

Maria Legionis



Maria Legionis

The Voice of the Legion of Mary

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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.'

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The Legion of Mary for Men

Extract from 'Mary Shall Reign'

by Frank Duff

The first legal men's praesidium of the Legion of Mary met in December 1929, or rather the two of them met. One had been carrying on unofficially on an experimental basis for three years before that. But it must not be supposed from this that 'the Legion for Men' represented a new thought. No, it was part of the original idea; and though it took time to realise its fullness, nevertheless the germ was operative from the first moment. Let me explain the foregoing.

History of the Idea

With the exception of the priest and the layman, the first praesidium was composed of women, fifteen of them. But with a sureness of touch which was a fitting part of the strange confident gaze into the future which

characterised that meeting, it was stipulated that the new society would not be for women alone but equally for men, and that men would be accepted at the appropriate moment. The belief was that they would come along soon. But therein those planners were mistaken: it was going to take time. But from the very first, in the membership of that solitary man and in the making of a certain rule, the principle of joint membership was asserted. The rule was to the effect that each branch should have a male member who would assist it in its work. In what way? Well, in the miscellaneous directions in which a man can be useful. Chiefly in view were such things as liaison with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and other agencies for relief and social benefit.



This aspect of things was peremptorily in the minds of that original band by reason of the fact that the Legion was cutting itself off from the particular field of giving material relief.

That rule was acted upon, and each branch of the Legion which came into existence for a considerable time afterwards, provided itself with such a man, called the Tribune, who was in fact given the status of an officer. In the later days of ordinary male membership, that officership status was abolished as anomalous. Here and there one finds places with Tribunes, but nowadays there does not seem to be much purpose in the office. For why call a man-legionary a Tribune instead of just a legionary? So possibly in the future the Tribune may go the way of all flesh, having justified his existence by maintaining the principle of male membership in those vital developing years.

When the men came in, they came in with a vengeance. This was indeed surprising, for the Legion had by that time gained for itself the name of being a women's organisation. Historically there must have been few cases where societies started among women were subsequently taken up by men to the

extent of being as much for one as for the other. The fact has to be faced up to that men fight shy of women's societies.

The Legion appeals to Men

Why did this not apply in the case of the Legion? Leaving out the big reason that Our Lady was raising her army for both, and in due course brought in both, we might suggest the human explanation that the Legion in its 'women's days' had established itself as an instrument of courage and enterprise, tackling tasks and problems from which men had been holding back. The fact of the matter was that men were very pleased to be let in. Then they went through no period of shyness and excuses. They had come into a tough fighting force and they knew it. And outsiders knew it too, and so the men flowed in as through an open sluice gate

What sort of men?

A distinguished person, writing to the Legion governing body in those early days, had contended that the title of the organisation and the setting of its meetings (i.e., altar of Our Lady, Rosary etc.) would effectively keep out men. No estimation could have been more astray. The appeal of the Legion to men has been dynamic, one of its chief features. Nor has that appeal been confined to the more devotional type of man whom the cruder ones of his sex would call 'sissies.' The contrary applied – and drastically so.



The first men's branch, which has worked experimentally for two years, set itself to the most difficult and actually dangerous work that could be essayed – the running of the now world-famous Morning Star Hostel for down-and-out men. No more virile body of men could be assembled.



By a circumstance which must be regarded as significant, the very first praesidium in the New World was of men, and here again that note of toughness was struck. The branch was composed mainly of miners in a primitive settlement in the U.S.A. Those men who responded so

unhesitatingly to Mary's Army were not pious. At the initial meeting, the priest, surveying them from under his eyelids during their unaccustomed exercise of saying the Rosary, saw that his first occupation would have to be the regulating of the irregular religious condition of most of them. This accomplished, an era of sensational apostleship was entered upon.

The first praesidium in Canada was likewise of men. It was in British Columbia and was of Indians, most of them illiterate – a new important note. The first praesidium in all Africa was of native African men on the Calabar coast. As if to signal the importance of this inaugural step, in that continent, several miracles graced its work.



St. Vincent de Paul's Link with the Legion of Mary



By Michael Walsh

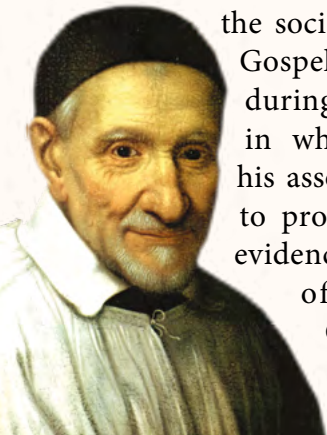
Founder of the St Vincent de Paul, Frederick Ozanam was born in Milan on Friday, 23 April 1813 to Jean and Marie Ozanam and grew up in Lyon. Abbé Noirot, a priest-teacher at the Collège de Lyon, helped Frederick at an early age in the formation of his Catholic faith, resulting in his becoming a writer for the Association for the Propagation of the Faith, a lay Catholic organisation founded with the aim of supporting Catholic missionaries. Frederick studied law in Paris, contributing to Bailly's Tribune Catholique, a French Catholic daily newspaper.

Ozanam went on to help revive a discussion group called a 'Society of Good Studies' and formed it into a 'Conference of History,' which became a forum for debates among students, whose focus often included the social teachings of the Gospel. At one meeting during a heated debate in which Ozanam and his associates were trying to prove from historical evidence alone the truth of the Catholic Church as the one founded by Christ, their adversaries

declared that, though at one time the Church was a source of good, it no longer was such. One voice issued the challenge: "What is your Church doing now? What is she doing for the poor of Paris? Show us your works and we will believe you!"

In May 1833, Ozanam, while thinking about the problem of poverty, with a group of other young men founded the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, under the supervision of Sister Rosalie Rendu, a member of the Congregation of Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, The members of the Conferences collaborated with Sister Rendu during the cholera epidemic, organising the Conferences in Paris to help the cholera victims. Ozanam's first act of charity in this enterprise was to give his own supply of Winter firewood to a widow whose husband had died of cholera.

From the beginning, the Society of St Vincent de Paul embraced a direct method in dealing with poverty: The members must give their time, talents and resources to helping the poor, stressing: "You must not be content with tiding the poor over the poverty crisis.



You must study their condition and the injustices which brought about such poverty, with the aim of a long-term improvement.” Charity had to include non-Catholics and be extended to other countries. In this he was ahead of his time.

Words, spoken in 1834 by Frederic Ozanam, express the spiritual ethos of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and its focus on working for social justice: *“The question which is agitating the world today is a social one. It is a struggle between those who have nothing and those who have too much. It is a violent clash of opulence and poverty which is shaking the ground*

under our feet. Our duty as Christians is to throw ourselves between these two camps in order to accomplish by love what justice alone cannot do.”

From 1851 onwards Ozanam’s health worsened after contracting tuberculosis. Despite enduring great suffering, he sustained a heavy workload and in December 1852 made a Pilgrimage to Pouy, the birthplace of St. Vincent de Paul. By this time his organisation numbered in excess of 2,000 members. Up to the time of his death he continued with literary tasks and the work of district-visiting as a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Frederick Ozanam died in Marseille on Thursday, 8 September 1853, at the age of 40, and was buried in the crypt of the Church of St. Joseph des Carmes at the Institut Catholique in Paris.

Crypt of the Church of St. Joseph des Carmes, Paris

The fruits of Blessed Frederick Ozanam’s works and writings live on in the memories and hearts of millions of people, particularly those who continue to benefit from the organisation he founded in May 1833 – St. Vincent de Paul.

Blessed Frederick Ozanam, born in Milan on Friday, 23 April 1813, to Jean and Marie Ozanam was beatified in 1997 by Pope John Paul II in the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris. His Feast Day falls on 9th September.





Myra House 1921



St. Vincent de Paul Conference of St. Patrick

Eighty-eight years after the establishment of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Legion of Mary came into existence, spearheaded by Frank Duff.

In his book ‘Mary Shall Reign’, the founder of the Legion wrote: ‘If we have our principles right, I think that we are sure of success, because it is usually possible to enlist the necessary effort. Then if effort is there and principles are right, you cannot hold back a Christian work. It is not the least of those principles which I now discuss. I start by quoting a passage from the works of Fredirick Ozanam. It contains a thought which is not only true and beautiful, but provocative too’: *“We are all unprofitable servants, but we serve a Master who is absolutely economical, who lets nothing go to waste, not a drop of the sweat of our brow, any more than a drop of his heavenly dew. I know not what fate awaits this book; whether I shall finish*

it; or whether I shall reach the end of the page that lies beneath my pen. But I know enough to cause me to throw into it the remnant, be it great or small, of my strength and of my days.”

(This quote is also in the Legion of Mary Handbook, Chapter 6, Section 4).

