

Maria Legionis



Venite Adoremus Dominum

Come let us adore the Lord

Maria Legionis

The Voice of the Legion of Mary

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Christmas Blessings

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

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The Senatus of Uganda Conference

By Gloria Tumusiime
Secretary Senatus of Uganda

The 12th National Spiritual Directors' Conference was held at St. Mary's National Seminary, Kampala on 19 - 22 August 2025.

Highlights of the Keynote Address.

Bishop Anthony Zziwa, Chairman of the Uganda Episcopal Conference, warmly welcomed all the priests present at the conference and extended his gratitude to the organisers for their commitment in bringing everyone together. He observed that while many priests had been involved in the Legion of Mary apostolate for years, others were new and therefore needed encouragement and orientation into its life and mission.

The bishop explained that the Legion of Mary is firmly grounded in theology, rooted in Mary's role as the first disciple and missionary of Christ. He traced its historical origins to 1921 in Dublin, Ireland, when it was founded by the Servant of God Frank Duff, and later introduced in Uganda

by Venerable Edel Quinn in 1938. He noted that from its first praesidium at Nkokonjeru, the movement had grown to all dioceses in Uganda and had spread widely beyond.

He emphasised the significance of the Legion in the life of the Church, stressing that it is not a mere association but a true apostolate of evangelisation. The bishop emphasised that the Legion offers lay people a concrete path of sharing in the mission of the Church. Through weekly meetings, prayer, devotion to the Rosary, and apostolic works, members grow in holiness, discipline, and missionary zeal. He pointed out that the Legion strengthens parish life, nurtures vocations, and instils Marian spirituality in the faithful.

The bishop remarked that many priests and religious vocations in Uganda had their roots in the Legion of Mary, proving its importance as a seedbed of faith and service.

He further highlighted the role of the spiritual director, noting that this is central to the vitality of the Legion. The spiritual director, he said, is not a passive presence but the guide and teacher who ensures fidelity to the Church's teaching and the Legion's spirit. He is responsible for inspiring zeal, keeping members anchored in prayer and sacraments, and safeguarding the Legion from becoming a purely social organisation. His task is to cultivate Marian virtues of humility, purity, and obedience within the membership.

During the discussions that followed, several issues were raised:

On non-Catholic students who wish to join, it was clarified that according to the Legion Handbook, membership is strictly for sacramental Catholics.

On inadequate time for Legion activities in schools, members were urged to engage school administrations and diocesan education offices to secure more space for the apostolate.

On mixed marriages between Catholics and non-Christians, the bishop noted that dioceses already have policies to guide such cases and should handle them with pastoral care.

On concerns regarding individuals referred to as "Marians," he stressed the importance of diocesan guidance, coupled with attentive listening and spiritual accompaniment.

In conclusion, Bishop Zziwa reminded the participants that the Legion of Mary is a great treasure for the Church in Uganda. He called on all priests to support it wholeheartedly so that, under the example of Mary, it continues to form faithful missionaries of Christ in every generation.

Shepherding Youth with Faith and Courage

Fr. Benedict Mugerwa, national youth chaplain, emphasised guiding young people in today's fast-paced and complex world requires wisdom, empathy, and courage, while remaining rooted in timeless Christian values. He highlighted that the role of mentors, parents, and spiritual leaders is to walk alongside young people, addressing their unique challenges while nurturing their spiritual growth.

Core Messages

BUILD TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS: Active listening, empathy, and genuine interest create safe spaces for young people to share their faith, doubts, and aspirations.

FOSTER SPIRITUAL GROWTH: Model faith in daily life, encourage prayer,





reflection, and community service, and openly discuss spiritual issues to deepen their relationship with God.

ENCOURAGE PERSEVERANCE: Equip youth with coping strategies, share testimonies of overcoming adversity, and nurture mental well-being and a growth mindset.

EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA: Use digital platforms to evangelise, share inspiring content, and engage youth meaningfully, while also modeling responsible use and setting healthy boundaries.

MODEL AUTHENTICITY AND VULNERABILITY: Leaders should share their own faith struggles honestly, showing that Christianity is lived in real life, thus encouraging youth to be authentic themselves.

