



How I Discovered the Virgin Mary

by Cainneach Rua, Presentata Curia

Even though I was raised a Catholic and grew up in a very religious household, I never really knew Our Lady, let alone loved her or prayed to her. She was a familiar figure alright; I saw her statues and images everywhere I went - in my home, in school, at Church, etc. I often heard others speak about her using very sentimental language which, even though it was nice, was not appealing to me because it appeared far too possessive. I was apathetic towards Our Lady; she seemed to be everyone else's except my own, and it was this popularity of hers which prevented me from wanting to pray to her, to learn about her, to know her, etc. The underdog always appealed to me, and Mary was anything but an underdog. I disliked the fact that she was so loved and esteemed: it made her boring, institutionalized and too mainstream

for me and as such I certainly wasn't going to start possessing her like I heard others doing. Moreover, I was not attracted by the often kitschy and poorly painted images I saw of her.

No, I much preferred the saints to Our Lady. To me they seemed more interesting and colourful than Mary. Plus, there were so many of them that they would never become as popular or mundane as Our Lady had become in my eyes. And so, I always prayed to Jesus or the saints but never to the Virgin Mary.

As I grew older and having read hundreds of 'lives of the saints,' I realised that there was a common theme in all of their stories and that theme was their outstanding love for Our Lady. Something clicked in my head, and I began to view her with less disinterest than previously.

HOW I DISCOVERED THE VIRGIN MARY

When I was a teenager, I was in a second-hand bookstore one day and saw the biography of Alfie Lambe by Hilde Firtel. I had recently discovered Alfie from a prayer card in the back of a Church which I had brought home with me. I developed a devotion to Alfie, reciting his prayer often and



was eager to learn more about him. When I picked up that book, I noticed another book titled 'The True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary' by St. Louis de

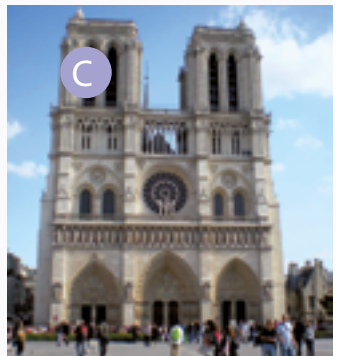
Montfort. Something prompted me to buy it even though I did not think I would ever read it; I was interested only in Alfie's biography.

But everything changed after that. When I read the book, Mary suddenly appeared different and I wanted to love her. I learned just how important and necessary she is. The childish notions I had about Our Lady being 'too popular' dissipated after reading the True Devotion. I began to admire her greatly and to invoke her intercession because I learned from that book how pivotal Mary is for our salvation; how beautiful is Our Lady; how close she is to Jesus and how effective she is in helping us.

The childhood image of Mary had totally turned on its head: thanks to that book and to Alfie Lambe who had led me to it. Little did I know then that all these years later I would be a Legionary of Mary and would wear her Miraculous Medal around my neck!

€50 Book Token

Identify the churches below



Identify these three churches and send your entry to:
Maria Legionis, Presentata House, 263 North Circular Road, Dublin 7.

The first correct answer received will win a €50 book token from
Maria Legionis - Editor.

Our Children Our Future

By Edana Dekkar; Maura Wall; Margaret Davin.

Today when the family seems to be under attack on all sides, it is good to reflect on the Holy Family in which Jesus grew up. He had a mother, Mary, and a foster-father, Joseph, God being his real Father in Heaven. It was the ideal family. Joseph worked as a carpenter to provide for them, and Mary worked in the home, cooking and cleaning, making, mending and washing their clothes. It was full of love and respect for each other. It had its difficulties as every family has, and probably even more than most. The baby was born in poverty, and they had to flee into exile to escape the murderous King Herod; Jesus knew what it was to be a child.

In his words, Jesus shows his great love and concern for children. In Matthew (18: 1-4) this is what he said when the disciples put to him the question: “who is the greatest

in the Kingdom of God?” Calling out a little child, he put him in the midst of them. “Truly I say to you; unless you become like little children, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.”

He went on to say: “Whoever receives one such child in my name, receives me, but whoever scandalises one of these little ones who believes in me, it would be better for him to have a millstone tied around his neck and be buried in the bottom of the sea.”

In another passage in Matthew (19:14) it is related that people were pressing around him bringing children to him to be blessed, and the disciples were keeping them away, but Jesus said: “Let the children come to me, and do not send them away, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.”



The Legion of Mary can be a powerful support to young people and help them harness their generosity and joy in the service of people in need – Archbishop Neary.

The Importance of passing on our faith to our children:

The greatest and first influence on the child is the family. It is good to have a baby baptised as early as possible so that the Holy Spirit can enter into the soul soon after birth. This is one place that the Legion of Mary can play a part as members of a baptism team in a parish. Later, a junior praesidium could be established and play an important role in the development of each child.

If there is a junior praesidium attached to the parish in your area, it would be great to invite parents to come along also to encourage children to become more involved in their parish and further develop the mind of the child, particularly teaching the children how to pray the Rosary, and to learn how to love Jesus through the Rosary.

Among some of the advantages to children of being a member of a Junior Legion praesidium which may encourage one to commence a praesidium in your Parish could be:

- 1. Children learn to be conscious of their peers.**
- 2. Children learn to listen to one another.**
- 3. Children learn to speak in public.**
- 4. Children learn about voluntary work and how to run a meeting correctly.**

In the month of June, before the end of the school year, a Legion praesidium in a Dublin parish took on the work of visiting the local school to present a short talk on the Rosary and on the Miraculous Medal.



On arrival, we were greeted by a teacher who introduced us to Second Class, the First Holy Communion Class, and then Fifth Class, the Confirmation Class.

The children were courteous and attentive as we explained the origin of the sacramentals and the importance of wearing them as signs of our love for Jesus and Mary.



An altar was set up in front with a white cloth, a statue of Our Lady and some flowers.

Each child was presented with a small pack containing a blessed Rosary and a leaflet on how to pray the Rosary. In addition, a Miraculous Medal and an explanatory leaflet was enclosed. The children volunteered to pray the Rosary in different languages including English, Spanish, Dutch, French, Irish and Czech! It was a very joyful occasion.

For the younger children in Second Class, a colouring page of the Miraculous Medal was included, whilst the children in Confirmation Class received a colouring page with an image of the Descent of the Holy Spirit on one side and a prayer on the other.

Before leaving we invited the children in both classes to join us in praying a decade of the Rosary. This was recited in front of the statue of Our Lady of Grace that was adorned with a rose and a lighted candle signifying the light of Christ.

We thanked the teachers for allowing us the opportunity to visit the classes during their busy schedules.