Members at the first Legion of Mary praesidium had worked with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Dublin prior to 1921 and realised that a parallel organisation was required to focus on the spiritual needs of the people; this realisation was the main stimulus for the founding of the Legion of Mary. Since that first Legion meeting on 7th September, 1921 in Francis Street, Dublin, both organisations have worked tirelessly along parallel lines for the benefit of mankind, resulting in significant spiritual and temporal benefits to millions of people worldwide.

Evangelisation Outreach in Tipperary Town

By Eileen Fraher



During 2023 the praesidium of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception held three days of events outside three different supermarkets in the town. Permission was sought and received from the management of the supermarkets. The dates selected were:

September 8th: Our Lady's birthday;

May 13th: Feast of Our Lady of Fatima;

December 8th: Feast of Our lady of the Immaculate Conception.

The Parish Priest placed an article in the Sunday Mass leaflet and informed readers that the mission was to share our Catholic faith and to explain and distribute Miraculous Medals.

A rota of praesidium workers was drawn up by our presidium president, Sr. Bridget O'Driscoll.

Legion literature, rosaries and Miraculous Medals were on display on the tables outside the supermarkets.

In each of the three sessions, about 12,000 Miraculous Medals, circa 300 Rosary beads were distributed. A great variety of people were contacted: In the morning the workers; in the afternoon the more elderly; and in the evening the youth.

At a subsequent Curia meeting reports from each legionary were given. It was noted how graciously the Miraculous Medals were received when an explanation was given, and many asked for extra medals to take home to relatives and elderly. Many people showed great interest when it was explained that the Miraculous Medal has the power to protect the wearer from evil when worn around the neck and activated by saying the prayer:

"O Mary conceived without sin pray for us who have recourse to thee."

It is planned to repeat this outreach in 2024. We pray that the seeds which were scattered on those three days, with the help of the Holy Spirit and Our Lady, will bear much fruit in God's Holy Name.



Reflection on the Rosary

Immaculate Heart of Mary Prayer Group

By Paul Moran

Some of you may never have heard of St. Louis-Marie De Montfort (1673 -1716) or his spiritual classic 'The Secret of the Rosary.'

This French Priest is commonly referred to as De Montfort, the place of his birth. He had a charismatic openness to the Holy Spirit who infused him with knowledge of Mary. This allowed him to decode the power of the Rosary, as it were. De Montfort maintained praying the Rosary is beneficial to one's spiritual growth, mainly on account that Mary is our spiritual Mother and that she is uniquely gifted to lead souls into a deeper relationship with her divine Son. Realising the constant spiritual warfare going on all around us, De Montfort had recourse to Mary's power over Satan. He stated; *"The most terrible of all the enemies which God has set up against the devil is His holy Mother Mary"* (TD51/2). Everywhere De Montfort went he preached on the power of the Rosary. He maintained that never did a sinner resist after being touched by him with a Rosary.

There seems to be no limit to the many books about the Rosary, including the many Encyclical Letters promoting

it. It is significant that Pope St. Leo XIII wrote no less than 11 encyclicals on the Rosary. Pope Pius IX said: *"Among all devotions approved by the Church none has been favoured by so many miracles as the devotion of the Most Holy Rosary."* Pope Pius XII stated: *"We do not hesitate to affirm again that We put great confidence in the Holy Rosary for the healing of evils which afflict our times."* These encyclicals, and inspiring books help us to appreciate the power of the rosary. In his Apostolic Letter 'Rosarium Virginis,' Saint John Paul proudly stated: *"The Rosary is my favourite prayer."* He went on to say, *"With the Rosary, the Christian people sit at the school of Mary, and are led to contemplate the beauty of the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love. Through the Rosary the faithful receive abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer."*

In private recitation of the Rosary, one may on occasions feel the need to pause in silence to allow God to speak to us. Especially when the Hail Mary's seem to fade into the background while the heart gravitates to God.



This is as natural as a flower opening its corolla to the heat of the morning sun. Hence, the importance of praying the Rosary with the right disposition least we fall under the condemnation of Christ: *“These people honour me with the lips but their hearts are far from me”* (Matthew 15:8). In this regard St Louis De Montfort relates a cautionary tale:



“The life of Blessed Hermann tells us that at one time when he used to say the Rosary attentively and devoutly while meditating upon the mysteries, Our Lady used to appear to him resplendent in breathtaking majesty and beauty. But as time went on his fervour cooled, and he fell into the way of saying his Rosary hurriedly and without giving it his full attention. Then one day Our Lady appeared to him again – only this time she was far from beautiful, and her face was furrowed and drawn with sadness. Blessed Hermann was appalled at the change in her, and then Our Lady explained: “This is how I look to you, Hermann, because in your soul this is how you are treating me; as a woman to be despised and of no importance. Why do you no longer greet me with respect and attention meditating on my mysteries and praising my privileges.”

That said, few are exempt from distractions and spiritual dryness in prayer. This should not be a cause for concern, as some of the great saints, like St. Therese of Lisieux, experienced difficulties praying the Rosary. Essentially prayer in all its facets is the raising of the heart and mind to God in faith. So, it is helpful to be aware that prayer is independent of one’s feelings and emotions. We take comfort from St Louis-Marie De Montfort who assures us that those who faithfully pray the Rosary in the faith, while mediating on the mystery of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, live perfectly, die peacefully, and rise surely to eternal life.



THE SECRET OF THE ROSARY
ST. LOUIS DE MONTFORT

Visit by Star of the Sea Senatus

From Mumbai, India to Nepal *By Br. Carlton, President Senatus*

Nepal, land of the Himalayan mountains was visited in October 2023 for over a month by Ms. Cassina Netto Assistant Secretary of Mumbai Senatus and Correspondent for Nepal, and by Ms. Janet Mendonca, for Extension, Visitation and Consolidation.

The Nepal Curia consists of three praesidia in Kathmandu at Dhobighat, Godavari and Banyataar and three isolated praesidia at Lubu, Urlabari and Damak in Eastern Nepal. Our Curia meets at Our Lady of the Assumption Church, Dhabhighat, Nepal

The legionaries are humble, spiritual, committed and dedicated members with a deep love for Mother Mary. Even though they live a life of financial difficulties working in farms or small industries, sudden unexpected calamities of weather change and earthquakes, they travel a long way to the Church to belong to the community and to the Legion of Mary.

The works done are visits to Catholic and other faith homes, visits to lapsed Catholics, hospital visitation, visits to the sick and homebound, visits to bereaved families and institutes. They also conduct RCIA classes, visit the prison, teach catechism and are Eucharistic Ministers.

The visits focussed on building the

legionaries as future leaders, teaching them, and training them on the Legion System. The Legion units that were struggling were restarted and new officers were appointed.

Bishop Paul Simick gave us a warm welcome. He was happy to hear of the progress of the Legion in the country and advised us to spread further the Legion in the nearby parishes. The Legion is grateful for his full support and cooperation.

We met the parish priests of all the parishes where the legion exists; they all spoke about the good works of the legionaries in their parishes, visiting the sick, interfaith couples, visits to the lapsed Catholics, conducting the Rosary in May and October, etc. We also appreciate the full cooperation and support of the Rev. Sister Jileola spiritual directress of Nepal Curia and all other religious nuns who help and guide the legionaries to develop spiritually.

The language barrier did not prevent us from speaking our hearts out to them, sharing their joys and sorrows and also praying the Rosary in Nepali with them. We realised nothing is impossible when Mary our mother walks along with us.

The memories and relationships we build last long and for ever as we continue our visits yearly to learn and build the family of the Church through the Legion of Mary.

Pope Leo The Great

(Saint and Doctor of the Church)



By Michael Walsh

In the entire history of the Papacy only two Popes have received the title 'Great,' the first being Leo and the second being Gregory who lived at the end of the sixth century. It is said that were it not for the Popes in that stretch of history, Rome might have suffered a similar fate to Babylon or Carthage. Leo is especially recognised for saving the Eternal City from the invasions of the Northern tribes.

Leo was born in Tuscany, Italy in 400 A.D., but the family came to live in Rome while he was still a child. As an adult Civil Servant in 440, he was away on a municipal mission in France to bring about peace between two of Rome's military leaders when the request came to him to return to Rome. The clergy and laity of the city had decided that he, though not even a priest or a bishop, was the most suitable nominee for the vacant Papacy after the death of Pope Sixtus III. As a result, Leo was consecrated Pope on 29th September 440.

As Pope between 440 and 461, he was to bring his clear visualisation to the Church and mould the papacy as it is at present. He attained the title 'Great' principally for the way he

led the Church at a time of political upheaval and cumulative barbarian invasions; this, coupled with the declining imperial authority in the West, forced the Bishop of Rome to take a more active part in civic and political affairs. The power of the Western Roman Empire was in decline at this time and the prospect of conquest was attractive to the invaders from northern Europe: one by Attila the Hun in 452. A painting by Raphael shows the invader facing Leo, but behind him he sees Peter and Paul supporting the Pope's demands. In that attack, Attila retreated.



