

Maria Legionis



Why should I be honoured with a visit
from the Mother of my Lord

Luke 1:43

Maria Legionis

The Voice of the Legion of Mary

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by Domenico Ghirlandaio

PRICE INCREASE

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INVITATION

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Saint Bernadette of Lourdes

By Paul Moran



Introduction

Lourdes is in southern France situated at the foothills of the great Pyrenees mountains which border Northern Spain. Many people who have gone on pilgrimage to Lourdes have described it as an extraordinary place, a spiritual oasis for all kinds of healing of mind, body, and spirit, and believe there is no place like it on earth. Before the Apparitions of Our Lady, Lourdes was a mountain town largely unknown to the world. However, in 1858 all that changed, when Lourdes was catapulted into publicity as the place where the Blessed Virgin appeared 18 times to a sickly poverty-stricken teenager named Bernadette Soubirous.

Reduced to destitution

Bernadette's biographers tell us that up to the age of ten years Bernadette and her family lived a comfortable life where her father worked as a miller in the Boly mill. However, due in part to mismanagement the family business collapsed. Unable to meet the rent the family were reduced to destitution and became one of the

poorest families in Lourdes. Taking up residence in the Cachot, a disused prison cell, which was deemed unfit even for prisoners, Bernadette and her family had to accustom themselves to suffering hunger and cold. Both her father and mother tried to obtain work wherever they could. In which case Bernadette took charge of looking after her siblings.

Gifted with common sense

Many people came to know of Saint Bernadette from the popular film 'The Song of Bernadette.' It gave viewers a flavour of the hardships the family suffered, and the character of village life and later life in the convent of Nevers.

A nun, questioned at the canonisation proceedings stated that the Cure of Lourdes had said in her presence: "While giving Communion to the convent children, Fr. Peyramale prayed to heaven for a sign which would prove Bernadette's divine mission, and at the moment of giving her Communion, he saw a halo of light around her head." Sr Victorine pointed out that Bernadette prepared and received the Holy Communion with great reverence and recollection.

Prosecutor's tricks

Bernadette was no doe-eyed girl portrayed in the film by Jennifer Jones. On the contrary, Bernadette was quick witted, and gifted with a high degree of common sense. Oftentimes her gaiety spilled over into a situation that she saw was amusing, while others failed to see the funny side of things. Witnesses have confirmed that Bernadette's self-assurance frustrated the Town Officials as all their attempts to bully and frighten her failed. Bernadette at times had to restrain the impulse to laugh at them. "We will put you in jail," they said; she retorted: "if you put me in jail, you will have to let me out again." One high-ranking cleric was deeply impressed that Bernadette never tried to persuade those who doubted her; she did not think it her business to convince others. In spite of the prosecutor's threats aimed at making her change her story, Bernadette never added or detracted a single word in her story.



The greatest Marian Shrine

Bernadette will always be a part of the mysterious narrative of Lourdes, a narrative that is contained within two bookends, so to speak, the Feastday of Our Lady of Lourdes, 11th February 1858, and the Feastday of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, 16th July 1858. Lourdes is truly an authentic Marian shrine, and Bernadette is truly a Marian Saint. Unlike other Marian shrines, the Blessed Virgin has requested people to go there on pilgrimage. From the very beginning Lourdes has placed a great emphasis on Eucharistic Adoration, and the recitation of the Holy Rosary. The shrine received heaven's endorsement by the constant flow of miracles, particularly those of nature which baffle scientists to this day. It is not surprising that many people maintain that Lourdes is the greatest Marian shrine on earth.

Victim soul

Bernadette was 14 years of age when Our Lady appeared to her. In her great suffering throughout her 35 years of life, spiritual writers have described her as a 'victim soul' a saint of the Passion of Jesus Christ. When questioned: "Why should you need to suffer more than others?" Bernadette replied: "It is God's will."

Born on the 9th January 1844, Bernadette was the eldest child. From the age of six she had a bronchial infection which made her breathing difficult, and in 1854, at the age of ten, following an attack of cholera, she became asthmatic. "Her little chest was gripped by asthma, and when in the throes of an attack of coughing she fought for air and sometimes lost consciousness for long and disturbing periods. This was due to her tuberculosis, which later became general, and caused her indescribable suffering until her death in 1879." (J. B. Estrade).

A vicious slap across the face

Her state of poverty and bad health was exacerbated by her sudden exposure to the harsh reality of being a visionary. Bernadette was pestered daily by people constantly interrogating her with interminable questions about the Lady. Everybody, from Bishops, priests, officials of state and all classes of the laity wanted to meet her and speak with her. Not everyone was kind to her. One woman, imbued with a sense of her own importance gave Bernadette a vicious slap across the face, accusing her of telling lies. On one occasion Bernadette overheard a woman say that she wanted to cut a piece off her clothes. Others begged her to touch and bless rosaries and religious objects. Bernadette bluntly told them to go to a priest. Some requested her to heal sick people. Bernadette told them she had no power to heal, and instructed them to go wash in the spring at the Grotto. The woman who

attempted to teach Bernadette her catechism called Bernadette 'good for nothing.' Her biographers explained that the person in question was trying to teach her through French, a language largely unfamiliar to her: she spoke only in the local dialect.

Rosary beads

No one is born a saint. Bernadette could be stubborn. At times she clung to her views and was slow to give in and admit that she was in the wrong. After the Apparitions, Bernadette made every effort to correct her faults. However, from the beginning, Bernadette's spiritual life was uncomplicated, and prayer, the line of communication with God, was already established when our Lady first appeared to her. Startled by the vision of the Lady in the niche above the Grotto, Bernadette's knee jerk reaction was to reach for her Rosary beads. The Rosary was Bernadette's treasure; she had it with her at all times.



Passionist

Bernadette was canonised; not because she had seen and spoke to Our Lady, but by her practice of heroic virtue. Her efforts at self-control established her maturity of character.

She would not have been human if she did not feel the psychological wounds inflicted on her by all the harsh treatment she received as a consequence of the apparitions. What hurt her most was the brutal methods of her superiors designed to make her humble, and their lack of affection for her.

Bernadette fought hard to defuse her anger and bitterness, not letting resentment to gain the upper hand. Thus, she practised the cardinal virtue of fortitude to an extraordinary degree. This was demonstrated by her spontaneous and ungrudging obedience. All the while the Holy Spirit was fashioning her beautiful soul and leading her to Calvary. Saint Bernadette is truly a Saint of the Passion of Jesus.



Resignation to the Will of God

Mother Bordenave observed: "I am convinced that the more she was made unhappy by her fellow creatures, the more confidently she threw herself into the arms of God." Bernadette could indeed empathise with the Passion and Death of the Saviour. Jesus received a vicious slap across his Sacred Face; on the Cross Jesus experienced suffocating agony trying to draw a breath; Jesus suffered interior desolation and fearsome physical pains. Yet, her biographers tell us that St. Bernadette was always joyous; that her secret of inner peace lay in doing the will of God. In spite of her heavy cross, she always gave thanks to God, and held nothing back from Him; her surrender to God was absolute.

The following statements give us a glimpse of her resignation to the will of God.

"The poverty in which my mother and father lived, for the failure of the mill, for all the hard times, for the awful sheep, for constant tiredness, thank you, my God. Thank you, my God for the prosecutor and the police commissioner, for the policeman, and for the harsh words of Father Peyramale."

"For the days, Mary, in which you came; for the ones in which you did not come, I will never be able to thank you – only in Paradise. For the slap in the face, for the ridicule,

the insults, for those who thought I was mad, for those who suspected me of lying, for those who suspecting me of wanting to gain something from it – thank you, my Lady."

"For my spelling, which I never learned, for the memory which I never had, for my ignorance and my stupidity, thank you. For the fact that my mother died so far away, for the pain I felt when my father, instead of hugging his little Bernadette, called me 'Sister Marie Bernard' – I thank you."

"I thank you for the heart you gave me, so delicate and sensitive, which you filled with bitterness. For the fact that Mother Josephine proclaimed that I was 'good for nothing', thank you. For the sarcasm of Mother Superior, her harsh voice, her injustices, for the bread of humiliation, thank you."

"Thank you, that I was the privileged one when it came to being reprimanded, so that my sisters said: 'How lucky it is not to be Bernadette.' For the miserable body which you gave me, for this burning and suffocating illness, for my decaying tissues, for my de-calcified bones, for the sweats, for my fever, for my dull and for my acute pains, thank you, my God."

"And for this soul which you have given me, for the desert of inner dryness, for your night and your lightening, for the silences and your thunders, for everything. For you – when you were present and when you were not – thank you Jesus."

The Age of Mary

When one considers her heroic life, her love of God and her deep humility, one can appreciate why the Blessed Virgin chose Bernadette for her mission which included Mary's self-disclosure of her Immaculate Conception, thus, upholding the Sacred Petrine Office of Pope Pius IX who, four years earlier, in 1854 proclaimed the Dogma of Mary's Immaculate Conception as an article of faith. This Dogma paved the way for the Church's proclamation of the dogma of the Assumption of Our Lady into Heaven, by Pope Pius XII, on the 1 November 1950. Truly, we are living in the age of Mary.

First created human being to enter Heaven

At the Grotto of Massabielle the Blessed Virgin was sensibly present to Bernadette. Ghosts do not carry Rosary beads or wear yellow roses on their feet. The Lourdes Apparitions confound the 'God is dead' philosophers, whose atheism deny the existence of an afterlife.



Faith teaches us that the consequences of Mary's Immaculate Conception is that the Blessed Virgin of Nazareth, is the first created human being ever to reside in the glory of Heaven, in mind, body and spirit. One cannot rest one's head upon a hologram. In 1830 St. Catherine Laboure actually rested her head on Mary's lap, while Our Lady was seated upon a chair at the foot of the Altar.