NURTURE COMMUNITY AND BELONGING: Provide opportunities for group activities, mentorship, service projects, and peer support to strengthen bonds and foster a sense of belonging in the Church.

EMPOWER YOUTH TO FIND THEIR

VOICE: Support them in leadership, self-expression, and addressing social issues through a faith-informed lens, enabling them to become confident agents of change.

INTEGRATION OF CHRISTUS VIVIT (POPE FRANCIS): Fr. Mugerwa aligned his reflections with Pope Francis' teaching in Christus Vivit, highlighting:

ACCOMPANIMENT AND LISTENING: Adults should walk with youth, giving them space to express concerns and needs.

CLOSENESS AND RELATIONAL LOVE: Use the "language of closeness" and foster relationships marked by generosity and love.

EMPOWERING YOUTH: Encourage active participation and leadership without imposing rigid structures.

FLEXIBILITY AND CREATIVITY: Adapt ministry approaches to the diverse realities of young people.

COMMUNITY AND SERVICE: Strengthen social responsibility

through service and communal life.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH: Guide youth toward deepening their faith and relationship with God.

Report on the 11th National Spiritual Directors' Conference

The Secretary of the Senatus of Uganda presented the report of the 11th National Spiritual Directors' Conference held in 2023, highlighting key outcomes and observations. A recurring call was made for legionaries to study the Handbook more diligently in order to deepen their understanding of the system and ensure fidelity to its spirit and practice.

Encouraging progress was noted in the translation of the Handbook into local languages to enhance accessibility. The Runyoro–Rutooro version has already been completed and is in active use, while work continues in other languages.

The report also conveyed a moment of sadness with the passing away of Br. Deo Nkuzingoma, a former President of the Senatus, whose faithful service and leadership left a lasting legacy. May his soul rest in peace.

On the apostolate, the Legion continues to expand in schools, with more praesidia being established. However, this growth has created an overwhelming demand for handbooks and altar items. It was emphasised that higher councils should prioritise the

provision of these essential materials, particularly through the book barrow system, to strengthen the apostolate and sustain the momentum of growth.

Closing Remarks: Dr. Augustine Kasujja, Nuncio Emeritus

His Excellency warmly welcomed all the spiritual directors to the conference and expressed his gratitude to the organisers for the invitation extended to him. He reminded the participants of the unique privilege they share in having the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of Jesus, at the very heart of their vocation. Referring to the words of Our Lady at Cana, he emphasised that every legionary is called to obey her invitation: "Do whatever He tells you." This obedience, he explained, is lived out concretely through the weekly apostolic works entrusted to members of the Legion of Mary.

Reflecting on priestly identity, he recalled the words of Pope Leo, who taught that "the identity of a priest depends on his union with Christ, the supreme and eternal High Priest."



A LIFE DEVOTED TO OUR LADY

By Frank Nuttall

With sadness the death was announced of Fr Thomas Toal who died at home in Coatbridge Scotland in the early hours of 21st June following a long illness.

Fr. Tommy was a lifelong member of the Legion of Mary having joined in London in the early 60's. He was later to be very proactive on Senatus PPC committee - organising and participating in numerous Peregrinatio Pro Christo throughout Britain and overseas including trips to India and South America.

Fr. Tommy was born in Coatbridge on 21st April 1942, the third of twelve children to Joe and Cathy Toal. He grew up in a strong Catholic household in the parish of St Marys, Whifflet.

He attended St Patrick's High school Coatbridge and then joined the Civil Service. From his young days, Fr. Tommy had a strong devotion to Our Lady and was involved in the Legion of Mary both locally and nationally. He developed a love of travel and regularly travelled to Lourdes and Fatima and also made a trip to the Holy Land. He also made several trips to a football stadium in the East of



Glasgow with Celtic FC. being a large part of his life.

In 1976 Fr. Tommy took a sabbatical from work to go to Uruguay as an envoy for the Legion of Mary, during which time he was involved in establishing several praesidia. He was inspired by this experience to consider a vocation to the priesthood and was ordained a priest on 12 October 1986 for the Diocese of Mela, Uruguay. His ministry there was one of mission, travelling round all the stations to bring the sacraments to people. He would send a message to parishioners through the local radio that he would be coming to celebrate Mass with them.

