



LEGION OF MARY
FOUNDED 7 SEPTEMBER 1921

Maria Legionis



Puer Natus Est Nobis

Unto us a Child is Born

ISAIAH 9:6

Maria Legionis

The Voice of the Legion of Mary

Edition 4 of 2020

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The picture on the front cover is the painting entitled 'Nativity' and also known as 'In the City of David.' It was painted by the Argentinian artist Jorge Cocco Santangelo.



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Dear Readers of Maria Legionis

The year that is passing has witnessed unprecedented difficulties for the world at large with the advent of an unforeseen pandemic that has affected, in one degree or another, the lives of perhaps every person on earth. Certainly, in this regard, the Legion has not been immune. Every branch of the Legion has had to adjust to the new realities of coping with this silent enemy.

Legionaries have shown responsibility and given good example by cooperating with the authorities in implementing the various measures that have been put in force from time-to-time.

We are a Legion Family and as a Family we must endeavour to assist each other in any and every way possible, whether spiritually, emotionally or financially. Of necessity, weekly Legion meetings and work have had to be postponed. But despite this, all Legion bodies have

implemented new and creative means of communication. Praesidium officers especially continue to make regular contact with praesidium members to offer support and advice should the need arise, while distribution of the Maria Legionis has been an ideal way of making contact with auxiliary members. Let us all pray together and draw support from each other.

Finally, the Editor and the Editorial Board of Maria Legionis wish you all and your families a Peaceful and a Happy Christmas and a New Year filled with hope and promise.

May Jesus, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, bless, guide, and keep you all safe and protected.

The Editor, December 2020.



What are you doing for Christmas?

By Fr. Philip Gaiya,
Spiritual Director, Kaduna Regia, Northern Nigeria.
[Reprinted from The Cross, Kaduna, with kind permission]



As we approach Christmas, most people's expectations begin to rise.

Many begin to look forward more keenly to seeing and celebrating with friends and family members. They anticipate catching up on news of all that has happened during the year. Their homes take on an air of joyful expectations as they await the delights of Christmas. The joy that fills the hearts of younger children is beyond telling as they await new gifts at this season. With all these expectations, what are you doing for this great day?

As the one who prepared the way for God's Kingdom, John the Baptist and his message are very important for us, especially as we prepare this Advent for the coming of Jesus at Christmas.

We are not just preparing to celebrate a past event, the birth of Jesus nearly two thousand years ago; we are also preparing to celebrate the coming of Jesus into our lives right now. The Father wants Jesus to be born anew within each of us through the power of the Holy Spirit. The message of John the Baptist tells us how the birth of Jesus can change our lives.

The gospels tell us that prior to Jesus' Public Ministry, John went about the region of Jordan "preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (cf Luke 3:3; Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:2-3). This baptism of repentance was by way of preparation for the coming of God's Kingdom. John saw himself fulfilling the prophesy of Isaiah:

*"The voice of one crying in the wilderness;
Prepare the way of the Lord, (Isaiah 40:3-5)*

Make His paths straight

Every valley should be filled,

And every mountain and hill shall be brought low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways shall be made smooth;

And all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

(Luke 3:4-6).



This particular passage is addressed to all people. This message in this short passage is of vital importance to us as we prepare for Christmas. If we allow this Word of Truth to penetrate our lives this Advent, we will know and experience the salvation of God which these words promise.

In quoting the prophet Isaiah (40:3-5), John stressed that a way must be prepared, that a straight path must be made for the Lord. John expected that what he said would be taken seriously and acted upon. It was absolutely crucial that a way be prepared for the Messiah. The path was not so much for the benefit of the Messiah – so that the way would be easy for him; rather, it was for us so that we can be ready to receive Him when He comes.

Christmas is a time when we can be open in a special way to the grace which God bountifully dispenses. As recipients of God's generous gifts, we ought to foster an attitude which seeks to use His grace to glorify Him. We need to see ourselves as stewards or trustees of the Father's grace.

In our society today, taking a different way like John is often frowned upon. Our individual natures firmly believe that no one can tell us what to do. Such an attitude towards the authority of God reveals the deep-seated pride which is in our hearts. The attitude we ought to adopt this Advent is the attitude exemplified by

the Blessed Virgin Mary. When asked by the angel to be the Mother of Jesus, Mary replied: "let it be done unto me according to Your Word" (Luke 1:38). If we truly desire the Lord to enter our lives, then we, like Mary, will wish to conform our wills to God's will.

John the Baptist is a good example of one who was a good steward of God's grace. It is evident from John's proclamation of the coming of the Messiah that he prayed and was attentive to God's word. Only if he himself was prepared for the coming of the Messiah could he, in turn, prepare others. The Spirit's revelation to John led him to cry out: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29).



Simeon and Anna are two others in the Bible who readied themselves for Jesus' coming and yearned for it. Luke tells us that Simeon was a "righteous and devout man who looked for the Consolation of Israel." The Holy Spirit was upon him. Because of Simeon's loyalty and faithfulness, it had been promised him that he would "not see death until he had set eyes on the Lord Jesus Christ." (Luke 2:25-26).

The elderly prophetess, Anna, spent many years in prayer after her husband's death. "She did not depart from the temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day" (Luke 2:37). Her fidelity to God was rewarded when she too gazed on the Infant Jesus. "She gave thanks to God,

and spoke to Him (Jesus) for all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem." (Luke 2:38).

Whatever you are doing for Christmas, the patterns of these people's lives should not go unnoticed. Each was prayerful, devoted and attentive to God's word. Like Simeon and Anna, who loved the temple and longed to be in God's presence, we can be prayerful and devoted in our different church services. John preached repentance: Anna fasted for sin. For us there is the Sacrament of Reconciliation through which we come to experience the Lord's forgiveness. God's promises were fulfilled in their lives and will be faithful for everyone.



We should also be reminded that this is an occasion of rejoicing, a season of goodwill, a time of joy, even for those who unfortunately do not know or realise its meaning. A time for all to realise that Christ came into the world not as a mighty prince in the prime of life, as He could have done, but came as one like us, born of a mother, taking the form of a slave.

(Founder of the Family Rosary Crusade)
(January 9th 1909 – June 3rd 1992)

FR. PATRICK PEYTON THE ROSARY PRIEST

by Michael Walsh



Patrick Joseph Peyton was born to John and Mary Gillard Peyton, in Attymass, near the foot of the Ox Mountains, which lie along County Sligo's border with Mayo, on the west coast of Ireland.

Patrick came from a devout family of four girls and five boys living in a cottage on a 14-acre farm. At school-going age Patrick was sent to his mother's relatives in Bonniconlon to study at a school run by Tadhg O'Leary in Bofield. By his teen years, Patrick was considering becoming a priest. Although religious recruiter's such as the Capuchins and the Redemptorist Fathers visited schools in search of young men wanting to become priests, Patrick continued helping his family on the farm when their father became too ill. At this stage, two of his elder sisters, Beatrice and Nellie were already in America and were sending remittances to help the family left behind in Attymass.

In 1927, his sister Beatrice sent word that Patrick and his older brother

Thomas could sail to the United States and join them in Scranton, Pennsylvania. On May 13, 1928, nineteen-year-old Patrick and his brother set sail. After a ten-day trip, travelling by steerage, they arrived in New York. The two took the train from New York to Pennsylvania and lived at the home of their married sister Beatrice, who was working as a housekeeper. Patrick's sister Nellie had already spoken to Monsignor Paul Kelly of Saint Peter's Cathedral. She told him of her brother's forthcoming trip and Patrick's interest in becoming a priest. Monsignor Kelly told Nellie to bring Patrick to the Cathedral as soon as he arrived.



By June 1928, Patrick finally met Monsignor Kelly and was offered a job of becoming the Cathedral's sexton. Patrick reluctantly accepted the employment. His daily presence at the Cathedral rekindled his early ambitions to be a priest, but Monsignor Kelly insisted that he should complete his high-school education prior to entering the novitiate.

During the spring of 1929, Father Pat Dolan of the Congregation of Holy Cross came to the Cathedral in Scranton in search of new recruits for the priesthood. As a result, Patrick and his brother Thomas entered the Minor Seminary of the Congregation of Holy Cross in Notre Dame, Indiana.

After completing his studies in 1932, Patrick went to the Moreau Seminary within the University of Notre Dame, where he pursued a Bachelor of Arts degree, and excelled in Philosophy. As a young seminarian, Patrick was attracted to become a Holy Cross Father because of the order's focus on the Holy Family and towards obedience and conscience.

In October 1938, during Patrick's second year of theology at Catholic University of America, he was diagnosed with tuberculosis, and transferred back to Notre Dame to the Infirmary. Father Cornelius Hagerty was influential in this stage of Patrick's life, encouraging him to seek the help of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The doctors soon discovered that the

patches on his lungs had disappeared, after which he left for Washington DC, to complete his theology studies and take his final vows. On 15 June 1941, Patrick and his brother Thomas were ordained at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at the University of Notre Dame as members of the Congregation of Holy Cross.

Fr. Peyton's first assignment was in Albany, New York, as the chaplain of the Holy Cross Brothers of the Vincentian Institute. As World War II raged on, he commenced sending letters to Bishops, Catholic laity, and other groups promoting the importance of families praying the Rosary.



“The family that prays together stays together”

Fr. Peyton was one of the pioneers of evangelism using mass media. To get his message out even more broadly, he focussed at first on harnessing the power of radio for the sake of the Gospel, resulting in the Rosary being broadcast and promoted around the world. As founder of the Family Rosary Crusade, he staged massive Rosary rallies in key cities and dioceses, taking the ‘Rosary Priest’ across the globe from Brussels, Belgium, to Madrid, Spain, across Asia to Manila, Philippines, down south of the equator to New Zealand and Papua New Guinea, and into several South-American cities such as Lima in Peru and Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.

