

Maria Legionis



Sergio Byrne 1962

Maria Legionis

The Voice of the Legion of Mary

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ST. LOUIS-MARIE DE MONTFORT - 300th Anniversary Feast Day April 28th

"In view of other decisions as to the inadmissibility of particular and local patrons, the inclusion of the name of Blessed Grignon de Montfort would at first sight appear to be debatable ground. It can, however, be safely asserted that no saint has played a greater part in the development of the Legion than he. The handbook is full of his spirit. The prayers re-echo his very words. He is really the tutor of the Legion: thus invocation is due to him by the Legion almost as a matter of moral obligation." (Decision of the Legion placing the name of Blessed Grignon de Montfort in the list of invocations.) He was canonised on 20 July, 1947, and his feast occurs on 28 April.

"Not only a founder, but missionary as well! And more than missionary; for we see yet another aspect: He is doctor and theologian, who has given us a mariology such as no one before him had conceived. So deeply has he explored the roots of marian devotion, so widely has he extended its horizons, that he has become without question the announcer of all the modern manifestations of Mary — from Lourdes to Fatima, from the definition of the Immaculate Conception to the Legion of Mary. He has constituted himself the herald of the coming of the reign of God through Mary, and the precursor of that longed-for salvation which in the fullness of time the Virgin Mother of God will bring to the world by her Immaculate Heart." (Federigo Cardinal Tedeschini, Archpriest of St. Peter's: Discourse at unveiling of statue of St. Louis-Marie de Montfort in Saint Peter's, 8 December, 1948)



Blessed Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort

Cover Illustration by Gerald O'Byrne



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The Ascension Commandment

(The Woman of Genesis)

by
The Servant of God,
Frank Duff



Our Lord's mission closed on the note of Conversion. Indeed it could have closed on no other, for He had only a few believers around Him – one hundred and twenty of them – so that there was no other programme to announce. It was directed to all men. He said to His Disciples: "Go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptised shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned." (Mark 16, 15.)

That Commandment was delivered on Mount Olivet. It was more than the place of the Ascension. Tradition assigns to it a multitude of events in Our Lord's life, including a cavern which was His favourite spot for instructing His Disciples, and where He gave them the Our Father. The Mount lies to the east of Jerusalem about two-thirds of a mile from the



Gate where St. Stephen was martyred. The road crosses the Valley of Kedron to Gethsemane, after which the ascent through dense trees is steep, passing the spot where Our Lord wept over Jerusalem, up to the site of the Ascension which is about five hundred feet above the valley.

That scene of the Ascension must have been a surpassing one. All those Disciples now fully realised with Whom they were dealing. They believed utterly. They took Him literally. They knew what they had to announce. He made them aware that He would continue with them even though He was departing from them. They realised that His promise of the Paraclete meant His presence with them in another way, and that the Paraclete was going to teach them all things and give them Divine strength.



“Go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptised shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned.” [Mark 16, 15.]

Therefore they caught much more than a glimpse of their mission. Its details were not communicated to them but their enlightened intelligence painted a picture for them even before their reception of the special missionary graces which the Holy Spirit would impart.

To them the world was a totally different conception from what it is to us. To us it is a comparatively small orb revolving in a vacuum, surrounded by innumerable other bodies about which we already know something. Some from among us have journeyed out a quarter of a million miles into that void, have landed on our nearest neighbour, and have come back with the account of their experiences garnished with cine and still photos in colour and black and white. More than that, they talked to the earth from there and the earth talked back to them. Furthermore, all that is only a beginning.

In regard to this earth, we know much, so much as to make us able to visualise every bit of it. And really a trip could be arranged to absolutely every spot of it. Why, our own Legion probably contains members of every race on earth, and great numbers of them have come here to visit us. Your own aspirations aim at visits to far-flung parts. Time and money are the only limiting circumstances.



But to the Disciples on Ascension Thursday, all that was even to their illuminated minds a sealed book. They were citizens of a small country, and they were simple citizens of it who had never passed its frontiers. Of course they had heard plenty about the adjacent lands. The Jews were a scattered people and communities of them existed in a wide circumference of Jerusalem. Even the distant Jews regarded it as a duty to come to the centre of their race and worship. Remember that the only place where the Sacrifice was offered was the Temple. Even though they realised – as we do in regard to the Mass – that the benefit of the Sacrifice was transmitted to those united with it by faith, still they yearned to be present at it, just as we would if Mass were said at only one place in the world.

Actually an example of this was before the Apostles eyes at that time. Pious Jews from every nation had flocked into Jerusalem to fulfil the Paschal Precept there and to attend the great ceremonies in the Temple.

But even allowing for the possession of that vague knowledge of the world outside Palestine, the mental horizon of even the best versed Jews would not stretch far out. It would limit itself to the ends of the various trade routes established by Solomon. These would comprise nearer India, Northern Africa and Spain. Of the rest of the world we may say they knew nothing. They would have no idea as to how far the land and sea extended. Daring travellers would have reported that no matter how far they had gone, there was still land and water beyond that point. So where did the earth end?

Although the researches of the Egyptians and Greeks into astronomy were remarkable at that time and had revealed to them that the earth was not flat but a globe revolving in space like its neighbours, this was a notion far removed from the minds of those who listened to Our Lord's last discourse as He was about to ascend into Heaven.

"Go out into the whole world" signified to them a humanly impossible proceeding, a penetration out beyond anything that the most adventurous traveller had brought back word of – out into a wilderness of mystery and imagination inhabited

by strange peoples and fantastic, mythical animals. That expanse was so illimitable that presumably it ended nowhere. Certainly no one had ever heard of any boundary to the world. Not even the farthest explorer had ever heard a rumour of there being any end to that outstretching wilderness.



To give a faint idea of what that contemplation must have meant to those first Christians, I mention that sixteen hundred years later it took two years for a Jesuit Brother travelling overland to get from Rome to Macau in China, and the journey entailed the most grievous hardships and peril.

That was the bewildering prospect which was called up in minds by the command of Our Lord. You will realise how preposterous it sounded to mere human thinking. But this was no occasion for such thinking. Jesus, their Divine Saviour, who had just ascended into Heaven before their eyes, had spoken those words and He had promised to be with them in the overwhelming prospect.



Their task was clear-cut. It was to give their own priceless possession to all other men, to tell them that God had become Man and had suffered and died to save all men. Everyone without exception had to be told that and induced to believe. Their salvation depended on that belief.

As far as can be judged from the Biblical recital, not one of those who thus heard the Lord had any doubts. It would seem plain that His instruction was unquestioningly received by them and reduced to the level of business to be done. There was no selfish cogitation. Perhaps the best to sort out their thoughts is to ascribe to them our own mentality in the presence of a crisis. This is justifiable, for they were normal humanity. Imagine yourselves in a position akin to theirs, and you have reasonably pictured them.

Note that the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon them to usher in a superior dispensation. So when Our Lord had disappeared into the cloud and the awful shock of their separation from Him had passed off, what would be the state of their minds? I would say: an extraordinary mixture of exaltation and bewilderment, of pain and joy. There would be the stupendous reaction from all their old doubtings of every kind. Jesus was God. He had ascended into Heaven. He was their own most beloved Friend, but more than Friend. He loved them and they loved Him distractedly. Now He was depending on them and had passed on His own mission to them.

Then there was this wonderful Visitor Whom He had promised to them. What was he going to be like? Would He be another sort of Jesus? Apparently He was going to come in circumstances of great majesty and for the giving of power.

You will understand from such crises of conflicting emotions and perhaps peril as most of you must have experienced in your own lives that everything in the Disciples' minds would quickly have resolved itself down to a strangely matter-of-fact performance. One half of their mind thrilling throughout, the other half would apply itself to what had to be done immediately. That was to return to Jerusalem.



But before we depart in imagination with them from that hallowed Mountain, we must press strongly on a note not so often emphasised. Religious art has enshrined the standing of Our Lady at the Cross, and rightly so because it is part of the essence of the Mystery.

But I am not acquainted with any picture which shows her standing beside her Son as He lifts Himself from earth in His Ascension. But her standing there is likewise part of that Mystery. Mary had to be there under many heads of suitability. She was the Mother and the first believer in Jesus, His co-operator in Redemption foretold from before history. One day, still far ahead, she will ascend in body as He had just ascended – save (we are told) that the Angels will bear her aloft to signify her purely human condition. Moreover her Assumption will be from Mount Olivet. Those missionary words of her Son struck heaviest of all on her ears because they pointed to the next stage of her motherhood. Just as she had to bring forth her Babe, so she had to inaugurate and tend His Mystical Body. She will be as necessary to the Holy Spirit in that operation as she was to Him in the Incarnation. She cannot go away with Jesus now because that new phase, that campaign of evangelisation claims her. Though so dissimilar in appearance, it will be the same in essence, the continuation of her motherhood.