POPE LEO THE GREAT

The political situation had changed when invader, Genseric the Vandal arrived a few years later: The Emperor was dead, and no military leader was defending the city. Again, Leo met the invader and persuaded him not to destroy the city. Genseric and his men pillaged for two weeks but no one was killed and much of the art and architecture remained undamaged.

Pope Leo nurtured charitable works in a Rome beset by famines, and an inflow of refugees. He encouraged charity and almsgiving to the sick and needy. Despite all material difficulties at this problematic time, he was a major contributor to the centralisation of spiritual authority within the Church and in reaffirming papal authority. He gathered many scholarly men about him, among them Prosper of Aquitaine, who served in a secretarial capacity.



Pope Leo staunchly opposed every type of heresy such as the writings of the British monk Pelagius, and the Manichaeans in Italy. He was a fiery and a daunting opponent with the motto: 'The integral and true faith is a great bulwark to which nothing can be added or taken from by anyone.' In his encyclical *'Aeterna Dei Sapientia'* (1961), Pope John XXIII wrote: 'St. Leo is celebrated above all as Doctor of the unity of the Church.'

In his sermons Pope Leo often cited previous decisions of the Popes and continually appealed to the Canons of the Council of Nicea (325). He had a vibrant sense of his own role in speaking for the entire Church, constantly stressing: 'For the stability which the Rock himself was given by the Rock which is Christ, he conveyed also to his successors, and where-so-ever any steadfastness is apparent, there without doubt is to be seen the strength of the shepherd.'

Pope Benedict XIV stated that Leo's papacy was unquestionably one of the most important in the history of the Church.



St. Peter's Basilica, Rome from the Tiber

Frank Duff made a reference to Pope Leo in a quote by Cardinal Newman (Ch. 10, Section 6, Legion Handbook):



It is a moral force, not a material one which will vindicate your position and secure your triumph.

It is not giants who do most. How small was the Holy Land! Yet it subdued the world. How poor a spot was Attica! Yet it has formed the intellect. Moses was one, David was one, Paul was one, Athanasius was one, Leo was one. Grace ever works by few; it is the keen vision, the intense conviction, the indomitable resolve of the few, it is the blood of the martyrs, it is the prayer of the saint, it is the heroic deed, it is the momentary crisis, it is the concentrated energy of a word, or a look, which is the instrument of heaven. Fear not, little flock for he is mighty who is in the midst of you, and he will do for you great things.

After serving twenty-one years as Pope, Leo the Great died on 10 November 461.

This outstanding Pontiff mirrored the sentiments of Cardinal Newman in the above quote. Leo was a moral force, a man of prayer and action, a Prelate who could handle a crisis, a Doctor of the Church, one of only two Popes ever to be given the title 'Great' in the long history of the Papacy.

Because Leo wished to be buried as close as possible to the tomb of St. Peter, his body was placed in a tomb in the portico of Saint Peter's Basilica. Then in 688 his remains were moved inside the Basilica.



Pope Benedict XIV

In 1754 Pope Benedict XIV proclaimed Saint Leo the Great, 'Doctor of the Church.'

His Feast Day falls on 10 November.

Allocutio on St. Paul

By Fr. Eamon Devlin CM

Allocutio to Concilium - 21 January 2024



The Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul which occurs on Thursday is one of the most significant conversions in the history of Christianity. Saul, persecutor personified of the early Church, becomes Paul - preacher par excellence of the faith and apostle of the Gentiles. He is one of the patrons of the Legion, and for good reason.

Paul's Damascus experience of the Risen Christ, who asks him: 'Why do you persecute me?' reveals to him the mystery of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ - a mystery Paul took great pains to elaborate and proclaim. It is the mystery which underlies the Legion's understanding of itself and its mission: All have a place in Christ; all have a responsibility to do something about that place.

The Legion has a place and a work for everyone - There is no least or greatest in the endeavour of making Christ present in the world for those who haven't met Him or who haven't stayed with Him. Every cell of the Legion from the smallest praesidium to Concilium itself is a manifestation of Christ's Mystical Body.

Part of St Paul's legacy to the Legion is the sense of belonging, the reaching out to the other. Christ invests

Himself in the insignificant. The other part is his restless apostolic effort which he pursued at great personal cost. Our understanding of ourselves as Legionaries of Mary compels us to be no less than people who possess the Spirit of Mary - the Holy Spirit - and strive in all and every opportunity to make her Son known and loved. For some legionaries this will include the kind of hardships St. Paul endured by land and sea and in different cultural settings. For all of us it includes the sharing in the joys and sorrows of the Mystical Body of Christ, whether through prayer, outreach or even being among them in any of the ways the Legion makes possible through PPC and Correspondents.

We hear of difficulties endured by Christians in countries such as Nicaragua mentioned today. Yet, the work goes on. In Ireland there is now, a white martyrdom of faith. While reflecting on today's Feast Day of the Word of God, let us pray for Church Unity. As legionaries, we should know who we are and do something about being a member of the Christ's Mystical Body. The Mother of Jesus stands by us.

Praesidium: Serving Mary Saving Souls

By Aloysius Kiribaki - President Senatus of Uganda

Introduction

In 2024, the Senatus of Uganda embarks on yet another new spiritually oriented year under the theme: “Praesidium: Serving Mary, Saving Souls.” This theme underscores the Legion’s commitment to being a tangible “Presence” of Mary in the modern world, striving to embody her love, compassion and grace in their service to the Church. The theme emphasises the importance of coming together as a unified body to engage in the official, pastoral apostolate of the Church. The Legion of Mary recognises the significance of the communal apostolate, highlighting the importance of collective worship, devotion and service to Mother Church.

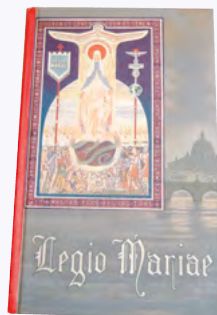
Background

The theme for 2024: “Praesidium: Serving Mary, Saving Souls,” seamlessly builds on the foundation laid in 2023, where it was emphasised that: The Legionary must Pray as well as Work. This evolution acknowledges that our devotion to prayer remains essential, but it now underscores the purpose behind our work. Serving

Mary reflects our commitment to our faith, community and the Legion of Mary, mirroring the 2023 theme’s emphasis on prayer and work. Moreover, “Saving Souls” places a greater emphasis on our mission and evangelism, linking it back to the 2021-2022 theme: “Remember, Renew, Recruit and Rejoice.” By serving Mary through our work and prayer, we honour our centenary celebration’s call to remember our history, renew our dedication, recruit new members and rejoice in the spiritual fulfilment that comes from saving souls for Christ.

The Praesidium is a presence of Mary

Reference is made to the Legion of Mary Handbook in chapter 14, Chapter 19 (section 23) and Chapter 39 (section 6) where the praesidium is explained in greater detail. However, suffice to say that the praesidium as a “Presence” of Mary is rooted in the Legion of Mary’s deep commitment to the official pastoral apostolate of the Church.



It emphasises the consolidation of individuals into a collective, united body that operates in harmony with the Church's mission. This consolidation is likened to the relationship between the liturgy, the official public worship of the Church and private prayer. Just as liturgy is the communal expression of faith, the praesidium acts as a communal apostolate that works in harmony with individual members.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, plays a central role in this theme. She is the one who gave the world the Life that renews all things and was enriched by God with gifts suitable for her maternal role. Through the Legion of Mary, her mothering role continues, supported by those who are willing to assist her. A praesidium, within this context, offers a group of devoted individuals ready to aid Mary in her ongoing mission. It is believed that she will graciously accept this help, transforming a praesidium into a local manifestation of her presence.

The Legion of Mary, as reflected in its theme, requires the praesidium to be a shining example of consistency. This resonates with the biblical teaching in Galatians 6:9: which says, "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up." It should be noted that legionaries may encounter obstacles such as illness, holidays, or other unavoidable circumstances that temporarily prevent them from fulfilling their duties. However,

by virtue of its collective nature, composed of many members who won't all face hindrances simultaneously, the praesidium can rise above these individual limitations. This principle is akin to the biblical teaching in Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, "Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labour: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up."

The Legion of Mary Handbook (Chapter 19, section 23) explains that a praesidium places at her disposal a group of loving souls eager to help her in that office. It is certain that she will accept that aid. Therefore, a praesidium may be imagined as a sort of local presence of Mary through which she will display her unique gifts and reproduce her motherhood. So, it can be expected that a praesidium which is true to its ideals will bestow around itself life and renewal and healing and solutions.



Aims for 2024

To empower each praesidium truly to become a living embodiment of Mary's presence in the Legion of Mary and in the world.

This will involve deepening the understanding of the communal apostolate, fostering unity among Legion members and enhancing the Legion's collective service to the Church and humanity.