He convinced celebrities such as Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, and James Cagney to lend their fame to the promotion of the Rosary through television and films.

He hosted several televised shows abroad promoting the Rosary, where

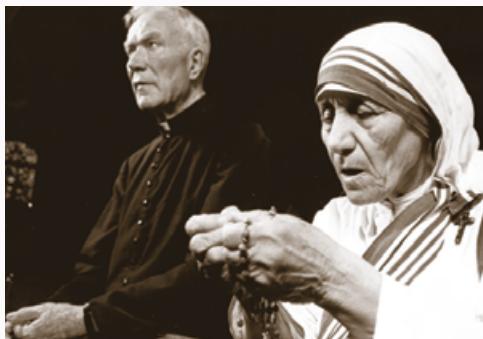
an image of Murillo’s painting of ‘Our Lady of the Rosary’ was always present in the background.

By the time of his death in 1992, Fr. Peyton had helped to produce over 600 television and radio shows, and had also overseen the production of three feature-length epics on the life of Christ, divided into the Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary. He was a man with hope in his heart and initiative to match, striving with the rich and the poor, the famous and the overlooked, to promote the family Rosary throughout the world. According to historian Hugh Wilford, Fr. Peyton himself was deeply conscious of the political dimension of his mission, proudly proclaiming in a 1946 radio broadcast: “The Rosary is the offensive weapon that will destroy Communism—the great evil that seeks to destroy the faith.”



Fr. Peyton popularised the slogans: “The family that prays together stays together.” and “A world at prayer is a world at peace.” During the Marian year of 1954, he brought the Rosary Crusade to Ireland, where an estimated 445,000 people attended his rallies. His work in promoting prayer was recognised by the Holy See, his efforts earning him the title ‘The Rosary Priest’.

After a long career of promoting the Rosary, Patrick Joseph Peyton, ‘the Rosary Priest’ died peacefully on June 3, 1992 at the Little Sisters of the Poor, Jeanne Jugan Residence in San Pedro, California, holding in his hands a Rosary Beads. His remains were brought to the Holy Cross Cemetery on the grounds of Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts.



Cardinal Sean Patrick O’Malley announced the opening of the cause for sainthood of Father Peyton on 1st June 2001, and on 18th December 2017, he was declared Venerable by Pope Francis, who at the present time is encouraging families to rediscover the Rosary at home and to include additional prayers which he has written to curb the corona-virus pandemic – an extract from which includes the following:

“We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God.” In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our mother, and seek refuge under your protection. Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes toward us amid this corona-virus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.



HOMILY AT KNOCK SHRINE

FOR THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE LEGION OF MARY

*By Most Rev. Michael Neary Archbishop of Tuam
27 September 2020*



Welcome you all as we celebrate the National Pilgrimage of the Legion of Mary to Our Lady's Shrine here at Knock. I greet the President of the Legion of Mary, Mary Murphy and the Officers of the Legion. I am delighted to be joined by the concelebrants, Fr. Bede McGregor, OP, who is the Spiritual Director to the Concilium and by Fr. Delcan Lohan, Spiritual Director of the Galway Curia.

Long before the church began to emphasise the role of lay people and the importance of various ministries, the Legion of Mary was active and in many ways was far ahead of its time. Founded in Dublin by a group of fifteen women under the leadership of Frank Duff, the Legion of Mary was deeply rooted in the Gospel.

During his earthly ministry Jesus invited and encouraged people and sent his disciples out in twos to visit the sick and the needy. There is something intrinsically biblical with regard to the Legion of Mary who conduct their visitation in two's. Prayer and apostolic work find an ideal combination among legionaries.

When Our Lady received the message from the Angel Gabriel at the Annunciation that she would be the one who would bring Jesus into the world, we remember that the first recorded instant in the Bible after the Annunciation was her visit to her cousin Elizabeth. Visitation preceded by prayer is one of the great strengths of the Legion of Mary. Those who have been away from the Church or have distanced themselves from the sacraments may be more open towards an approach by lay people, such as members of the Legion of Mary, who are convinced of God's love and forgiveness and approach gently to share their experience with others.



Here in Ireland there are 2,500 members of the Legion of Mary: across the world the Legion of Mary has some five million members. On the occasion of this National Pilgrimage I greet all Legion of Mary members here in Ireland, in the neighbouring Island of England, Scotland and Wales, in Europe and across the world.

During this pandemic we recognise the way in which we could be preoccupied with a very busy world and neglect the more important areas of making time for each other, visiting the sick and those who are lonely. Admittedly this will be difficult in the present circumstances. The object however of the Legion of Mary remains constant: the glory of God through the holiness of its members, developed by prayer and active co-operation in the work of Jesus Christ.

As we celebrate this pilgrimage I am reminded of what Pope Francis



emphasised: that holiness is courage, hope, and daily conversion. In his Apostolic Exhortation on the call to holiness in today's world, *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 'Rejoice and Be Glad', the Holy Father underlines the importance of the call to holiness for all. He acknowledges that his purpose is to re-propose the call to holiness in a practical way for our own time, with all its risks, challenges and opportunities. In his exhortation the Holy Father

draws attention to what he calls "signs of holiness in today's world." Among those signs, he emphasises characteristics which are present in legionaries: perseverance, patience and meekness. Perseverance, he goes on to state, does not desert others in bad times but rather accompanies them in their anxiety and distress, even-though doing so may not bring immediate satisfaction. He could be speaking about legionaries when he makes that statement. Other signs of holiness mentioned by Pope Francis are: "joy and a sense of humour." Legionaries will inevitably encounter opposition, rejection and maybe insults, but because of the joy of knowing that they are doing God's work they radiate a positive and hopeful spirit. Frank Duff once said that "the Legion makes saints and makes them by the bushel." Pope Paul VI was deeply impressed by the humility of the members of the Legion of Mary and he stated that "the Legion empowers the little people to become apostles." Pope John XXIII stated that "the Legion represents the true face of the Catholic Church in countries throughout the world."

Next year on the 7th September the Legion will celebrate its centenary. Founded in Dublin, it now has members in each of the five continents and is particularly strong in South Korea, the Philippines, Brazil, Argentina and the African countries.



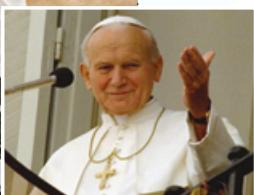
Its Founder, Frank Duff, envisaged the Legion as an opportunity for Catholic lay people to fulfil their baptismal promises to be able to live their dedication to the Church in an organised structure which would be supported by fraternity and prayer.

One could not mention the Legion without referring to the wonderful work of Venerable Edel Quinn and her heroic ministry in Africa in the 1930's and 40's. All legionaries are familiar with the work of Alfie Lambe in Latin America, particularly in Argentina. At times perhaps we are guilty of not extending a challenge to others, informing them about the work which the Legion of Mary does and inviting them to become involved. I am very conscious of the leadership that can be provided at local level. A legionary known to me exercised an extraordinary influence on young people, invited them to become involved in the work of the Legion of Mary.



These young people were enthusiastic, energetic and enjoyed the work, visiting nursing homes in the area, praying with the residents, playing music for them, listening to their stories and their history. During holiday time many of them accompanied that legionary on Peregrinatio Pro Christo. I am sure that many legionaries will be able to speak of similar experiences. Only the Lord can tell what goodness may come of the contact which these young people had with others and which will bear fruit into the future. I am convinced that there are young people who are searching for opportunities to share with others but find it difficult to know how best to find a suitable structure. I believe that the Legion of Mary can be a powerful support to those young people and can help them to harness their generosity and joy in the service of people in need.

I pray that as we prepare to celebrate the centenary of the Legion of Mary next year we will be inspired and encouraged by the wonderful work which the Legion of Mary has done in some 170 countries across the world. A few months before Frank Duff died Pope John Paul II addressed him saying: "remember victory will come through Mary." At a time of uncertainty, fear and confusion, we need to reflect on that prophetic statement of Pope John Paul: "Victory through Mary", a message of hope and reassurance for us today.



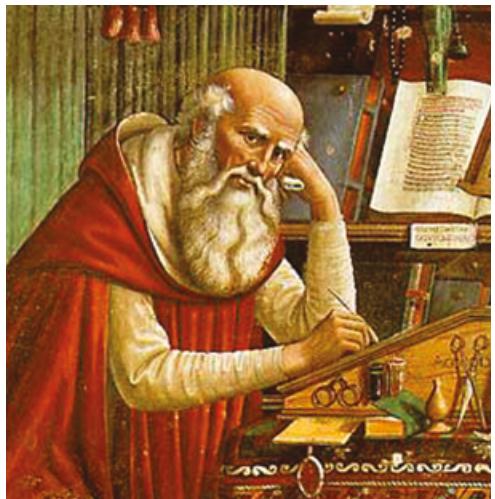
SAINT JEROME

By Michael Walsh

347 AD - 420 AD
(Translator of the Vulgate Bible)

Jerome was born at the village of Štrigova (Stridon), located 19 kilometres north-west of Čakovec, Međimurje County, in the north of Croatia.

At about the age of twelve he travelled to Rome to study grammar, philosophy and rhetoric, and as a result may have considered a career in law. During his teen years Jerome engaged in the uninhibited lifestyle of some of the students in Rome, but later regretted his actions. Suffering from remorse, on Sundays he began visiting the sepulchers of the martyrs and the Apostles in the catacombs in search of peace, but instead he found that the crypts reminded him of the next life and of hell. His subsequent stage of education came from Aelius Donatus, a well-known Roman teacher. From him, the young Jerome learned Latin and Greek. At around this time Jerome had a companion named Bonosus, who was a Christian influence on his



life and a factor in his turning towards Christianity and changing his lifestyle.