Frank Duff in the Legion of Mary, always sought to keep the family together. He never separated mother and child but gave them shelter in the home which he founded for homeless mothers and children - the Regina Coeli Hostel - with, in many cases, the father nearby in the Morning Star Hostel for homeless men.

Children are our future.



REPORT OF THE 11TH NATIONAL SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE - UGANDA

By Nashaba Victor

Introduction

The 11th National Spiritual Directors Conference (SDC) was held from 22nd to 25th August 2023 at St. Mary's National Major Seminary, Ggaba, Kampala.

The conference was well attended beyond expectation. It attracted the following categories of participants:

Priests from Uganda 205

Priests from South Sudan 4

Religious Sister from Uganda 1

Religious Brother from South Sudan 1

Invited Guests (Priests) 3

Invited Guests (Lay Leader) 1

Officers from Higher Councils 19

Officers from South Sudan 3

Volunteer legionaries 10

Total 247

Aim

To enhance the spiritual formation, guidance and development of the members of the Legion of Mary in Uganda and South Sudan.

Objectives

a) To Provide spiritual directors with opportunities for personal and ongoing spiritual formation, deepening the understanding of the Legion of Mary's apostolate, spirituality, and charism, enabling

them to support and guide better the members.

b) To offer educational sessions and discussions on various topics related to spiritual direction, pastoral care and charism for spiritual accompaniment of Legion of Mary members.

c) To foster a sense of community and collaboration among the spiritual directors, encouraging them to share experiences, insights, and best practices, and to create a supportive network for ongoing learning and growth.

d) To provide an atmosphere of inspiration and renewal, reigniting the passion and enthusiasm of spiritual directors for their vocation

Conference Highlights

The conference commenced with a welcome Mass presided over by Msgr. John Baptist Kauta, the Secretary General of the Uganda Episcopal Conference. The formal opening ceremony was graced by the representative of the Archbishop of Kampala, Msgr. Charles Kasibante, who is also the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Kampala. The Papal Nuncio to Uganda, H.E. Most Rev. Luigi Bianco, had the honour of officially closing the conference.



a) Challenges of Prayer Life and Sacramental Engagement

Rev. Fr. Charles Kimbowa Junior addressed the challenges faced in maintaining a vibrant prayer life and faithfully observing sacramental obligations. Participants gained insights into strategies for overcoming spiritual obstacles and deepening their connection with God.

b) Cultivating Holistic Spirituality in the Digital Realm

Rev. Fr. Ronnie Mubiru explored the intersection of faith, technology, and parenting in the context of lay Christians' apostolate. The presentation focused on how priests can guide their congregations to integrate digital tools while staying rooted in their faith.

c) The Legion of Mary's Devotional Outlook

Rev. Fr. Grace Kintu emphasized the Legion of Mary's devotional approach

and its impact on fostering devotion to Mary and Christ. The session highlighted how imitating Mary's virtues leads to a more profound union with Christ and a steadfast commitment to His teachings.

d) The Spirituality of Productivity

Rev. Fr. Ndyomugabe Balthazar delved into the spirituality of productivity and how it can be harnessed to find meaning and purpose in daily work. Participants were encouraged to discover the divine aspects of their allocated tasks and integrate them into their spiritual journey.

e) Positive Evaluation and Feedback

The participants were highly appreciative of the well-structured content that addressed pertinent spiritual challenges and provided practical insights for growth. The clergy praised the conference for its appropriateness and usefulness in their pastoral roles.



Challenges

The Diocese of Tombura-Yambio had made arrangements to be represented at the Spiritual Directors Conference by at least one priest but unfortunately the domestic airline cancelled the available flight postponing it until two days after. This made it impossible for the participant to come despite having paid for the flight. Due to widespread insecurity, local road transport is neither secure nor predictable.

Way Forward

We plan to use the balance from Concilium contribution towards the SDC on extension work in South Sudan. We have already made plans to hold a congress by December 2023 for

the four Curiae that were represented at the SDC.

As for Tombura Yambio, the Senatus of Uganda has also assigned two Envoys to go and spend 2-4 weeks in the diocese of Tombura Yambio doing extension work from 17th October 2023.

Appreciation

The Senatus of Uganda wishes to extend its appreciation to Concilium for supporting the Spiritual Directors Conference financially and ultimately supporting extension work in South Sudan. We are optimistic that the Spiritual Directors Conference will yield innumerable good results.



The Eucharist

Extract from
Pope Benedict XVI: *Sacramentum Caritatis*

by Paul Moran



The Eucharist reveals the loving plan that guides all salvation history (c/f. Ephesians 1:10; 3:8). There, the Trinity, who is essentially love (c/f. 1 John 4:7-8), becomes fully a part of our human condition. In the bread and wine under whose appearances Christ gives himself to us in the paschal meal (c/f. Lk. 22: 14-20), 1 Cor. 11:23-26), God's whole life encounters us and is sacramentally shared with us. God is a perfect communion of love between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

At creation itself, man was called to have some share in God's breath of life (c/f Genesis 2:7). But it is in Christ, dead and risen, and in the outpouring

of the Holy Spirit, given without measure (c/f. John 3:34), that we have become sharers of God's inmost life. Jesus Christ, who "through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God" (Heb. 9:14), makes us, in the gift of the Eucharist, sharers in God's own life. This is an absolute free gift: the super abundant fulfilment of God's promises. The Church receives, celebrates, and adores this gift in faithful obedience. The "mystery of faith" is thus a mystery of Trinitarian love; a mystery in which we are called by grace to participate. We too should therefore exclaim with St. Augustine: "If you see love, you see the Trinity."

Rosary Procession

In Belfast, Northern Ireland

By *Luke McCann*

In Belfast on Sunday, 8th October, over 800 pilgrims gathered for Our Lady's Rosary Procession. This was the Procession's 20th annual renewal. In all previous years it had been run by the Legion of Mary as a stand-alone event; however, this year to mark the 20 years, the Legion of Mary joined with the Order of the Knights of St. Columbanus to host an eight-day event: Our Lady's Rosary Festival.

The week began with a Camino of St. Michael the Archangel, where pilgrims visited nine churches while praying the Chaplet of St. Michael the Archangel; it was followed by a Eucharistic Healing Service, Holy Mass, and veneration of a first-class relic of St. Faustina. On the opening day there was also a Retreat for Catholic Mothers. Other events included a Reconciliation Crusade,

a talk by Fr. John Harris OP of the Dominicans in Ireland, Way of the Cross with Sacred Heart Devotions, and First-Saturday Devotions, before the culmination and climax of The Festival: Our Lady's Rosary Procession.