For those reasons she has to be beside her Son on the mountain. Her presence must not for a second be overshadowed or taken for granted. She is there by office as she was at Nazareth or Cana or Calvary. Most fittingly then does the Rosary include the Ascension in its mysteries. Let us look at that woman of destiny at this moment of drastic transition.

She is about 50 years of age but time has touched her tenderly and gracefully. Her quiet beauty is still there. Nevertheless a careful eye can see the mark of the inexpressible sufferings through which she has passed and which have constituted her as the Mother of Sorrows.



Anne Catherine Emmerich

Yet that marking has, if possible, made her more appealing and even more lovely, more attuned to our notion of her as our mother, Anne Catherine Emmerich, the Visionary, depicts her as follows at a still later moment when her mortal term was running out:

“I saw the Blessed Virgin as full of years but without sign of old age.

There was an indescribable impressiveness about her.

As she had grown older, her face became paler and more transparent. She was thin but had no wrinkles or any sign of withering or decay.”



When Jesus departed from sight, it would obviously be to her that all eyes and thoughts would turn in utter solicitude. She was like Him. She was part of Him still left on earth. She was still with them and their special source of confidence for the future.

The company turned their backs on Mount Olivet and walked back to the city wall, a distance of approximately two-thirds of a mile. Then through the streets to the great white house, the property of Joseph of Arimathea, where the Last Supper had taken place and where the Apostles had been living since Holy Thursday, and which was to be the first headquarters of the Mystical Body. We know it as the Cenacle.

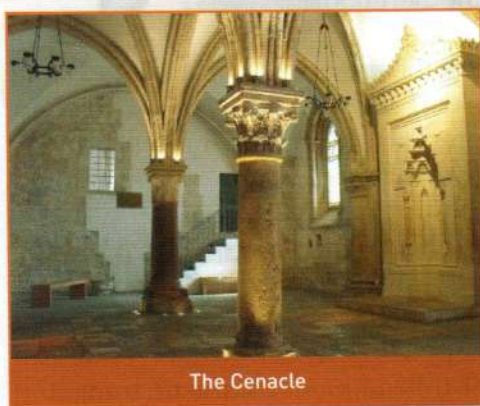
It is likely that they did not march back in a body. It was no part of their policy just yet to attract attention to themselves. But they were not afraid. St. Luke stresses the fact that they were full of joy. Their present mental condition simply would not allow room for common fear. They were in the grip of certain dominating ideas which would impose their mastery on less worthy feelings.

I think it is inconceivable that on reaching Jerusalem they broke up and went to their own homes. Every emotion in them would urge that they stay together to talk, to try to sort out their ideas, to have a meal. You will remember the importance that the early Christians attached to having a meal together.

There would be a catering problem of sorts. I fancy that this eventuality of remaining together could not have been foreseen. The happenings of that day must have been like a whirlwind bearing them whither they knew not. But now they find themselves assembled in the Cenacle and they realise that it is time for a meal. In this strange way does nature obtrude on super-nature and ecstasy alternate with hunger.

However, that preparation of a repast would be facilitated by the simpler customs of the time. Bread and wine was all that was needed and would be readily available. Had cost been a factor, well, Joseph of Arimathea was a very wealthy man. He is supposed to have been the rich young man of the Gospel!

In this manner began the time of waiting. In a talk on the Cenacle I have ventured to suggest that the 120 lived in the house during that period of expectation. The phrase "persevering in one mind in prayer" is not indicative of persons hurrying backwards and forwards for ten days between home and the Cenacle.



The Cenacle

Here again the simple living of the day would help. Sleeping only needed a blanket and six feet by three of floor space. On those terms that mansion could easily accommodate the full number.

So there we leave them with the world at their feet and in longing for the celestial Personage Who will clothe them with power and provide them with whatsoever they will need. How many days have they to wait? Jesus had said, "Not many days hence" (Acts 1, 6). They had been ordered not to depart from Jerusalem. Their demeanour is not that of persons engaged in a wait of indefinite duration.



On the tenth day the Holy Spirit comes, visibly and with signs as would befit the promulgation of the life in the world of the Mystical Body. I have seen pictures of His descent which did not include Mary. One might as well leave her out of the Annunciation where the same Holy Spirit had come on her to give Jesus to the world. Mary's place in thus inaugurating the church was primary. She has been compared to a lightning conductor which captures the electric fluid and shepherds it into the earth.

It was she whom the Third Divine Person saw first and specially. It was through her that the heavenly Fire would part into tongues to settle on those whose mission it was to spread that Fire over the whole earth.

Her role at Pentecost is virtually the same as it was at the Annunciation. Through her comes the Holy Spirit. He makes her his co-operator – what we expressively call His spouse – so that she administers His grace and power. Not only that: she is a sort of image of Him. She makes Him vivid to us so that without her He would be neither real nor intelligible to us. She interprets Him to us. She is our bond of union with Him. If she is dispensed with, then in the same degree is the Holy Spirit denied to men. For as Vatican II says, she is Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix, and Mediatrix – words which some people would have us believe are intended to mean nothing at all.

Filled with those confident reflections, confront your own prospective missions. You must assimilate those assignments to the campaign proclaimed on Olivet, and you must assimilate your own dispositions to those of the Apostles. This is no vain proposition, for they were as human as yourselves. They faced an overwhelming prospect, but in some ways your difficulties exceed theirs. Their world was a limitless and dangerous wilderness but one inclined towards religion. Yours is a jaded multitude which has rejected the supernatural and turned science into an idol.



But we may be sure that essentially the task remains the same. Whatever the difficulty, right faith can press down the balance. Remember that the Holy See itself has given testimony to your legionary faith, alleging that it is of the highest sort. Moreover you are in a quite particular way associated with the apostolic commission conferred by Jesus inasmuch as you are specially united to the Queen of the Apostles whom you exist to serve. Possessing her, you will be filled with the Holy Spirit Who will be instrumental through you.

Perfect love casts out fear – just look at a mother saving her endangered child! The sense of mission raises one above personal considerations. A holy discipline, acting on those ingredients, produces heroism. Into that human blending faith instils the Divine power. I would be bold enough to believe that in the presence of the same situations as faced the Apostles, very many among you would not fall below the level of their achievement. Cardinal Riberi asserted



that the stature of the Chinese legionaries was that of the first Christians – no less.

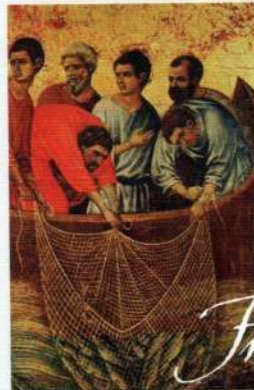
So try to concentrate into your legionary dedication the faith and fiery ardour of that original apostolic band. Be as ambitious as they were. This is no presumption. You, no less than they, are heirs to the Promise and Commission. Here is their programme as pictured to us by



Bossuet: "How foolish the presumption, or how sublime and heavenly the inspiration, which has now taken possession of those fishermen.

Consider for a moment their enterprise. Never has prince or empire or republic conceived so lofty a plan. Without any apparent chance of human aid, these Galileans partitioned out the whole world for future conquest. They formed a determined plan to change the religion established all over the world, whether false or in part true – whether Jewish or Gentile.

They desired to establish a new worship, a new sacrifice, a new law, because – said they – a certain Man whom men crucified at Jerusalem so ordained it."





TALK ON JOSEPH GABBETT

BY THE SERVANT OF GOD
FRANK DUFF

- PART 3 -

At a certain stage, Gabbett decided to discontinue the work at the place on Cheaters Lane.

He allowed me to take all the goods and chattels of the place up to Myra House, where they entered into ordinary use and it is intriguing to reflect that each and every article, as if there was a special seal set upon it by heaven, was destined to play a special role

in the Legion afterwards. I have told you of the statue of the Immaculate Conception. There was also a great statue of St. Patrick, a picture of the Sacred Heart, long benches and crockery. I'll refer to their particular parts later.

Strange to say, his action, with which I could not of course more cordially disagree, did not produce friction between us. I suppose the position was that I was quite the small boy of the firm. I continued my visits to him and our joint work continued in the barracks for a while. But, suddenly, like the falling of a meteor, he joined the army. It would be some time during that very year. He did not see active service on account of his age. He was appointed to Aldershot where he was master shoemaker and his remarkable abilities declared them-selves there because he was employed on a large scale in giving lectures to the troops on the care of feet and footwear.

Though I did not know it at the time nor for a fair time after, Gabbett had begun to drink. I carried on the barrack work in his place until the beginning of 1918, which would be the last year of the war. Then the hospital was transferred to Spike Island in Cork where it would have a whole time Chaplain – a wonderful blessing. On the Sunday before they left, every single one of the 70 Catholics attended the little service and went to Holy Communion. Gabbett was discharged when the war finished, came back again and took up his normal work.