In about the year 366, Jerome was baptised by Pope Liberius. Now interested in theological subjects, he set aside secular studies to pursue matters of the faith, travelling with Bonosus to Trier which had schools for him to gain ecclesiastical training.

370 Jerome visited a monastery at Aquileia which was supervised by Bishop St. Valerian, and which had attracted some bright intellectuals. While in Aquileia, Jerome met a monk named Rufinus, who later became known for his translations of Greek works into Latin. The two men became friends and at this monastery Jerome honed his skills as a translator.

Following his time in Aquileia, Jerome travelled to Treves, Gaul where he began to translate books with the view to building a personal library.

373 He returned to Aquileia and while there had a dispute with his friend Bonosus, after which Bonosus went to an island in the Adriatic and lived as a hermit for a time.

374 Jerome arrived in Antioch after making several stops along the way. While in that city, he began writing his first work: 'Concerning the Seven Beatings.' That same year, disease made Jerome feel unwell. During his illness, he experienced visions which resulted in making him more spiritual.

375 Jerome began a two-year search for inner peace as a hermit in the desert of Chalcis, south-west of Antioch. Speaking only Latin, he was faced with Syriac and Greek. He found desert food unpalatable, but claimed to be happy. He prayed much to ward off temptation. During this time, Jerome learned Hebrew from a Jewish convert and studied Greek, had manuscripts copied for his library and his friends, and carried on correspondence with various people.

After returning to Antioch he was encouraged by the Church officials to become a priest, but Jerome made clear that this was not his first choice of vocation: he wanted to be a monk or a hermit. However the Church officials in Antioch, as well as Pope Damasus, still wanted him to be ordained.

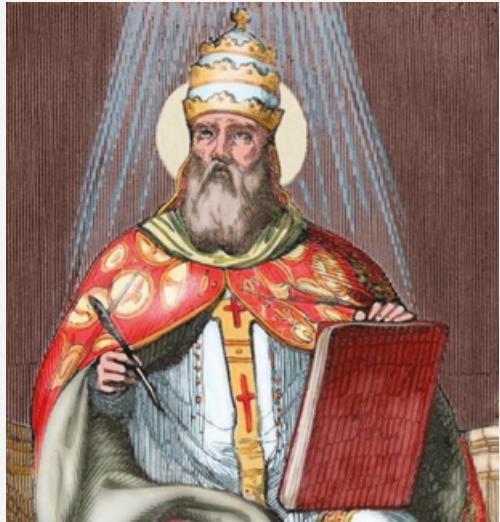
378 Jerome finally relented on condition that he would not be expected to serve in any ministry and

would still be allowed to pursue his monastic life. Under those conditions he was ordained a priest.

379 Fr. Jerome travelled to Constantinople, where for three years he pursued his scriptural studies under St. Gregory of Nazianzus, a famous theologian. During this time Jerome improved his knowledge of Greek, translating into Latin, fourteen of Origen's homilies and Old Testament books.

382 Jerome went to Rome for a council of the Church and met Pope Damasus, who retained him as his secretary. Jerome distinguished himself before the Pope and assumed a prominent place in his papal councils. He engaged in several debates against various heresies, and promoted the ideal of asceticism to those with whom he was in touch; these included a consortium of women who wanted to live saintly lives. During his stay in Rome, Jerome began translating the Bible from the original Hebrew to Latin, a labour which resulted in what is known as the Vulgate Bible.





Pope Damasus died in 384, and this exposed Jerome to criticism and controversy. Jerome was a sarcastic man of great wit. He became unpopular in certain quarters because of his standpoint on spirituality. While Pope Damasus was alive, he shielded Jerome from criticism, but now Jerome faced the retribution of his adversaries. Non-believers who resented his promotion of the faith and some Christians who opposed his views attacked him with nasty accusations.

385 Jerome left Rome and made a religious pilgrimage to Palestine and to the monastic centres of Egypt; he spent a month with Didymus the Blind in Alexandria before travelling to the Holy Land.

386 Shortly after Jerome's arrival in the Holy Land, several followers from Rome joined him; these included a lady named Paula, who was a wealthy Roman aristocrat. He acted as spiritual director with this group which finally settled in Bethlehem where they set about establishing a monastery. By 389, a monastic site was established in Bethlehem under Jerome's supervision and with financial assistance from the Roman aristocrat, Paula. The monastery included a separate convent under Paula's supervision, and a hostel for pilgrims. Jerome lived in the monastery until his death.

420 Jerome died on 30th September. His remains, originally buried under the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, were later transferred to the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome.



Saint Jerome, former Secretary to Pope Damasus, and translator of the Hebrew Bible into Latin, now known as the Vulgate Bible, is the Patron Saint of biblical scholars, students, librarians, archaeologists, and translators.

His Feast Day falls on 30th September

THE LEGION CORRESPONDENT



By Aodán Ó Briain

INTRODUCTION

Our Handbook (Ch. 8) states that the Legion ‘provides an intensely ordered system ... in regard to every detail of which it enjoins a spirit of scrupulous observance.’ It promises in return perseverance and conspicuous growth in the qualities of Christian perfection, namely: faith, love of Mary, fearlessness, self-sacrifice, fraternity, prayerfulness, prudence, patience, obedience, humility, gladness and the apostolic spirit.

At this time, then, perhaps we might ask ourselves if there is any way in which we can serve Jesus and Mary more effectively in our Legion membership. I believe that there is one particularly good way, and what follows is a very personal appeal to legionaries to undertake the work of correspondence. Admittedly, I am thinking especially of members throughout Ireland who can attend Concilium, but at the same time my hope is that my comments may help Legion councils around the world to realise just how precious are their minutes and reports, and what an essential part they play in the life of the Legion. From my experience, I wish to outline, as best I can, the duties of a Concilium correspondent and

the many blessings which flow from this activity: an activity which is both challenging and stimulating.

ATTENDANCE AT CONCILIUM

The Concilium meeting is held on the third Sunday of each month. It is attended by the Concilium officers and counsellors, Dublin Curia officers, officers of other councils entitled to be present, including officers from councils in Ireland and areas abroad directly affiliated to Concilium, correspondents and visiting priests, religious and legionaries from Ireland and overseas. Visiting groups are prominent during the summer months, and especially if a Legion summer school is in progress. It is notable that the opening prayers and the rosary are recited in Latin, thereby underlining the universality of the Legion of Mary.

Of course, attendance at Concilium does at times require self-sacrifice but it’s an essential aid to the correspondent in his work. For reporting purposes, the world is divided into zones and so, as one meeting follows another, a global picture of Legion activity emerges: seven Senatus controlling

the spiritual development and work of thousands of legionaries; places where members are continuing heroically in wartime conditions; countries, especially in Europe, where recruiting and extension are often difficult due to low levels of religious practice; newly-appointed correspondents learn many important lessons from the comments, questions and suggestions which arise from the reports.

THE CORRESPONDENTS' GROUP

The new correspondent receives further instructions from his correspondents' group, which meets every two months, normally after the Concilium meeting. These groups are formed on a geographical basis or according to the language in use. Here the group leader can check on the receipt of council minutes and, in a less formal atmosphere, take a look at the needs of individual councils for the new correspondent.

As I have said, correspondents' groups are organised on a language basis. Language classes have been formed in which correspondents have the opportunity of learning the appropriate language. The main language classes so organised are French, German, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese. The services of persons with knowledge of a particular language are sometimes availed of for the translation of correspondence in other languages.

A FEW GUIDELINES

A further article could be written on the contents of correspondents' letters to the Council. The following are a few suggestions from my own experience:

(a) "Earn the right to one word of criticism by ten words of praise." It is important at all times to stick closely to this great motto of Frank Duff.

(b) If there is fault which needs correction, we must try to do this in a humble and sensitive way, so that our recommendation will be accepted and put into action.

(c) Our letters should have a positive and joyful spirit and should give evidence of our own dedication to Our Lady and to the Legion.

(d) Be yourself. Along with faithfully transmitting essential news and decisions from Concilium, embellish this with incidents from activities of your own praesidium, including at times, efforts which may not have been very successful. This can help to build up a more relaxed, fraternal contact; consequently the council will be more ready to confide its difficulties to the correspondent and to seek advice.

(e) Finally, it is a good idea to include some personal or social items as a friendly gesture.

THE FRENCH CONNECTION

The greater part of my many years as a correspondent has been taken up with writing to two councils in France. It has certainly been a fascinating experience to be in contact with a dedicated band of legionaries who are endeavouring to establish the Legion and spread the reign of Christ in circumstances which are not always favourable. Since its foundation in 1940, the Legion in France has had its problems as well as its highlights, and the challenges it now faces: low Mass attendance, materialism and competition for recruits from a whole host of other religious movements, are factors with which our French sisters and brothers have to contend.

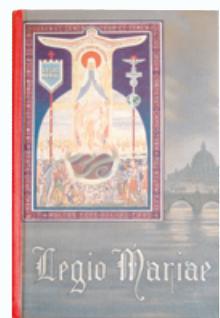
Having taken account of these difficulties, however, I must emphasise that my own correspondence and personal encounters with legionaries there have been most enriching, and my own membership has benefited greatly as a result. Especially striking is their readiness to keep trying in the face of adversity, the commitment to extending the Legion, and whole-hearted participation in missionary efforts. In recent years, French legionaries have given valuable service in Iceland, Belgium and several African countries.

CONCLUSION

This article gives just a small insight into the role of a Concilium correspondent. However, my hope is that, inspired by the outstanding apostolic activity undertaken by Frank Duff, intermediates coming into senior ranks, parents whose families have grown up, members about to retire from work, or any reader of this journal who feels the urge for a new Legion challenge would perhaps take the plunge and volunteer for this work. You will be really welcome.