Over 800 souls took to the Falls Road and proudly professed their Catholic Faith and devotion to Our Blessed Mother as they journeyed from St. John's Parish to St. Peter's Cathedral, where benediction and closing prayers were followed by a Catholic Organisations' Fair, involving fourteen different organisations including Radio Maria Ireland, Sisters Adorers ICKSP and Mary's Meals. It was a most joyful, spiritually nourishing and uplifting event as the Catholic laity in Ireland came together in a unique way for Our Lady.





The hopes of the Rosary Festival Committee were that many lay organisations and individuals could come together once a year to organise as big a festival as possible which would allow people proudly to profess their Catholic faith; to grow and nurture a sense of Catholic community, and to encourage the

laity to become more active in evangelisation; for people to grow closer to God through the sacraments, and opportunities to encounter Jesus and His Blessed Mother throughout the week. It was a most blessed festival. God Willing next year it will be even better!



Our Lady of Kibeho

By Philip Fleming

After twenty years of rigorous investigation Our Lady of Kibeho became the first and only Vatican approved Marian apparition site in Africa. In 2001 the Church finally proclaimed that the evidence it had collected on the apparitions was too overwhelming to ignore.



Pope Francis in an address to the Bishops of the Episcopal Conference of Rwanda on their visit to the Vatican on 3 April 2014 said:



“I entrust you all to the motherly protection of the Virgin Mary. The Mother of Jesus wished to appear in your country to several children, reminding them of the efficacy of fasting and of prayer, especially the recitation of the Rosary. I sincerely hope that you can make the Shrine of Kibeho radiate even more the love of Mary for all her children.” ...The story still remains largely unknown.

On Saturday 28th November 1981 the Blessed Virgin appeared at Kibeho Rwanda to a sixteen-year-old school girl named Alphonsine Mumureke.

Alphonsine was serving in the dining

room of a girls’ boarding school when she heard someone calling her name. Then she walked towards a corridor from where the sound came and heard a gentle voice say “My Child”: all she could see was a brilliantly-luminous white cloud materialising in mid-air a few feet in front of her.

Then to Alphonsine’s amazement the loveliest woman she had ever seen emerged from the cloud floating between the floor and the ceiling; her hands were clasped in front of her in a gesture of prayer; she was barefoot. Alphonsine was filled with an unimaginable joy. She felt she was in the presence of the Divine and knelt down and asked: “Who are you?” The woman replied:

“I am the mother of the Word.”

“You are the mother of the word” Alphonsine repeated and said: “my name is Alphonsine.”

Mary responded: “Of all things in heaven what makes you happy?” “I love God and I love his mother who gave us their son who has saved us.” Alphonsine immediately said:

“Really” the lady replied.”

“If that is true then know that I have heard your prayers and am here to console you. I want your friends and school mates to have your faith, for they do not have enough.” The Virgin asked Alphonsine to join the Legion of Mary. Alphonsine agreed to do so right away. Mary then stated that she wanted to be loved and trusted by people everywhere so that she could lead lost souls to salvation through Jesus.

Though a good Catholic, Alphonsine wasn't particularly devout. Her parents separated before she was born. She was raised by her mother in poor circumstances; however, she had a happy childhood.

She was not believed; the students began taunting her at once; some thought she was out of her mind. The insults she received were led by a girl named Marie Clare who was one of the most outgoing and popular girls in the school.

The Blessed Virgin continued to appear to Alphonsine in the school dormitory throughout December 1981; usually on Saturdays in full view of students and nuns.

Alphonsine asked Mary to appear to other schoolgirls as well. She was getting much abuse and rejection.

Alphonsine said because Mary loves us so much, she wants us to have more faith in God. During Advent we should reflect on the return of Jesus. She said that Mary told her that her



Son will return to earth soon and that our souls must be prepared for his arrival. The world is in a very bad way with much hatred and sin, so she wants us to say the Rosary every day to cleanse our hearts and show our love for her, for Jesus and for God. She says that praying the Rosary is the best way of showing her our love.

The second visionary was Anathalie Mukamazimpaka. She was seventeen years of age; a member of the Legion of Mary and was known as one of the most pious students in the school. This apparition happened in January 1982 at about 7pm. Anathalie was going to go to chapel but was feeling unwell and went to the dormitory. She decided to say the Rosary to calm herself. She went into a daze and found herself in a meadow; a bright white sphere descended from above and an unseen woman spoke to her from the light.

Mary said: “I am sad because I have sent a message, and no one will listen to my words as I desire.

My child you must pray, for the world is in a horrible way; people have turned from God and the love of my son Jesus. So many souls are running to ruin that I want your help to turn them back to my son.” Mary told her that along with any pain she would endure, she must lead a life of mortification, a life of discipline, humility, prayer and denial of the body and its appetites.

The third Church recognised visionary was Marie Clare. It began on 1st March 1982.

Marie Clare was born in 1961; her father died a few months after her birth and her mother often had difficulty providing for her. So, she lived with her grandparents for much of her childhood. She was raised Catholic and believed in God but was not very religious. She was her class president.

Marie Clare had a vision while in chapel. She saw a field before her and a sky of beautiful colours; then she heard a voice call her name Mukangano. Mary asked her to repeat the verses from the beatitudes about blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness's sake. From then on, her behaviour changed. She said the Virgin was carrying



a black Rosary beads which Mary said was an ancient one called ‘the rosary of the seven sorrows’ and that it would be the girl’s mission in life to reintroduce it to the world.

Mary told her ‘I cannot promise you happiness in this world, but I can promise you eternal happiness in the next world.’

One message was that humans’ time on earth is nearing the end and that many of God’s children have fallen into sin. Mary told her she was here to convert hearts back to Jesus and encourage people to say the Rosary because it is the most powerful tool of prayer and conversion we have to fight evil and receive God’s love. She said the Virgin kept repeating the same message: ‘when I address myself to you, I am talking to the whole world. I have not come to Rwanda to speak to only those in the parish of Kibeho. When I come to one person, I speak to all of God’s children everywhere.’

Bishop Jean-Baptiste Gahamanyi assembled a medical commission to examine the visionaries and then he appointed a theological commission a few months later. Mary told the visionaries that she would appear to them on March 25, 1982. She instructed them to gather all 120 students together and have everyone kneel down during the apparitions and pray the Rosary as an act of penance for having persecuted the visionaries.

She promised that every student who attended the school for the next six years would complete her education and graduate with a diploma. In Rwanda such an achievement was completely unknown; poverty and illness meant that only a few students from any one school would complete their education and graduate. Mary had told Anatholie that all people were her children; she instructed that the Protestants and Muslim girls should pray the Rosary not as Catholics but as her children and they would be awarded as all the others. All students knelt and prayed the Rosary. Every single girl went on to graduate from Kibeho High School.