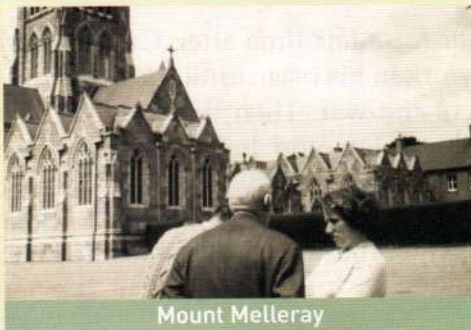


I brought him into my own conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, now St. Patrick's conference, out of which the Legion sprang.



He was alternating between fairly prolonged spells of scrupulous abstinence and unmerciful bouts of drinking. He had just embarked on one of these and I was speaking about it to Mr. Lalor who was that time the President of the St. Vincent de Paul society in Dublin and he said to me, "you should bring him down to Mount Melleray. They are very kind down there to people like that." It's a celebrated place of cure, so I had often heard about Melleray.

I had read Cistercian literature and I was terrified by the austerity of the place as depicted in the printed word, so I brought him down and that visit was destined to have a big effect on both of us. It led to the association with the great Abbey which has persisted up to the present moment and to their really immense interest in the Legion, all of them are auxiliary members and our emblems are in mosaic on each side of the high altar.



Mount Melleray

One item of our visit was this. We were told one day that the Lord Abbot wished to see us and we were brought into the room of state to wait his coming. Neither of us had ever spoken to such an exalted personage and we were a bit apprehensive. So we were wondering how we should address him.

So Gabbett says, (he had a very deep voice) "I know" he said "what I'll say to him" "what will that be" "Abbott, I'm Gabbett". I mentioned that in the place and it made the rounds like wildfire and it reached the ears of the Abbott who was greatly amused. Gabbett was normally most serious minded. His thoughts were always on problems, but he had a sense of humour, which occasionally broke out like that. I could tell you some stories, but time does not permit.

Now I made reference to that question of equipment, which we took from Cheaters Lane. The statue of St. Patrick started an interesting custom. We put it up on the mantelpiece for the meetings of St. Patrick's conference and I bought two brass candlesticks and during the meeting, we put candles into these and lit them and you will see there the germ of the Legion altar. In 1921, the Legion began in that house.



Alice Keogh



September 7, 1921, It was the first meeting of the Legion of Mary. When Frank Duff arrived into the room, he was delighted to see on the table a statue of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, with flowers and candles around it, exactly as can be seen at any Legion meeting today.

Alice Keogh who was the aunt of Sister Patty Kavanagh (legionary who died in 2010) set the altar without having received any instructions, it included the Immaculate Conception statue already mentioned and the two brass candlesticks and two glass vases which perished in the course of distinguished service and the surviving elements are now in the showcase up in North Brunswick Street. The Sacred Heart picture that I referred to, figured in another capacity, which I will now mention.

With the Legion, Gabbett had no direct touch, but he did enter dramatically in at one important point. We had ransacked that place known as Biddy Slickers lodging house, 25 Chancery Lane in July 1922 and out of the 30 street girls living in the place, most of them volunteered to come away with us and actually twenty three of them turned up. We brought them off to Baldoyle, to the Sisters of Charity House where the first retreat was given. When they were brought out to that place, we had no place in Dublin to bring them back to. We hadn't time to think that far ahead, it was thinking from minute to minute, but we brought them out on a Friday, and on Saturday, we had reached the stage of wondering where

we would go on Monday when the retreat was due to finish. So we said we'd go to the Minister for Local Government, housing is his problem – this is a housing problem.

So we went in to the then minister who was the late Mr. W. T. Cosgrave who was destined to become the President of the country and we told our extraordinary tale. Now to cover that is not possible to me tonight. But we impressed him as to the necessity and he said, "I don't know what I can do for you but this I do know. You have got to be helped" and that attitude was typical of that most noble of people.

The following day, Father Creedon and I dropped into the offices in Merrion Street and we got a letter which is framed up in North Brunswick Street, announcing to us that the premises at No. 76 Harcourt St. were placed at our disposal, free of rent and taxes. So there we had our port of call for Monday. I stayed out in Baldoyle on Sunday night and on Monday I came in. I went down to the floor below me in the office and I got the key of the premises and then I went over to 76, and on my way I dropped in on Gabbett and I said: "your help is needed." He stood up and walked up with me.



We opened the door and while we stood in the hallway looking around, there was a rush of feet outside and the girls came swarming over from No. 6, Harcourt St., then the Municipal Art Gallery where they had taken shelter.

They had come in much earlier than expected and with them were Miss Plunkett and Miss Scratton who were going to live in the hostel with them. They came up to the house and it was shut against them. The wonder was that though they were only a quarter of a mile from their old residence in 25, Chancery Lane, not one girl thought of going. They waited in the gallery, they saw us pass and they followed us up.

The house was as the removers had left it, they had only been to the house on the previous Thursday. It was empty and dirty. Immediately there was a mobilisation operation. The girls were all set to clean. The basement was flooded, that had to be settled. Miss Plunkett and Miss Scratton set off to buy provisions and household implements. We had to furnish the house. The beds and bedding were on their way in from Baldoyle, because we had bought everything we had used out there to save comment. And that would be arriving. So I said to Gabbett: "I know where we'll get a lot of furniture." So we went down to Great Longford Street, which still survives as a street, though there are no houses in it.

Then it was a busy tenement area and we hired a lorry and on that lorry we proceeded to Myra house.



The caretaker of that house was an extraordinary martinet called Healy. He was an ex petty officer in the British Navy. He was a monstrously big man and he had an impediment in his speech, contracted in war service and it was said that only two people in the world knew what he was saying, his wife and Jim Finlay, the latter being the secretary of Myra House.

So, when we walked in, we had a right to go in as members and we proceeded to take hold of a lot of the furniture. So Healy rushed down and placed himself in our path. Had we permission? But we have to get the stuff. Can't do that – wouldn't permit it! So we said to him, "now look here Mr. Healy, if you have a grievance over anything that is going to happen, report it, report it to the House Committee but you must not attempt to stop us because we won't let you. We have to get this stuff!" Now whether my share in the transaction would have impressed him or not, I do not know, but Gabbett's did, because Gabbett looked ferocity itself at that moment, and he had the physique to back it.



Josephine Plunkett



Rose Scratton

So Healy retired, not only out of the hall but up to his own quarters at the top of the house. We took away everything except the good stuff in what was called the boardroom. We respected that. The crockery, chairs, pictures, benches and other things including that picture of the Sacred Heart I mentioned we loaded onto the lorry and when it was well packed, we got up on it and drove off and my last vision was seeing Healy leaning out of his own window with a big sheet of paper and every item was conscientiously put down on that.



Sancta Maria Hostel

So when we reached 76, Harcourt St., we found Gorevan's lorry drawn up outside with the beds and the girls already busy carrying in the stuff from it. They then turned their attention to our lorry and it was emptied. Our lorry driver was at once engaged by Miss Plunkett and Miss Scratton to go off and bring their own private furniture, which was in storage to the house and that meant that within a few hours we had a

completely furnished domicile, clean spic and span. Gabbett's first act, on coming into the house, was to take off his coat and cook the first meal served in the house. He was a jack of all trades, and unlike the rest of the proverb, he was certainly a master of one. That evening the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart took place in the house. It was one of the most moving memorable events that come into my mind. Present, Father Creedon, Father Toher, Father Robinson, Father Philip, the Franciscan who had given the retreat, all the girls, many of ourselves. And at that, when the religious part was over, I would say that every person in that entire room contributed in the way of a little speech. The Sancta Maria hostel had begun.

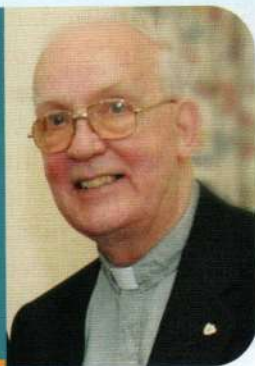
Now it would be a pity if Gabbett's name were to vanish from among us. Considering his limitations in education and the littleness of the chance that would be his, what a giant he was. If he had been in the Legion and growing up with this idealism, I hesitate to think of what he might have accomplished. He was fearless, he was resourceful. He had a magic of handling people. His sincerity was such that he would give faith to a stick. I have called him a noble figure. Few nobler ones have walked the stage of life and one of the things that I look forward to in the future is the meeting of him again.



MARY - MOTHER OF MERCY

BY FR. BEDE MCGREGOR O.P.