Moreover, it aims to strengthen existing praesidia by providing ongoing training, resources, and support to local leaders and members. Additionally, it aims to establish new praesidia in areas with a need for increased Catholic presence in Uganda, South Sudan and Ethiopia. This objective aims to ensure that praesidia remain effective and continue to grow.

It is anticipated that the outcome of these aims will result in improved organisation and effectiveness of existing praesidia, and to enhanced quality of leadership.

Key Activities

Conduct regular training sessions for praesidia officers to develop their organisational and leadership skills.

Provide resources and materials for praesidia activities, such as pamphlets, guides, and religious literature.

Offer ongoing mentorship and support for local leaders, including

regular checks-in and consultations.

Organise regional or national gatherings to facilitate networking and the exchange of best practices among praesidia.

These key activities will foster the spiritual growth of members and will offer regular spiritual retreats, formation programs and access to spiritual directors.

Extension Work in Underserved Regions

It is proposed to expand extension work in underserved regions within Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia, including hard-to-reach areas such as islands, highlands, and refugee camps.

To achieve this goal, it is planned to develop tailored outreach programs and establish partnerships with existing Legion of Mary councils to ensure the Catholic faith reaches those who need it most.

Effective Evangelisation Through Media

Utilise radio, television and social media platforms to engage in extensive apostolate. Create and disseminate engaging and informative religious content, such as allocutio, homilies, discussions and educational materials, to reach a wide and diverse audience. Adapt the message and approach to be effective in these media channels to fulfil the theme's call to "Saving Souls."

Conclusion

As we start a new year with a new theme: “Praesidium: Serving Mary, Saving Souls,” we are filled with a profound sense of purpose and possibility. The work that lies ahead is not just a duty but a divine calling; one that invites us to rise to the occasion, to embrace our roles with renewed commitment, and to be the living embodiment of Mary’s presence in the Legion of Mary and in the world.

The year 2024 holds great promise for us, a year in which we have set a clear and inspiring goal: “To empower each praesidium truly to become a living embodiment of Mary’s presence in the Legion of Mary and in the world.” To achieve this, we must all be driven by a shared sense of urgency and an unshakable resolve. In the busy hustle and bustle of our lives, it’s easy to become distracted and lose sight of our noble purpose, but we must remind ourselves of the profound impact we can have on the lives of others, of the souls we can touch, and the salvation we can bring. Let this year be the year in which we make a tangible difference, the year we transform lives and the year we serve Mary with great devotion.

To make the year 2024 and the theme a reality, we need your commitment, your dedication and your passion. Each one of you, as officers and legionaries, plays a crucial role in this mission.

Your energy, enthusiasm and faith are the driving forces that will propel us forward. It’s not just about what we can do individually, but what we can achieve together. Let us remember that Mary’s presence in the Legion is not a distant ideal but a living reality and we are the vessels through which it shines.



So, I implore you all, dear officers and legionaries, to rekindle your passion, to redouble your efforts, and to inspire one another to achieve our 2024 objectives. May Mother Mary guide our steps and may her love infuse our every action. Together, we can serve Mary and save souls. Together, we can make 2024 a year of profound impact. Let us march forward with faith, hope, and love, for we are the Legion of Mary, and with Mary’s grace, there is nothing we cannot achieve.

The Nativity of Mary Senatus, Bangkok

By Ichaya Methasate



The Nativity of Mary Junior Curia, our first youth Curia, had its first meeting on August 9, 2023, with the participation of youth members from seven Catholic schools in Thailand. Rev. Fr. Sahaphon Tangtavorn is their Spiritual Director. At the meeting, they elected four officers, and it is resolved to have a monthly meeting on the second Sunday of every month at Assumption Convent School, Bangkok.



On November 12, 2023, a Eucharistic Celebration was offered for Frank Duff, Edel Quinn, Alfie Lambe, and all deceased legionaries, at St. Louis Church, Bangkok.



Faith and Fun with St. Thérèse

A Route to Evangelisation in Families

Queen of Peace Praesidium, Swords, Co. Dublin *By Rosaleen Devery*

Our Lady of Mercy Junior Praesidium meets each week in Brackenstown parish. Basically, it teaches the child the spirit of the Legion and introduces the child to an encounter with Christ. Children learn that Jesus is their greatest friend, and that each child's life has a deep meaning.

Faith and Fun is a three-week project that has been running in Brackenstown Parish since 2009. Led by the Legion of Mary, the project

last year aimed to introduce the spirituality of St. Thérèse to children between six and eleven years. It was delivered over 3 x 2 hour slots and consisted of activities which included art, crafts, storytelling, games and song that speak to St. Thérèse's 'Little Way'. Emphasis was put on the gift of St. Therese's family in nurturing vocations to the priesthood and religious life and on praying for priests out of love for the souls they touch.

Project Timetable

	Week 1	Week 3	Week 3
2:00 - 2:15	Sign-in	Sign-in	Sign-in
2:15 - 2:20	Welcome	Welcome	Welcome
2:20 - 2:25	Explanation of Legion Altar	Hail Mary Prayer	Hail Mary Prayer
2:25 - 2:30	The story of St. Peter's escape from prison (Acts of Apostles, 14:)	Bible Story "Let the children come to me" (Mark 10:13-15)	Interactive Q&A
2:00 - 2:40	The Story of St. Thérèse: The Little Flower_Part 1	The Story of St. Thérèse: The Little Flower_Part 2	The Story of St. Thérèse: The Little Flower_Part 3
2:40 - 2:55	Colour the Hail Mary picture and card craft	Craft Work: Make a St. Thérèse bracelet	Craft Work: Make a paper rose
2:55 - 3:00	Video of St. Thérèse	St. Thérèse Word Search Page	Gather in Church
2:00 - 3:10	Break for Refreshments with Music	Break for Refreshments with Music	Eucharistic Adoration
3:10 - 3:15	Our Father Prayer	Our Father Prayer	Our Father Prayer
3:15 - 3:30	Prayer to St. Thérèse and Hail Mary and Hymn (Circle of Friends (Alive-04))	Prayer to St. Thérèse and Hail Mary and Hymn (Circle of Friends (Alive-04))	Party Time! Hymn (Circle of Friends (Alive-04))
3:30 - 3:45	Feedback	Feedback	Feedback
3:15 - 3:55	Sign-out	Sign-out	Sign-out
4:00 -	End	End	End

Learning Goals:

The project had as its goals that children would learn that: God can be trusted in difficult situations because nothing is too difficult for God to handle. Each child is precious in God's sight. Mary is the mother of all peoples and source of all graces.

Learning Outcomes

Children were able to express their faith in prayer, reflection, song and art. Children were able to identify distinguishing words and sayings from St. Thérèse's 'Story of a Soul' that will help them grow in wisdom. Children demonstrated how a St. Thérèse Feast Day card for a family member may be crafted. Children were able to follow instructions to make a St. Thérèse bracelet and paper roses.



Indicative Program:

The project's activities were mapped to four learning outcomes as follows:

1. Formal prayers of the Catholic tradition and significance of the Legion altar.
2. Scriptural readings and instruction to promote opportunity for reflection.
Week 1: St. Peter's miraculous escape from prison (Acts of the Apostles 12:1-24).
Week 2: "Let the children come to me" (Mark 10:13-15).
Week 3: Fifteen-minute Eucharistic Adoration.
3. The Story of St. Thérèse and Quiz.
4. Saint Thérèse Word Search Page.
5. Hail Mary and St. Thérèse Coloring Pages.
6. Card craft that involves pasting pictures, leaves, rose buds, prayers and coloring.
7. Make bracelet using alphabetical beads and St. Thérèse - miraculous medals.
8. Making simple paper roses.

A team of five legionaries delivered the project to circa nine children. All team members were provided with resource materials (The Story of a Soul, word search pages, art and craft materials and video instructions) beforehand. It was timetabled as shown in Table 1. Feedback was very positive from children, parents/guardians. The children helped each other and enjoyed the exercises. The project was a practical reminder to all involved that in the words of St. Thérèse: "the most beautiful thoughts are nothing without good works."

Visit to Los Angeles

on behalf of the Concilium, 6 July 2023

By Patricia O'Donoghue and Sheila Daly

What a privilege we received from the Concilium to allow us to visit Los Angeles Senatus in July. Sheila is the former correspondent and I am the current correspondent to the Senatus.

We were received by them as their blessing: they knew how to respond to a blessing, and we were the lucky recipients.

We visited six senior and one junior praesidia, three Curiae and the Senatus meeting. We also had two long meetings with the Senatus officers.

While we were there, we heard of a proposed new Japanese praesidium which just sprung up by the desire of a lady who had come across the Legion. It has since begun meeting and has seven members. They named it the Praesidium of Our Lady of Akita.

We visited a praesidium with 40 members; looks like they have the secret of obtaining new members. What a super challenge this presents to us in Ireland. I am longing to see what will come of this praesidium and the extension of the Legion of Mary.