On 15 August 1982, the feast of the Assumption, more than 20,000 people turned up at Kibeho expecting to sing joyous songs and share apparitions; some were hoping for miraculous cures. When Alphonsine entered a state of ecstasy she began a song of welcome. "I am too sad to hear my children sing" Mary said. Alphonsine started the song seven times, and seven times was told to stop.

Mary began to weep. The people could not hear the Virgin - only Alphonsine.

Alphonsine has visions of what was going to happen in Rwanda.

Each visionary who stepped on the podium received the same message that day.

The genocide in Rwanda took place in 1994.

Marie Clare commented that one of Our Lady's greatest sorrows during her many visits to Kibeho was that not enough people truly listened to the loving advice and counsel she offered through her visionaries; too many individuals came to the village simply to witness a miracle while their hearts failed to hear the messages. Mary repeated again and again: Love God, love and be kind to each other, read the bible, follow God's commandments, accept the love of Christ, repent for sins, be humble, seek and offer forgiveness and live the gift of your life how God wants you to do it with a clean and open heart and a clear conscience.

Bishop Augustin Misago, Bishop of Girongoro, approved public devotion linked to the apparitions on 15 August 1988, and declared their authenticity on 29 June 2001. Then on 2 July 2002 the Holy See also released the declaration of the Bishop approving the apparitions.

The Marian Shrine at Kibeho is called the 'Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows.' Then following an agreement with the local Ordinary and the Society of Catholic Apostolate, better known as the Pallottine Fathers, the Rectorate of the shrine was entrusted to the Pallottine Fathers.

Talk Given at Meeting of Legion Correspondents

By Br. Philip Neri - Dominican Student.



This morning I want to say a few words about St. Paul the Apostle and his role in the building up of the early Church. In particular, I want to suggest some ways that St. Paul's correspondence with the first local churches can be a kind of example and model – an example and model for your own letter-writing as correspondents in the Legion of Mary.

In a meeting of Concilium Correspondents in 1976, Frank Duff said that the very fate of the Legion throughout the world depends on these correspondents.

Why did he say this? Because the correspondents are the links between the highest council, the Concilium, to all the bodies below them, wherever they are. They are the links which transmit legionary idealism, the spirit of the Legion, throughout the ranks. For this reason, Frank Duff says that “accordingly the responsibility of the individual Correspondent is really great.” With this in mind, I think it is worthwhile reflecting on how to carry out that responsibility well and on some examples of how this kind of communication ought to be done.



An initial question is: why would we look to St. Paul and the early Christians for guidance in this area? How much can we really have in common with them? After all, the letters St. Paul wrote, the ones that we possess today in the Bible, are different in a number of ways from the ones you are asked to write today.

The biggest difference is that, while the words St. Paul wrote were truly his own, they were also and primarily the words of God. All of the Pauline epistles are the inspired word of God. Obviously, the correspondence of the Legion of Mary is not inspired in this way.

Secondly, the situation and context in which you write to your brothers and sisters is very different. When St. Paul wrote to the Church in Corinth, he wrote to them as a bishop, as an apostle, as the very founder of that Church. None of us, not even the president of the Concilium, can presume to correspond with that level of authority.

Then there's also the fact that we're talking about letters that were written to groups of Christians two thousand years ago. The culture, the language, the society, is so much different.

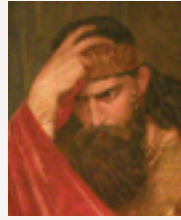
And yet, we should not exaggerate the differences either. I think that in many parts of the world, the Church today looks like and will continue to look more like this nascent Church of the Apostolic Age. Some of you at this meeting today perhaps come from parts of the world where the possibility of martyrdom, of dying for your faith, is very real. The early Christians, as we know, were also familiar with terrible persecution.

And in Ireland, the Church continues to shrink; it continues to be sidelined in society and become less and less relevant in the daily lives of Irish people; as the difficulty of holding on to one's faith and the risk of persecution increases, we too will be able to relate to the experiences of our forefathers in faith.

We can and should look to the early Christians for guidance and for encouragement. They have finished the race, they have kept the faith, and we are still very much in the valley of tears. And St. Paul is one of our best sources for telling us how the first Christians lived, worshipped, persevered, and, for our own purposes this morning, communicated.

For Christians who seek to answer the call to preach the Gospel, to

engage in the work of evangelisation, however that may look, St. Paul is an unparalleled model.



Once a devout Jew and Pharisee, Saul was one of the most fervent persecutors of the early Church.

But by a singular grace he was converted when Jesus Himself appeared to him, and he went on to become the Apostle of the Gentiles. In the face of so many trials, sufferings, dangers, persecutions, he gave himself entirely to sharing the Good News of the Risen Christ. He knew that his Lord desired all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, and so he set out to be the most obedient and effective instrument possible. He gave of himself totally, finally dying for the Catholic faith in Rome.

In the words of Frank Duff: "A soul that is to win others must be great and wide as the ocean." St. Paul was such a soul, which is to say that he loved greatly and he loved generously. He says in the first letter to the Corinthians: "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal." Ultimately it was love that made St. Paul an extraordinary missionary.

You don't need me to give you the full story of St. Paul; you all already have it in the Book of Acts and his letters.

The point is that we have here an example that God has given us to imitate. By virtue of our Baptism, we are all called to holiness and to be missionaries in our own ways, sharing the truth with souls who are utterly deprived without it. Legionaries strive to live out this calling in a particularly intentional way, under the protection of the Mother of God. And since the Handbook has named St. Paul as one of the Legion's patrons, we must look to him for his intercession and for his example.

There are a few themes from St. Paul's epistles to which I think we should pay particular attention this morning. Those are encouragement, instruction and intercession.

Encouragement

In writing to various churches and individuals like Timothy and Titus, St. Paul was motivated by charity. He loved these people, and considered them his children. He wanted what was most important for them, which was for their souls to be saved and to enjoy eternal life with God.

So when he saw that his brothers and sisters in Christ were striving for this goal, that they were on the right path, this was a great consolation for him. It was something to celebrate and make known to other communities of Christians.

In Thessalonians 1 St. Paul says we give thanks to God always for you all, constantly mentioning you in our

prayers remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

And a little further on he says:

And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything.

We read that, despite their sufferings and hardships, the Christians of Thessalonica were striving to imitate Christ and his apostle Paul, labouring with faith and love, and were succeeding by the grace of God. And we find that not only was this to the benefit of the Thessalonians, but Christians throughout Macedonia and Achaia were benefiting from the example that they were setting.

We see here a kind of mutual encouragement. The Thessalonians are blessing and consoling St. Paul and other Christian communities by their faithfulness and endurance. Upon receiving this news, St. Paul seeks to hearten the Thessalonians and motivate them to persevere.