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

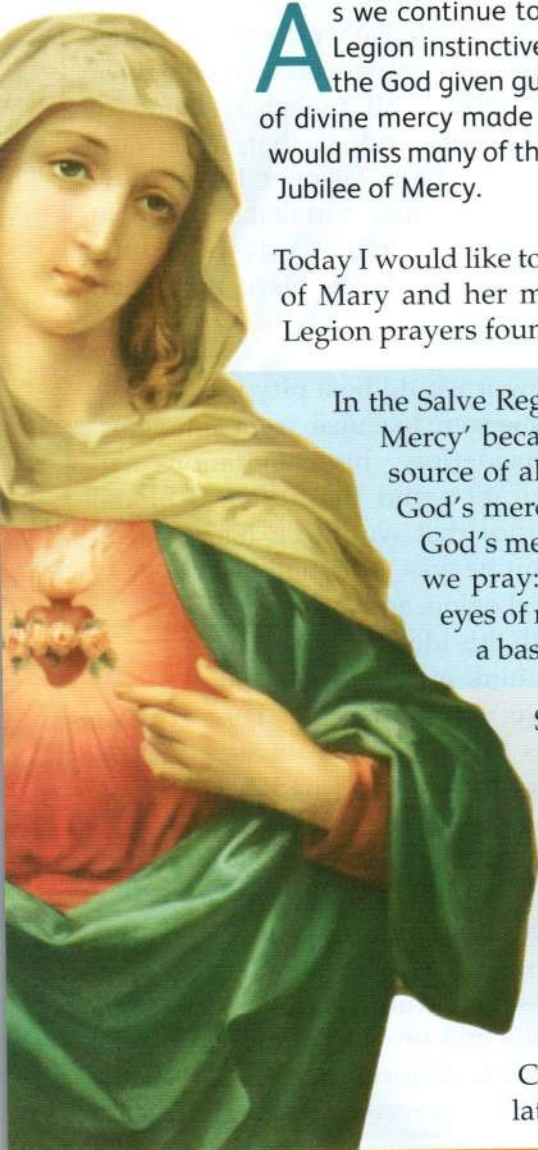


As we continue to prepare for the great Jubilee of Mercy, the Legion instinctively turns to Mary the Mother of Mercy. She is the God given guide and companion to all of us into the heart of divine mercy made incarnate in her Divine Son. Without her we would miss many of the most tender and beautiful fruits of the great Jubilee of Mercy.

Today I would like to reflect on the place of mercy in the mystery of Mary and her mission in the world as manifested in the Legion prayers found in the Tessera.

In the Salve Regina we greet Mary as 'Hail Holy Queen of Mercy' because she is the mother of God, who is the source of all mercy and so she is totally immersed in God's mercy and becomes the sublime instrument of God's mercy and so the Mediatrix of all graces. Then we pray: 'Turn then most gracious Advocate your eyes of mercy towards us.' That sentence underlines a basic dimension of all our prayer to Mary.

So we move to the Sub Tuum, the oldest recorded prayer to Mary in the history of Christian devotion to her. Cardinal Schonborn along with many other scholars points out that the oldest manuscripts and versions of this prayer begin: 'We fly to your mercy O Holy Mother of God' and not 'We fly to your patronage O Holy Mother of God.' Certainly mercy reflects the spirit of Christian prayer to Mary more than that of the later theme of patronage.



*'Turn then most gracious Advocate
your eyes of mercy towards us.'*

Of course, we must point to the Hail Mary, the most popular and universal prayer to Mary in the Church. In many ways this prayer has shaped the very heart of the Church and of the Legion. It is the first way we all learn to speak to Our Lady and it would be difficult to find a more beautiful way. Because of her deep love and understanding of Mary as Mother of Mercy it is not surprising that in the 15th Century the Church added a second part of the Hail Mary: 'Holy Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.' Those words surely express the deepest sentiments of every legionary heart and indeed of every true Christian.



Reflection on the Hail Mary leads us on to the Rosary which Frank Duff our Founder considered irreplaceable in the spirituality of the Legion. And the Rosary is nothing else but a dwelling with mind and heart on the Person of Our Lord from His birth to His passion, His Resurrection and Ascension and finally the giving of

the Holy Spirit to the Church. In other words, the Rosary opens to us the whole history of salvation and the graces of the mysteries of Christ and our redemption. And the History of salvation is the history of God's mercy to mankind. The mercy of God provides the deepest ambience for the praying of the Rosary.

Now we come to the Magnificat that St. John Paul II calls 'Mary's hymn to the divine mercy.' We call it the Catena, the precious link that binds all legionaries to Mary and each other in a joyful and grace-filled family. We take great delight, both active and auxiliary members, in praying Mary's hymn every day.



Mary begins her song by telling us that her spirit, what is deepest in her, rejoices in God her Saviour. In other words she acknowledges that everything about her, both in nature and grace is a gift of God's mercy. She knows that she has been redeemed in a unique and special way. The Immaculate Conception is the sublime manifestation of God's redemptive mercy, not only for Mary but for the whole world. Mary is God's absolute gratuitous gift of mercy to the world.



In her very conception, and indeed through her whole life, Mary is a sign that sin does not have the last word and that ultimately God's mercy will infallibly triumph. It is no wonder that Mary sings; 'The Almighty works marvels for me, Holy his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him.' Yes indeed, the mercy of God is infinitely greater than our sinfulness. It is boundless and timeless; that is the message of the Immaculate Conception, the feast that is so dear to the Legion since its very inception. Mary concludes her hymn to God's mercy by reminding us that mercy is at the source of all salvation history. She sings: 'He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy, the mercy promised to our fathers, to Abraham and his sons forever.'



The last prayer of the Tessera also centers us on God's mercy.

Whatever the ups and downs of our life with its quota of grace and sin we confidently entrust our departed legionaries and all the faithful departed to the mercy of God. We are called as legionaries along with all the faithful to trust absolutely in God's mercy knowing that it is impossible for that trust to be misplaced. And moreover, as legionaries we have entrusted ourselves in a special way to Mary, the Mother of Mercy all our lives so we can be certain that she will be there at the end to lead us to the heart of God.

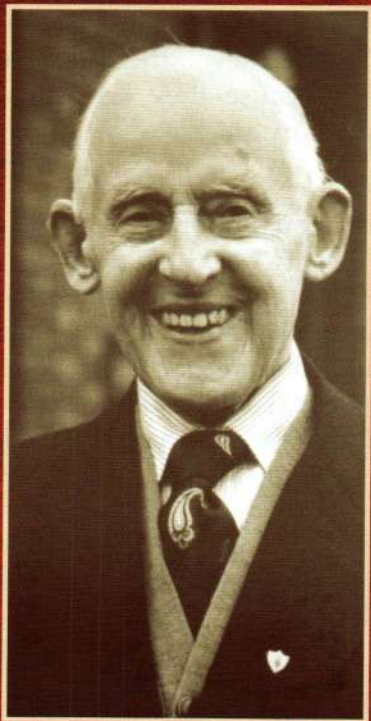
Let me conclude with a quotation from a German theologian who was praised by Pope Francis for what he had to say on Divine Mercy. It sums up much of what I was trying to read into the prayers of the Tessera.

He writes:

'Mary says to us and shows us: the Good News of God's mercy in Jesus Christ is the best thing that can ever be said to us and the best thing we can ever hear. At the same time, it is the most beautiful thing there can be because it can transform us and our world by means of God's glory, expressed in His gracious mercy.'

This mercy is God's gift and, simultaneously, our task as Christians. We are supposed to enact mercy. We should live it in word and deed and give witness to it. In this way, our often dark and cold world can become somewhat warmer, lighter, more endearing, and more worth living because of a ray of mercy.

Mercy is the reflection of God's glory in this world and the epitome of the message of Jesus Christ, which was given to us as a gift and which we are called to bestow on others."



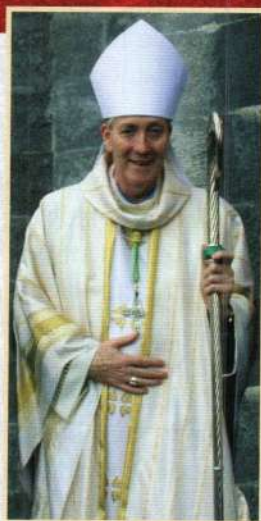
FRANK DUFF

35th Anniversary Mass

Address - Bishop Denis Nulty

The Servant of God, Frank Duff, died thirty-five years ago on November 7th last. We gather this afternoon, exactly a fortnight later, to pay tribute to the man who has left behind possibly the greatest contribution the Irish Church has offered to the world, what we fondly know today as 'The Legion of Mary'. Of course it wasn't always the Legion of Mary; originally the Legion was known as 'The Association of Our Lady of Mercy' – what a beautiful name and what a splendid link with Pope Francis's soon to commence Year of Mercy. But enough of about all that for the moment.

John's gospel had us gathered around the Cross. We know who was there then and we know who is there still; His mother, His aunt, the wife of Cleopas and Mary of Magdala. The Cross gives us the context of the Gospel conversation. I think it's important we take this privileged anniversary time today, to drill down into the story of one Frank Duff. November is the month of the Holy Souls, it's the month we customarily bring to our memories loved ones gone before us. Here in the Pro-Cathedral, as in every parish church, we gather often to reflect on those we lose to death. Only a week ago this Pro-Cathedral was full to capacity with people praying for those who died in the horrific Paris atrocity.