I am the Immaculate Conception

On hearing the Lady pronounce: "I am the Immaculate Conception", Bernadette dashed off to relate to



Fr. Peyramale what Our Lady had told her. He was stunned; especially on account of the Church's recent declaration of this dogma in 1854. He

realised that the illiterate Bernadette had no idea of the theological significance of what she had said; she could not have fabricated such a story. Spiritual writers have made the connection between the Lourdes Apparitions, and those of the Rue du Bac in Paris in 1830 when Our Lady showed Catherine Laboure the medal of the Immaculate Conception. It is significant that around the edge of the medal is the inscription: "O, Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee." Here is Heaven's own declaration of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, confirmed by multiple miracles. Hence the name, Miraculous Medal.



The glory of the Blessed Trinity

Neither St. Catherine Laboure nor St. Bernadette performed miracles. Paradoxically, they were the catalyst for countless miracles. Even their incorrupt bodies direct our eschatological hope to the glorious resurrection of our own bodies, becoming like Jesus and Mary in the completeness of our humanity, united in Christ forever in the glory of the Blessed Trinity.



St. Catherine Labouré



St. Bernadette

Go to Lourdes on pilgrimage

Our Catholic faith teaches us that the Blessed Virgin will always be associated with the administration of graces that come to us solely from the Passion and Death of Jesus. Whenever Our Lady is invoked, the Holy Spirit is present to perform miracles of grace and nature; water will be changed into wine on Mary's request. People ought to go to Lourdes on pilgrimage, as Our Blessed Mother requested,

and learn more about this wonderful French Saint, Bernadette Soubirous, who will always be associated with the miracles of Lourdes.

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Homily at the Anniversary Mass for Servant of God Frank Duff

By Bishop Tom Deenihan – Diocese of Meath

I am delighted to be with you this afternoon to celebrate Mass for the forty-first anniversary of the death of the Servant of God, Frank Duff. I am also conscious that we are celebrating this year the centenary of the founding of the Legion of Mary.

By any standard, the centenary itself, as well as the scope of the Apostolate of the Legion in terms of tasks and geographical spread, is remarkable. In that context, the gospel of our Mass today has something to offer regarding the Apostolate of the Legion of Mary. The gospel is a familiar one. Christ visits two sisters. The hard-working Martha gets annoyed with the somewhat lazier Mary and on the spur of the moment loses control of her tongue, lashes out and appeals to the visitor to take her side. Martha feels that as co-host, Mary should be doing something more practical than sitting and talking with Christ. Part of the difficulty with today's gospel is that we feel a degree of sympathy for Martha and consequently may feel that Christ's retort was a little unfair. After all, it was Saint Therese who commented on this gospel passage that if Martha had imitated Mary, Christ would have gone without his dinner!

Both sisters, or more correctly, the different approach by both sisters,

has been taken to typify religious life in the Church – the contemplative, as typified by Mary, and the apostolic, as typified by Martha. A true believer and a real faith will need to encapsulate aspects from both Mary and Martha.

Indeed, you could suggest that the Legion of Mary, under the clear direction of Frank Duff, was a happy merger of both Mary and Martha, the contemplative and the apostolic, or, more simply put, prayer and action! From its inception, the Legion of Mary, as you know better than I, was a merger of prayer and apostolic action, prayer and practice.

Finola Kennedy, in her 2011 biography of Frank Duff, 'Frank Duff, A life Story' tells us that his membership of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul around 1913 proved to be a turning point in his understanding of the Christian vocation. This, allied with his membership of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association from 1917 onwards, led to the germination of the seed that grew from 1921 onwards into the Legion of Mary.



The 'apostolic' or 'Martha' dimension of the Christian vocation remained at the core of what Frank Duff envisaged for the members of the Legion of Mary, something attested to his concern for prostitutes and the establishment of hostels here in Dublin for 'derelict' men and women. That was, in many ways, the Vincent de Paul legacy. The importance of prayer and sacrifice, or the 'Mary' model may well have been a product of the religious practices and prayers associated with membership of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association.

One of the big concerns from Old Testament times was the separation of liturgy and life. The prophet Amos highlighted it in his day. Christ referred to 'whitewashed sepulchres' and those who were oblivious to the sufferings and plight of others like the parable of Lazarus and Dives. It is a recurring theme for believers of all creeds. What we profess in church on Sunday can, sometimes, have little impact on what we do for the rest of the week. In its extreme form, it causes scandal and leaves believers open to the charge of hypocrisy.

The gospels also speak clearly of the obligation to share one's faith. Lamps under bushels, buried talents and faith shown by good deeds are all examples. The Second Vatican Council was clearer and spoke of the Church being missionary – each parish was either establishing a mission or developing one. The private Catholic is, by nature, a poor missionary. The Legion of Mary understands this. Indeed, its *Raison d'être* is to be the missionary Church.



Pope Paul VI and Frank at the Second Vatican Council

Frank Duff was, as you know, invited to attend part of the Second Vatican Council where he was accorded a standing ovation by the bishops of the world. Vatican II's teaching on the Church, the lay apostolate, and the emphasis on the centrality of the vocation from baptism was in some way a confirmation of the work of Frank Duff and a vindication of the Legion of Mary.

That outward looking and missionary Church, typified by acts of outreach, charity and compassion is very much the model that Pope Francis has for the Church of today. Indeed, a recent article on the Legion of Mary in *The Tablet* said that the Legion of Mary, founded as it was one hundred years ago, prefigured many of the themes of Pope Francis' pontificate.

The scope of the work extended from here to China, where the Legion was established and worked collaboratively with Columban missionaries.

This was in keeping with Frank Duff's statement that the Legion was a priest's organisation, *par excellence*, and is, in fact, an extension of him.

Sadly, that unity of purpose was not always recognised, and he was not always supported. His relationship with Archbishop McQuaid of Dublin has been well

aired but, to be fair, McQuaid wrote to the Apostolic Nuncio in 1963 and said that Frank Duff was 'utterly loyal.' The Irish Bishops said of the Legion in 1971, the year of the Legion's Golden Jubilee, that "the supernatural faith and courage of the founding members have merited the grace not only of survival, through every kind of human vicissitude, but also a diffusion throughout the world." That is still true. There are people throughout the world whose only connection with Ireland is through the Legion of Mary.

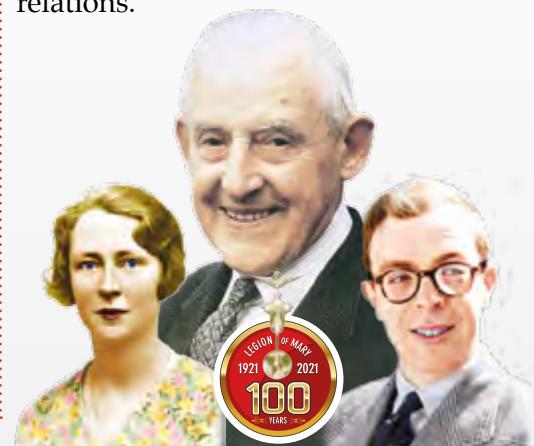
If the institutional Church displayed some hostility to the Legion, it could be argued that this was replicated in general Irish society to some extent. Mary Kenny acknowledged same in a recent article in *The Irish Catholic*. She admitted to looking on the Legion as a bunch of 'Holy Joes.' She also acknowledged that it would be some years before she would learn of the work of Legion members in poorer areas and with those who suffered from alcohol, drug addiction, poverty, and from sexual exploitation. The Morning Star Hostel for homeless men was opened in 1927 and the Regina Coeli hostel for homeless women and a shelter for unmarried mothers opened in 1930. It is also of note that the Legion was open to both male and female members.

Things have progressed since then. The Legion now has three million members in over 170 countries and the handbook has been translated into 100 languages. Names like Edel Quinn and Alfie Lamb in Africa and South America respectively are among the more recognisable and lauded members. The legacy of the Legion has been remarkable on Catholicism and on the Lay involvement.

It is, as I mentioned, one hundred years since the Legion was founded and forty-one years since Frank Duff died. While these are short periods in human history and in our memories, much has also changed in these periods.

The sex workers of Dublin that the early Legion members assisted have now become the trafficked women from around the world who are sent to every Irish county to be used and exploited.

The homeless we still have and those who have not come to know the joy and hope of the Gospel of Christ are still with us and are of all ages and are our colleagues, neighbours and relations.



The need for the Legion is still there, perhaps even greater. While membership is reducing in Ireland, membership is growing in Africa, South America and South Korea.

Pope Francis has, as you know, stressed the importance of a less clerical, more synodal, mission orientated, outward-looking Church. The Legion of Mary is well equipped and experienced in this area. Please God, in the weeks and months ahead, the Legion will be able to assist the Irish Church on that journey through the prayerful contemplation of Mary and the practical action and assistance of Martha, but always loyal to the Church and faithful to the baptismal calling and the call to holiness.

In an essay published in 1976, Frank Duff wrote: 'I fear that the majority of our people have but a mechanical goodness. They attend Sunday Mass and the sacraments but have no depth

in their religion. They do not know it properly nor live their lives according to it.' Again, it is that separation of liturgy or prayer from Life that Amos warned against.

Let us renew our prayers on this anniversary that the Servant of God, Frank Duff, and his authentic spirituality and witness, a combination of the prayer of Mary and the action of Martha, will continue to contribute to the good of the Church and the growth and support of faith.

I wish you a happy anniversary of the Legion, I thank you for your selfless witness to Christ and to the mission of evangelisation and I wish you continued success in spreading the joy of the Gospel and in witnessing to your own faith because Mary without Martha, faith without practice, faith without implications for daily living, is no faith at all but that mechanical goodness that shocked Frank Duff!