Fr. Tommy returned to Scotland many times over the years, coming home to celebrate family weddings and baptisms, and after retiring from active ministry he returned home to live in Coatbridge. On his return to Scotland, he provided supply in parishes across

the Motherwell Diocese and beyond and with a true missionary spirit was always happy to go wherever he was required - often travelling on public transport to get there. He was greatly appreciated by priests and parishioners across the diocese and was a well-known face throughout Lanarkshire.

For the following 20 years or so he continued to be active in the Legion of Mary and was involved in the life of the Diocese, attended many of the Diocesan Masses and events throughout the year. He was Spiritual Director for the Motherwell Diocese Curia until his illness prevented him attending meetings. He was a humble man who rarely spoke about his work and devotion to our Blessed Mother Mary.

Fr. Tommy will be sadly missed by the Legion community.

His Requiem Mass was celebrated in St Augustine's Church, Coatbridge on the Feast of Our Lady of Aberdeen by Bishop Toal with whom he was proud to share a surname. During his homily at the Requiem Mass, Bishop Toal said: "I was privileged to visit him on the day that he died, which was a great blessing for me personally and when we prayed with him, although he wasn't able to say much and was in some distress, he was participating in the prayers and blessing himself. He had a huge faith in the Lord which gave him great joy and contentment.

May he rest in peace.

The Donkey of the Crib



I am that silent donkey
Who plodded through the snow
To the little town of Bethlehem
Two thousand years ago.

And though the World condemns me
To trudge with burdens great
Upon the bye-ways of the earth
This, my destined fate

To be beaten and derided
By the careless and uncouth
Yet never a word of censure
Has uttered from my mouth.

For I am dumb to beatings
I hold my private joy:
Upon that Holy Silent Night
I carried Mary's Boy.

Before the dawn I saw Him
With angels hovering near,
The King of Kings asleep on straw:
Since then, I know not fear.

For Man's opinion counts but nought,
I thwarted Herod's hand
And carried the Holy Child
On the Flight to Egypt's Land.

But more than this, my finest hour,
My back, the Saviour's seat:
They cheered him with Hosannas
And spread palm before my feet.

F.H.



A Summer Pilgrimage

Members of the Legion of Mary from parish groups (praesidia) in the Diocese of Plymouth made their summer outing this year as a pilgrimage to Crediton in Devon, the birthplace of Saint Boniface (c. 680 - 754 AD).

The town has a popular pilgrim walk for visitors which shows episodes in the saint's life in stained glass. He was born with the name of Winfrith and went on to bring Christianity to the Netherlands and Germany. In 716 the Holy Father gave him the name of Boniface and, in 722, Pope Gregory II made him Bishop of all Germany.

The Catholic Church in Crediton is the National Shrine to the saint who, together with St Cuthbert Mayne is also a Patron of the Plymouth Diocese in which the Legion is active, covering Devon, Cornwall and parts of Dorset.

St. Boniface is famous for tackling pagan worshippers by chopping down their sacred oak tree dedicated to the god Thor. And, in 754, now an old man and an Archbishop, he was attacked by a band of heathen warriors and struck down by a sword which pierced the holy book he raised to protect himself.

The body of this 'Apostle to the Germans' rests in a shrine in Fulda Cathedral where St Boniface is venerated today throughout Germany.

Some traditions credit Boniface with the origin of the Christmas tree. A fir tree growing in the roots of Thor's oak was claimed by him as a new symbol, saying.....

"Its leaves remain evergreen in the darkest days; let Christ be your constant light..."



SOME OF THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGION OF MARY AT THE SHRINE OF ST BONIFACE IN CREDITON, DEVON.

Legion of Mary Annual Pilgrimage to Knock

Homily by Fr. John Harris O.P.



Recently I was challenged by an image of the Catholic Church in Ireland given to me by a fellow priest.