I would like to conclude with a passing but very striking reference in our Handbook (Chapter XXXIX) to the fruits of persevering correspondence.

One episode stands out in the life of St. Madeleine Sophie in which the faithful pursuit of a soul is seen in all its pathos. For twenty-three years she clung with persistent love to one whom God's providence had brought across her path: a lost sheep who but for the Saint could never have found the fold. She (Julie) adopted as her own child, wrote more than two-hundred letters to her and suffered much on her account ... Julie died seven years after the Saint and in peace with God.



The Beauty of Mary

By Fr. Pat Collins CM

Introduction: During the Second-Vatican Council there was the intention of publishing a document on Mary. But then that plan was replaced by another, namely to talk about the mother of Jesus in chapter 8 of the Constitution on the Church. This contextualised Marian doctrine within an ecclesial context, e.g., Mary as Mother of the Church. Here I will look at three interrelated points.

1. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary
2. Mary's role as Mother of the Church
3. Mary's role as our gracious advocate

1. Mary the Immaculate Conception



When Mary appeared to St Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes in 1858 she responded to her oft-repeated question: "who are you?" by replying: "I am the Immaculate Conception." This response echoed what Our Lady had already said to St Catherine Labouré in the Rue de Bac in 1830. Many years later in the 20th century, St Maximilian Kolbe, who had an enormous devotion to Our Lady, was intrigued by the meaning and implications of Mary's announcement that she was the Immaculate Conception. She didn't say that she was conceived or born immaculate; she said: "I am the Immaculate Conception," which is actually a strange phrase. For many years Maximilian reflected upon what

Mary had said about herself. He began to make notes with a view to writing a book on the subject. Just before he was arrested by the Nazis in 1941, he dictated his key ideas to a secretary who wrote them down. His thought is dense, profound, innovative, and not easy to express in simple, clear terms. Having reflected quite a bit on what he said, I will do my best to give you some idea of what he had in mind.

Mary is the human created Immaculate Conception who from the beginning of her existence was free from original and personal sin. That was why the angel Gabriel was able to greet her by saying: "Hail, full of grace."

Kolbe said:

It is above all an interior union, a union of Mary's essence with the "essence" of the Holy Spirit. The Holy

Spirit dwells in her, lives in her. This was true from the first instance of her existence. It is always true; it will always be true.

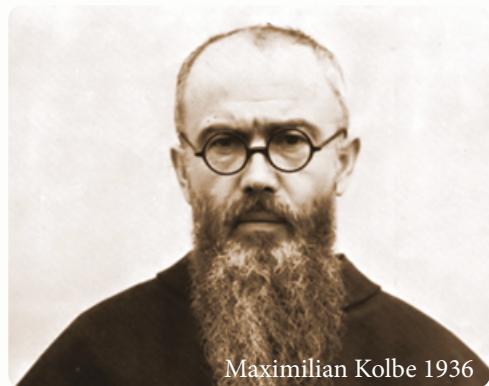
Therefore, we can say, Mary is the spouse of the Holy Spirit. Although she was, and is a creature and not divine by nature, she has been divinised by the free gift of the grace of her Son. As a result, in her life the Holy Spirit becomes visible. So we could say of Mary: "He or she who sees her, sees the Holy Spirit, just as those who see her divine Son see the Father."

Kolbe was keen to avoid any misunderstanding of what he was saying, so he wrote:

The Holy Spirit is in the Immaculate as the second person of the most Holy Trinity is in Jesus, but with this difference: there are in Jesus two natures, the divine and the human, and one sole person, the divine. The nature and person of the Immaculate are distinct from the nature and person of the Holy Spirit.

If you are not into theology you might not follow what exactly Kolbe is saying here. He's stating that Jesus is the divine, uncreated embodiment of the Father, whereas Mary, is the human, created embodiment of the Holy Spirit which was given to her in an anticipatory way, in virtue of the future death and resurrection of her Son.

Speaking about one important implication of the doctrine of



Maximilian Kolbe 1936

the Immaculate Conception, St. Maximilian felt that it might explain the fall of one third of the angels in heaven. He wrote:

When he had created the angels, God willed that they should spontaneously give him proof that they would always and everywhere accomplish his will. He revealed to them the mystery of the incarnation and announced that one day he would call into existence a human creature made of body and soul, a creature that he would raise to the dignity of Mother of God.

Kolbe maintains that when they heard about Mary as the Immaculate Conception, who would be the future Mother of God, some angels rebelled. They realised that although Mary would be a human being with a material body, she would be elevated far above their status as archangels and angels. When they realised this, they envied and resented Mary's future dignity and role – and they said to God: "we don't accept this; we will not serve on these grounds." So they lost their place in heaven and were cast down to earth (Rev. 12:2).

I was reading in a study Bible that this passage is one of key importance in the Book of Revelation because it depicts the struggle between the people of God, represented by Mary, and the power of the evil one. In Catholic circles Mary is sometimes depicted as the Immaculate Conception, the new Eve, who crushes the head of the serpent with her heel. In other words, together with her Son, she is mighty in the combat with the powers of evil. Of course, inevitably with her Son, the victory will be his - and hers and ours, through the conquest won over the evil one by the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross.

2. Mary as Mother of the Church

Because of her pre-eminent role, Mary is seen as the model and mother of the Church. It is stating the obvious to say that she was the mother of Jesus. But ever since our baptism, Christ has come to live within us by the working of the Holy Spirit and as a result we become members of his mystical body on earth. Mary is the mother of Christ's body the Church. That role was intimated in Jn. 19:25-27 when Jesus said from the cross: "Woman, here is



your son," and to the disciple: "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. As St Paul VI said in his Credo of the People of God:

"The Blessed Mother of God, the New Eve, Mother of the Church, continues in heaven her maternal role with regard to Christ's members, cooperating with the birth and growth of divine life in the souls of the redeemed."

In this context it is worth recalling the fact that in 1815 when Catherine Labouré was aged nine, her mother died. It is said that following her mother's funeral, she picked up a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary and kissed it saying: "Now you will be my Mother." As our heavenly mother, Mary intercedes for us.

3. Mary as our gracious advocate

The roots of Mary's intercessory role are to be found in the Old Testament. At one time in Israel the king could have had many wives. In order to avoid rivalries and disputes, the queen mother was the first lady in the land. The ordinary people could approach her with their requests, and she would present them to her son, the king. She was their intercessor, who pleaded on their behalf.

i. King Solomon and Bathsheba

In 1 Kings 2:19-20 there is an example of what was involved. It described the relationship that existed between King Solomon and his mother Bathsheba. In the text we are told:

"And the king rose to meet her, and bowed down to her; and he sat on his throne, and had a seat brought for the

king's mother, and she sat on his right. Then she said: "I have one small request to make of you, do not refuse me." And the king said to her: "make your request, my mother, for I will not refuse you."

ii. King Ahasuerus and Esther

On another occasion we are told that Esther, a Jewish woman, was "lovely and beautiful" (Esth. 2:3). She was married to king Ahasuerus. At one stage the queen heard that Haman, one of her husband's advisors, had hatched a vindictive plot to kill all her fellow Jews in the kingdom. As a result, she interceded with the King.

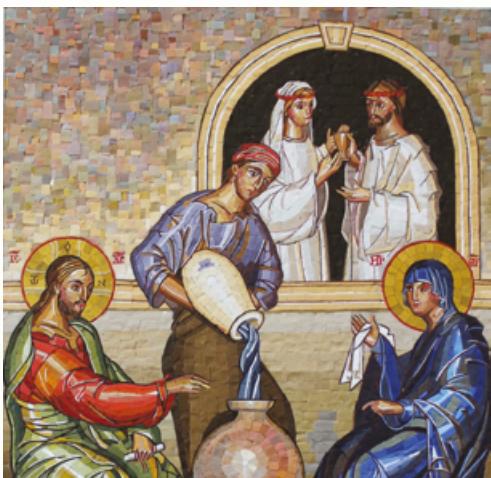
"If it pleases the king," she said, "and if he regards me with favour and thinks it the right thing to do, and if he is pleased with me, let an order be written overruling the dispatches that Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, devised and wrote to destroy the Jews in all the king's provinces. For how can I bear to see disaster fall on my people? How can I bear to see the destruction of my family?" He said: "Now write another decree in the king's name on behalf of the Jews as seems best to you, and seal it with the king's signet ring – for no document written in the king's name and sealed with his ring can be revoked" (Esth. 8:3-8).

Now you notice here that having interceded with her husband, Esther's request is granted and furthermore the king hands his authority over to her – she can write the letter and stamp it

with the king's signet ring on his behalf and, in so doing, that document was going to be obeyed by the people in the kingdom and no harm would come to the Jews.

iii. The Marriage Feast of Cana

In the story of the Marriage Feast of Cana we have an outstanding New Testament example of the spiritual relationship between the mother and the king. We are told in Jn. 2:3-5: "When the wine failed the mother of Jesus said to him: "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her: "O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants: "Do whatever he tells you."



Jesus recognised that her spontaneous impulse of loving concern was inspired by the Spirit and therefore an expression of the Father's will. Just as she had given birth to Jesus as a result of her obedient faith at the Annunciation, so now she was giving birth to his public ministry, as a result of her compassionate intercession.

Apparitions to St. Catherine Labouré

Our Lady appeared to Catherine Labouré on a number of occasions in the Rue du Bac in 1830. During the apparitions Our Lady announced

her Immaculate Conception and taught the young novice the following prayer: "O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee." She also

instructed her to have a medal made which was called at first: "the Medal of Mary, the Immaculate Conception."



On 27 November 1830, Catherine reported that the Blessed Mother returned during evening meditation. She displayed herself inside an oval frame, standing upon a globe. She wore many rings set with gems that shone rays of light over the globe. Around the margin of the frame appeared the words: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee." At that same moment Catherine heard a voice saying: "These rays are a symbol of the graces that I pour out on those who ask them of me."