Centenary Photos from Around the world



Maria Legionis

The Lourdes Chapel

Zwaag, Netherlands

By Edana Dekker



The Lourdes Chapel situated in Zwaag, in the Netherlands, dates from 1882, making it one of the oldest Lourdes Chapels in the Netherlands. In the chapel is a copy of the cave in Lourdes (France) where Bernadette Soubirous saw the appearance of Mary in 1858.

The hexagonal chapel was built on behalf of the then Pastor Masker.

He had visited Lourdes and wanted to have an imitation of the cave made in Zwaag, following the example of other places.

To this end, in the summer of 1877, he had the cave accurately sketched on site by an expert. Bishop Snickers van Haarlem was initially against the construction, but agreed after a miracle had happened. At the reopening of the Lourdes Chapel, Alderman R. Tonnaer surprised those present with the story of the miracle of Zwaag. A blind girl was healed after praying at the statue of the Virgin in Zwaag. Pastor Masker argued this miracle in his letter to the diocese in which he pleaded for permission to build the Lourdes chapel.

It is said that on his return journey from his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1881, Pastor Masker also asked Pope Leo XIII for permission to build.

The chapel was built in 1882. One year later was the first approved Dutch pilgrimage to Lourdes.

In 2003 the chapel was fully renovated; the following year the garden was fixed up, once again making the Lourdes chapel the jewel of the village of Zwaag.

Many celebrations are still held in the chapel; for example, when people get married or when children are baptised. About 70 people can sit in the chapel.

At Christmas there is the living nativity scene.



It is open on Sunday mornings when there is also a celebration in the church. Many candles are lit, with which people ask Mary something, e.g. to get better or to help with something.

The name of the architect of the Lourdes chapel is unknown; it may have been the architect Kooter from Wognum, who is known to have been involved in the construction.



Replica of the Cave in Lourdes

Centenary Project: Bethlehem Curia

By Helen Murphy

What would we do in our Curia to celebrate the Centenary was the question being asked? After some discussion we decided on street contact at the book-barrow.

Chapter 37 in the Handbook, section 8 says: *"There is no more efficacious way of carrying on a comprehensive apostolate directed to the good, the mediocre, and the bad, or of bringing the Church to the notice of the unthinking many. Therefore, the Legion earnestly desires that in every large centre there should be at least one of these (book-barrow)."*

Today, 100 years since its humble beginnings in Myra House, Francis Street, Dublin, the Legion of Mary continues to lead souls to Jesus through Mary. The members of the Legion learn to appreciate their faith as a precious gift from God. At the same time, membership helps one to understand that faith also comes with a responsibility: The Gospel must be pro-claimed to all creation (Mk.16:15). With this message in mind, we decided to make 100 street contacts for the 100th. Anniversary. What a challenge we had set ourselves! Tuesday 7th September 2021 was a beautiful sunny day as we assembled at our legion house, 28 Mountjoy

Square. We had our Centenary Banner in the front window with Our Lady's Statue. We put outside the door the big pull-up banner of Frank Duff and our Bookstand.

We had made up 100 packs which included: Frank Duff prayer leaflet, Frank Duff's booklet 'One of the Best' and a Centenary bookmark.

We commenced work at 11.00 am and concluded at 7.00 pm. We welcomed 17 of our Curia members throughout the day; some working the two hours, while many stayed for three or four hours. All were full of excitement and so happy to share in the birthday of the Legion.

Legionaries were allocated 2 x 2 to contact people on all four sides of Mountjoy Sq. We told our contacts about our 100th birthday and we wanted to share the Good News and offer them a birthday present (our made-up packs). We spoke about our Catholic faith, what it means to us as legionaries and what it might mean to them. As Frank Duff reminds us: "we are offering the faith to them because we love them and wish to give them the greatest gift we know." Some contacts were brief; many long conversations were had with others, and many of various religions and nationalities.



All were invited to consider having a closer relationship with Christ in the Catholic faith. One young man was very interested and with the help of the legionaries contacted the local parish to join the RCIA course.

What a happy day we had and even a greater joy when 7.00 pm arrived;

we had reached our target and made our 100 contacts. What a privilege it was for me to have taken part in this project, and what a blessing it is for all of us legionaries to be active members in the Centenary Year of the Legion of Mary. May Frank Duff's influence continue to inspire and enthuse us in our membership.

Explanation of Front and Back Covers - Editor

The picture on the front cover is the painting 'the Visitation' by the Italian Renaissance artist Domenico Ghirlandaio. It is tempera on panel and is dated 1491. It is now on display in the Louvre Museum, Paris. Elizabeth is wearing a large yellow vest and is kneeling in homage to the Virgin Mary. The Virgin is wearing a light blue cloak with a gilt brooch decorated with pearls and a ruby in the center. The two women at the sides represent Mary of Cleopas and Salome.



The picture on the back cover is known as 'Our Lady of Aparecida' and known in Brazil as *Nossa Senhora de Conceicao Aparecida*. This image of the Virgin Mary is widely venerated by Catholics in Brazil whom they consider as the principal Patroness of Brazil. Historic accounts state the statue was originally found by three fishermen who miraculously caught many fish after invoking the aid of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This statue is currently housed in the Basilica of the National Shrine of Our lady of Aparecida in the city of Aparecida, Sao Paulo, Brazil.



The Legion of Mary in Armenia

By Kim Vahanyan

My name is Kim Vahanyan from Yerevan, the capital of Armenia. I have been a member of the Legion of Mary since 2008. With love I would like to tell you about my beloved and beautiful country Armenia; about the beginning of Christianity and its spreading in our country; how the Legion commenced in Armenia and the apostolate that we do.

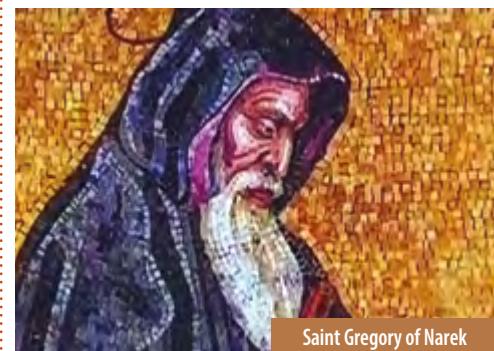
According to tradition, the apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew were those who first brought Christianity to Armenia when they visited it after Our Lord's Resurrection and followed His command to spread the Gospel all over the world.

Years later, at the end of the 3rd century, an officer called Gregory who was at the service of King Trdat III, was asked to render homage to the pagan gods, but he refused and revealed that he was a Christian. He was tortured severely, but he did not die; then they decided to put him in a well to die. According to the Armenian Historian Agatangheos, Gregory remained in the well for 14 years, being fed by a lady who felt sorry for him and who was also a Christian in secret. In the year 405 the Holy Priest Mesrop Mashtots created the Armenian Alphabet and dedicated his life to the translation of the Bible into Armenian. That made Christianity and Culture develop

rapidly and form the identity of the Armenian Nation.

After accepting Christianity, the trials of the Armenian nation increased. As an example of this we fought the Vardanians battle against the Persian Empire which forced the people to renounce Christ, but they refused and remained faithful to Christ.

The life of the nation and of the Church continued to give fruits of holiness through martyrs; religious life in monasteries flourished and countless saints and writers produced marvellous works. The pick of these is Saint Gregory Narekatsi who was born in 951 and died 1003. He wrote the famous 'Book of Lamentations' a collections of hymns and poems to God. Even to this day, almost in every house in Armenia you'll find this book that is also considered a holy and healing book. So great is Saint Gregory of Narek that he was declared Doctor of the Church by Pope Francis in 2015.



Saint Gregory of Narek

Because of the geographical situation of being surrounded by pagan and Muslim countries, Armenia has always suffered persecution for its Christian faith.

The saddest chapter in the history of Armenia is the genocide that occurred in 1915 under the Ottoman Empire, where 1.5m Armenians were killed or deported to die. As a result of the genocide, the Armenians fled to the five continents where still today there is a great Armenian diaspora.

After such horrendous persecution, the only alternative for the Armenian nation to survive was to join the incipient Soviet Union becoming one of the Republics. Unfortunately, during this time of communism, there were persecutions; almost all the churches were closed and many clergy were put in jail. During this time the country was rich financially but very poor spiritually. The situation remained until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and after the dismemberment of the Soviet Union, Armenia gained her independence in 1991.

With independence came the rebirth of the Church. People are allowed to practice their faith freely. Dioceses are again organised; the clergy can organise themselves and communities were established and began to grow.

In 2001, to mark the 1,700 years of Christianity, Armenia was honoured with the visit of Pope Saint John Paul II: an event

that left wonderful memories in the hearts of every Armenian.

In 2008 the Legion of Mary was introduced in Armenia by the Envoy of the Concilium, Bernardo De Nardo, in the Armenian Catholic Parish of Yerevan. I became one of the first members and later on became the first president of the first praesidium. Our apostolates were concerned with visiting the sick and lonely, preparing children and adults for the sacraments, visiting families. Two more praesidia were established in neighboring parishes.

In 2013 another praesidium was established in the city of Gyumri, while the praesidium in Yerevan, mainly due to emigration, was not able to continue.

The praesidium in Gyumri city continued until 2015 when, because of many different reasons, was not able to continue.

In 2016 again Armenia was blessed by the visit of Pope Francis to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide that had occurred in 2015. Once again the presence of the Pope brought happiness, hope and joy to the people of Armenia.

With the appointment of Father Bernardo De Nardo as pastor of the Latin Parish in Yerevan in 2017, the Legion was restarted with a praesidium in the English language to which later another one in the Armenian language was added.