The image portrayed us in the church as standing on one side of the road of life, people are walking up and down the road, sometimes they turn into the church but mostly they just keep walking past; and there are others on the opposite side of the road and we never cross over to them, we always expect them to cross over to us. The apostolic work of the Legion of Mary defies this view of the Church for you are the very ones, and maybe most of the time, the only ones, who do actually cross over the road and invite people to come over to us. You in your apostolic work cross the chasm that often divides those into the luxury and self-complacency as church goers from those who feel rejected or unwelcome into the Church. This year marks 100 years since Frank Duff together with his fellow legionaries in Dublin were told that there was a gulf between all good living Catholics and the ladies of Monto in Dublin city centre, the most notorious red-light district in Europe. Frank Duff was told you can't cross

this gulf. But he did cross the chasm and 100 years ago this past March the group of courageous legionaries gave those women freedom, respect and new life, and Monto was closed because that little group of legionaries dared to cross the chasm between respectability and gospel values. This to me is the greatest calling of the legionary, to cross the chasm. Those of you who are auxiliary members, who unite yourselves in prayer each day obtain the graces necessary to allow this crossing to take place. Through your prayers and sacrifices you abolish the chasm as it were.

In today's passage from the Gospel, the rich man is not accused of violence, theft, or blasphemy. His sin is deeper - it is the sin of indifference. Lazarus lies at the gate of the rich man's house, a living icon of Christ's suffering, and yet the rich man does not even see him. He lives enclosed within himself, deaf to the cry of the poor, blind to the presence of God at his very doorstep. His wealth has become not simply possessions, but his prison.



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Our membership of Legion of Mary forces us to break out of our prisons and to see those who are the poorest. Pope Leo reminds us, as we in the Legion know, the gravest form of poverty is not the lack of material wealth but not to know God. In his MESSAGE THE 9th WORLD DAY OF THE POOR the Pope writes "all this earth's goods, material realities, worldly pleasures, economic prosperity, however important, cannot bring happiness to our hearts. Wealth often disappoints and can lead to tragic situations of poverty - above all the poverty born of the failure to recognise our need for God and of the attempt to live without him. A saying of Saint Augustine comes to mind: "Let all your hope be in God: feel your need for him, and let him fill that need. Without him, whatever you possess will only make you all the emptier." And those of you who work in the Legion know the truth of these words of St. Augustine.



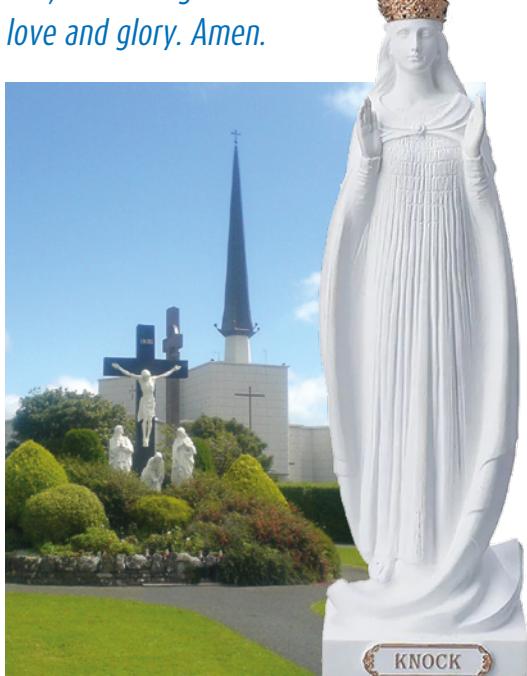
However, the Legion is not merely an association for "doing spiritual good works." It is a school of spiritual vision. As Frank Duff writes: "the apostolate is the extension of the motherhood of Mary." I think we can say in Mary's womb the chasms between God and humanity, heaven and earth were crossed once and for all in the Lord Jesus himself. Our Lady, the humble handmaid of the Lord, is the model of one whose heart was completely open to God and therefore open to others. Here at Knock Mary brought the heavenly court across the chasm, as she came to this wind-swept hill side on a rainy August evening in the West of Ireland, suffering from famine and hopelessness because her eyes were free of self. This Marian attentiveness is what the Legion seeks to form in us: the ability to see Christ in those whom the world passes by.