Is this not exactly what Legion correspondents should do?

I think we have all experienced something of this. I remember how edified and encouraged our praesidium was when our president Brother Ian shared with us some of the recent correspondence of the Legion in another country – hundreds of new members in the Curia, dozens of conversions to the Catholic faith, even two witch doctors renouncing their ways and entering the Church.

When, for example, a Senatus in Africa or South America gives its testimony of graces and blessings to the Legion throughout the world, how encouraging and consoling this can be. It reminds legionaries that they are part of something far bigger than themselves, far bigger than their own praesidium or Curia.

And it is in your correspondence that you can become an example and sign of hope for other legionaries; those who may be posted in places where there are very few new members, seemingly very little fruit. You can be the source of encouragement which fires up those legionaries to take new action, to recommit themselves to prayer and the apostolate.

Instruction

The second theme for us to look at is instruction or teaching.

Timothy 3: I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, if I am delayed, you may

know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.

Timothy 2: You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to satisfy the one who enlisted him.

When you read St. Paul's letters you see quite quickly that one of his chief aims is to teach others how to live as Christians, how to live virtuously and avoid sin, and how individuals are to behave in relation to their neighbours, their fellow believers.

Now, we are all Christians first, but we are speaking specifically of the role of instruction among legionaries. Most of the instruction is to be found in the Handbook, of course. But the Handbook itself also allows for higher councils, particularly the Concilium Legionis, to instruct in various ways.

Frank Duff, in the Correspondents Meeting I have mentioned above, envisaged that correspondents in the Concilium would pass down what he called a legionary education. What did he mean?

He thought that legionaries situated here in Dublin at the nucleus of the Legion, in the headquarters, are especially privileged. You get to see the workings of the Legion from a top-down view. You inhabit the milieu of the Legion's founder, and some of you have likely met or known him. You receive something that Frank Duff considered priceless, and it is for you to pass it out from the centre here in Dublin out to praesidia which are very far away.

It should be obvious that our instruction must be motivated by charity. In his letters, St. Paul is firm and critical, as he has a right to be in his position of authority. However, it is also clear that he is firm out of love. Frank Duff was clear about the tone that the correspondent's letter should have. He said "never dictate. Your method must be that of patient explanation... never merely come down on people." Thus, the best way for you to communicate the true spirit of the Legion is to make people see how attractive it is, how effective it is. In other words, you will catch more flies with honey than with vinegar.



Intercession

Thessalonians 3: Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed on and triumph, as it did among you, and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men; for not all have faith.

One of the most important doctrines communicated to us by St. Paul is that of Christ's Mystical Body. Christ is the Head of His Body, and we are His members. We are knit to Christ and to each other in such an intimate way that I can call people thousands of miles away my brothers and sisters, pray for them, rejoice for them as members of my own family.

How crucial it is for us to remember this truth, and not least for legionaries of Mary, who commit themselves to living this reality of the Mystical Body in a very intentional way. One becomes a legionary to glorify God through a holy life, developed by prayer and work for Our Lady. But they do it not as isolated individuals. They are members of a lay organisation far bigger than themselves.

Members of the Legion are joined together by spiritual bonds, by their promise to the Holy Spirit and their servitude to Our Lady. But this means that legionaries should be praying, not just for the success of their own apostolates, but those of praesidia throughout the world.

How can legionaries pray for the success of their brothers and sisters abroad, how can they pray for them in the midst of trials and difficulty, if they do not know what's going on with them? We know that prayer, imploring God's help, is simply non-negotiable. Thus, it would be good for us to pray for our correspondents and ask them to pray for us.

Conclusion

"A soul that is to win others must be great and wide as the ocean." All of the saints were like this on earth, and this is what made them such powerful instruments in building up

the Body of Christ. It was love that had grown their souls, that had raised them up above selfishness and petty concerns, and that had made them magnanimous and generous in the service of God.

St. Paul is an outstanding example of this greatness of soul, and we are called to imitate him. In your work as legionaries, encourage, instruct and intercede, but above all love.

And read and pray with his epistles, which are a bottomless fountain of wisdom and which can guide us to conform our lives more and more to God's will.

Explanation of Front and Back Covers – *The Editor*



The two paintings on the front and back covers are modern depictions of the Nativity.

Unlike earlier Renaissance paintings, which generally depicted the Nativity as the Holy Night in which Christ was born, these modern paintings depict the Nativity as a daylight scene, thereby suggesting that the arrival of the Baby Jesus heralded a new and glorious day for all mankind.

The angel of the Lord appeared to them (shepherds) and the glory of the Lord shone round them and they were terrified. But the angel said: "do not be afraid, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

(Luke 1:9-12).



Praises of Mary



What treasure is superior to the Divine Love that animated the Heart of Mary? It is from this Heart, as from a furnace of Divine Love, that the Blessed Virgin drew forth words of a most ardent love.

St. Bernardine of Siena

Breathing is not only the sign but the very cause of life. In like manner, the name of Mary, continually on the lips of her clients, not only proves the presence of supernatural life but also causes and preserves it and gives it strength for everything.

St. Germanus

The Mother of God contained the infinite God under her Heart, the God whom no space can contain.

Through her, the Trinity is adored, demons are vanquished, Satan is cast out of heaven, and our fallen nature is assumed into heaven.

St. Cyril of Alexandria

Come let us throw ourselves at the feet of this good Mother. Let us cling to her and not leave her, until she blesses us and takes us for her children.

St. Bernard

Do you wish to know the most intimate perfections of Jesus and the most hidden attractions of His love.

Then seek them in the Heart of Mary.

St. Peter Eymard

We have only one thing that we must do – that is pray to the Blessed Virgin. Ask her for the grace to love our Lord as she loves Him and to remain faithful to Him in life and in death.

St. Bernadette



Legion world news



WEST INDIES

Dominican Republic: Santa Domingo Senatus reported on apostolic work by two Comitias such as visiting about one thousand and four hundred sick people, arranging Sacrament of the Sick for people, catechesis for forty people and counselling for eighty-eight people.

Haiti: Works include visitation of homes, hospitals, markets, preparing people for the sacraments, and working with youth. There are two Seminary praesidia.

Puerto Rico: New praesidia have been formed and apostolic works include book barrow, home visits, taking children and the elderly to Mass and organising Mass in some residential complexes.

Trinidad and Tobago: Reports were received from four local Curiae and from Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, and Antigua. Contact with St. Vincent and St. Lucia had been retarded due to an earthquake.