We were present at two meetings where the Legion promise was made. We were also at a meeting where two visitors, potential legionaries came

who had been recruited a few days previously on street contact.

It is safe to say that Los Angeles are recruiting and doing some great works. They are also great for caring for their auxiliaries; they visit them, hold functions for them and they report weekly on their recruiting efforts for active and auxiliary.

We promoted the Frank Duff prayer groups and we suggested that they spread across Los Angeles. We also talked on the *Maria et Patria* and other Legion projects, and we hope that in due course they will appoint an extension worker.



The Senatus meeting was most encouraging with 80 members present from many nationalities. One Curia we visited conducted its business in two languages with the help of an interpreter.

We celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the Legion in St. Dominic's Parish where we were staying in a cottage belonging to the Dominicans which they graciously allowed us to use.

We had morning Mass just across the yard every morning. What a blessing. They invited us to speak at the Masses the weekend before the celebration of 40 years of the Legion of Mary in the parish. The legionaries designated us as "Guest of honour" and "keynote speaker" at the celebration. We had a cake with our names on it and they also had a pig cooked to eat. We did our duty by saying a few words and of course eating all the lovely food prepared.

We certainly learnt from them how to celebrate and it was a happy place to visit. Nothing was too much trouble to these wonderful legionaries. They even took us to visit Disneyland which we thoroughly enjoyed. They really treated us as their sisters, and we loved it.



Being a blessing is hard work! But the rewards are out of this world.





The Legion of Mary In Nagaland, India

By Kevin Paul

The Legion of Mary in Nagaland, India celebrated its Ruby Jubilee in October 2023 having completed 40 years of active service in that diocese.

The Legion was introduced to Nagaland around 1972 by the late Niu Francis Whiso, who later became the first Kohima Curia President. He was sent to America for higher studies by the Government. He fell ill there and was visited by legionaries who presented him with a book on Edel Quinn. He was very impressed, and on his return to Kohima, he commenced the first Naga Presidium. Unfortunately, it did not last long. But when in 1983 he heard we were coming, unknown to us, he set up everything. He was then Professor and Head of the English Department of the government Science College. In the 80's, public transport was infrequent, requiring him to walk about an hour each way to Church from his home – and in Nagaland, it means walking up and down steep hills. Imagine my utter surprise and joy when I walked into Kohima Village Parish, backpack et al, straight into a room replete with the Legion altar, full of eager to-be legionaries! Niu Francis had done all the necessary preliminary work for us, and we did not have to do the

customary home-to-home visitation, give talks, etc. to recruit members – immediately, that very night, the first senior praesidium to be affiliated was inaugurated on 10th November 1983. The first Junior praesidium started in Lakhuti, the previous night. I was witness to Br. Francis' foresight and persuasive skills; he took me along to talk to the late Beatrice Richa about joining the active ranks, which she politely declined. She was too busy, she said. Apart from a full-time Government job, after work she ran a free school for deserving children. I would have given up, but not Br. Francis! He kept at it for half an hour, until Sr. Beatrice relented. She turned out to be an excellent catch, later becoming the very efficient first Secretary of Kohima Curia.

On going through the Catholic Directory, we found that Nagaland had a larger Catholic population as compared to other dioceses in our area. It was therefore decided to extend the Legion in Nagaland. In those days, the early 80's, Nagaland was not a very safe place on account of terrorist militant activity. All those we contacted to know more about the dangers involved cautioned us against going there – except for two.

One was a legionary from our praesidium who had worked and stayed in Nagaland, and the other was the legendary late Rev. Fr. Aurelius Maschio, SDB, a pioneering missionary of North-East India. He arrived in the North-East in 1924 at the age of fifteen, and worked there until he was transferred to Mumbai in 1937, where he founded the prestigious Don Bosco School at Matunga and built a very popular beautiful Shrine to Our Lady. One of our ex-legionaries, Rev. Fr. Jeffery Fernandes SDB, was then a seminarian at Don Bosco's. When I told him of our apprehensions about extension in Nagaland, he suggested an appointment with Rev. Fr. Maschio. With the confidence and encouragement, he gave us, we decided to go ahead.

The only railhead to Nagaland is Dimapur, which is today a two-hour, 70 km. road journey to Kohima, the capital of Nagaland. Our buses were always stopped around four to five times during this journey for security checks at gunpoint. All passengers were made to disembark, stand in a line by the road, with their bags opened in front of them. Army soldiers – in India they are called Jawans – would inspect each permit, cross-question us and search our luggage. As a result, it used to take around four hours to reach Kohima! I can still recall the bullet holes in the tin walls of some homes in Kohima Village – mementoes of World War

II! The Japanese Army was stopped at Kohima, and there is a very scenic and serene War Cemetery there.

The first team consisted of two legionaries from Mumbai. We travelled by train from Mumbai on our West coast to Calcutta on the East coast – across the Indian subcontinent – and 70-year-old Br. Joe Reston from Calcutta joined us there and we continued our journey right around Bangladesh, to Dimapur – a three-day, 2,800 km. memorable journey. Our plans were to start the Legion in five parishes, and accordingly we wrote to His Lordship, the late Bishop Abraham – the first Bishop of Nagaland, and five Parish Priests. We were concerned as none of the Parish Priests replied – we set out solely on the warm reply Bishop Abraham wrote welcoming us.

It was only later that we realised why the Priests didn't reply – they were incredibly busy and hard-working because their parishes were huge, each having a number of Mass-Centers spread out in remote villages. There was often no way of reaching these Centers except on foot, sometimes more than a day's journey away, through thick forests. Although they did not reply, the priests were most hospitable and welcoming, and so many more wanted the Legion in their parishes; Bishop Abraham at their monthly priests meeting had informed them of our visit.

We set foot in Nagaland in Dimapur, and immediately set to work. Rev. Fr. Yesudas from Lakhuti happened to be there and insisted that we come and start the Legion in his parish. I pleaded that we had already made our plans, but he would not take no for an answer, sat me down and discussed our plans, and showed me how we could also include Lakhuti. So, it was decided that I would go back with him to Lakhuti, whilst the other two would work in Dimapur. We would then reunite at Kohima and continue as planned. That's how the first praesidium, a junior one, was inaugurated in Lakhuti. True to his word, Fr. Yesudhas started the senior praesidium a little later. One of the first few conversions to Christianity took place in Lakhuti, and one of the first converts came to meet me with a few wild oranges he had picked from the hills. He spoke of the tribal punishment, ostracism and opposition he had gone through; he was even put into an underground pit for seven days without food!

Lakhuti is located on a high ridge overlooking Wokha, the district headquarters. In the 80's this remote village was accessible by bus only on alternate days. To save a day, one had to walk for around four to five hours. I remember my aching then-fit legs as I trekked down the steep slopes through the forest to Wokha, (where regular buses to Kohima are available) often through elephant grass taller than myself! On another trip, whilst

trekking to Lakhuti, I encountered first-hand the tender hospitality of the Nagas. Seeing me sweating with my backpack, one of them invited me to his home to rest. He then served me a Naga welcoming drink – water laced with a few drops of milk! But those long walks were very rewarding – the forests in Nagaland are full of treats for nature lovers.

Rev. Fr. Yesudhas was typical of the hard-working priests I had the privilege of meeting. He'd rise early every morning to spend a couple of hours in hard labor, tending to his vegetable garden. During a famine, he would drive down to the plains of Assam to get rice – the staple diet of Nagas - for his parishioners. But he stopped when he found that some of them, instead of eating the rice, used it to brew rice-beer, the very potent local hooch!

He almost earned a gallantry award from the Government once for driving his Jeep through hostile militant fire to rescue a wounded Jawan. Priests are widely respected in Nagaland, which is about 70% Christian - but only a minority of these are Catholic - a majority are Baptists. That magical 17-day first trip to Nagaland and Manipur resulted in five senior and four junior praesidia. And the first of many miracles we witnessed happened on the first day itself. Since the team met only on the journey to Dimapur, we had a small orientation session on the train itself.

We noticed that Br. Joe was not taking down notes – he could not write as his right hand was paralysed. On the first evening, they visited the Seminary in Dimapur to deliver a talk on the Legion. On being served a cup of tea there, his hitherto paralysed hand stretched out to receive the cup – he was healed!

The next trip there was in April-May '84. Except for Kohima Village, all the praesidia had shut down, and had to be revived. The second praesidium in the neighboring Kohima Town Parish was started after the Parish Priest there, the late Rev. Fr. Thomas, insisted that he wanted the Legion. He later became the first Spiritual Director of Kohima Curia and was an excellent photographer. His work featured on many Governments' Tourism Department picture post-cards, brochures and calendars, and his documentation of Naga culture is widely recognised.