The work of those praesidia included visiting the sick and lonely, hospital visitation, work with street girls, street contact and preparing people for the sacraments. In 2019, as a result of the proposal of the Sisters of Mother Teresa, another praesidium was established in the village of Spitak, where the legionaries do mainly home visitation and prepare people for the sacraments, especially of Baptism and Marriage. In Yerevan, also through the sisters of Mother Teresa, a junior praesidium was opened: its main apostolate is distributing Miraculous Medals and helping the sisters of Mother Teresa in their house for handicapped children.

In 2018 my wife and I and Fr Bernardo had the wonderful opportunity to visit Ireland on the occasion of the World Meeting of Families. For this we had also the unique experience of participating at the Concilium meeting, and of visiting Frank Duff's house and grave. It was very inspiring listening to the reports at the Concilium meeting and to be at the places where our founder lived. The testimonies of the work of the legionaries all around the world gave us a glimpse of the honour of being part of such an organisation such as the Legion: and that gave me a big sense of responsibility for continuing the apostolate of the Legion.

All the praesidia during the time of the pandemics continued with the meetings; although the apostolate was curtailed, it never stopped. This was for all of us a source of consolation, commitment and inspiration.

In February 2021 another praesidium was started in the parish, bringing the number of working praesidia to five which includes four adult and one junior. The necessity of a council to get us together was very much felt and that's why in May this year a Curia was established.

The same day before the inaugural meeting of the Curia, we held the very first Acies in Armenia, with an attendance of 50 active and auxiliary members.

During these years we have had two spiritual retreats: one led by one of the Sisters of Mother Teresa and the last one by a Franciscan-Armenian Priest. In addition, we held three pilgrimages to ancient Armenian monasteries, which also gave us the opportunity to share moments of amusement and to deepen the friendship between members.



To mark the 100th anniversary of the Legion, on 18th of September we celebrated the Centenary. We were honoured by the presence of the Latin Bishop Giuseppe Pasotto, priests, legionaries active and auxiliaries with their families, friends and visitors. The event commenced with Holy Mass celebrated by the Bishop and Fr. Bernardo. It was followed by a combination of slideshows presenting the Legion's history and apostolate all over the world, including Armenia.

There were moments for music presented by junior legionaries and for dance in charge of the English-speaking legionaries. The program concluded by distributing the book by Frank Duff: 'Can we be Saints', translated especially for the occasion, and with refreshments. In the context of the Centenary we are planning to spread the Legion in neighboring Georgia, and also in other cities of Armenia.

Through the Legion many people have had the possibility to know about the sacraments and to receive them; those who joined have understood better the importance of the apostolate and of bringing the message of God to all. The Legion also has given us the realisation that the vocation to holiness belongs to everyone and not only to the clergy.

For me the Legion was the means

to understand the grace of the sacraments and the importance of apostolate in fighting for souls who are priceless. In my life the Legion made me love Mary and know Her; it gave me the importance of prayer and the perseverance and devotion in it. It also deepened in me the sense of security and protection from Our Lady.

I hope the Legion will continue to grow in Armenia and celebrate many more anniversaries and bring many more souls to Christ, and that through the Legion the Armenian nation can come closer to God after having suffered so many years under communism.

We commenced with three members; now are more than 50; it is my desire that the Legion will continue to grow at this pace until we are numbered in thousands.

Centenary Photos from Around the world



REGIA DE MANAGU - NICARAGUA



SENATUS BENEDICTA DE SANTIAGO DE CHILE

The Place of St. Mary Magdalene in the Gospels

By John Burgess

Explicit Gospel References

Mary Magdalene is first mentioned by name in the Gospels (Luke 8: 1-2). Jesus has just assembled His Apostles in Galilee and with them set out to preach and teach. A number of holy women were with them who provided for their needs. Among the latter was Mary Magdalene "from whom seven devils had gone out." Later, she is mentioned for the second time by the four evangelists when she was present on Calvary on the first Good Friday – "now there stood by the Cross of Jesus, His mother, His mother's sister Mary of Clopas and Mary Magdalene", (John 19:25). Three days later, reference is again made to her. She went to the tomb early on Easter Sunday morning only to find it empty. She informed Peter and John and they went to see for themselves and eventually went away again satisfied that her report was true. Mary Magdalene, however, remained on at the tomb searching for the Body of her Lord and her perseverance and love were rewarded. She became the first to see the Risen Christ and He addressed her by her own name: 'Mary', so that she would recognise Him and understand the mystery of the Resurrection. He gave her a message for the Apostles that He would go before them into Galilee and eventually would ascend to "Your Father and My Father to your God and My God." Thus, she

became known as *Apostolorum Apostola* or the Apostle of Apostles. It was no small privilege to be chosen to be the first to see Christ after His Resurrection and then to be His first Messenger or Apostle.

Further References

There are other scriptural references about which opinion has been divided. For instance, the Greek Orthodox Church has always held there were three Marys – a) Mary from whom seven devils had been evicted – (Luke 8) – and who stood by the cross on Calvary and spoke with the Risen Christ; b) Mary who entered the feast uninvited in Galilee and anointed Jesus' feet; c) Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus. To this day, the experts differ, some holding there was just one Mary, some believing there were two and others believing, like the Greek Orthodox Church, there were three.



The Catholic Church leaves the question open. However, about the year 600, Pope Gregory the Great said that all these references pointed to just one person and that person was St. Mary Magdalene, and with few exceptions this belief was held in the Western Church for centuries and is still held by many to this day.

More Recent References



Teresa of Avila, about a thousand years later, writing in 'The Interior Castle', does not raise it as a controversial issue but refers to Mary, the sister of Martha, and of Mary the Sinner who entered the Pharisee's house uninvited, as being the same woman who stood by the cross known as Mary Magdalene. In effect, she was of the same opinion as Gregory.

In the Liturgy

The Liturgy places St. Magdalene's feast on July 22nd as an obligatory memorial, when a passage from the homilies of St. Gregory on Mary Magdalene is read in the Divine Office.

In the Divine Office, reference is made to the woman who was a sinner "whose many sins have been forgiven her because she hath loved much" – (Luke: 7) – and also to Martha and Mary as well as to Magdalene on Calvary so that it would appear that the Church looks on these incidents as referring just to one person. In other words, the sinner in St. Luke, the sister of Martha and Lazarus as well as Magdalene who stood by the cross refer to the same person.

The present thinking of the Church on St. Mary Magdalene is further emphasised in the Litany of the Saints. Before Vatican II, she was invoked with the other prominent women saints at the end of the litany but now she comes after Peter, Paul and Andrew and, therefore, ranks as an apostle, preceding all the other great saints, both men and women, since the time of Christ.

Devotion to Mary Magdalene

I shall now deal briefly with devotion to St. Mary Magdalene on account of the prominence given her in the gospels. Christians have always held her in high esteem. Mention has already been made in this article of devotion to her in the Greek Orthodox Church where the fathers, writers and the missal refer to her.

In our Church, her feast day is celebrated on July 22nd by an obligatory memorial, when a passage from the homilies of St. Gregory on Mary Magdalene is read in the Divine Office.

There was an upsurge of devotion to our Saint during the Middle Ages, St. Catherine of Sienna, St. Bridget of Sweden and St. Dominic with his Friars being chiefly responsible for it.

St. Catherine of Sienna was a Dominican Tertiary. She is said to have had a vision of St. Mary Magdalene with Our Lord and Our Lady. They told Catherine to look on Magdalene as her mother. This relationship bore fruit as Catherine was greatly responsible for healing the great schism and, with St. Brigid of Sweden, inducing the Pope to return from Avignon to Rome.

St. Brigid said that Magdalene loved nothing more than God, would never displease Him and would always do His will (Jorgenson Volume 1). Through her influence on these two saints, it could be held that Magdalene helped to save the Church in this, possibly, its darkest hour.

The Spread of this Devotion



St. Dominic and his followers have always looked on her as their patroness and wherever they went they spread devotion to her. In Ireland, the Dominicans built a church in Drogheda in the year 1224 bearing her name, only to have it sacked by Cromwell in 1650. The imposing bell tower still stands.

The Dominicans were not deterred. A few hundred yards away from the original site and a few yards from the River Boyne, so well known in Irish history, there now stands a fine Church built in her honour. As far as

I know, it is the only public church in Ireland dedicated to Magdalene.

In England, the great University of Oxford has a college called Magdalene College showing that devotion has existed there for hundreds of years. There is also a chapel in Windsor and a church in Kings Lynn, both paying honour to her.

The Magdalene in Paris, *Die Madalenin Kirche* in Helldesheim, and St. Mary Magdalene's in Rome all show that there was widespread devotion to her for many centuries. Even in Peru, in the time of St. Martin de Porres, there was a Dominican church dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene.

In Jerusalem, itself, many of us have seen the beautiful little church commemorating her. It is on the lands of the Orthodox Nuns.

In the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, itself, there is a Magdalene Chapel. It is prominently situated between the Holy Sepulchre and the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, just where Jesus appeared to Magdalene immediately after His Resurrection. In this Basilica there are only two pictures or paintings. Both are marked by the ravages of time and both depict the Risen Christ appearing to Magdalene. Could greater honour have been shown to her!



Maria Legionis

After the Ascension

It is only natural that we wonder what became of Magdalene after the Ascension. According to tradition she, with Martha and Lazarus, were cast out to sea in an open boat and this is confirmed by Catherine Emmerich. There is strong devotion to her in the South of France and she is reported to have been buried there at St. Maximian. Thurston, in his 'Lives of Saints' discounts this tradition.