ASIA

India: Kerala Senatus: Works being carried out include home and hospital visitation to all. In **Mumbai Senatus** 128 junior legionaries attended a fun and formation day. **Pondicherry Senatus** reports much visitation done of homes of Catholics and non-Catholics. Works include sorting of family disputes, saving a person from a suicide attempt, and encountering people with drug and drink problems. In **Chennai Regia** Extension work was carried out in two areas. Muslims and Hindus were visited, and thirteen lapsed Catholics returned to practice. **Kochi Comitium** has increased auxiliary

and praetorian memberships. Another Curia has thirteen junior praesidia attached. The same Curia is encouraging all to return to Mass attendance. **Coimbatore Comitium:** Has over one thousand members and four *Patricians* groups.

Nepal: The Legion is now in eight parishes; four in Kathmandu and four in isolated areas. There are thirty senior and sixteen junior members.

Sri Lanka: The **Senatus** reported many lapsed returned to the sacraments. Marriages have been rectified, adults, including thirteen Hindus, have been prepared for Baptism. The Colombo junior Curia has four school praesidia. A Legion Congress was held in June.

Thailand: Bangkok Senatus: A praesidium comprised of teachers taught catechism classes, and spoke to people, including students and parents, friends, and family members of the students on the importance of attending Holy Mass on Sundays. The praesidium also had a notice board with banners educating about Christianity. A praesidium encouraged youth, both male and female, to join in the vocation camps organized by many religious orders. A Comitium reported the parish priest celebrated Holy Mass in the home of one family, two couples received the sacrament of Matrimony, their grandchild was baptised, and the priest blessed their house.

Vietnam: The **Senatus** celebrated the 63rd anniversary of it having been raised to Senatus in May 1960. The Legion in **Than Hoa Comitium** is working in 84 of the 95 parishes under its care and the legionaries are grateful for the great spiritual direction given to them. There are 25 senior and two junior Curiae comprising 369

praesidia and 24 junior praesidia comprising 5,061 senior members and 183 juniors. The legionaries work in a mountainous area so face difficulties. The **Vihn Comitium** is working in 73 of its 119 parishes. Most of the members are elderly with the younger people moving to larger centres. Despite this they have 21 senior and two junior Curiae with 2,823 senior and 750 junior members. **Ha Thin Comitium** is in a central area with harsh weather conditions and has one junior and nineteen senior Curiae. All the councils reporting arrange for baptism of adults, children of migrants, help families to reconcile, invite people to have their marriages blessed in Church, and help women not to proceed with abortions. They all emphasise the need to recruit active and auxiliary members and run training for active members and correspondents.

AFRICA

Cameroon: Reports to **Douala Senatus** mention many conversions and Church marriages, home, hospital, orphanage and prison visitation, and street contact. Melong Comitium reported on an Exploratio Dominicalis. In Yaoundé Regia, one Curia and many new praesidia have been set up. The **Comitium of Mbanga** counts three junior praesidia and has enrolled three-hundred prisoners in the Legion. In Bamenda a new praesidium has started in a prison, while the local praesidium visits them every week and teaches catechism.

Gambia: Banjul Curia now has twelve praesidia. A Lenten retreat had an attendance of one hundred and six; three priests assisted with Mass, talks and prayers. Two different praesidia take responsibility each month for the Legion Radio Programme. Reports also included extension work, home and hospital visitation.

Guinea: Conakry: Works include home, hospital and prison visitation as well as providing catechesis. Many Muslims were met.

Kenya: Senatus of Kenya: The first praesidium set up by Venerable Edel Quinn in December 1936 has eighteen active members, five probationers and eighteen auxiliary members. The annual Mass at Venerable Edel Quinn's grave had the largest attendance ever with legionaries from Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, and all over Kenya in attendance.

Nigeria: A Comitium, attached to Onitsha Regia, with several thousand members prepared many for the sacraments. **Jos Regia** prepared hundreds for baptism and First Holy Communion. Works reported include home and hospital visitation, catechism instruction, crowd contact, and care for junior praesidia. In **Enugu Senatus, Abakaliki Regia** prepared hundreds for Baptism, First Holy Communion and Confirmation. In the last year 52 senior and 67 junior praesidia were started.

Nsukka Regia undertook Exploratio Dominicalis projects resulting in eighty-three people being received into the Church. **Ikot Ekpen Regia:** A Comitium prepared 72 catechumens for baptism and First Holy Communion. Queen of Apostles Seminary Curia recruited twenty new members. **Abuja Senatus:** The Legion of Mary in collaboration with other Marian societies have commenced a radio programme on Radio Maria. The Legion is present in some seminaries in Makurdi Regia. The ordination of nine deacons is a cause for joy. Makurdi Regia is planning to produce the Legion Handbook in the TIV language. **Ibadan Senatus:** Works reported include hospital visitation, teaching of catechism, book barrow, care of junior praesidium, and of auxiliary members. Twelve legionaries were recently ordained. **Lagos Regia:** Forty-nine members undertook St. Louis-Marie de Montfort's Total Consecration, while

64 members renewed their consecration. A Comitium reports home and hospital visitation, teaching the Catechism, taking care of children, visiting an orphanage and a brothel. Another council reports visitation of homes, hospitals, maternity hospitals and prisons, teaching of the Catechism, marriage counselling, and crowd contact.

Senegal: Dakar Comitium: One new Curia was set up; one new one is projected and three new adult praesidia have been established. Home, hospital, and prison visitation and giving catechesis are some of the works mentioned. Three marriages were regularised and some received the Sacrament of First Holy Communion and Confirmation. In **Pikine Comitium** home visitation, hospital and prison visitation are carried out, along with giving catechism classes.

South Sudan: Visitors from South Sudan continue to attend the Ugandan Senatus meetings. Ten participants from South Sudan were planning to attend the Ugandan National Spiritual Directors Conference in Ggaba in August, including the Archbishop of Juba Archdiocese.

Tanzania: Dar-es-Salaam Regia: Regular efforts are made to establish the Legion of Mary in parishes where there is currently no Legion of Mary praesidium. **Hai Moshi Comitium** works included home and hospital visitation, care of junior praesidia, intervening with family disputes and contact with young drug & alcohol addicts; in one area four young people have reformed their lives.

Togo: Lomé Senatus: Numerous Exploratio Dominicalis projects and a Congress were held. Works include home, prison, and orphanage visitation as well as street contact and catechesis. Junior legionaries talk about the importance of confession and going to

Mass. A Peregrinatio Pro Christo with ninety peregrini was held from 18th- 29th August.