In January 1985, Kohima Curia was inaugurated with three praesidia. Bombay legionaries assisted, but at great cost. Prior to this trip, one of them was hospitalised with a serious illness, and on account of his prolonged absence, he lost his job. He was offered a job just before departure to Nagaland, on condition that he join work immediately. It was a huge temptation to him, being from an economically weak background, but he decided to go and help inaugurate the Curia. His sacrifice was rewarded

when on returning from that successful trip he got a job in a reputable firm, where he served until his retirement. Mumbai has a very moderate climate, being on the seacoast; it is quite humid most of the year, and the temperature dips below 20 degrees centigrade for only for a few days of the year. The legionaries were badly affected by the cold dry January weather in Nagaland; their skin was severely chapped and bleeding when they returned to Mumbai. After this trip, the Bombay Senatus decided to hand over Kohima Curia to Calcutta Comitium as Calcutta is much closer to Nagaland.

But the sacrifices and the hard work of the Naga legionaries have not been in vain. Our Blessed Mother has showered graces on them, and today there are two Curia in Kohima, one with five local and four isolated praesidia, the other with eight local and two isolated presidia. There is scope for another two Curia in Dimapur and Wokha. Every time I visited Nagaland, I found improvement. Priests there appreciate the vital work of legionaries, especially the regularisation of marriages and evangelisation. The Tesseræ is printed in three tribal languages, Angami (used around Kohima), Lotha (used around Wokha) and Mao (in Manipur). Let us continue to pray that the Legion continues to blossom and bear much fruit in Nagaland and beyond in the North-East!

Servant of God Alfie Lambe 65th Anniversary

By Nazareno Gonzalez - Senatus of Buenos Aires

In a weekend filled with emotion, the Parish of St. Gabriel Archangel in Adrogué, Buenos Aires, stood as the center of religious fervor, commemorating the 65th anniversary of the passing of Servant of God Alfonso Lambe.

On Saturday the 20th, the Parish of St. Gabriel Archangel took on a profound meaning with the inspiring talk by Brother Nazareno Gonzalez, president of the committee for the promotion of the cause of the Servant of God. His uplifting message urged legionaries to embrace Alfonso's legacy, making him a model intercessor among their fellow brothers.

On Sunday the 21st, the anniversary of Alfonso Lambe's passing, legionaries gathered at the vault of the Brothers of Mercy in the Recoleta Cemetery,

Buenos Aires. There, they recited the tessera prayers and offered a prayer for the beatification of the Servant of God. At noon, the Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar hosted a Eucharistic Celebration, further intensifying the spiritual connection of the community.

The Mass was presided over by Father Gastón Lorenzo, the parish priest of the Basilica, with concelebration by Fathers Pedro Gennaro and Diego Doldan, the latter being a Teatine religious. The celebration was graced by the distinguished presence of the Ambassador of the Republic of Paraguay in Argentina, Mr. Juan Ramón Cano Montania, along with legionary brothers from across the country and neighboring nations.

Heaven - Haven

*I have desired to go
Where springs not fail,
To fields where flies no sharp and sided hail
And a few lilies blow.
And I have asked to be
Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in then havens dumb
And out of the swing of the sea.*

Gerard Manley Hopkins





Subsequently, crowd contacts were resumed in the vicinity of the cemetery, extending Alfonso Lambe's message to those in the vicinity. The day concluded with a touching theatrical performance honoring the Servant of God, reminiscent of his life dedicated to service and love for God.

All activities were broadcasted through social media, amplifying devotion and respect for Alfonso Lambe. A profound gratitude is extended to all organisers and participants, whose dedication and love contributed to the success of these commemorative days. In a humble gesture of gratitude, a prayer is offered for Servant of God Alfonso Lambe to continue interceding for all members of the Legion of Mary.



At the Fourth Station

Where do You go My Only Son
In the Springtime of the year?
Is there another Feast at Cana
And other guests to cheer?
But why the wood upon your back
And on Your brow a thorn?
And why those weary steps and slow
Upon this Friday morn?
And where have your disciples gone?
Where is Peter? James? and John?
And why these cruel soldiers?
And why this vengeful throng?
Please tell me you go to Cana
Where the grape grows on the vine,
That You go once more to Cana
To change water into wine.
I go no more to Cana,
The wedding guests have fled,
I travel now this Calvary Road
My Living Blood to shed.
For I must shed my Living Blood
Upon the Hill of Shame
Because it is My Father's Will
That I must take the blame.
I take all sin upon My Head
To set the captives free
I will be mocked and spat upon
And nailed upon a tree.
My Cross shall smash the fowler's snare,
My singing birds shall soar,
My Blood shall cleanse the world of sin
And open Heaven's Door.

Anonymous



Praises of Mary



Mary, Mother of the Good Shepherd and our Mother, is renowned for obtaining all kind of good things for her children.

May she always be our trust and hope.

St. Germanus

Mary's sole object in this world was to keep her eyes constantly focused on God so as to discover His will.

Then when she had found out what God wanted, she did it.

St. Bernardine of Siena

So pleasing to God was Mary's humility that He was constrained by His goodness to entrust to her the Word, His only Son.

And it was that dearest Mother who gave Him to us.

St. Catherine of Siena

The Holy Spirit spoke of Mary by the mouth of the Prophets, foretold her by His oracles, and drew her portrait by means of figures.

He promised her in the events that preceded her and completed her in the events that followed her.

St. Ildephonsus

Divine love so inflamed Mary that nothing earthly could enter her affections.

She was always enkindled with God's heavenly ardour and, so to speak, inebriated with it.

St. Sophronius

The Heart of Mary constituted a perfect empire for the Divine Love, which always reigned therein.

And it caused to reign therein all the laws of God, all the maxims of heaven, and all the Christian virtues.

St. John Eudes





EUROPE

Albania: Two copies of the newly printed handbook were recently received at the Concilium. The praesidium in Durres, in the Diocese of Tirana-Durres, visit the female prison and assist the priest in his pastoral duties.

Austria: The **Senatus of Austria** reports Holy Mass is celebrated and a weekly prayer gathering is held in the Persian community. A statue of Our Lady is brought to Persian households. Three Comitia reported one new praesidium set up in each Comitium.

Belarus: **Minsk Comitium** reported visitation to the sick at home and in hospital. A Curia, attached to **Baranovichi Comitium** reported also on visitation of the sick among other works.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: **Sarajevo Curia** has four praesidia with 21 active and 160 auxiliary members

Croatia: In **Zagreb Regia** seventeen people have received the sacraments following on from home visitation. **Split Comitium** has a wide variety of works including park contact, street contact and home visitation with good results.

Zadar Comitium reported on works including home and statue visitation.

Hungary: **Budapest Regia** reported that in Advent, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is organised for young people to help them to deepen their faith. In one praesidium several people completed the 33 days Consecration to Jesus through Mary.

Italy: The pastor in one of the parishes has asked the **Rome Senatus** to reorganise the praesidium in the parish again. The Legion apostolate includes visits to the sick and housebound.

Latvia: A praesidium in **Riga Comitium** visits the oncology ward in Riga University Hospital and a care centre for the visually impaired. Another praesidium visits the local prison.

Lithuania: A praesidium in **Telsiai Comitium** reported a sixty-year-old woman converted and received her First Communion and a child was baptised.

Malta: **Malta Regia** reports that following visits to families, parents are bringing their children to Mass. One person returned to the sacraments after fifty-five years. A Peregrinatio Pro Christo was carried out to Banbury in Oxford, England.

Poland: A new praesidium was set up in **Kolka Curia** attached to **Warsaw Praga Comitium**. A praesidium attached to **Lublin Regia** reported on home visitation. Two people were brought to confession.

Portugal: The **Lisbon Senatus** organised the annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima. A praesidium organises daily support for a sick person who lives alone. One person received the Sacrament of Reconciliation after 60 years. **Porto Regia** supports homeless people and young people at risk.

Romania: The apostolate in **Satu Mare Regia** includes helping elderly and ill people to receive the sacraments, leading the rosary in Church, bringing people to Adoration, and many other works of service.

Slovakia: The legionaries in Trnava Curia prepared forty children from a children's home for the sacraments.

Spain: **Madrid Senatus** report newly arrived immigrants are helped, some of whom have been legionaries in their native countries and are now legionaries in their new parishes.

Many new praesidia have been set up in the Senatus. Legionaries in the Senatus have an apostolate to the women and girls in the red light area. A legionary in the Toledo Comitium is 101 years old and is a legionary for 70 years. Congratulations. The **Bilbao Senatus** celebrated its 60th Anniversary on 26th November with a Thanksgiving Mass in St. Nicholas of Bari Church with a good attendance. The correspondent was invited and attended along with a second Concilium representative.

Turkey: Our Lady of Ephesus Curia has five praesidia attached. The apostolate includes home visitation with the Statue of Our Lady, and visiting the sick in hospital and at home. Two retreats were organised. The officers of the Curia had a meeting with the Apostolic Administrator for Istanbul.