Conclusion

As a result of the three-interrelated truths of which we have looked, we can have confidence in turning to our Mother Mary in all of our troubles.

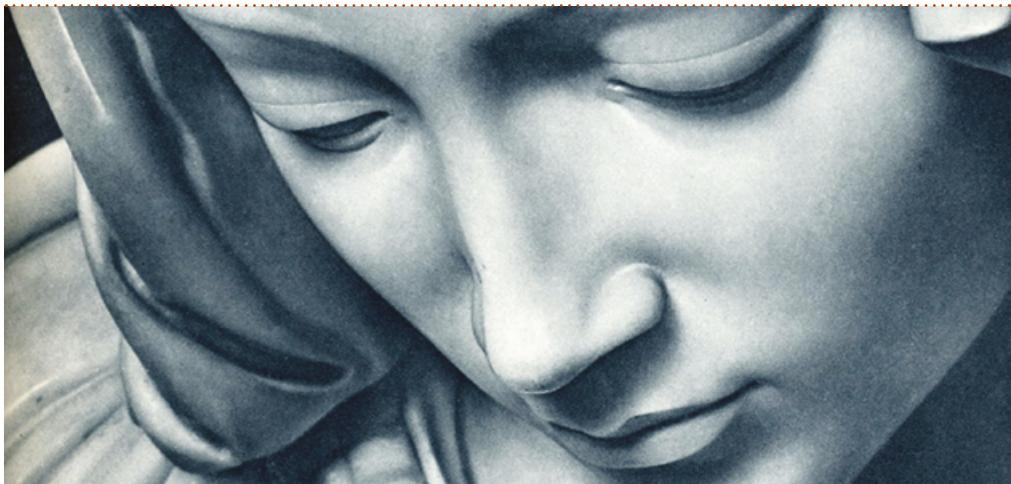
As one of our lovely Marian prayer says:

"Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of Virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me." Amen.

Speaking of Mary's intercessory role,
someone said half joking, whole in earnest:

"Mary, because you are God's mother you can't say you can't;
because you are my mother, you won't say you won't;
so you will, won't you!"

Final Prayer



Blessed Virgin Mary,
 who can worthily repay you with praise and thanks
 for having rescued a fallen world
 by your generous consent!
 Receive our gratitude, and by your prayers
 obtain the pardon of our sins.
 Take our prayers into the sanctuary of heaven
 and enable them to make our peace with God.
 Holy Mary, help the miserable,
 strengthen the discouraged, comfort the sorrowful,
 pray for your people, plead for the clergy,
 intercede for all women consecrated to God.
 May all who venerate you feel now your help and protection.
 Be ready to help us when we pray,
 and bring back to us the answers to our prayers.
 Make it your continual concern to pray for the people of God,
 for you were blessed by God and
 were made worthy to bear the Redeemer of the world,
 who lives and reigns forever.
Amen.
 - Saint Augustine of Hippo

THE EFFECTIVE LEGIONARY

By Frank Holohan

What makes for an effective legionary: patience, a prayerful disposition, an absolute trust in Our Lady, a pleasant personality, a good co-worker, an evangelising spirit? Certainly, all of these qualities are indeed admirable and necessary for the successful discharge of Legion duties in an ever-increasingly secular world. But there is one other indispensable quality which transforms the good legionary into an effective legionary: and that is realism.

The realistic legionary is the one who will 'stay the course', who will not be deterred, who will not abandon the work when obstacles are strewn along the path of progress. Such legionary fully realises that setbacks are inevitable; that in the course of Legion work you will encounter a range of responses and attitudes: polite indifference, flat refusal or even unconcealed hostility; but the goal is ever the same: to carry Christ and his Good News into the public square.

The realistic legionary realises that it will not always be easy: that you may climb up vistaed slopes of success and yet again be hurled down into caverns of dark defeat, but all the while keeping steadfast eyes upon the unchanging goal.

When Christ sent out the seventy-two disciples, he did not paint for them a rosy picture; on the contrary, he gave them realistic advice as regards what to expect (Luke 10:1-12).

.....Start off now but remember I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Carry no purse, no haversack, no sandals... Whatever house you go into let your words be: 'Peace to this house!' and if a man of peace lives there, your peace will go and rest on him; if not, it will come back to you..... Whenever you enter a town and they do not make you welcome, go out into its streets and say: 'We wipe off the very dust of your town that clings to our feet, and leave it with you.' Yet be sure of this: The Kingdom of God is very near..... Anyone who listens to you listens to me; anyone who rejects you rejects me, and those who rejects me rejects the one who sent me."

After two-thousand years, it is no-less true today. Jesus is still sending out men and women with a mission and a responsibility to spread the Good News. The essence of Luke's reading is how realistically he portrays what working for the Lord really means in practical terms.



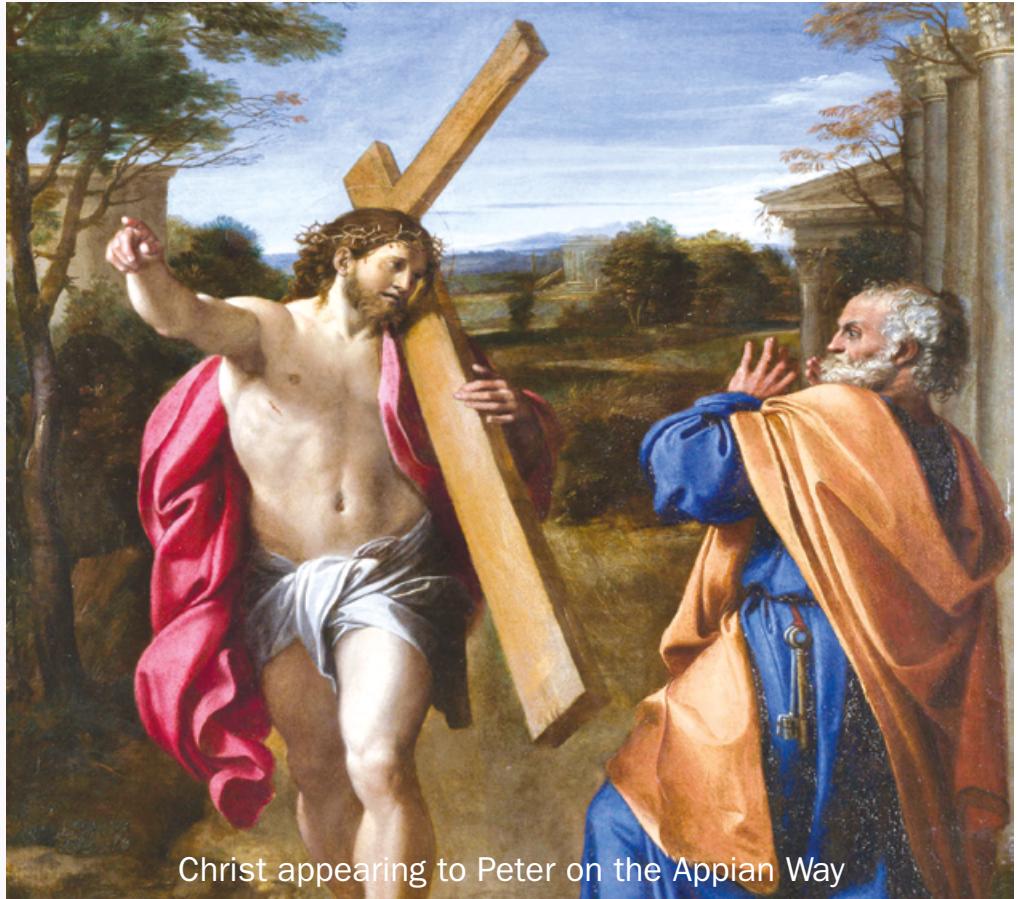
Legionaries especially would do well to realise that evangelisation can be something of a roller coaster with winding roads, twists and turns. If we realise that working in the vineyard of the Lord will not be easy, it makes it much easier for us as legionaries to know that we can find the Lord in what the poet Patrick Kavanagh referred to as "the bits and pieces of every day." This is why Jesus does not leave his disciples under any illusions as to the difficulties they will encounter. Before sending out the seventy-two disciples, he gave them a big reality check!

So, the realistic legionary is under no illusions, but understands that setbacks and disappointments will come; that the cockle may grow with the wheat, and that not every endeavour will bear positive results.

And yet, to doubt, to feel dispirited, to be tempted to abandon the fight, is all too understandably human. Let us

remember that even the Apostle Peter, to whom Christ had given the Keys, ran away when circumstances were difficult. In 64AD Peter hurried out of Rome to avoid the persecutions the Emperor Nero was inflicting upon the fledgling Christian Community.

On the Appian Way leading out of Rome, Christ appears to Peter. Christ was walking towards Rome while Peter was walking away from Rome. Peter asks Christ: *Domine, quo vadis* –Lord, where are you going? Christ replies: *Romani vadi ietrum crucifigi* – I am going to Rome to be crucified again. Realising that he had betrayed Christ once before by denying him thrice during his Passion, Peter is determined not to betray his Master again. Peter turns around and goes back to Rome where in 67AD he will face martyrdom by crucifixion for the sake of Christ.