Uganda: The **Uganda Senatus** recently launched their new website which gives details of the Legion of Mary throughout Uganda. Mugalike Comitium reported that following visitation one hundred and forty believers of the Bisaka cult were received back to the Catholic Church. Jinja Comitium reported that through their work, one hundred and fourteen patients received the anointing of the sick and four satanic shrines were demolished. The Legion of Mary Handbook has been translated into five local languages and is in the process of being translated into four other local languages. The Legion of Mary was invited to the Little Sisters of St. Francis' celebration of one hundred years in Nkokonjeru. This Congregation of Sisters is key to the history of the Legion of Mary in Uganda as they were very close to Venerable Edel Quinn during her time there. The Regia of Western Uganda celebrated the 79th Anniversary of Venerable Edel Quinn's death with Holy Mass, with four thousand legionaries in attendance.

Zambia: Works reported by **Lusaka Regia** include marriage counselling, catechism classes, visiting the sick and grieving. A Curia organised a day with Mary themed "Mary Mother of the Church" with the purpose of deepening one's relationship with Mary.

NORTH AMERICA

Canada: Extension efforts in **Toronto Senatus** have resulted in four new praesidia with a total of 40 members approximately. A former president in Winnipeg was ordained to the priesthood. **Montreal Senatus** printed one thousand French Handbooks. Monthly recruiting resulted in eight new members in Senatus and three in attached Curiae. Two praesidia highlighted catechesis of children

and adults, working with bereaved and bringing the elderly to Mass. One praesidium in **Edmonton Comitium** does Exploratio Dominicalis two to three times annually. One attached local Curia with ninety-five active members does door-to-door visits, a weekly virtual Rosary with prisoners, catechesis for children preparing for the sacraments, Pilgrim Virgin Statue visitation and runs two junior praesidia. A praesidium of sixteen members in **Vancouver Comitium** circulates four Pilgrim Statues to families to encourage practice of the faith.

U.S.A.: The **Arlington Regia** was raised to **Senatus** status at the Concilium meeting of 17th of September 2023. Congratulations. They reported an increase of ninety-nine senior members and five juniors in a Comitium with a total of nineteen praesidia. A youth retreat had fifty in attendance. Pilgrim Virgin Statue visitation stimulated a request from a non-Catholic to become a Catholic while another lady was declared cancer-free after this visit. Knoxville Curia started two new praesidia. Providence Comitium, attached to **Boston Senatus**, has eighteen senior and three junior praesidia and two Curiae with a total of sixteen praesidia. The Vietnamese La Vang Curia reported four non-Catholics baptised. One local Curia, attached to **Chicago Senatus** had five language groups represented at their Acies. In Minnesota, one Curia staffed a Legion booth at a fair. **Cincinnati Senatus** started a new praesidium of six members in Ohio. **Detroit Regia** reported good extension efforts made. **Houston Senatus** report that their Northern Curia gained eight new active members and twenty-seven auxiliaries in two recruiting drives. Parents were impressed that hosting the Pilgrim Statue or Sacred Heart Enthronement stimulated interest in their children in praying the Rosary. In July, the Concilium visitors to **Los Angeles Senatus**,

Patricia O'Donoghue and Sheila Daly, visited six senior and one junior praesidia, three Curiae and the Senatus meeting as well as two Senatus officers' meetings. Recruiting efforts greatly impressed them. Some membership statistics show that **Pittsburgh Regia**, attached to **Philadelphia Senatus**, has a total of twenty-nine senior praesidia and two junior praesidia with a total of one hundred and eighty-one members. Camden Comitium has twenty-eight senior praesidia, two junior praesidia and one young adult praesidium with a total of two hundred and twenty-eight active members. **San Francisco Senatus** reports highlighted Acies ceremonies, and extension. A praesidium of twenty-two started in Nevada and will divide soon. **St. Louis Senatus** reports that a Korean praesidium gained three new members. A Curia in Arkansas reports enthronements of the Sacred Heart in homes, catechesis, home and nursing home visitation and distribution of blessed sacramentals among their works. **Miami Regia** reported that works included recruiting for a Rosary Confraternity and leading First Saturday Devotions. The Legion of Mary in Jamaica and the bishop there were visited in June 2023. Only one praesidium, out of three, has restarted in Kingston after Covid.

Mexico: In **Merida Senatus** legionaries spoke to forty-five people of other faiths, two of whom converted to the Catholic faith. Six couples received the Sacrament of Matrimony. Reports to **Mexico City Senatus** show the Pioneer apostolate resulted in four persons taking the Pioneer pledge, and another four attending the Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting. A Comitium has eighteen Curiae and twelve praesidia one of which works in a high security prison. Legionaries in **Durango Regia** on home visitation, encourage Enthronement of the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the homes, which is welcomed by the families. One of the Curiae in **Guadalajara**

Regia reported eighteen new members. A young man was prepared for the sacraments of Christian initiation. A number of praesidia throughout the **Hermosillo Regia** area closed during Covid, and efforts are now being made to rebuild or set up new praesidia. A Curia in **Monterrey Regia** gives formation talks to thirty married couples. A new praesidium with eighteen members presented its first report. They bring the Statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe to homes. In addition to the usual works, they lead the rosary at wakes and organise dawn Rosaries.

EUROPE

Albania: The Malta correspondent and another legionary visited the Comitium and the attached Curiae from the 20th – 31st May. Fr. Emanuel Cutajar, Spiritual Director Gozo Comitium who had spent twenty-one years in Albania, visited with them. They had meetings with the Comitium officers in Shkoder and the attached Curiae. The Comitium held its Acies and the apostolate includes teaching Catechism, church cleaning, visiting the sick and housebound, distribution of Miraculous Medals and Statue visitation. All the attached Curiae were found to be working well and engaging in good apostolates. The praesidium in Tirana was also visited. They have seven members, and their works include prison visitation. A meeting was held with Archbishop Angelo of Massfra Shkoder-Pult Diocese. He is very proud of the Legion of Mary and holds it in high esteem. A number of priests said the Legion of Mary is the heart of the parish.

Belgium: A praesidium of thirteen members in **Brussels Senatus** continued to have five Pilgrim Statues circulating during lockdown amongst parishioners who would telephone each other to arrange delivery of the Statue. Legionaries visit homes and hospitals. A

Filipino man met on contact work agreed to be baptised and was given instruction by legionaries. His marriage in Church is being prepared. Members of another praesidium succeeded, through home visitation, in reconciling a divorcing couple and a Catholic/Muslim couple.

Cyprus: Praesidia are meeting in Nicosia, Limassol, Kyrenia and Famagusta.

England: Brentwood Regia: Works include visitation of the sick, housebound and bereaved, and distribution of Miraculous Medals to First Communicants. **Southwark Comitium:** Works include door-to-door visitation, book barrow, helping with catechetics and training of altar servers.