However, it is certain that in the face of persecution in the Holy Land after the death of St. Stephen, she would have fled with Our Lady, the Apostles and other Christians. We know from the Acts of the Apostles that Saul launched a campaign to kill all Christians until he himself was converted on the way to Damascus.

Our Lady, with St. John and some of the holy women went to Ephesus where the Blessed Virgin was hidden on a hill outside Ephesus. Did she bring her close friend Magdalene with her? In any event John, Mary and Magdalene became known as the second holy family. Many of the holy women hid in caves close by and about halfway between Our Lady's house and Ephesus are the Caves of the Seven Sleepers where the Sarcophagus of Magdalene may be seen and which has been identified as such by Massegnon, Professor at the College de France in Paris. According to Martha, after his Ascension Christ told her to hide herself in the desert and the latter to form a community of women. It is, therefore, quite probable that Magdalene ended her days in this country close to Our Lady.

Many holy women who were present at Our Lady's death are mentioned by name by the above visionary. A notable exception is our Saint. She does note that the Blessed Virgin, before she dies, embraced just one of them; could it have been her closest friend?



The Supreme Pontiff Pope Francis has established that from now on the celebration of St. Mary Magdalene should be inscribed in the General Roman Calendar with the rank of Feast rather than Memorial as is presently the case. (*Decree of Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments*, 3 June 2016).

Addendum:

John Burgess died in February 1993, R.I.P. His wife, Noreen, also a Legionary, with whom he had visited extensively in the Holy Land, passed on to us this very sensitive and informative article which John had written some time ago. Perhaps his interest in the Holy Places was increased by the fact that he was chairman of the Pillar of Fire Society for several years, so he had many Jewish friends. John was proprietor of Lafayette, the well-known photographic studio in Dublin, in which capacity he was responsible for many photographs of Legion interest, particularly those of several Envoys which may be seen in the Concilium Headquarters.

A Plenary Indulgence for Legionaries - POPE FRANCIS -

A plenary indulgence has been granted to the Legion of Mary worldwide by his Holiness, Pope Francis on the occasion of its one hundredth anniversary.



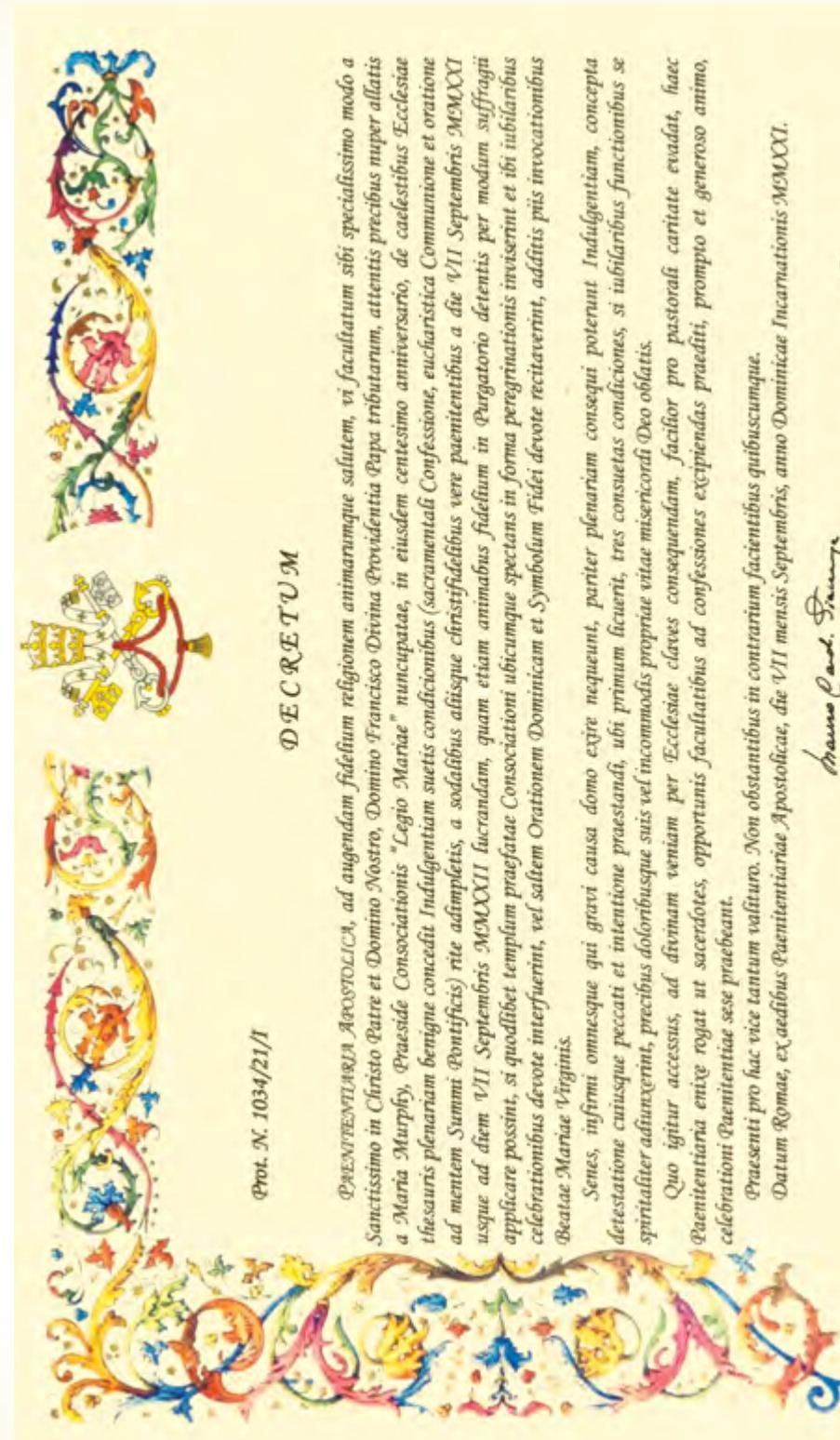
"To increase the holiness of the faithful and for the salvation of souls, by virtue of the faculty granted to it in a special way by the Most Reverend Father in Christ and Our Master, the Lord Francis, by Divine Providence, Pope, having taken note of the requests made by Mary Murphy, President of the Association called the Legion of Mary, on the occasion of its one hundredth anniversary, the Apostolic Penitentiary graciously concedes from the heavenly treasures of the Church a plenary indulgence properly fulfilled under the usual conditions (sacramental Confession, Holy Communion and prayer for the intention of the Holy Pontiff) to the members of the association and to other members of the faithful who are truly penitent, to be gained from 7 September 2021 until 7 September 2022, which can be applied for the souls of the faithful detained in Purgatory by way of suffrage, if they visit any church of the said Association or wherever on pilgrimage and are present devoutly at the joyful celebrations, or at least recite the Lord's Prayer and the Creed devoutly, with added pious appeals to the Blessed Virgin Mary

The aged, the sick, and all who cannot leave home for a grave reason, can gain equally the Plenary Indulgence, having evinced a detestation of sin and a purpose of amendment, where first permitted, under the three usual conditions, if they join themselves spiritually to the joyful celebrations, offering the prayers, sorrows or misfortunes of their own lives to the mercy of God.

In order to facilitate out of pastoral charity such visits for the reception of the divine forgiveness through the keys of the Church, this Penitentiary especially requests priests who have the faculties to hear the confessions of the said people, to make themselves available with prompt and generous heart for the celebration of Confession.

This letter is only valid for this purpose. All other things to the contrary notwithstanding."

Given at Rome, from the seat of the Apostolic Penitentiary,
on 7 of September, in the Year of Our Lord's Incarnation 2021.
Regent: H.E. Mons. Krzysztof Józef Nykiel.



The Black Madonna of Częstochowa Poland

By Michael Walsh

Pope John Paul II visited the shrine of the Black Madonna, at the Jasna Góra Monastery in Częstochowa, Poland in 1979, one year after being elected Pontiff, thus acknowledging its importance as a prominent Marian shrine for the people of Poland, and for Catholics worldwide who visit the shrine as pilgrims.

The icon exhibits the Blessed Virgin seeming to guide the focus away from herself, gesturing with her right hand toward Jesus as the source of salvation. In turn, the Child extends his right hand towards the viewer in blessing while holding a book of Gospels in his left hand. The icon is shown with two scars on Mary's right cheek.

The tradition concerning the two scars is that the Hussites stormed the Pauline monastery in 1430, plundering the sanctuary. Among the items stolen was the icon. After putting it in their wagon, the Hussites tried to make their getaway, but their horses refused to move forward. In anger, the burglars threw the portrait off their wagon onto the ground. One of them then drew his sword and struck out at the image; the damage included two deep strikes to the face of the Madonna. While attempting to inflict further damage, he fell to the ground, apparently in pain and



died. The wooden panel backing the Blessed Virgin was broken in the attack; this damage was later repaired, but multiple efforts to eradicate the facial scars failed. However, during this process of repainting the original features of an Orthodox icon were softened, and the nose of the Madonna was made more aquiline.

The icon of the Black Madonna has been closely associated with Poland for the past 600 years. Its history before it arrived in Poland traces the icon's origin to St. Luke, who reputedly painted it on a cedar table top from the Holy Family house. When Mary saw it, she was so pleased that she wished her blessing to accompany it wherever it went. Many miracles are said to have been linked to the image. The same traditional belief holds that the painting was discovered in Jerusalem in 326 by St. Helena, who brought it back to Constantinople and presented it to her son, Constantine the Great.

Over the centuries, multiple sieges of Constantinople took place and during

those times of crisis the icon of the Black Madonna became a focal point of hope for the natives. During one such siege the chapel was set on fire, and everything in the building was destroyed except a small section of the wall where the icon was displayed thereby saving this precious item for the benefit of future generations.