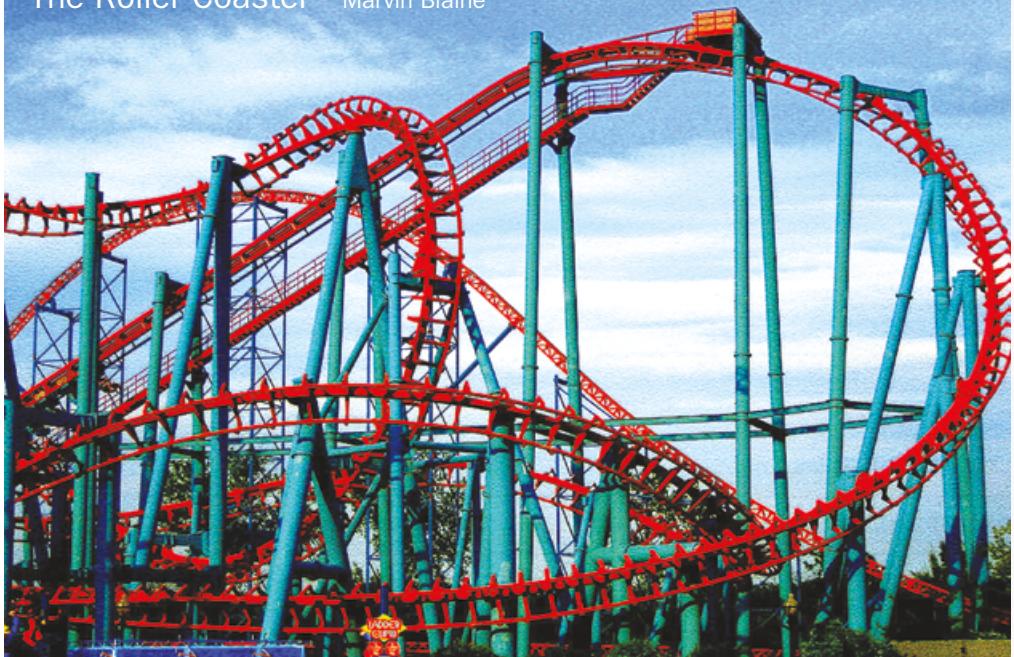
This painting by Annibale Carracci captures the moment of meeting between Christ and the Apostle Peter on the Appian Way. Christ is clearly evident with a crown of thorns and carrying a cross over his left shoulder. Peter is identified by his traditional keys, blue-and-yellow robes, grey hair and beard. The moment is dramatic as Peter is both shocked and ashamed by his action of running away from the mission entrusted to him by Christ when he said: "Thou art Peter and upon this Rock I will build my Church."

For the legionary, the moral of this

event is clearly evident: when we feel like giving up the struggle, we are disappointing, not simply our fellow legionaries but, Christ Himself and his Blessed Mother!

The best metaphor for the life and work of the legionary is the digital painting 'The Roller Coaster' by the American artist Marvin Blaine. The work of the legionary is indeed a 'roller coaster' of ups and downs, of successes and defeats, of navigating the maze of human life encountered. It can indeed be a bumpy ride but one that is also filled with great joy and excitement.

The Roller Coaster - Marvin Blaine



Hand-in-hand with Jesus and Mary, we can achieve the impossible because all the while we are assured that the goal is reachable with simple faith and trust in the One who is the Way the Truth and the Life. *NB The above digitally-generated image is a new medium that*

the Church could embrace with benefit as it communicates in a manner with which a whole new generation of young people can understand. It carries an immediate sense of familiarity as it speaks to young people in a language that carries credibility.

CHRISTMAS

By John Betjeman

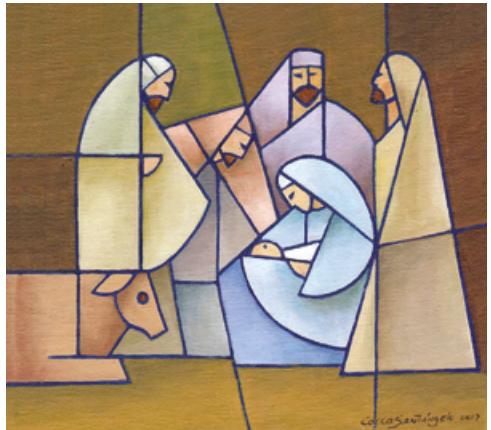
*And is it true
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Became a Child on earth for me?
No love that in a family dwells
Can with this simple Truth compare
That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and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



EXPLANATION OF FRONT AND BACK COVERS

The Editor

The picture on the front cover is the painting entitled: 'Nativity' and is also known as: 'In the City of David.' It was painted by the Argentinian artist Jorge Cocco Santangelo. It is painted in a style known as 'sacrocubism' which portrays religious events with some features of the post-cubist art movement. This in effect means that the painting displays objects and scenes from different angles-rather than from a single perspective. This type of painting holds that while a portrait can move the viewer to contemplate, an abstract painting can evoke deeper, higher things.



In this picture the Virgin Mary is depicted contemplating her new-born Infant Son, Our Lord and Saviour, while standing in respectful silence are Joseph and the three Wise Kings.



The picture on the back cover is the painting entitled: 'Come Ye to Bethlehem' by the London-born artist Simon Dewey. It is Christmas night; the shepherds are clearly discernible with crook and staff; they are standing on a hillside in the company of their sheep and lambs; Bethlehem is clearly seen in the near distance, while the young shepherd boy is pointing to the Star of Bethlehem in the sky above the Manger.

The title: 'Come Ye to Bethlehem' is an invitation to the shepherds to come to visit the Infant Saviour "wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a Manger" (Luke 2:13).

"A HURT TO THE WHOLE WORLD" By Frank Duff

Too often nothing but the minimum is proposed to the people which means they are being subjected to the process of mental freezing. Minds cannot project or possess a character that has not been offered to them. The apparent failure has been a real failure. Human possibilities are not being elicited. Talents are being left unprofitably in the ground. Genius is going to waste. Heroism is unexploited. Idealism is perverted by the atmosphere and frequently

turned to wrong causes. And worst of all: potential sanctity is left to be overgrown by the weeds and stifled.

It is not a case of the span of this life only, but of all eternity. Nor is it a matter of a local loss, but of a hurt to the whole world by depriving the Mystical Body of quality. All those stagnant souls should be at work. Potential in each one is the mission of influencing the world. Gray's 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard' contains many beautiful lines. One verse is appropriate here:



*Full many a flower of purest ray serene
The dark, unfathomed waves of ocean bear,
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on then desert air.*

It becomes infinitely tragic when that undiscovered gem could be a 'Francis of Assisi'; or when the flower that wastes its sweetness could be a 'Little Flower'. Yet, that is what is happening all around us in every department of life.



Our Lady of the Spindle

By Kathy Synnott



As a young girl I was blessed that my family attended St. Edmund's Church in Oak Park, Illinois. The Church was a wonderland of expressive paintings of heavenly beauty. The painting I remember best was of the Holy family. Mary is sitting on the porch of the holy house working at her spindle, and St. Joseph is in the yard working at his carpenter's bench; both pause for a moment to gaze at Jesus: a boy of about ten years carrying wood for St. Joseph.

The beauty of St. Edmunds Church is still woven into my prayer life, especially when I am meditating on the Holy Rosary: Mary carding wool when the Angel Gabriel appears; Elizabeth and Mary sewing as they await the birth of John the Baptist.

Mary and Joseph were “legally” married (betrothed) at the time of the Annunciation. However, the wedding feast, to which all the friends, relatives and neighbours came to celebrate Mary’s moving to Joseph’s house was still to come. For this, Mary would have embroidered a dress, and a special tunic for her husband Joseph.

When Mary returned home, after her time with her cousin Elizabeth, she would have much to do to prepare the wardrobe for the birth of her own Son. She must have brought garments with her to Bethlehem, as St. Luke tells us she had swaddling bands ready for Jesus when he was born. She also

would have prepared a special gown for the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. And then “Jesus grew in wisdom, age and grace.” This has many profound meanings, but for Mary one of them was keeping a growing boy in clothes.

The last mention of Mary’s handiwork is the “seamless garment.” This was the liturgical garment of a priest which Jesus donned for the Last Supper; that was soaked with sweat and blood in the Garden of Gethsemane; and was stripped from him on Golgotha. The seamless garment was so valuable that the soldiers did not divide it amongst themselves but gambled for it instead (Jn. 19:23-24).

St. Louis de Montfort tells us that such was her love that one sigh from Our Lady was of more merit than that of all the saints; this also must be true of every stitch she took for Jesus, for others, for you.

Our Lady of the Spindle, Pray for us.

Praises of Mary

The name of Mary contains in itself the brilliance of the virtues, the sweet reflection of modesty, and the sacrifice agreeable to God. It is the sign of hospitality and the centre of sanctity.

St. Peter Chrysologus

When we say that Mary is the Mother of God, we speak of a dignity that is above every other dignity that can be named, or thought of, after that of God.

Nothing equals Mary, for all is either above her, and this is God, or beneath her, and this is all that is not God.

St. Anselm

The Blessed Virgin was united with Jesus in the closest and most indissoluble bond.

Together with Jesus and through Jesus, she was the eternal enemy of the poisonous serpent, overcame him, and crushed his head with her virginal foot.

Pope Pius IX



The Blessed Virgin Mary was the nearest possible to Christ, for it was from her that He received His human nature. Therefore, she must have obtained a greater plenitude of grace from Him than all others.

St. Thomas Aquinas

Have recourse to that dear Mary who is the Mother of Mercy. She will take you into her Son's presence and use her Motherly intercession with Him on your behalf, so that He will be merciful toward you.

St. Catherine of Siena

Before her birth, the prophets proclaimed the glory of Mary. They compared her to the sun.

Indeed, the appearances of the Blessed Virgin can be compared to a beautiful ray of sunshine on a cloudy afternoon.