November is a reminder to all of us that we live in two worlds.

The world of time, the calendar, the clock, the iphone, the smartwatch – minutes, hours, days and years. Our

faith reminds us we gather outside time, in our ability to connect with those gone before us. My father would have celebrated his ninety-fifth birthday last Wednesday but he slipped into eternity nine years ago.



The Greek word 'kairos' allows us to attend to the memory of those gone before us, to make an occasion of our remembering. We call these occasions or moments Months' Memories, First

Anniversaries, even thirty-fifth anniversaries; they are all so important, because they keep this sense of memory alive.



Frank Duff was born on June 7th, I was born on June 7th, seventy-four years later! Frank Duff's roots were in County Meath, like my own! Frank Duff had a great devotion to Our Lady and I think I can safely tick that box also. Before going to Kildare & Leighlin Diocese, I had a great introduction to the commitment and dedication of the legionaries in my former parish of St. Mary's, Drogheda. I still recall the Legion Prayers recited around the grave of the late Sheila Murray, James Street, Drogheda who died on January 29th, 2001. Celebrating Sheila's funeral on that crisp January day I was reminded that the Legion of Mary had been the teaching tool, an evangelizing tool, a catechetical tool in her life. She, like many in her generation, didn't get to complete her formal education due to the usual generational stuff of caring for her parents. It was the Legion which filled in the gaps and much more.

And then there was Michael Walsh who met Rita Flannery at a Legion Curia Meeting. Michael who died in May 2006, would tell how the Legion Handbook gave him the skill-set to be a manager in Irish Cement at Platin. The Legion is responsible for gifting many full members and auxiliaries with talents and gifts that have stood them well in life.

It is wonderful that the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Críona Ní Dhálaigh, is present today, acknowledging the contribution of the Legion of Mary to the city of Dublin and its origins here in Dublin. It is estimated that the membership of the Legion stands at four million worldwide with a further ten million auxiliary members. The most recent Legion of Mary Bulletin carries reports of the Legion work from Kuala Lumpur to Korea, from Bulgaria to Belarus, from the Czech Republic to Croatia, from Latvia to Lithuania and from Slovakia to Slovenia.

Here in Ireland, the bulletin carried reports from Dromore to Derry, from Leitrim, Clogher, Kilmore and

Drogheda. The same bulletin contained a detailed report of the Dublin Southside Curiae, listing the nine curiae and their work.

I was delighted to note the growth of the Legion in Africa and South America. The greatest gift the Legion can offer today's world is that of being present; you are probably one of the few Church groups who continue to go out, to reach out beyond the comfort zones. When you go on visitation to a housing estate, to a prison, to a detox centre, you are being present, sometimes simply sitting with those who feel most ostracized in today's society. If you don't visit, who will?

In many respects, Frank Duff was a man born well ahead of his time. I wonder are we still ready for his calibre and his challenge? It's no secret that he had little support from the Institutional Church in establishing the Legion and in drawing up its mission and mandate. He most likely wouldn't have been on Archbishop Edward Byrne's Christmas Card list, considering he waited eight years to have his request for a meeting granted! It seems as if the authorities in Rome were ahead of the curve when it came to Frank Duff.



Frank was a civil servant, and working in that setting allowed him to have an influence on many other well connected people in the early days of this fledgling state - an influence that continued right through the Second Vatican Council and beyond. Alongside Edel Quinn and Alfie Lambe, the Legion of Mary has offered exemplary figures who are rightly proposed today as models of holiness for the twenty-first century. I think of the late Fr. Daniel Deady, a former curate in Kildare & Leighlin, who served in the parish of Arles, just outside Carlow.

He volunteered as a Diocesan on the Missions, working in Kenya. He was killed on the way to a retreat with three Holy Ghost missionaries on December 8th, 1986, and is buried in the same graveyard as Edel Quinn. It was Frank Duff who had invited Edel Quinn to volunteer to spread the Legion of Mary in East Africa. Edel was to Africa, what Alfie Lambe was to South America.

So what is the charism that has allowed the Legion to flourish over all these years? I think there is something in the fact that Frank Duff did not depend on the Institutional Church for encouragement; he often got very little. He was absolutely loyal to the church, but could never be accused of being a "yes man". One might say, despite the best efforts of some church leaders, the Legion of Mary flourished and thrived. His godchild I believe, Finola Kennedy, tells the story well of Frank being asked around the time of his First Communion what he intended to be when he grew up. Like many other boys, Frank said "a priest". How times have passed. The fear I would have is that if Frank Duff were around today, demonstrating all the charisms and gifts he did then, given the scarcity of vocations, he would be encouraged to enter the seminary and be a priest - it would be a huge mistake. The church needs articulate lay people who love their faith and express it in the way they live their lives. The church needs committed lay people who will reach out to those on the margins of society today.



The church needs courageous lay people who take seriously their baptismal calling of following Christ.

Even if our seminaries were overflowing with vocations, the particular contribution of lay people imbued with the spirit of Frank Duff, Edel Quinn and Alfie Lambe, and actively immersed in every detail of church life, is an essential element in witnessing to Gospel values in today's society.

The recent Synod just concluded in Rome on the vocation and mission of the family, seems to be suggesting that the great piece of work yet to be undertaken is the witness of one family to another, one married couple to another. The Legion of Mary and indeed the Irish Church must ask of itself a question posed first by Frank Duff; do we want to create a chaplaincy or a church?

A chaplaincy turns in on itself, ministers to those within, a church continues to reach beyond itself to those who are not yet evangelised and not yet catechised. It is interesting that Frank Duff's last public address to legionaries was delivered at the Annual Peregrinatio Conference in October 1980 two

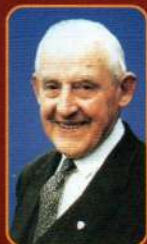
weeks before he died. The theme was on evangelisation. If the church stands still, if the Legion of Mary stands still, we are not honouring the vision of its founder. Returning to what the Legion of Mary was originally called 'The Association of Our Lady of Mercy'; we see the face of mercy when we look at the figure on the Cross, around which gathered His mother Mary, his aunt and his friend. The Year of Mercy gives us the opportunity to untie whatever knots are tangled in our lives.

In the year about to begin, are we brave enough to embrace the challenge of mercy and seek out those who in our time, are on the margins. Will we answer the call to unpack that message of mercy for the broken, for the lonely, for those in prisons, for those in alleys, for those in hospitals and clinics, for those at ports or train stations, for those unsure of their place in today's society?

May we be brave enough to revision the Legion!

May we be brave enough to honour its founder!

And may we be brave enough to reach out and, as Pope Francis so often asks, go out to the peripheries.



Frank Duff, Servant of God, pray for us ...

Alfie Lambe, Servant of God, pray for us ...

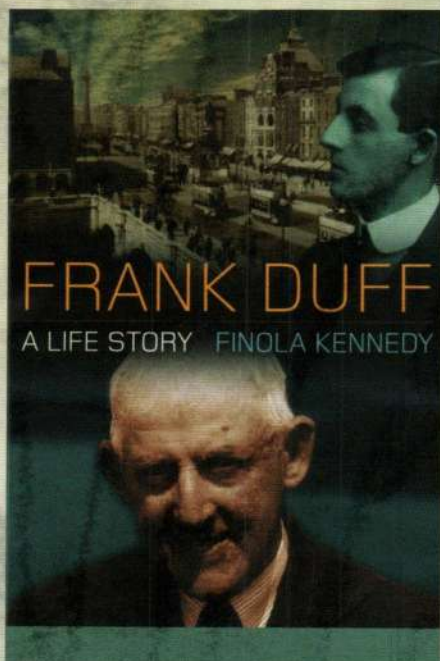
Venerable Edel Quinn, pray for us ...

Our Lady, Presented in the Temple, pray for us ...

Our Lady, Untier of Knots, pray for us ...

Frank Duff A Life Story

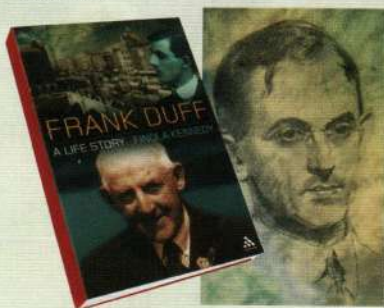
By Finola Kennedy



FINOLA KENNEDY



Finola Kennedy has been a Lecturer at University College Dublin and at the Institute of Public Administration, Ireland. She has served on a number of Boards, including the Housing Finance Agency (chairman), ACCBank and the Railway Procurement Agency. She was a member of the Review Group on the Constitution and the Commission on the Status of Women.