The original portraits of the Blessed Virgin Mary are linked to St. Luke: Worldwide tradition holds that when St. Luke visited Mary in her elderly days in Jerusalem, he painted her portrait. This original is supposed not now to exist. The other images made by him could only be free renderings from memory. St. Luke's life of constant movement would not permit him to carry the original with him. An ancient inscription in Rome says of a picture of the Blessed Virgin discovered there that it was one of seven painted by St. Jude. Theodoret, who is a very reliable historian, includes the story that Empress Eudocia sent to Aelia Pulcheria (an Eastern Roman Empress), one of the pictures of the Virgin Mary painted by St. Luke. Some at least of the seven paintings attributed to St. Luke are still in existence: Our Lady of the Snows placed by Pope Paul V in St. Mary Major's, Rome; Our Lady of Perpetual Succour is in St. Alphonsus Liguori Church, Rome; Our Lady of Vladimir in Oblast, Russia, and Our Lady of Częstochowa in Częstochowa, Poland.

In 1665 the Black Madonna icon is believed to have saved the monastery of Jasna Góra from a Swedish invasion. The Siege of Jasna Góra took

place during the 'Second Northern War', as the Swedish invasion of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth is known. As the Swedes were attempting to capture the Jasna Góra monastery in Częstochowa, seventy monks and 180 local volunteers, mostly from the Szlachta (Polish nobility), held off 4,000 Swedes for 40 days, saved their sacred icon and, according to some accounts, turned the course of the war. This event led King John II Casimir Vasa to give what has become known as the Lwów Oath: He submitted the Polish Commonwealth under the protection of Our Lady and proclaimed her Queen of Poland in the cathedral of Lwów on 1 April 1656. Pope Clement XI issued a Canonical Coronation for the image of the Black Madonna via the Vatican Chapter on 8 September 1717. Pope Pius X replaced the crowns on 22 May 1910, after they were stolen on 23 October 1909. Pope John Paul II gifted another set of crowns as a native of Poland, which was put in place on 26 August 2005.

Testimony to the popularity of Our Lady of Częstochowa is the fact that millions of pilgrims have visited the shrine over the centuries; even during war-times, numerous visitors displayed their faith and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary by assembling to pray for peace at the icon of the Black Madonna.

The feast day of Our Lady of Częstochowa is celebrated on 26th August.



The Importance of the Weekly Praesidium Meeting



Allocutio Given to Toronto Senatus January 9, 2022

By Fr. Joseph Moncada, Spiritual Director

If a non-legionary was to ask a legionary, what is the primary obligation of membership in the Legion, the legionary should be able to answer easily, cryptically and precisely, that it is consistent attendance at legion meetings. Furthermore, the praesidium should furnish the reasons for this, especially during the legionary's probationary instruction and formation. Every legionary and presidium stand to gain from the review of the primacy of the first standing order, namely the punctual and regular attendance at the weekly meetings of the presidium accompanied by the furnishing of an adequate and audible report on the work done.

"It is the meeting that makes the Legion," as the handbook states. It is like a burning lens catching, focusing and concentrating the rays of the sun in such a way that it fires up and kindles and energises everything and everyone who participates in the meeting, causing it to succeed. It is the indispensable focal point of our organisation. If the meeting makes

the Legion, then the converse is also true: meeting irregularly or with low attendance or with an unofficial format unmakes the Legion, unmakes a praesidium, and similarly unmakes a council. Officers should be vigilant that even the slightest wilful lapse in the duty of attendance beginning as a small error should not increase throughout the praesidium or council.

Attendance at the legion meeting is the primary obligation, and, therefore, all other obligations follow from it. A temptation may be to think that the performance of works is our primary obligation, but it is not so. While they are valuable, there are no works to perform unless they are appointed at and reported to the meeting.

The performance of works is always the before and the after of the meeting. In the meeting, we plan the works and in the following meeting, we assess them. Works should never be assigned without adequate planning nor reported without thoughtful assessment.

The performance of the apostolic works naturally and necessarily flow from the meeting and flow back to it through reporting. The effects of the neglect and outright abandonment of attendance, even temporarily at the meeting or in any way undervaluing it, inevitably lead members to drop away and apostolic works collapse. The abandonment or diminishment of the legion meeting is equivalent to the abandonment and diminishment of the Legion.

Conversely, in a measure, as the meeting is respected so is the power of our organisation intensified. (handbook p.70). The fulfilment of one's duty of attendance is the respect a member has for his praesidium meeting. Conversely, the absence without a good reason disrespects the meeting and one's fellow presidium members. The same can be applied to council meetings.

When one does a diagnosis of a struggling and or failing praesidium or a postmortem on a failed or closed praesidium, one should not be surprised to find the wilful neglect of the praesidium meeting as part of its pathology. When councils do their visitations, they must view a high rate of regular attendance as a sign of health to be commended and a low rate of attendance as a sign of weakness to be remedied. There is no way to overvalue high-level regular attendance, nor disregard

low-level irregular attendance. Members should encourage one another in regular attendance and the president should tactfully correct any attendance deficiencies among the members.

In the human-machine, in the supernatural entity which is the Legion, each member is glad to play the part of a cog. We are in no way demeaned by considering ourselves as a cog in the Legion machinery. While a cog is useless on its own, it is of great value when joined to other cogs as part of a great machine, helping to organise the efforts and magnifying the effects of others.

With this humble attitude, we do not value ourselves above others, but rather consider our very legionary existence and well-being dependent upon others. While cogs are replaceable and positions are refillable, no legionary in his uniqueness is replaceable by another and no position uniquely filled by a legionary is refillable in the same way by another. With this in mind, we should consider each other as unique and irreplaceable family members. Like the birth of a child, the profession of a new legionary brings us gladness, the timely retirement of a lifelong member leads us to thanksgiving, and the abrupt departure or death of a legionary should evoke in us some sadness.

So dear legionaries continue to hold in high esteem and put into faithful practice the duty of attendance at our meetings.

Centenary Photos from Around the world



In the emblem there is a Tamil sentence which means 'Legion is the instrument in the hand of the Church'

LEGION CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS - INDIA



Maria Legionis

Praises of Mary



There is no doubt whatever that all the praises we address to the Mother are also addressed to the Son and vice versa.

We cannot do honour to the Son without at the same time giving glory to the Mother.

St. Bernard

O Mary, when Jesus was conceived in you, He found you a Virgin. After being born of you, He left you a Virgin.

He gives you fertility, but He does not violate your integrity.

St. Augustine

Scarcely had Mary uttered her Fiat "Let it be done" when the Son of God became also the Son of Mary.

O Fiat to be venerated above every other Fiat! For with a Fiat God created light, heaven, and earth, but with Mary's Fiat God became man, like us!

St. Thomas of Villanova

To be the Mother of God is the greatest grace that can be conferred on a creature.

God could make a greater world and a greater heaven, but He cannot exalt a creature more than by making her His Mother.

St. Bonaventure

O Mother of Love, I am not surprised that the excess of your love for your poor children is so admirable.

Indeed, such love forever sends into ecstasy the inhabitants of heaven.

St. John Eudes

Jesus entrusted me to His Mother and charged me to love her.

O Mary, you are my heavenly Mother. You will act toward me like my Mother toward her children.

St. Gemma Galgani



Centenary Photos from Around the world



REGIA COIMBRA PORTUGAL



ABUJA SENATUS - NIGERIA

Legion world news



ASIA

Armenia: There are now six praesidia (four senior and two junior) which were formed into a Curia in May 2021 with Fr. Bernardo as Spiritual Director. From photos supplied there is a spirit of joy and zeal evident.

Holy Land: Some praesidia resumed in September 2021.

Hong Kong: The Centenary Mass took place on 3rd September 2021 in the Cathedral. The chief celebrant was Cardinal John Kong, who paid great tribute to the Legion of Mary, in particular as a 'nursery' of vocations.

India: **Karnataka Senatus** resumed its meetings in October 2021. During lockdown the Spiritual Director of **Kerala Senatus** prepared a course on Marian Spirituality which was conducted online, and the Centenary was marked online on 7th September. **Mumbai Senatus:** Cardinal Oswald celebrated Mass online on the 7th of September for the Centenary. **Pondicherry Senatus:** A Centenary Mass was concelebrated by the archbishop and seven priests.

Indonesia: **Jakarta Senatus:** On 7th June the Senatus successfully launched 'Can we be Saints' and 'Frank Duff: one of the best' in Indonesian language versions on a webinar attended by 400 on Zoom and thousands on YouTube. The canvas banner with the Centenary Logo, which had been travelling through the Senatus area, returned for the closing Mass on 11th September. This was celebrated by Cardinal Ignatius with 100 attending. **Kaupang Senatus:** The Archbishop and nine priests concelebrated the Centenary Mass.

Japan: **Osaka Senatus** reported small meetings being conducted over Zoom.

Korea: Seoul Senatus: The Centenary Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Soo-Jung Yeom, Archbishop of Seoul, on 28th of August.

Myanmar: Bishop John and Bishop Noel celebrated Mass in September to mark the Centenary which was also live streamed. Each of the five attached Comitia held prayer, rosary and allocutios on Zoom during the week 13th-17th September.

Pakistan: A small-scale Acies was held in March. During May a praesidium conducted an online rosary with many joining in from near and far.

Philippines: Masses for the Centenary were offered in all regions. **Western Visayas Senatus** officers had a pastoral visit from the Archbishop. **Senatus of Northern Philippines (Manila):** Legion prayers and rosary and handbook study are done weekly on Zoom.