AFRICA

Angola: Praesidia in **Benguela Senatus** report visiting the sick in their homes and in hospitals, and encouraging people to return to the sacraments. The Concilium set up a new Regia in the Diocese of Menongue.

Burundi: In the **Senatus of Gitega** a number of Comitia organised a competition for young Catholics, including legionaries and other Catholics, to test their knowledge of their Faith, Church in Burundi, and the Legion of Mary system. Five hundred young people attended. Père Jean de Dieu Kezimana, a former president of a praesidium in the St John Paul II Seminary, was ordained a priest in the Diocese of Rutana on 15th July.

Cape Verde Regia: Fifty- eight legionaries took part in a Peregrinatio Pro Christo on the island of Santo Antao from 31st August to the 13th of September.

Democratic Republic of Congo: The **Kisangani Senatus** carried out visitation of the sick in hospitals and at home. **Senatus of Lubumbashi:** Some works mentioned are

visiting the sick, orphans and widows as well as contacting the young, both Catholics and non-Catholics. The **Senatus of Butembo** reported the conversion of Protestants, Adventists, and Jehovah's Witnesses. Lapsed Catholics returned to confession and practice. Correspondence was received from the Concilium President congratulating the Senatus on their 75th Jubilee in the Diocese of Butembo-Beni. The **Senatus of Bukavu** reported care was given to fourteen families who were left homeless after their homes burned down. **Senatus of Kananga:** A retreat was organised at the military police camp. A grotto was constructed in honour of the Virgin Mary.

Ghana: A Comitium attached to **Accra Senatus** held a successful Edel Quinn Triduum and formed a new praesidium at a senior high school. At a recent conference Fr. Patrick Quarcoopome, the Senatus Spiritual Director said that "The Legion is needed in these challenging times for the Church" and advised members "to go out and conquer the world as legionaries."

Kenya: A praesidium reported doing home visitation resulting in two returns to the sacraments, two joining the praesidium, and four children in a children's home being baptised. The praesidium also cares for Venerable Edel Quinn's grave. Umoja Curia reported 275 children prepared for baptism, and 37 lapsed Catholics returned to the sacraments.

Lesotho Senatus reports many works undertaken including home visitation, visiting the sick and lapsed Christians and teaching children catechism.

Malawi: Maula Senatus: Works reported include visiting orphans, the sick, elderly, and bereaved. 32 marriages were ratified, 34 children were prepared for the sacrament of Confirmation and 21 lapsed Catholics

returned to the sacraments. **Blantyre Senatus:** Works reported include visiting the sick, lapsed Christians and counselling cohabiting couples. Some families have attended catechism classes and have since resumed their Catholic faith.

Mauritius: A Retreat was organised by the Regia recently and other retreats were organised also by many Curiae to help strengthen the faith. We thank Father Octavian, Spiritual Director, who has been transferred to Australia, for his many years of service to the Legion of Mary.

Mozambique: Maputo Regia held their annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima in Namaacha. In **Tete Comitium** to celebrate the anniversary of the Legion of Mary, a weekend event with Mass each day took place. **Quelimane Comitium:** The Legion of Mary continues to grow in this Diocese. **Beira Comitium:** has Curiae comprising sixty-seven praesidia.

Nigeria: Abuja Senatus held a workshop for officers of the Lafia diocese. Awkanaw Comitium, attached to Enugu Senatus, reported 15 praesidia were established. Uyo Comitium, attached to **Ikot Ekpene Regia** reported works include helping 62 people prepare for baptism, First Holy Communion and Confirmation. The **Lagos Regia** reported works include hospital and home visitation, teaching catechism and helping to prepare hundreds for the sacraments. In **Onitsha Regia** most councils report novenas for Servant of God Frank Duff, Venerable Edel Quinn and Servant of God Alfie Lambe.

Rwanda: Nnyundo Comitium, attached to the Senatus of Kigali has forty-four Curiae and thirty attached praesidia with a total of over 5,500 members

South Africa: Cape Town Senatus: The Afrikaans Handbook has been printed and

includes the Letter from Pope Francis and the paragraph on St. Raphael. Port Elizabeth celebrated their 90th Anniversary in September.

Johannesburg Senatus: 1,000 people were met on street contact of whom 428 were non-Catholics. A number of lapsed Catholics returned to the sacraments. **Esigodeni Comitium:** Bishop Jwara and five priests attended the two-day retreat for the legionaries. **Matatiele Comitium:** A praesidium reported ten children were baptised, and fifteen were prepared for Confirmation.

South Sudan: In November a two day congress was held for legionaries, supported by the Senatus of Uganda with approximately two hundred in attendance. A legionary from Uganda spent three weeks visiting the Legion of Mary in the Diocese of Tamburs-Yambio.

Tanzania: Dar-es-Salaam Regia is making efforts to restart praesidia that closed during Covid. They are also organising training courses for officers in distant councils. **Hai Moshi Comitium:** Works reported include home and hospital visitation, encouraging couples to marry in Church and preparing adults and children for the sacraments.

Uganda: The Senatus reported the three day National Spiritual Directors' Conference held in August was very successful with 250 in attendance; including priests, religious and eight participants from South Sudan. In September, over 2,000 legionaries attended a pilgrimage to Nkokonjeru, where the Legion of Mary was started in Uganda by Venerable Edel Quinn.

Zambia: Legionaries in **Lusaka Regia** visited 150 prisoners in two prisons. A successful young adults' Conference led by young legionaries took place in November. A Congress was held in Chawana in October with topics "God and Mary" and "Bringing Mary to the world" on the agenda.

ASIA

Hong Kong: The junior Curia organised formation days for their members to which parents were invited. Senior legionaries have recommenced visitation of the women's prison.

Indonesia: Jakarta Senatus: Bogor Comitium established a new Curia. The Legion of Mary is now in this area for sixty years and an anniversary Mass was celebrated. 42 new members have joined praesidia in South Jakarta Curia. A praesidium has been established in the Seminary. **Malang Senatus.** The Comitium reporting, which is based in South Sulawesi, has 1,789 active and 273 auxiliary members. *Patricians* meetings featured in reports. **Kaupang Senatus:** A variety of works were mentioned in reports. Legionaries encouraged unwed couples to marry in church and arranged baptism of children. One attached Regia has a membership of 9,810 senior and 2,500 junior members.

Japan: At the initiative of the **Osaka Senatus** officers, a discussion took place at which members spoke openly about present and future challenges. One Curia has four praesidia attached, two Japanese and two Korean speaking. Curia officers are active in encouraging the members by visitation and supporting any functions. The members in their turn, although advanced in years, show great loyalty to attending their meetings and are determined to continue their service to our Blessed Mother, while their health allows them.

Korea: Seoul Senatus: Archbishop Peter Chung Soon-Taick presided at the Mass in Seoul commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Legion of Mary in Korea. Reports from attached councils show many returns to the sacraments and recruiting of catechumens. To mark the 70th anniversary, the **Gwanju Senatus** prepared an action plan on the theme of 'Recovery of Faith

in the True Devotion to Mary'. One Comitium reported 40 people baptised, 146 returns to the sacraments and 90 people joining the Legion of Mary. Contact has been re-established with the **Daegu Senatus** after communication ceased with the onset of Covid early in 2020. The minutes of September 2023 have been received and these show an active apostolate.

Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur Regia: Works reported included home, hospital, and care-home visitation. Legionaries assist with the liturgy in their churches.

Philippines: Bicolandia Senatus: The Seminary Curia reported with 12 praesidia. They did a two-week Peregrinatio Pro Christo to a new parish in a Mission territory and prepared 150 adults for baptism. **Cebu Senatus:** A Curia reported setting up five new praesidia and another the conversion of fifty-eight Protestants. **Senatus of Northern Philippines (Manila):** The July Senatus meeting had visitors from Port Moresby, Mt. Hagan and Madang in Papua New Guinea.. **Western Visayas Senatus:** There have been many returns to the sacraments and marriages validated. The **Regia of Antipolo** covers 74 parishes. New senior and junior praesidia have been set up. 2,286 children have been prepared for the sacraments, and 500 non- legionaries attended seven *Patricians* meetings. The **Regia of Legaspi** reported a big attendance at a Marian Congress. **Palo Regia:** The attached Minglanilla Comitium reported four Protestants were converted and a person lapsed for 50 years returned to the sacraments. San Joaquin Curia was re-organised after Typhoon Yolanda devastated the area.

Singapore: The Senatus reported crowd contact is carried out in the market and on the streets. Twenty-six juniors attended a Lenten retreat organised by Kuching Comitium, (East Malaysia). A day of talks on the value of Legion of Mary membership organised for students was attended by 38 non- legionaries.

Taiwan: Ximzhu's Queen of Apostle's Curia has thirteen praesidia with 107 active members. Mystical Rose Curia in the Taipei 5th and 6th Deanery has seventeen attached praesidia with 165 members.