St. John Vianney



Legion world news



NORTH AMERICA

United States: Reports from **Boston Senatus** prior to the Covid-19 restrictions showed four parish retreats were organised by a praesidium. Among many works, legionaries in Providence Comitium organise RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) in nursing homes. They guided a Jewish lady into the Catholic Faith. Hartford Comitium has two prison praesidia and its attached Curia in Norwich has three. Reports from **Chicago Senatus** before Covid-19 show a new Curia in Peoria, with Spanish and Vietnamese among their twelve praesidia. Milwaukee Curia reported staffing a county booth for six days, where they catechised sixty youths and adults. The Last Rites were arranged for a fallen-away Catholic before death. The Korean Comitium had many returns to faith among 48 contacts. The praesidium in North Judson, IN, reports many returns to the sacraments in nursing homes. Reports from the period before Covid-19 showed **Cincinnati Senatus** had three legionaries staff a Legion Booth for four days at a Youth Conference which had 20,000 attendees. The attached **Detroit Regia**, with twelve praesidia and three councils attached, celebrated their Golden Jubilee and did extension. During the Covid-19 restrictions works included a virtual Rosary with a nursing home; 'window visits' and encouraging auxiliary participation in a virtual Rosary rally. Juniors sent 860 notes to the sick and to some priests.

In **Houston Senatus**, prior to Covid-19, a praesidium in a maximum-security prison reported that some inmates did the RCIA program and have been baptised and confirmed. One Curia hosted two Peregrinatio Pro Christo projects in 2019. In **New Orleans Regia**, the Lafayette Comitium is working with Radio Maria to establish a Legion radio program. One small praesidium in Laredo

prayed the Frank Duff prayer for new members, and now they have eighteen members. Tyler Comitium had a Lenten Retreat themed 'How the Cross Conquers Sin.' During Covid-19 the Senatus held virtual Senatus Officers' meetings to maintain contact with all attached units. Legionaries promoted a 54 Day Rosary Novena from 15th August to stop the spread of Covid.

Los Angeles Senatus: The fruits of developing legionaries to praetorian and adjutorian degree were evident in three praesidia reporting before the Covid-19 restrictions; for a total of 25 active members, there were thirteen praetorians and for a total of 154 auxiliaries, there were 25 adjutorians. Works included home visitation, enthronement of Sacred Heart, Eucharistic ministry to shut-ins, nursing home visits, street contact and catechesis to children. Virtual meetings in June and July comprised mainly of prayers as officers are very mindful of confidentiality. In **New York Senatus**, sadly some Legionaries died from the Coronavirus. May they Rest in Peace. Reports from the time before Covid-19 show that the Newark Korean Comitium has 783 active members and 1,170 auxiliaries. Church attendance increased by 1,090 due to home visitation. Eight new members were recruited through the Parish Newsletter and a new praesidium established. East Harlem Hispanic Curia has nine praesidia, 79 active members and 151 auxiliaries. Works include: 562 visits to families; enthronement of the Sacred Heart in 137 homes; 268 Nursing Home visits; 23 Funeral Home visits. Bookbarrow apostolate and Exploratio Dominicalis were also undertaken. Monsignor Aquino emphasised the importance of speaking to people about Christ and the Gospel message. Prior to Covid-19 restrictions, Prison visitation was undertaken by legionaries in several councils, attached to **Philadelphia Senatus**,

including Norristown Comitium, Allentown Curia, and Delaware South Curia. Conducting the Brother-House two nights a week for street people is another of the works in Norristown Comitium. Their attached Curiae do street evangelising and crowd contact. The praesidium in St. Charles Seminary has eighteen members. Fr. Giuffre is their Spiritual Director. They have done door-to-door evangelising in four parishes and have helped successfully to stage the annual Marian Day which is open to the public. **Harrisburg Comitium** has two new praesidia. Lebanon Curia organises a monthly Patricians and Frank Duff prayer group. Metuchen Comitium promoted Sacred Heart Enthronements and Bible studies. Reports to **St. Louis Senatus** before Covid-19 showed works included visiting homes, hospitals and nursing homes, promoting the Rosary in the family and also outdoor Rosary. Prison ministry was undertaken. Legionaries catechised pre-Confirmation children and helped 45 people recovering from addictions. There was one conversion to the Church and four people returned to the Church. Two Baptisms were arranged.

An extension trip by **San Francisco Senatus**, prior to Covid-19, resulted in a new praesidium in Reno. One praesidium brought the Pilgrim Virgin Statue to 86 families in three apartment blocks visited. There were seven enthronements of the Sacred Heart in homes and an average attendance of 25 at their Patricians group. Their Rosary Making Club for Auxiliary Members made 2,500 rosaries. A weekly Public Square Rosary featured in Stockton. At least, six new praesidia have commenced in attached councils in Sacramento, San Mateo, San Jose and Portland. Following the introduction of Covid-19 restrictions, the Senatus held three virtual meetings. Some prison and convalescent ministry was maintained virtually or by letter writing. In **Arlington Regia**, prior to Covid-19, there were many reports of enrolments in RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) and Church marriages. An elderly lady, given a short time to live, is now, two

years later, walking and enjoying life after a visit of the Pilgrim Virgin Statue. Visiting Auxiliaries is often done on Saturday mornings when many are at home. One young Presbyterian man was so impressed by his contact with the Legion that he signed up for RCIA. He was welcomed into the Church at Easter and is now a legionary. One praesidium did a parish-wide Total Consecration to Our Lady with eighty attendees. Since the introduction of the Covid-19 restrictions, a couple of meetings were carried out by skype. Reports were read in private. Works included phoning auxiliaries, sending cards to patients in the nursing homes, Bible Study and a virtual presentation on Edel Quinn. Recent reports to **Miami Regia** indicate that most senior praesidia have junior praesidia attached. Before Covid-19, street contact in the Miami City area and surroundings was done regularly by the praesidia on a rota basis and a new Curia was set up for the Southwest Florida area. After restrictions were introduced, some virtual meetings were held with due care for confidentiality.

• Canada: Before the introduction of Covid-19 restrictions, the **Montreal Senatus** reported works included catechism, crowd contact, Pilgrim Virgin Statue visitation, Baptism preparation and extension. The Senatus and an attached curia formed two new praesidia. The five praesidia in the Korean Curia brought non-Catholics on pilgrimage. The Senatus resorted to virtual meetings from April to June 2020. All five attached curiae and the Quebec comitium reported as scheduled resulting in a Senatus Bulletin in June. Prior to Covid-19 two new praesidia were established in the **Toronto Senatus** and St. Augustine Seminary re-established its seminarian praesidium. A new English praesidium and a junior praesidium began in **Etobicoke Korean Comitium**. Prison visitation was undertaken in Scarborough Comitium. Crowd contact was done in a public square, making over 100 contacts by Mississauga Comitium. During Covid-19 the senatus officers' and praesidia

meetings are held by virtual means. **Edmonton Comitium** had fifty legionaries at a Legion workshop which helped clarify many issues and Fr Paul Moret (Spiritual Director) was thanked for his inspiring talk. One curia had 120 children at a junior retreat. A praesidium in **Vancouver Comitium** has seven Pilgrim Statues in circulation; another praesidium has three adults preparing for Baptism. A new praesidium of fourteen members has a Frank Duff Prayer group. The comitium has two Korean curiae.

 **Mexico:** Due to Covid-19 lockdown, most of the councils in Mexico hold virtual meetings. They usually recite the Rosary and Legion prayers, have spiritual reading, an allocutio and a short report from each attached council sharing experiences of efforts at carrying out the apostolate. Most of the councils arranged for a Mass or a triduum of Masses to commemorate the 99th anniversary of the Legion. They also have plans to continue with activities in preparation for the Centenary. The **Mexico City Senatus** met on line for the first time on 30th August 2020. Meetings are not allowed except in Tulancingo where they were able to hold the comitium meeting. Legionaries in **Guadalajara Regia** keep in contact with each other and auxiliaries by telephone. The curiae of Tijuana and Ciudad Juarez, attached to **Hermosillo Regia**, transmit the Rosary and Chaplet of Mercy by video link and Facebook every day. A few legionaries died due to the virus, including a loyal member who was president of a Curia and correspondent, R.I.P.

EUROPE

 **Belgium:** Reports to **Brussels Senatus**, before the Covid-19 restrictions, showed a praesidium in St. Roch doing home visitation and crowd contact. A non-Catholic lady they met became a Catholic and went on to bring other women from her former group into the Church. A lady they met three years ago had a Church marriage

and her children baptised. A praesidium at the Marian Shrine at Beauraing made wonderful contacts at the shrine. Frs. Jean Franck, Spiritual Director of Curia of Welken-Baelen, with 50 years. legionary service, and Fr. Jean-Jacques Kabanda, Spiritual Director of two praesidia in Molenbeek, Brussels, both died recently. May their souls rest in peace. Eddie Evers, Concilium correspondent, and Ann Evers, recently visited the **Antwerp Regia**. A praesidium in the Regia keeps up phone contact with auxiliaries after the praesidium had to suspend meetings due to Covid-19.

 **England:** Reports from **Birmingham Senatus**, before the Covid-19 restrictions, showed thirty of the contacts made by a praesidium in the course of a night fever event went into and prayed in the Church. The Spiritual Director was present and heard Confessions. In West-Birmingham curia, consecration of homes to the Sacred Heart is promoted with good response from new families. Swansea curia reported that a woman contacted who had lapsed said that she had turned her life around since receiving and wearing the miraculous medal. Prior to Covid-19, reports from **Liverpool Senatus** showed a praesidium in South Shields, attached to Newcastle Comitium, celebrated its 75th Anniversary with Mass and a talk on the Legion of Mary. Legionary works included visitation of sick and housebound, street contact and book-barrow work, promotion of the Rosary in the schools during May and October and public Rosary. Reports from **Brentwood Regia**, before Covid-19, showed works include visitation of care homes and sheltered accommodation, pilgrim statue visitation and visitation of the sick and housebound. In West-Middlesex curia works include crowd contact, visitation of care homes, promotion of the Rosary during May and October and follow up on those distanced from the church. Central-London curia has 24 praesidia attached. A Legionary Congress was held with the theme: 'The Praesidium – The Bedrock of the Legion.' Since the coming of Covid-19 the

curia has been having meetings via Zoom, etc. A number of praesidia are keeping in touch with sick and housebound mainly by phone and doing messages when needed.