Sri Lanka: The Senatus reported that on the 8th of September a special Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated in the Verbum Catholic TV Studio. The Legion prayers, discussion on the Legion and Mass were televised.

Vietnam: Members tuned into the Centenary Mass from Francis Street in Dublin on 3 September 2021 and also had three Masses celebrated in their own country marking the centenary and Our Lady's birthday. As a result of Covid, 36 active members have died. May they rest in peace. Legionaries invited a young man to join the RCIA and supported him throughout, he joined the Legion and was very active with extension. Two years after becoming a Catholic he joined the Redemptorists and was ordained on 26th October 2021.

NORTH AMERICA

USA: **Philadelphia Senatus** mourns the death of Bro. Jim Mason, a hard worker in the Maria Legionis office. May he rest in peace. A praesidium of 7 members in **Cincinnati Senatus** made over 2,000 recruiting efforts this year. **Chicago Senatus** produced a beautiful 'History of the Legion in Chicago since 1933'. **San Francisco Senatus:** Some praesidia are doing book barrow apostolate two or three times weekly. **Houston Senatus** hosted the Holy Spirit Conference in October with Fr. Francis Peffley as guest speaker. A Peregrinatio Pro Christo to Louisiana called on 1,000 homes, yielding 500 contacts. **Miami Regia:** A junior praesidium of 3 members, gained 4 new members after being hailed as a "youth group that teaches Marian devotions, and helps struggling kids to read and write."

Canada: **Toronto Senatus** had many participants in the virtual 33 Days True Devotion to Mary preparation. The first new praesidium in Prince Edward Island has started after many years. **Montreal Senatus:** A new praesidium in Vancouver Comitium has ten active and twenty auxiliary members. There are 350 Korean Legionaries in the six Korean Curiae attached to the Comitium.

Mexico: **Mexico City Senatus** reported Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in 68 homes, 11 returns to the faith and five couples having Church marriages. **Durango Regia** reports the residents in a Penitential Centre together with the members of two praesidia have had a very good spiritual retreat as part of the Centenary celebrations. **Hermosillo Regia:** Among other works legionaries teach catechism, take care of the sick and in particular they help with the wakes and funerals. In **Monterrey Regia** legionaries also work with the families of the deceased.

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina: **Corrientes Regia:** For the Centenary, an hour of Adoration was held on Friday 3rd September and a special Mass on 7th September in the Cathedral, the main celebrant being the Archbishop Andres Stanovnik. A special Centenary plaque was unveiled and blessed in the Cathedral porch.

Bolivia: **Senatus of La Paz:** During the pandemic some family members became active legionaries due to some praesidia meeting in legionaries' homes.

Brazil: **São Paulo Senatus** had a Week of Prayer online in September to mark the Centenary. More than 65,000 people were reached on social networks during the Week of Prayer and 19,500 interacted in some way with comments, etc. On the 7th of September, Mass was relayed directly from the National Shrine of Nossa Senhora Aparecida.

Chile: **Senatus of Santiago:** All councils held centenary celebrations. Talks, videos, interviews and plays have been done to promote Alfie Lambe's cause. Many legionaries are now doing home visitation again and are welcomed by families.

Colombia: **Senatus of Bogota:** All councils reported on their Centenary Masses with their respective bishops. The Senatus held online 'Camino al Centenario' sessions twice a week leading up to the 7th of September.

Paraguay: **Asuncion Senatus:** On 7th September the Senatus celebrated the Centenary and the 75th anniversary of the Legion in Paraguay. The Centenary Mass was presided over by Mgr. Claudio Silvero, Bishop Emeritus. Also present was Sr. Alfa Serafina Delgado who was a member of the first praesidium in Paraguay. In his Allocutio Fr. Peter Gennaro, Senatus Spiritual Director, thanked the Redemptorist Missionaries who brought the Legion of Mary to Paraguay.

Peru: All nine distant councils attached to the **Senatus of Lima** prayed a novena from 28th August until 5th September as part of their Centenary celebrations. They held special Masses with their bishops. There are several Frank Duff Prayer Groups in operation.

Uruguay: **Senatus of Montevideo:** Cardinal Sturla and 22 Spiritual Directors concelebrated the Centenary Mass. All attached councils also had a special Mass celebrated.

Venezuela: **Senatus of Caracas:** The Episcopal Conference sent an inspiring message to mark the centenary: At the Centenary Mass, Cardinal Jorge Uroso Savino, Archbishop Emeritus of Caracas and Spiritual Director of the Senatus said that the celebrations should be a great impulse to renew our Christian and legionary commitment. Cardinal Savino passed away on 23rd September, may he rest in peace.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Costa Rica: The **Costa Rica Senatus** Centenary celebrations took place.

El Salvador: The **Senatus of San Salvador** continues to meet in person. A legionary who prayed for the conversion of her family is preparing her daughter and another young girl for baptism.

Honduras: **Tegucigalpa Senatus:** On 7th of September a solemn Mass was celebrated in the Basilica of Our Lady of Suyapa presided over by Cardinal Oscar A Rodriguez Maradiaga.

Nicaragua: All councils attached to Managua Regia organised a Mass on or near the 7th of September as well as a Dawn Rosary on the 4th of September.

Panama: The **Panama Regia:** The different councils celebrated the Centenary in their local parishes.

AFRICA

Angola: **Senatus of Luanda:** Centenary celebration took place on 19th September. The Chief Celebrant at the Centenary Mass was Most Reverend Dom Filomeno do Nascimento Vieira Dias, Archbishop of Luanda and President of the Episcopal Conference of Angola and São Tome. The **Senatus of Benguela** celebrated the Centenary over three days. An Opening Mass was celebrated on Friday 3rd September, and on Sunday 5th September, the closing Mass was celebrated with 2,000 legionaries attending.

Burundi: **Senatus of Burundi:** On the Centenary 7th Sept 2021 Legionaries went on pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady Queen of Mercy in Mushasha and during the Mass the National Spiritual Director Abbé Simon spoke of the history, the goal and the spirit of the Legion.

Cameroon: **Douala Senatus:** Douala Senatus had the Centenary Mass on 11th September. The rosary was recited in the highways and bye-ways with a statue of Our Lady and the display of the Centenary logo.

Central African Republic: **Senatus of Bangui:** Normal apostolic activity is resuming.

Chad: An account of their closing ceremony for the Centenary showed two Bishops, twelve Priests and 1,346 legionaries attending from eight dioceses.

Republic of Congo: **Brazzaville:** A Comitium with 1,200 active members undertakes works of teaching catechism, outreach to couples and the lapsed, and visitation of the sick.

Democratic Republic of Congo: **Senatus of Lubumbashi:** The Metropolitan Archbishop of the Archdiocese, Mgr. Fulgence Muteba Mugalu celebrated the thanksgiving Mass for the centenary. Several thousand Legionaries took part. **Senatus of Butembo** reported that

the new Frank Duff Centre was blessed on 5th September. The Centenary Mass in the Cathedral was celebrated on 7th of September 2021 at which the Bishop asked that rosaries be offered during October to restoring peace in the region. In the **Senatus of Bukavu** High Mass was celebrated on 8th September in the Cathedral of Bukavu by Archbishop Mons. Francois Xavier Maroy,

 **Egypt:** The **Senatus of Egypt:** Centenary Celebrations were held in Cairo, Sohag, Luxor, Menia and Alexandria in September. All the various Celebrations were led by the Hierarchy.

 **Ghana: The Senatus of Accra:** A Comitium organised 'A Day with Mary' on the 21st of August 2021. Activities for the day included Mass, Talks, Adoration and a film show.

 **Guinea:** The Conarky Comitium report mentions home, hospital and prison visitation as well as visiting drug ghettos, talking to children living rough and giving catechism classes.

 **Guinea Equatorial:** The **Malabo Regia** reported a new Curia with six praesidia was set up in September 2021.

 **Ivory Coast: Abidjan Senatus:** The Centenary celebrations began in March 2021 during the Acies, and celebrations were started in the parishes and dioceses of the country. The celebrations were due to close with a Marian vigil on 11th September and Solemn Mass on Sunday 12th September.

 **Kenya:** The Centenary Mass was celebrated in Holy Family Minor Basilica Nairobi where Venerable Edel Quinn set up the first praesidium in 1936. Each parish throughout the country is organising a local Centenary Mass.

 **Lesotho: Senatus of Lesotho:** Members were encouraged to attend Mass in their parishes on 7th September where possible. A special

Anniversary Mass was celebrated on Radio Maria on that day.

 **Liberia: Monrovia Curia:** Despite major difficulties over the past four years 13 praesidia with good membership are meeting regularly and a number of Curia meetings have been held.

 **Malawi: Maula Senatus:** Legionaries prepared 20 students for the Sacrament of Baptism, 50 for First Holy Communion and 35 for Confirmation. A junior Curia organised a youth Retreat. **Blantyre Senatus:** Legionaries visited 68 cohabiting couples, 47 of which have now received the Sacrament of Matrimony. 100 Catechumens were instructed by legionaries. A village Chief was baptised into the Catholic Church after being visited by legionaries.

 **Mauritius: Rodrigues Regia:** Two Thanksgiving Masses were held on 7th September. It was only on the 11th of September that the first Regia meeting since February was held due to Covid-19.

 **Mozambique: Maputo Regia:** Mass was celebrated on 7th September for the 100th anniversary of the Legion of Mary. The Chief Celebrant was Archbishop of Maputo, Francisco Chimoio. A vigil took place after Mass. Other Councils also reported on Centenary celebrations.

 **Nigeria: Abuja Senatus:** Kari Comitium reported 18 couples had Church marriages, 43 lapsed returned to the Sacraments, five conversions, and the formation of six praesidia and one Curia. **Enugu Senatus:** One Comitium reported 299 adults were received into the Church. **Ibadan Senatus:** The Senatus Annual Report to September 2021 reveals the formation of 27 new senior praesidia, 2 junior praesidia, 2 Curiae and one Comitium.