The Irish Times described Frank Duff as 'the founder of the largest international association that has originated in Ireland. Yet he has been, among Irish leaders of his generation, the least publicised'. Duff was not only a major religious figure; he also had a distinct influence on the evolution of modern Irish society. A friend of Irish leaders including Michael Collins, W. T. Cosgrave and Éamon de Valera, he avoided the cult of celebrity which might well have befallen him as the founder of an organisation which today has over four million active members and ten million auxiliary members in more than one hundred and seventy countries. Like most saintly people, his greatest opposition came from local Church figures and this is a vital part of the story.

*Available from good bookshops and
the Legion Literature Division.*



MUMBAI - A Recreational Moment

PRAESIDIUM PREMIER LEAGUE (PPL)

by Rohit Shetty, President, Ark of the Covenant Junior Curia



Ark of the Covenant, a Junior Curia under the Virgin Most Powerful Comitium at Thane in the Archdiocese of Mumbai, affiliated to the Mumbai Senatus, initiated a PPL – Praesidium Premier League – a cricket tournament, basically for all junior members supported by their senior members.

The curtains opened to a bright sunny day on 7th June, 2015, - a Sunday, as Rev. Fr. Joshua said a small prayer and blessed all the legionaries participating in the event.



The slogan was:

**BATTING WITH MARY, FOR CHRIST,
BOWLING OUT EVIL
WITHIN ME AND OTHERS;**

and

**ALWAYS FIELDING
FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH!**

After the Opening Prayers and the Rosary, with 96 legionaries participating (juniors and seniors). The matches started with a bang!

After the quarter finals, 6 teams went into the semi-final; with 2 teams qualifying for the finals. Before the Final the Catena was recited and snacks served.

A very competitive match was played between Mary, Help of Christians and Regina Angelorum, with Regina Angelorum winning the trophy by a very narrow margin.

Individual awards were conferred after considerable deliberation by a very impartial Jury:

Steven received the best bowler prize.

Dallan was recognised for taking the most number of wickets.

Rahul for scoring the greatest number of runs.

Stanley for being the senior-most legionary.

Alfred for good co-ordination and epitomising the sportsman spirit of the Legion

with Rev. Sr. Philoo being recognised for being a wonderful Spiritual Directress.



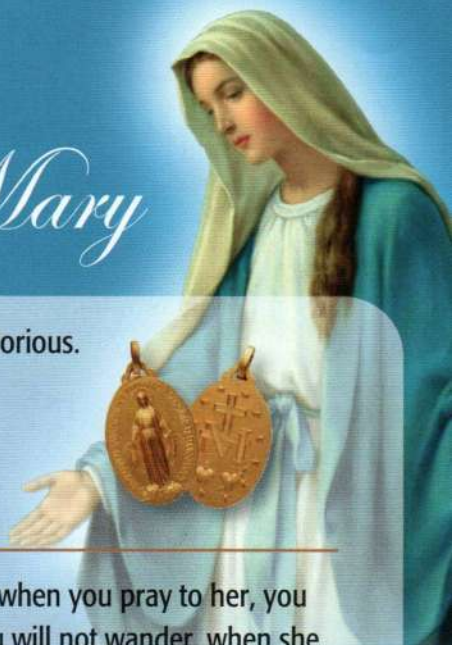
Each Participant was given a winner's certificate confirming the message that whatever we do as legionaries, has an effect on the entire praesidium. No single legionary could win the trophy – rather it is the work of the entire praesidium!

The PPL was witnessed by a few other faith people, brought together members from different praesidia experiencing the bond of the Legion Family!

Finally the curtains closed as Rev. Sr. Philoo lead all legionaries to recite the Concluding Prayers, followed by the Prayers for the beatification of the servant of God, Frank Duff.



Praises of Mary



Grace made Mary delightful, miraculous and glorious.
Delightful in her soul, miraculous in her Son,
glorious in her kingdom.

St. Bonaventure

When you follow Mary, you will not go astray; when you pray to her, you will not despair; when your mind is on her, you will not wander, when she holds you up, you will not fall; when she protects you, you will have no fear, when she guides you, you will feel no fatigue; when she is on your side, you will arrive safely home.

St. Bernard

It was Mary who gave existence and life to the author of all grace and because of this she is called the 'Mother of Grace'.

St. Louis Marie de Montfort

Prayer is powerful beyond limits when we turn to the Immaculata who is Queen even of God's heart.

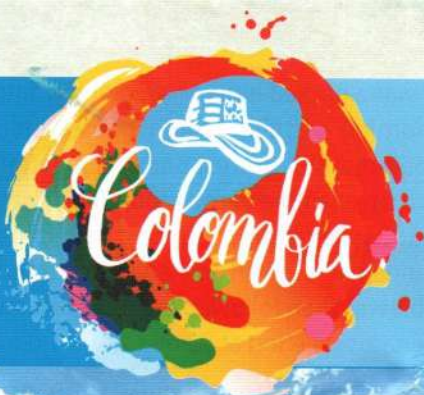
St. Louis Marie de Montfort

If you go to God through Mary, your work will become Mary's work, and consequently will be most noble and most worthy of God.

St. Louis Marie de Montfort

Always stay close to this Heavenly Mother, because she is the sea to be crossed to reach the shores of Eternal Splendour.

St. Pio of Pietrelcina



A Visit to COLOMBIA

Maria Keaveney



Described by destination guide the "Lonely Planet" ... Soaring Andean summits, unspoiled Caribbean coast, enigmatic Amazon jungle, its equatorial position affords it a diversity of landscapes matched by few countries... Colombia boasts all of South America's allure and more...



The Huffington Post reported "by the end of 2012 Colombia was crowned the happiest country in the world... it is also the home to 50,000 active members of the Legion of Mary."

In his letter of October 1947 to Jose Contreras, Frank Duff wrote:

"In this my first letter to you, I must express the deep feelings of gratitude of the Concilium for the kindness which all of you have lavished upon our envoy, Joaquina Lucas. All her letters are full of appreciation of the goodness shown to her by everybody. As you will realise, anything that is done to her is done to the Concilium itself. So I thank you for this great service to the Legion of Mary"



Student Praesidium
"María Trono de la Sabiduría"
Bogota University.



Joaquina Lucas
(Philippines)
Envoy: South America,
Portugal
1946-1963



The last visit from Dublin was in 2003 by Noel Lynch...and so another was to take place, from 2nd to the 20th October 2015 on behalf of Concilium. Myself and Diana Nichol of Madrid Senatus met up in Spain and boarded our flight for this wonderful country on the northern tip of South America.

Colombia has two Senatus – Bogota and Medellin – our purpose was to visit both – We arrived at Bogota airport on Friday 2nd and were greeted with smiles and hugs by the Senatus President Miguel, President Nola of Baranquilla Regia and the young officers of Senatus Annuntiata, also the delightful and 6 months into the job their new Spiritual Director, Fr Adolfo of the Montfort Missionaries. We were brought to our accommodation, a guesthouse run by the Dominican Sisters of Bethany, a wonderful reception awaiting us... balloons, a beautiful basket of Colombian fruit and songs to Our Lady with Andrey on guitar. We attended Holy Mass in their chapel at 7pm followed by a light supper.

It was a packed itinerary beginning Saturday morning at their Legion house attending their monthly correspondents meeting at 7 am, an example of correspondence was read out by Rene, great support, direction and guidance is given to new correspondents. This was then followed by Holy Mass and the Senatus meeting at 9 am.

Later we joined "Praesidium Maria Celestial Princesa", for a park apostolate, legionaries with joy played their guitars and tambourine, we sang, prayed and gently made contacts with young and old.

During our time with the Senatus of Bogota 4 praesidia were visited, including the young and vibrant 10 member student Praesidium "Maria Trono de la Sabiduria" at the National University of Colombia, this public university is the largest higher education institution in the country with more than 44,000 students, to their credit "Maria Trono de la Sabiduria" is in existence 33 years. Works include street contact on campus, public rosary, book barrow, promoting the pioneers and Mass times in the University Chapel "Cristo Maestro" and an apostolate to businesses around the campus.



Meeting with Spiritual Directors - Bogota Senatus.

We attended an open and informal meeting with youth leaders, young members gave their testimonies and experience of life in the Legion, there are over 1,000 young legionaries under the age of 18 yrs in the Regia of Bucaramanga alone. Andres Ortega former Senatus President, shared his insights.

A get together with some Spiritual Directors was generally very positive with difficulties discussed. "The Legion is the most organised and disciplined group in the Parish". Attendees included, former Senatus Spiritual Director Father Guillermo Prada San Miguel, 55 yrs in the Legion, he stressed the importance of re awakening the spirit

of mission and the apostolate, Fr Saul Efrén Cruz from the Diocese of Garagoa, Spiritual Director to 4 Comitias, Fr. also had experience of the foundation of 11 praesidia during his time in Rockford, U.S., Monsignor Libardo Ramirez, Bishop Emeritus of the Archdiocese of Bogota, gave a testimony on the powerful impact of the Legion on his life, his support in the setting up of 100 praesidia, a visit to Legion Headquarters and his friendship with Fr. Jose Antonio Jimenez, pioneer of the Legion in Colombia, Fr. Luis Carlos Bernal, Chaplain at the National University, who began his legionary journey as a student in the University Praesidium and is now the Spiritual Director.