 **France: Paris Senatus** reported meetings were suspended from mid-March to mid-June due to Covid-19. To mark the centenary of the Legion, the Senatus has requested praesidia provide details of remarkable people they have met in the Legion of Mary, the graces received through the intercession of Frank Duff, and remarkable events such as conversions. The information will be collated in the form of a booklet. The Vietnamese curia has seven praesidia. Works include home to home visitation, visiting and praying with the sick and elderly and bringing Holy Communion; and visiting families of different religions. A non-practising Catholic, given a miraculous medal and leaflet, decided to have his daughter baptised.

 **Germany:** The **Frankfurt Senatus** is carefully observing all the necessary precautions in regard to conducting the meetings in a safe manner during the pandemic. During lockdown members of the **Cologne Regia** said Legion prayers at a definite time each week. A prayer line was offered to people over the telephone and contact maintained with the lonely and housebound. During the Covid-19 period, legionaries have discovered a renewed openness and interest in the Legion apostolate. The Korean curia in Hamburg meet every-second year in Germany with Korean legionaries from different European states and participate in three days of training/schooling. In the Darmstadt curia all praesidia have resumed weekly meetings and apostolic work since restrictions were lifted at the end of June. Works include organisation of Eucharistic Adoration, conducting prayer services in hospitals, visitation of homes of newly baptised babies and supporting faith formation groups.

 **Kazakhstan:** There are six praesidia within 150 km. The curia meets every second month in Korneewka. On the alternative month the priest

visits the weekly meetings of the praesidia. Works include visitation of the sick and elderly, and helping with church duties.

 **Netherlands:** Before Covid-19 the praesidium in Groningen, **Amsterdam Regia**, made visits to the sick and elderly. They informed the parish priest of people who wished to receive the sacraments. He is very worried that many elderly die without receiving the Sacrament of the Sick and without religious funeral arrangements. The legionaries also gave catechesis to children and to some of the Chinese community. The Cape Verdian curia organised a retreat at which forty people were present.

 **Scotland:** Reports to the **Senatus of Scotland** before Covid-19 showed a praesidium doing visitation of homes of the newly baptised and the First-Holy Communicants. The Fatima Statue was offered to homes and seven care homes were visited. In **Annunciata Curia** works included door-to- door and nursing home visitation and the visitation of a care home. Due to Covid-19 restrictions meetings in Scotland had to be suspended.

 **Sweden:** A number of praesidia continue to meet, are doing some work, and also help the priest.

 **Switzerland: Zurich Comitium** has ten praesidia, with fifty active members and 2,300 auxiliaries, and a curia in Norway with four praesidia. It is hoped to set up a 'Croatian speaking' praesidium. In Zurich, in May, June and July, afternoon prayer was organised and conducted by priests; it consisted of Holy Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, Confession and Rosary. Radio Maria Switzerland is planning a radio programme to celebrate the centenary of the Legion in 2021

SOUTH AMERICA

 **Argentina:** With the Covid-19 restrictions, **Buenos Aires Senatus** meetings, Senatus officers' meetings, correspondents' meetings and Alfie

Lambe committee meetings are held on Zoom. Weekly praesidium virtual meetings continue and work in pairs is done by phone - organising Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and daily prayers with those who were previously visited personally. Virtual visits naturally are now more frequent. Some praesidia that had closed have now been reopened. New praesidia have been set up. A new work is called: ***My sick friend***. This is done using recordings and videos as well as Legion contact by phone to the sick of the parish. It is sent out on local T.V. As of mid-August, Cordoba remained a red zone - in lockdown. It was lifted briefly, churches opened and Public Masses resumed but this lasted only for a short time before the lockdown was reinforced. Throughout the months of lockdown, the **Cordoba Senatus** officers met via video conference call. Most councils held virtual meetings for prayer and discussion. Auxiliary members were contacted by phone. The September Senatus meeting of **Salta Senatus** was their first on Zoom. All were delighted with the experience. The Spiritual Director gave the Allocutio from his parish and praised the legionaries for their continued prayer life and apostolate. A list of suggestions for virtual Legion meetings includes taking into account the fourth Standing Instruction. Corrientes has not been as badly affected as other parts of Argentina by covid-19; groups of up to ten were allowed to meet. Council meetings have not been taking place other than some of them coming together online. Update in mid-September from secretary shows **Corrientes Regia** holding meetings online. Praesidium meetings are held but no Legion work is possible. For the 99th anniversary, many active and auxiliary legionaries erected an altar in their homes and celebrated with their families.

 **Bolivia:** April and June meetings of the **Senatus of La Paz** were held on Zoom with a good participation. Two council reports were given which showed that Legion works continue. The Spiritual Director was full of encouragement

and praised the legionaries who do prison visitation for the letters they write as visits from outside are not permitted at this time. The Regia of Santa Cruz has not missed any of their monthly Regia meetings or officers' meetings. Praesidia are meeting virtually each week. Their correspondents are in frequent contact with outlying councils and praesidia. Using Zoom and WhatsApp the rosary is taught and said with many contacts. The Regia President commented that: "The Holy Spirit and Mary have opened new ways for us to evangelise."

 **Brazil:** The **Salvador Senatus** and its attached councils, had their activities suspended in March due to Covid-19. Activities are limited to spiritual formation and prayer meetings in online form. Mass was celebrated to mark the anniversary of the foundation of the Legion of Mary on 7 September and was broadcast on YouTube. No meetings of the **São Paulo Senatus** have been held since March 2020 due to Covid-19. Some praesidia have held meetings online. The Senatus organised a series of events online each month of the lockdown. Some events were organised with the cooperation of the Missionary Congregation of St. Ignatius of Antioch of which the Senatus Spiritual Director is a member. These included relaying the Holy Week Ceremonies, and from Easter onwards, masses were relayed three days a week. From May a daily rosary was recited. The Solemnity of the Annunciation and an Acies ceremony were held online. On 12 May, the anniversary of the death of Venerable Edel Quinn, a 'day of prayer' was held online. The annual Legion Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida on the first weekend of June was cancelled. The programme of the pilgrimage was broadcast online. On Sunday, 7th June, the birthday of Frank Duff, a special programme commemorating him was held following the online pilgrimage. On 24 June, Alfie Lambe's birthday, and the Feast of St. John the Baptist, a 'day of prayer' was held online. Junior legionaries

had a programme in July. In September there was a week of prayer for the anniversary of the Legion on 7 September. It is considered that about 65,000 people were touched in some way by these online events and about 19,500 interacted in some way.

 **Chile:** Reports from **Senatus of Santiago** show that in spite of many restrictions and huge suffering due to the pandemic, all praesidia are working. Legion work involves two legionaries conversing with families by WhatsApp with special attention given to the elderly and those living alone. The Senatus bulletin reaches all praesidia with local and Concilium reports. Because of Covid 19, no Senatus meetings were held since March. Many groups held virtual meetings of prayer and formation.

 **Colombia:** Legionary apostolic works in **Bogota Senatus**, in the period before Covid-19 restrictions, included outreach to prisoners and their families, the homeless, immigrants, the sick in hospital, and others. The **Regia of Barranquilla** makes contact with street girls and some have joined praesidia as active legionaries. In Riohacha diocese they work with the Wayuu tribe in Reservations, helping to have children receive their First Holy Communion and Confirmation and three couples married. Since the introduction of Covid-19 restrictions, many groups have held virtual meetings of prayer and formation. The **Senatus of Medellin** organised a fourteen-day Peregrinatio Pro Christo in December 2019. It involved 26 legionaries in two teams. A distant curia in Jerico reported prison visitation and the accompaniment of the Lauritas missionaries in their work in the jungle with the indigenous people.

 **Paraguay:** Before Covid-19, Asunción Senatus set up an Alfie Lambe Committee which organised a pilgrimage to his tomb as well as several talks on his life. Some eighty youths attended a National Youth Congress. A praesidium was formed in the women's prison.

Reports show works undertaken by praesidia included home visitation, catechesis, visiting the sick at home and in hospital, police station apostolate, visitation of auxiliary members, and pre-marriage talks.

 **Peru:** Since the introduction of Covid-19 restrictions, the officers of the Senatus of Lima have maintained contact with attached councils and praesidia. Some praesidia have been meeting virtually to recite the Legion prayers and Rosary, study the Handbook and also the catechism and Papal documents. Some praesidia have been keeping in contact with their auxiliaries by phone and holding online gatherings with them. The Senatus Spiritual Director celebrated an online mass for the Legion at a national level.

 **Uruguay:** Before the Covid-19 restrictions it was reported from the Senatus of Montevideo that apostolic works undertaken included crowd contact, a youth conference, rosary groups, the visitation of the sick, home visitation and prison visitation. Some legionaries accompany the priest on his monthly visits to chapels. During the Covid-19 restrictions council meetings have not been held. The officers have been meeting virtually twice a month using zoom for prayer and discussion.

 **Venezuela:** Before the Covid-19 restrictions, reports to Caracas Senatus showed extension work was carried out by many councils. One attached Curia reported 1,500 recruiting contacts resulting in 58 new members. A Mass to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Legion of Mary in Venezuela was organised with a very big attendance. Celebrants were Cardinal Baltazar Porras Cardozo, Archbishop of Merida, and Cardinal Emeritus Jorge Urosa Savino, Spiritual Director of the Senatus of Caracas.

Let Us Go to Bethlehem

LUKE 2:15



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