Ikot Ekpene Regia: Ikot Osurua Curia reported 22 adults baptised. **Jos Regia:** Maiduguri Comitium reported six conversions. **Lagos**

Regia: Between October 2018 and November 2019, four legionaries were ordained to the priesthood, and two took their final religious vows. **Onitsha Regia:** Awgu Comitium reported 176 adults were fully initiated into the Catholic faith. **Warri Regia** reported 102 marriages blessed, 73 lapsed Catholics returned and 55 conversions.

 **Rwanda:** Centenary celebrations were held in several dioceses in September 2021. Nearly a thousand legionaries participated at the Mass in Ruhengeri on the 7th September. The Bishops gave great support. The Spiritual Director of Kigali Senatus prepared the 9-day prayer (Novena) for all Legionaries of the Senatus and it was broadcast on Radio Maria.

 **South Africa: Senatus of Cape Town:** Small Centenary celebrations took place at local level. Some legionaries joined the 33 day consecration and watched the opening Mass for the Centenary live from Dublin. **Matatiele Comitium:** Centenary celebrations took place in September which included Holy Mass, and a special Centenary cake.

 **Tanzania: Dar-es-Salaam Regia:** Following resumption of meetings, the Regia is arranging to visit all attached praesidia and councils. They are also in touch with the Legion in distant areas on behalf of the Concilium.

 **Togo: Lomé Senatus:** Works reported on include home and hospital visitation, crowd contact, the book-barrow and the running of catechism classes. A number of abortions were prevented and one girl was assisted until the baby was born. Some conversions were also mentioned.

 **Uganda: Senatus of Uganda:** The Centenary Mass took place on the 7th September in Nsamba Parish where Edel Quinn started the first praesidium in Uganda and was broadcast on TV, radio, and online. The Vexillum which Edel brought to that first meeting in Uganda

was placed on the Legion altar at the Mass. There were 20 Spiritual Directors present including one from South Sudan.

EUROPE

 **Austria: Senatus of Austria:** Centenary celebrations in Vienna started with Mass on September 3rd followed by street apostolate. On Saturday 4th September there was a procession with the Rosary to St. Stephen's Cathedral followed by Holy Mass celebrated by the Bishop. On Sunday 5th of September, a Mariological Congress was held, and the celebrations concluded with Holy Mass in the Cathedral. A Persian praesidium of 4 members care for Persians who are preparing for or are newly baptised.

 **Belgium: Brussels Senatus:** On the 7th of September a Centenary Mass, presided over by Msgr. Jean Kockerois, was celebrated in Brussels Basilica. The Belgian Catholic newspaper 'Dimanche' published a centre page feature article on the Legion. **Antwerp Regia:** Some Centenary celebrations took place at local level.

 **Bosnia Herzegovina: Sarajevo Curia** has five praesidia. The Acies was held in May with a good attendance. Curia meetings were held as planned.

 **Croatia: Zagreb Regia:** Returns to the Sacraments and anointing of the sick were recorded. A meeting for Spiritual Directors in the Archdiocese of Zadar had an attendance of 12. **Osijek Comitium:** Legionaries visited elderly people in their homes as suggested by the Priests and encouraged them to receive the sacraments. 20 people received the sacrament of the sick.

 **Czech Republic:** The two Councils of Prague and Olomouc are working well together and have almost completed the new handbook.

 **Denmark:** The praesidium has resumed its meetings. The sick and needy are visited.

 **England: Birmingham Senatus:** Centenary celebrations took place in St. Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham and also in Glastonbury, Leicester and other venues. A new praesidium has been set up in St. Joseph's parish Banbury and the members are getting a great response in large housing estates where people are hungry for the message of hope. **Liverpool Senatus:** Archbishop Malcom McMahon celebrated Mass in Liverpool Cathedral on 20th November to mark the Centenary.

Brentwood Regia: A new praesidium has been set up in Walsingham. **Manchester Comitium:** Since September works include involvement in adult Confirmation preparation and Sacramental Programmes for children.

Northampton Comitium: Bishop David Oakley, who is a former active member, preached a very moving homily at the centenary Mass. The Legion was his path to priesthood, and he sees it as a perfect way of living out one's Baptism.

East Brentwood Curia: A family of four children were baptised and received 1st Holy Communion. Juniors distribute miraculous medals and rosaries to family and friends. **Central London Curia:** The Curia held an evangelisation project in Hampstead Park which they found very encouraging. The Curia held a full day of events to celebrate the Centenary with Holy Mass celebrated by Bishop McAleenan, and Curia Spiritual Director, Parish Priest and three priests from the Nigerian Chaplaincy.

The Wirral Curia: A man met on book barrow work told legionaries that he had regained his faith after talking with the legionaries.

 **France: Paris Senatus:** On November 20th Sr. Miriam Teixeira, Asst. Treasurer of the Senatus passed away. She was very active in the apostolate and took charge of the Permanence in Lourdes schedule. May she rest in peace.

Strasbourg Comitium: A praesidium visits the sick and brings Holy Communion to parishioners.

 **Germany: Frankfurt Senatus.** Archbishop

Nikola Etelovic, Apostolic Nuncio, travelled from Berlin to celebrate the Centenary Mass in St Gallus Church, Frankfurt. A new praesidium has been established in Oberhausen.

Munich Regia: The auxiliary Bishop of Munich celebrated the Centenary Mass on 6th September. The 33-day Marian Consecration culminated on 7th of June with 20 Masses offered throughout Germany for legionaries, active and auxiliary.

 **Hungary: Budapest Regia:** September Regia meeting commemorated the Centenary. Their Spiritual Director, Fr. Béla spoke on Frank Duff and the Legion of Mary. After the Mass he blessed a renovated Lourdes grotto as well as a memorial plaque dedicated to the 52nd International Eucharistic Congress and the 100th anniversary of the Legion.

 **Kazakhstan:** Comitium has six praesidia with thirty active members. Visitation of the sick and elderly and telephone contact work is undertaken. The Acies and 33 Day Marian consecration were celebrated on 26th of June in Osornoje.

 **Latvia:** A few Praesidia are meeting again and doing street contact work mainly.

 **Lithuania: Telšiai Comitium:** A praesidium conducts three Rosary groups at which sixty parishioners attend. A Mass of thanksgiving was offered for a former member, who had celebrated 100 years and is now an auxiliary member.

 **Moldova:** All seven praesidia in Chisinau have their meetings regularly.

 **Netherlands: Amsterdam Regia:** Centenary celebrations took place on Saturday the 10th of September in Amsterdam with Bishop Jan Hendrickken and Fr. Peter Klos, Spiritual

Director celebrating Mass, which included the Acies.

 **Norway: Tønsberg:** A Mass for the Centenary was celebrated on 7th September followed by a DVD on the Legion of Mary.

 **Poland: Lublin Regia:** Mass for the Centenary was planned for 7th September for Poland. Most praesidia have now resumed meetings.

 **Romania: Satu Mare Regia:** The legionaries take care of old and sick people in the village who request the sacraments if they are unable to attend Mass.

 **Scotland: Senatus of Scotland:** Meetings have resumed since September. Great direction has been received from Bishops and Priests re meetings and work. Centenary celebration was to take place on 7th of September.

 **Slovakia:** The two Curiae in Slovakia have resumed their meetings. All opportunities were used during lockdown to be active in the apostolate.

 **Sweden:** Holy Mass was celebrated to mark the Centenary by Cardinal Anders Arborelius on the 15th of September. The Curia planned a five Day programme on five consecutive Wednesdays in September in Sodertalje church with Mass, prayers talks etc. in Arabic, English and Swedish.

 **Switzerland: Zurich Comitium** has 11 praesidia with 62 active members. Most meetings are virtual. Street contact is undertaken in Lucerne and the pilgrim statue offered.

 **Ukraine:** The Acies was held in many places. A Peregrinatio Pro Christo in the Ukraine had three Austrian and 24 Ukrainian legionaries on the team.

 **Wales: Swansea Curia** - Five praesidia are meeting regularly and are carrying out an apostolate.

WEST INDIES

 **Dominican Republic: The Senatus of Santo Domingo**

celebrated their 75th Anniversary of the Legion there which coincides with the Worldwide Centenary. Many legionaries, active and auxiliary, died due to Covid. May they rest in peace.

 **Haiti: Senatus of Haiti:** All councils reported holding Centenary Mass celebrations with their Bishops or Spiritual Directors providing gracious and inspiring homilies.

 **Trinidad and Tobago: Regia of Trinidad and Tobago:** Minutes of the August Regia meeting show the pandemic restricts many apostolates but they are encouraging continuous prayer.

 **Commonwealth of Puerto Rico: Puerto Rico Senatus:** The country has been in lockdown for most of 2021. They held a Senatus meeting in October and November.

OCEANIA

 **Australia: Melbourne Senatus.** The Centenary Mass was celebrated on 7th September. Mass to commemorate Frank Duff was celebrated on Saturday 6th November. **Sydney Senatus.**

The October meeting took place after four months closure. Up to date news will be forwarded as well as their events for the Centenary. **Brisbane Comitium:** The Centenary Mass was celebrated on 12th September by Most Rev. Mark Coleridge, Archbishop of Brisbane.

 **New Zealand: Auckland Senatus.** The lunch time Rosary in the Marist College saw an increase of students and teachers attending. Contact is made at bus stops, and non-Catholics are encouraged to attend the RCIA programme. A Chinese praesidium contact the lapsed and teach catechism to children.



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