New Regia of Villavicencio

We visited the newly formed Regia of Villavicencio "Madre Excelsa Del Llano" and stayed with De Montfort Brothers in Acacias. Numerous gatherings of legionaries over the week took place with many questions and shared testimonies for the Dublin visitors, one young legionary aged 17 yrs began as a young member aged 6. At the gathering of young legionaries at the Chapel University Br Jesus David spoke fondly of his time as extension worker in Panama.



It was a wonderful privilege to visit the parish, Our Lady of Belen (Bethlehem) where the Legion was first founded in Colombia and South America.

The story goes.....

Fr Antonio Jimenez PP of Our Lady of Belen (Bethlehem) Bogota, of the Community of De Montfort Fathers, wants to start an apostolic group.

He hears about the Legion of Mary and gathers a group from his Congregation.

With the model taken from the first meeting of the Legion in Dublin, on the February 2nd, 1947 at 4pm the first praesidium "Maria Queen of Hearts" is founded.

Father Jimenez writes to Dublin requesting an Envoy.

Sr Joaquina Lucas in Mexico receives a letter from Frank Duff to dispatch to Bogota.

On the 30th June 1947 Sr Lucas arrives in Bogota.

It was such a thrill to arrive at the home of the Contreras brothers and sister, the founding members of the Legion in Colombia, Jose Antonio Contreras spoke excitedly of Fr. Jimenez and recounted to us in great detail the early days of the Legion.

He told us a beautiful story of their Mother Silvia, seriously ill, doctors told them to prepare for her funeral, the newly arrived envoy Joaquina Lucas said she was going to spend 3 days fasting and praying before the Blessed Sacrament, shortly after, on July 20th 1947 the day of the canonization of Louis Marie De Montfort this lady opened her eyes and good health returned, Jose told us his Mother went to live on for another 30 years. I asked Jose: "how can I be the best possible legionary?" He replied:

"Oracion y constante" (Prayer and be constant/consistent).

By the 26th October 1947 the first Curia "Annuntiata" is founded.

24th April 1948 the first junior praesidium is born, this same year Legion Envoy Pacita Santos arrives.

13th May 1951 the first Junior Curia is formed.

16th December 1951 Dublin approves the elevation of the Curia to Comitium.

24th July 1953 Joaquina Lucas, Seamus Grace and Alfonso Lambe arrive from Dublin.

On the 29th January 1958 communication is received from Seamus Grace the decision from Dublin to approve to category of Senatus.

24th June 1973 with the name "Inmaculada" the 2nd Senatus, Senatus of Medellin is formed.





With Officers of Medellin Senatus

By the end of a busy 10 days we sadly said our goodbyes to Bogota and on Monday 12th October our flight arrived into the city of Medellin, a smiling Luz Marina Senatus Secretary, her Brother and Libia, Senatus President were there to greet us. We later met Luz Marina's family including her brother William, founder and former President who is now Chairman of the PPC committee. Our accommodation was beside the beautiful Church of San Joaquin with statues of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal and St Louis Marie De Montfort to greet us, this Church was built by a former Spiritual Director of the Legion.

On Tuesday we came together for a reunion of officers of the Senatus including the Regia of Pereira, Rio Negro and Cali, over 120 members attended sharing ideas, works with many questions and wonderful testimonies.. "the Legion is my life", details of heroic works of PPC ...mission teams of 20 legionaries going into dangerous remote areas, for 2 weeks, items to bring include a sleeping bag, sheets, plate, and cutlery, the Sacred Bible, Catechism of the Catholic Church and Legion Handbook ...reaching out to drug addicts, alcoholics, organising baptisms, formation of youth, travelling to

distant areas with no priest or church, to indigenous communities. During one mission, the priest there wanted to leave the priesthood and had written 3 letters to his Bishop, because of the mission he stayed and continues in his priesthood, one wonderful lady spoke, she is 86 yrs in the legion and still active.

During our days in Medellin we visited the officers pre-Senatus meet up, a Comitium and Senatus meeting. A visit to Curia "Maria Sagrario de la Sna Trinidad" in a disadvantaged area in the mountains with humble legionaries faithful in their work. It was a busy schedule, attending a correspondents meeting with a report from one correspondent lady who travels 15 hours in a bus to get to her council, partaking in a "Columban Drive" at St Joaquin and subsequent meeting after with interested parishioners, a public rosary and reach out in Park de Bolivar, to visiting "La Iglesia de la Candelaria" and hugely successful Legion initiative "Alfabetizacion". 40 to 50 students with little or no education being taught by 10 retired teachers, we got a super welcome, heard inspirational testimonies, they sang for us too.



Gathering of Legionaries in Acacias

These few accounts barely touch on the whole experience, there are now friendships formed and memories for ever... the Sisters of Bethany and the beautiful chapel with the Blessed Sacrament beside our room, the chats and discussion each night with Diana, the yum papaya and mango, plentiful in Colombia, Fr Adolfo and his love for St Louis Marie de Montfort, Alphie, Joaquina and Our Blessed Mother who we felt so close to.

Muchisimas Gracias! to Concilium, to Ann Murray Colombian Correspondent for her trojan work in the background, to Noel Lynch and Tadhg McMahon former envoys to South America for their emails of advice and encouragement. To my comrade and companion Diana, fluent in English, Spanish and French, her knowledge of the government of the Legion, the laughs and her bravery in sorting out my scary visitor "una Cucaracha"! ...but most of all our Legion Familia in Colombia...souls so close to Our Lady... "Angeles" minding us every minute of the trip, they were deeply honoured to receive a visit from Concilium.

And finally a word from our founder, Frank Duff in correspondence *"All the ardour which you can throw into extension will be needed, the task of spreading the Legion over every portion of that immense land of yours will be indeed a formidable one, needing many extension workers of heroic qualities. But we judge from the various descriptions of individuals given to us by Joaquina that legionaries of high quality and great zeal are numerous among you. In this case we can look forward to the future with confidence"*

So what is left to say but the many times I heard them sing out with joy:

*Viva Colombia!
Viva La Legion de Maria!!!*



SOUTH AMERICA

BOLIVIA: The **Senatus of La Paz** reported that some non-Catholic families accept the invitation to attend Sunday Mass with the legionaries. This inevitably leads to them coming into the Church. Many street contacts are made and the Triduum for the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was held in the local street market. Distant villages and shanty towns on the outskirts of the cities are visited to prepare for the visit of the priest and the celebration of Holy Mass. Bolivian legionaries saw the visit of Pope Francis as a great opportunity to encourage all. Many references are made to promoting Alfie Lambe's Cause.

CHILE: In the **Senatus of Santiago** legionaries do contact work at local Shrines where thousands gather. Many interesting contacts are made with bystanders, tourists and holiday makers. While visiting a prisoner in hospital, the guard, who was handcuffed to the prisoner, joined in the prayers. The legionaries of Coquimbo and Copiapo, where the tsunami hit, are helping those who have lost everything. The **Regia of Temuco** reaches out to the Mapuche Indians, partaking in their New Year celebrations in June. A Curia reports having 14 praesidia in five parishes.

They have a *Patricians* group for children and sometimes their parents attend.

COLOMBIA: In **Bogota Senatus** prayers were requested for the two brothers and one sister of the Contreras family, co-founders of the Legion of Mary in Bogota. All reports indicate good auxiliary membership. Some Councils have intensified promotion of the Frank Duff Cause. The Comitium of Villavicencio has been raised to Regia by the Concilium. The Spiritual Director, Fr. Adolfo reminded the legionaries that 2016 is the 300th anniversary of the death of St. Louis Marie de Montfort and encouraged them to consider the Total Consecration. Two Comitias attached to the **Medellin Senatus** reported on prison visitation and prisoners returning to Confession after being lapsed for many years. Parents and godparents are prepared for Baptism ceremonies. A visit on behalf of the Concilium was made to the two Senatus of Bogota and Medellin in October 2015 by Maria Keaveney from Dublin and Diana Nichol from Madrid, who were both very warmly received. The visitors attended many meetings and met a great number of legionaries and had very useful discussions.



show the Hausa Handbook is now available and twenty people were recruited to start the first praesidium in Kaduna State University. Membership of a Comitium attached to Lagos Regia increased by 250 to 1401. Works include, brothel visitation and marriage instruction/ counselling while another Comitium reported that an elderly Free-Thinker was converted, baptised and died a Catholic. A Comitium attached to **Onitsha Regia** which prepared many adults and children for the Sacraments recruited 396 prospective legionaries, leading to the start of 12 senior and four junior praesidia. A Curia with over 500 members has 102 probationers. 30 couples were helped to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony.