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina: Buenos Aires Senatus: In the many poor barrios immigrants from neighbouring countries have prayer groups which, it is expected, in time will become praesidia. Prayers are asked for the Senatus Spiritual Director Fr. Mirko who died recently. R.I.P.

Salta Senatus: Special devotions are held for the Bolivian community for Our Lady of *Urkupiña*. On 21st of each month a 24-hour rosary is said, praying for Alfie Lambe's Beatification. The 5th Youth Conference took place in the **Corrientes Regia** area from 15th to 17th July. A Curia reported its works include visits to the sick and works of service for them, street contact, and visits to the women's prison on Women's Day. The **Rosario Regia's** Acies was presided over by the Archbishop. The Regia held a beautiful procession on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, Our Lady of the Rosary being the Patron Saint of the city, the Archdiocese and the Regia itself.

Bolivia: Senatus of La Paz: In Oruro Junior legionaries do street contact reaching out to teenagers. Colomban Drives and Exploratio Dominicalis are done in many parishes.

Brazil: Belem Senatus: Holy Communion is brought to the sick in hospitals. Non-Catholic families are visited. **Belo Horizonte Senatus:** An attached Regia reports legionaries made over a thousand visits to infirm and elderly people bringing them Holy Communion. A Comitium report shows visits to 138 prisoners. **Ponta Grossa Senatus:** The legionaries visited homes, hospitals, and homes for the elderly. They visited and cared for families with physical difficulties. **Recife Senatus:** Around 1,500

legionaries took part in the celebrations for the 102nd Anniversary of the Legion of Mary and the 66th Anniversary locally. Dom Paulo Jackson, Archbishop of Olinda and Recife, and five Spiritual Directors were present. The Senatus organised a Peregrinatio Pro Christo in the city of Timbaúba with seventy participants. An Interstate Legionary Youth Meeting was held in the city of Cupira, with 350 young people and five Spiritual Directors taking part.

Salvador Senatus: More than one hundred visits were made to Protestant families. On All Souls' Day, legionaries travelled to cemeteries and presided over the rosary at the graves of the deceased. The attached Regia of Aracaju organised the preparation for the Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary. Forty made the Consecration/Renewal. **Santa Maria**

Senatus: Works include visits to hospitals, sick people in homes, visits to homes for minors and young people, visits to asylums, and adult and juvenile penitentiaries. **São Paulo Senatus:** Reports show many visits to homes and the sick and the preparation of many for the sacraments. A Peregrinatio Pro Christo included many visits and street contacts. Many of those visited began to attend Mass.

Chile: Senatus of Santiago: Street contact is done by many legionaries. A special approach is made to those living on the street.

Colombia: Senatus of Bogota: The Regia of Barranquilla carry out an apostolate in Riohacha to the Wayuu indigenous communities using the Wayuu language. They were the hosts of the National Youth Conference with 82 participants from ten different regions. **Senatus of Medellin:** Among works undertaken, children are prepared for the sacraments and the sick are visited.

Ecuador: Senatus of Quito: The legionaries are well received during home visitation. As well as encouraging Sunday Mass and the

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sacraments, they invite the children to weekly catechesis in the parish. The 102nd anniversary of the Legion of Mary and the 68th anniversary of the Legion of Mary in Ecuador were celebrated with a special Mass in Portoviejo with an attendance of 502 legionaries.

Paraguay: Senatus of Asuncion: At the Villarrica senior penitentiary, three praesidia with twelve men each are in the formation stage. Legionaries visit schools and colleges to spread the rosary, and bring Holy Communion to the sick. There are 70 seminarians in five praesidia.

Peru: Senatus of Lima: Works include home visitation, catechesis, marriage preparation, nursing home visitation, visiting the sick, street contact, junior praesidia, Patricians meetings, and Frank Duff Prayer Groups. The Curia of Hurcapata is mostly made up of men, but several of the men there invited their wives to join, and they did. They are mostly Quechua speakers. The Curia of Huancayo has five praesidia in the desert.

Uruguay: Senatus of Montevideo: Works include visitation of homes and nursing homes and catechesis. They have asked all their councils and praesidia for prayers for their former Concilium correspondent Joan Barry.

Venezuela: Senatus of Caracas: An attached Comitium reports prison visitation. Legionaries also accompany the priest to visit and bless homes where the family has requested the blessing.

OCEANIA

Australia: Melbourne Senatus: Albury and Wodonga Comitium has six praesidia and one Curia with five praesidia. The Rosary in the park had 100 in attendance including juniors and parents. Hobart Curia in Tasmania has three praesidia of eighteen members. **Sydney Senatus.** The Korean Silverwater Comitium

reported 45 lapsed Catholics returned to the Faith, and 32 adults and 27 children were baptised. The Vietnamese Curia reported a new praesidium was set up with 25 members.

New Zealand: Auckland Senatus: The Northwest Auckland Curia, with nine senior and three junior praesidia attached gave its first report. Visits are made to grieving families, the rosary is promoted through Statue visitation, Brown Scapular enrolment is carried out, help is given with the running of Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) programme.

New Caledonia: Noumea Comitium: Catechism is taught to children and in the tribes and villages. Retired priests are visited, and lapsed Catholics are encouraged to return to the Catholic Church. The Legion of Mary is in the seven attached Islands.

WEST INDIES

Dominican Republic: Santo Domingo Senatus reported 6,000 visits to the sick and 3,000 homes visited. Two local legionaries joined Peregrinatio Pro Christo from Arlington Senatus to Banica which resulted in 40 people returning to Mass. The **Senatus in Santiago de los Caballeros** reported works included counselling unmarried couples and Catechesis for the sacraments.

Haiti: Many different Faiths are met during visitation of homes, hospitals and prisons. They accompany priests on sick calls and prepare people for the Sacraments. They held an enclosed retreat in September and a training course for officers on three consecutive Saturdays.

Puerto Rico: Homeless people and a womens' refuge are visited. Contact with several Protestants over time resulted in their return to the Catholic Church.

Trinidad and Tobago: They revived junior

praesidia at four schools. In visiting Guyana they encouraged revival of praesidia and approached three parishes for extension.

NORTH AMERICA

USA: Boston Senatus: Two new praesidia were formed, one with five legionaries from Uganda and another with six members in Maine. The latter organised a Marian evening with forty people attending.

Chicago Senatus: Crowd contact was carried out in Millenium Park and Exploratio Dominicalis in Jefferson Park. Peoria Curia promote Eucharistic Revival, First Friday Devotions and First Saturday Devotions and True Devotion to Mary.

Cincinnati Senatus: Extension efforts in the Comitium and Senatus territories resulted in a total of 30 people visiting the first meetings of two new praesidia. A praesidium exhibited a Marian display and presented a slide show on Frank Duff in the Dayton University Chapel in honour of his receiving a Marian Award in that Chapel in 1956.

Houston Senatus: A praesidium in Arizona set up a Catholic information table at a local flea market. During a Peregrinatio Pro Christo project in Irving, they met the officers of a new Spanish praesidium of 24 members who run a junior praesidium for 23 members.

Los Angeles Senatus: One Comitium has twenty-seven praesidia attached. Their new Japanese praesidium, Our Lady of Akita, has seven members.

Philadelphia Senatus: A praesidium of five active members provides three staff members for the *Maria Legionis*. In their St. Patrick's Day parade, Harrisburg Comitium provided "Our Lady of Knock" float accompanied by crowd contact apostolate

San Francisco Senatus: A nursing home resident was instructed and received into the

Church recently. The Senatus fully supports the Archdiocese's objective of a Eucharistic Revival.

St. Louis Senatus: Conversion work in Pueblo led to six conversions, three baptisms and fifteen Confirmations. Also, a Curia in Kansas observed increased Mass attendance due to visitation by the Legion of Mary.

Miami Regia: There was the exemplary dedication of a wheelchair bound legionary who travelled extensively for various Legion of Mary activities. She reflects the spirit of "anything for Jesus and Mary" and for the sanctification of our Legion of Mary members.

Canada: Montreal Senatus: A new senior praesidium is being affiliated. Plans are underway for Peregrinatio Pro Christo in Quebec in May 2024.

Toronto Senatus: Columban drives and new praesidia featured for most attached councils in Winnipeg, Hamilton and Scarborough. Ottawa Regia reported 200 people participated in a Marian procession and held a retreat for people with disabilities and for elderly people.

Edmonton Comitium: Legion of Mary growth in Calgary necessitated a divide into a Northside Curia with 13 praesidia, including three junior, and a Southside Curia with 14 praesidia, including two junior, and two new senior praesidia.

Vancouver Comitium: A recent Columban Drive in one parish recruited ten active members including two juniors and 49 auxiliaries.

We express our heartfelt appreciation of the former life-long Concilium correspondents with respectively, Miami, St. Louis and Trinidad - namely Marie Dunleavy, Marie Barry and Mary O'Sullivan.



Sancta Maria Mater Dei



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