Central London Curia: Three praesidia featured with a total of thirty- five active members and works include crowd contact, Statue visitation and visitation of elderly and lonely and residential homes. A junior praesidium has ten members. **Leeds Curia:** A praesidium which had three members gained twelve new members including some Nigerian students attending Leeds University and who had been in the Legion of Mary previously. Works include home-to-home visitation and nursing home visitation. **Wirral Curia:** A praesidium visits a Catholic school weekly to teach and pray the Rosary with the children. **Billingham Curia:** A praesidium carries out home to home visitation and through this a number of lapsed Catholics have returned to practice. **Manchester Comitium:** A new praesidium has sixteen active members and twenty auxiliary members. The work is mainly street contact, instruction of children and hospital visitation. **Birmingham Senatus:** Attendance has improved. In regard to Extension, a second praesidium is in formation in Wolverhampton and a new praesidium with eight members has been set up in Walsall by West Birmingham Curia. Legionaries in Sheldon attend and help at baptisms where

they have an apostolate to the parents. Street contact work is also done where many good contacts are made.

France: A praesidium of sixteen active members in **Paris Senatus** reported works include involvement in catechesis and catechumenate and bringing Holy Communion to the sick. Another praesidium had a stand at the parish festival where members encouraged a young lady, a recent convert, who was keen to join an organisation associated with Our Lady.

Germany: The **Frankfurt Senatus** members were very saddened by the death of Sr. Birgit Metzler at just fifty-two years of age, a dedicated legionary and correspondent to the Curiae of Siberia (with seven praesidia) and Kazakstan (with five praesidia) where she had visited many times. She fell ill while on Peregrinatio Pro Christo in Berlin in June and died on 17th July. May her soul rest in peace. Extension is ongoing in **Munich Regia**. Works include promotion of the Rosary amongst children who are to receive First Holy Communion. This is accompanied by a demonstration on making Rosary beads which attracts great interest from young people at various Legion of Mary stands including one at a Lutheran Church stand. **Cologne Regia:** The Frankfurt Senatus officers while visiting the Regia met with a Colombian Spanish-speaking couple, residing in Luxembourg, who have established a Spanish-speaking praesidium and are planning a second, and a French speaking praesidium to begin in July.

Italy: The **Rome Senatus** and the attached Curiae and praesidia are working to help weak praesidia which have not recovered from the pandemic. Two former presidents of the Comitium in Reggio Calabria were ordained recently. There is a praesidium in Milan, and one Curia with two praesidia in Bruneck on the

border with Austria. The Legion of Mary in Asti and Tortona is working well.

Kosovo: Two Maltese legionaries, who visited Albania visited Kosovo also. The two praesidia there were visited. They also met the parish priest. The legionaries were encouraged to persevere in their membership and apostolate.

Malta: Reports to **Malta Regia show** the apostolate includes home, hospital and statue visitation, ship apostolate and teaching catechism. From home visitation a housebound couple accepted the invitation for confession and Holy Communion. One person contacted was encouraged to go back to Mass and now attends every Sunday. The Patricians, tourist contacts, the sects and encouraging people back to Mass are the main works of an attached Curia. An English-speaking praesidium for Filipinos is in formation in **Gozo Comitium**.

Netherlands: Amsterdam Regia: The Cape Verde Curia in Rotterdam reported confirmation of six adults, baptism of six adults and four couples to be married in the Church. During the Christmas period legionaries in Amsterdam visited the red-light district, sang carols and spoke to the girls and passers-by.

Norway: Legionaries in **Bergen Curia** undertake excellent work amongst which are sacramental preparation of children, weekly street apostolate and overseeing sixty WhatsApp Rosary groups and an online catechism course. Six new legionaries have made the promise. Encouraging people to attend Sunday Mass and visiting sick and housebound are among the works of the praesidium in **Tonsberg**. Children are taught basic prayers by the praesidium in **Drammen** and one of the legionaries gives catechism classes to the children. Home and hospital visitation is also carried out.

Portugal: The number of auxiliary members has been highlighted in the reports received from **Lisbon Senatus**. A slide presentation was held on Venerable Edel Quinn in a meeting with auxiliaries. Legionaries make a weekly visit to a prison in Lisbon. The Councils attached report the foundation of new praesidia. Much evangelisation work was carried out in **Coimbra Regia**. It held a Retreat attended by 33 legionaries. Seventy people attended a retreat in Ponta Delgada, Azores.

Scotland: Works being done by a Curia with eleven praesidia in the **Senatus of Scotland** include visitation of schools in May and October to promote the Rosary, *Patricians*, and Christmas Crib apostolate. The report of the praesidium in Strathclyde University showed a great variety of works including helping at the Wayside club and crowd contact. The chaplain is very supportive.

Spain: The **Madrid Senatus** officers are suggesting new works and the starting of new praesidia. The Peregrinatio Pro Christo team in Seville, which was organised by the Brazilian legionaries, had eleven Spanish as well as legionaries from Armenia, U.S.A., Ireland, and Cuba. Their example and amazing work have given hope to organise more PPC teams and extension work.

Switzerland: Zurich Comitium: Two Frankfurt Senatus officers while on a visit to the Comitium met officers of the Curia of Bergen, Norway.

Wales: The **Swansea** Curia is working hard at extension and a new praesidium is planned for Neath. The apostolate of home and brothel visitation, and crowd contact are the main works. Miraculous Medals are offered and accepted.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Costa Rica: Efforts to involve the young people in the community were reflected in reports to the **Senatus**. Prison visitation is done, also home visitation and street contact with positive results. One Curia organised a Congress after many years.

El Salvador: San Salvador Senatus: An atheist lady was converted and after receiving the sacraments, she joined the Legion of Mary. A young man was prepared for and received the sacraments of Christian initiation over a five-month period. Five new junior and four new senior praesidia were set up.

Honduras: Tegucigalpa Senatus: The New Regia in San Pedro Sula will govern a large area and is working hard at visiting and getting to know it. New members are helped with getting to know the Legion and they are encouraged to read some of Frank Duff's articles and books.

Panama: Reports to the **Panama Regia** indicate that legionaries are working hard setting up new praesidia in the different Curiae. One of the objectives is to organise a Congress to enable the members to learn and strengthen their knowledge of the Legion.

Cuba: There are now three Curiae in Cuba, meeting and working well, and there are plans for the setting up of a fourth Curia. The three Curiae are in contact with Concilium. It is hoped that a Comitium can be set up as soon as possible in Cuba.





Puer Natus Est Nobis
Introit for Mass of Nativity



International Centre of the Legion of Mary
De Montfort House, Morning Star Avenue, Brunswick Street, Dublin 7, Ireland.
Phone: (353-1) 872 3153 / 872 5093. Website: www.legionofmary.ie
Legion enquiries - e-mail: concilium@legion-of-mary.ie