SIERRA LEONE: Among the works of legionaries in **Freetown Curia** are home visits to families of bereaved, new parishioners, hospital visitation including to the military hospital, organising Parish Novenas, leading the Rosary in Church and assisting with RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) classes. Visitation was hampered due to the Ebola virus, but now legionaries continue with their activities.

TANZANIA: In **Dar-Es-Salaam Regia** the Legionary apostolate includes visiting homes, the sick at home and in hospital, street rescue, and doing works of service. Many received the Sacraments, especially marriage, and many lapsed returned to the Church. In **Hai Moshi Comitium** works include home and hospital visitation, contact

with drug and alcohol addicts, encouraging couples to marry in Church and preparing adults and children for the Sacraments. The Acies Ceremony in **Kahama Comitium** was preceded by a day Retreat. Their home visitation includes the elderly, sick and lonely, bereaved families and people of different faiths; they recite prayers at funerals and teach children to pray the Rosary. 16 people joined the Catholic Church and five received the Sacraments. Frank Duff's Cause is widely promoted. The 400 members in **Mango Comitium** are very active. Works in **Mtwara Comitium** include home and hospital visitation, and youth work such as supervising juniors. Prayer cards for the Causes have been printed in Swahili. A Diocesan Seminar on the Family was very informative. The main focus of their work recently has been promoting family prayer especially in small Christian communities. **Rombo Comitium** reports legionaries engaged in works of home and hospital visitation and visiting schools to try and establish praesidia.

UGANDA: Two Comitias, a Curia and a praesidium located in prisons reported to the **Uganda Senatus**. The Senatus is most supportive of the activities in the prisons, where people of many different religions are met and a good mixture of conversion and consolation works take place such as: sharing the good news of the Gospel, preparing people for the Sacraments, promoting devotion to Mary, visiting sick and elderly inmates and doing acts of service for them.

The officers, other prison staff and Chaplains were thanked for their help and encouragement to the legionaries. A Congress for the members of a prison Curia had 200 present and afterwards the members from the Uganda Senatus and the Spiritual Director met with the Prison Officer in charge who is very pleased with the legionaries' work. Youth and juniors make up over 75% of the **Western Uganda Regia's** huge membership. Following counselling, 50 drug addicts had HIV tests done and gave up drugs. More than 100 legionaries entered Seminaries or Convents. The anniversary of the death of Venerable Edel Quinn was celebrated throughout Uganda.

ZAMBIA: Works being done by legionaries in **Lusaka Regia** include visiting homes, the sick at home and in hospitals, health centres, orphanages, teaching catechism, visiting catechumens and helping with Sunday school. The results included: lapsed returning to the faith and some non-Catholics agreeing to join the Catholic Church. One Curia had a Retreat with 128 present. A Comitium held a three-day Seminar and two new Comitium were inaugurated. Great work is being done with juniors.

EUROPE

BELGIUM: One praesidium in Brussels Senatus organised processions for the Triduum of the Assumption and Way of the Cross for Good Friday. Another praesidium has 20 active members and one probationer. Five new members

were recruited during the year. *Awaken Hope* prayers for vocations are promoted. A day of evangelisation was carried out at the Pukkelpop Festival. The Senatus organised a Peregrinatio Pro Christo to Chimay. Antwerp Regia was visited by Comitium correspondent Eddy Evers and Renate Seber (Frankfurt Senatus). The 94th anniversary of the foundation of the Legion was celebrated and an afternoon of evangelisation took place near Antwerp Cathedral.

ENGLAND: Reports to **Birmingham Senatus** show good contacts on street contact at the Bull Ring and elsewhere in the city. It was reported that due to contact with legionaries seven ladies had a change of heart regarding abortion. One person returned to the Church after being lapsed for 71 years. A *Night Fever* project had amazing results. In Brentwood Comitium, a praesidium holds House Rosaries in May and October with an attendance of 10-20 people. These are advertised in the parish newsletter and find that they have a queue of people wanting them. **Liverpool Senatus** reported that a new praesidium started in Leeds. Legionaries in Wirral operate a Legion stall at Birkenhead Market. Great results following a *Night Fever* initiative were reported from St. Helen's Curia. Very good contacts were made at the book barrows in Rochdale and Heywood Town Centres. In Middlesborough Comitium two new praesidia were set up. A praesidium in Central London Curia teaches catechism to children with disabilities and special needs.



Other works include parish census and home visitation. Prison visitation is carried out by two praesidia. In the **Southwark Comitium**, as a result of a *Patricians* meeting on the Sacred Heart, four persons had their homes consecrated. On street contact a leaflet entitled *7 reasons you should be a Catholic* is shared with people of other denominations.

FRANCE: Congratulations and best wishes to the **Paris Regia**, which was raised to *Senatus* by the Concilium in March 2016. New praesidia were set up in the Dioceses of Evry, Versailles and Meux. Two Congolese praesidia with 20 and 22 members, visit among their communities. A praesidium of 12 Haitian members is attached to the Regia. Legionaries in **Valance Regia** work among Portuguese families, arrange Prayer Vigils, Rosary and Adoration. The **Vietnamese Curia** in Lyon is active in preparing adults for the Sacraments. In Strasbourg Comitium the youth praesidium is organising a weekend Evangelisation Project and find recruitment after major religious events fruitful.

GERMANY: Congratulations to the **Frankfurt Senatus**, which celebrated its Golden Jubilee in January 2016. The Legion DVD was shown in Frankfurt High School. A new recruiting leaflet and one on Confession were printed. The Korean Curia in Frankfurt held a De Montfort Day of Recollection. The programme of works in **Freiburg Comitium** includes a camping apostolate, *Patricians*, visiting schools and book barrow apostolate. The

Munich Regia has ten book stands in the inner city and they run the German Legion website. They established a new praesidium in Pechbrunn. Legionaries from the Regia had a stand at the Munich Festival. **Cologne Regia** has two new praesidia in Leverkusen and Hamburg. **Berlin Comitium** has eight praesidia and one Curia attached. Works include visitation and encouraging lapsed Catholics to return to the faith. The Cause of the Servant of God is promoted in Berlin parishes.

GIBRALTAR: The **Gibraltar Curia** has five praesidia. Legionaries visit St. Bernard's Hospital and a psychiatric unit. They held an ecumenical outdoor Stations of the Cross on Good Friday with a great attendance. School children are prepared for Holy Communion and legionaries help with the children's Liturgy.

NETHERLANDS: **Amsterdam Regia** is making progress on setting up a website. *Patricians* meetings are well attended and extension efforts continue in Amsterdam. The **Cape Verde Curia** in Rotterdam has eight praesidia with 60 active and 45 auxiliary members. Efforts are being made to recruit among the Portuguese-speaking community. Legionaries from Rotterdam visited the Portuguese praesidium which they set up 10 years ago in Amiens. The praesidium in Duivendrecht, established by Sr. Sally Chan from Hong Kong, now has nine members.

NORWAY: Members of the Zurich Comitium, Switzerland, visited

praesidia in Drammen and Tonsberg and the two Filipino praesidia in Bergen. In Tonsberg, the praesidium has 10 active members, two probationers and 18 auxiliary members. In a wide-ranging apostolate they teach catechism to children, and visit the sick and lonely. In Drammen there are six active members and 25 auxiliaries. House Rosaries and Bible studies featured in reports. During Advent Norwegian and Filipino families were visited. Members visit nursing homes where they pray the Rosary with residents.

SCOTLAND: Visitation of schools features in many reports and a meeting with heads of Secondary Schools is planned. In Stirling a talk on True Devotion to Mary was given by a De Montfort Father at a Marian Evening which included an all-night vigil. Legionaries in Ayrshire visit five nursing homes, three hospitals, and five Primary Schools. Our Lady of the Wayside praesidium has members from several different countries. Annunciata Curia reports the baptism of five children in one family.

SIBERIA: Huge distances are involved for members attending meetings. The Curia has five praesidia. One praesidium is on the parish website and has taken part in extension work in Abakan.

SWEDEN: The praesidium in Vaxjo reports a steady increase in membership. A new praesidium was established in Gavel. Another praesidium reports great response to

the Pilgrim Statue. Work is progressing well since the printing of the Swedish Handbook.

SWITZERLAND: Zurich Comitium has one Curia and 12 praesidia attached. Legionaries regularly participate in Swiss Radio Maria programmes. The report mentions an Exploratio Dominicalis project in Estfeld.

WALES: Legionaries in Gwent, Cardiff Comitium, responded swiftly to a request to bring the Rosary to school children. Swansea Curia established a new praesidium and has held its first Congress. Legionaries carry out street rescue work and crowd contact at train stations. Three Exploratio Dominicalis projects were undertaken. Wrexham Curia is busy following up contacts made by a Peregrinatio Pro Christo team.



BEING LOST... BEING FOUND

What shall I return to the Lord
for all his bounty to me? (Ps 116: 12)

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