Finally, the parable reminds us of the seriousness of our lives here on earth, - the ultimate destiny of the human person, the seriousness of our membership of the Church and in the Legion. Our spirituality is not some safe place of comfort, it brings us to the ultimate, the salvation of souls, both our own and those to whom we reach out to. Today's Gospel passage is a profound revelation of the eternal consequences of our choices and, most importantly, of the way we respond - or fail to respond - to grace. The "great chasm" fixed between heaven and hell is not arbitrary. It is the final revelation of the gulf we allow to grow in this life when we refuse to love. If I close my heart now, if I ignore Lazarus at my gate, then I am already shaping a soul that cannot enjoy communion with God in eternity. Remember the final judgement and the afterlife reveals, it does not invent, who we have become, or are becoming. Our choices make us make us to be who we are, not the final judgement.

Thus, for us, brothers and sisters our membership in the Legion of Mary is not an addition to our Christian life; it is our school of salvation. When we go two by two, visiting the sick, the housebound, the lapsed, in our street contact, knocking at a door in a foreign city, each time we offer a miraculous medal we are training our souls for heaven. We learn to cross the "chasms" of indifference, isolation, and fear. We allow Mary to teach us

her way of seeing, her way of noticing, her way of serving, her way of being mother.

So, dear fellow legionaries, as we gather here in our annual pilgrimage to Our Lady of Knock, let us ask Our Lady, under whose standard we serve to give us her heart: that we may never disregard the Lazarus at our gate, that our service may break down the chasms of this world, that we may never fail to kindle everywhere the fires of divine love, to enlighten those who are in darkness, to inflame those who are lukewarm, to bring back to life those who are dead in sin that, when our earthly journey is done, the battle of life over - our Legion may reassemble, without loss of any one, in the kingdom of God's love and glory. Amen.



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Senatus of Scotland Conference

Walking Together in Hope

By Alison Gilchrist

On 8th March 2025 ninety active members of the Legion of Mary from Dioceses of Aberdeen, Galloway, Motherwell, Paisley, and Archdioceses of Glasgow and Edinburgh travelled to Our Lady & St George's Church in Glasgow, to join with the parishioners for morning Mass. The Mass was celebrated by the parish priest and national spiritual director of the Legion of Mary, Fr Joseph Boyle, with Fr Pat Hennessy, Motherwell and Fr Bernard Fox MHM concelebrating.

Guest speakers were Sister Sally Hyland of Sisters of St. John of God, Dublin and Father Bernard Fox of Mill Hill Missionaries.

The object of the Legion of Mary is the glory of God through the holiness of its members, developed by prayer and sharing in the active apostolate of the Church. All spent the day pondering deeply this objective. This day was a great way to start reflecting on the life of the Legion in Scotland where it was founded in St Peter's in Partick in April 1928. Scotland was the first country outside Ireland to establish the Legion of Mary.

'Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love.'

The conference began with Legion prayers with the first line being 'Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love.' Legionaries were very mindful of how much the Holy Spirit was at work during the day. Sister Sally, telling us that her talk will be transformational and not informational, opened with her presentation on the Spirituality of the Legion of Mary. Legionaries are instruments of the mighty purposes of the Holy Spirit in union with Mary. Under the guidance of parish priests, legionaries undertake many and varied tasks depending on the needs of the parishes in which they minister and can do so only by taking the time to reflect on and nurture their own spirituality. Sister Sally reminded those present that they need to get in touch with their inner centre and take the time and space to appreciate the sacredness of who they really are. She posed several questions including: 'Do we pray or are we saying prayers?' She highlighted the need for us to recognise the presence of God within us when we pray.

Sister Sally reminded us that our work of sanctification of ourselves and others calls for a very close union with the Holy Spirit. This insightful presentation will have us all thinking very deeply whenever we pray.

Sister Sally ended by highlighting the heroic lives of three well-known legionaries: Frank Duff, the founder, Edel Quinn, and Alfie Lamb, both of whom were lay missionaries and envoys of the Legion. Their causes for beatification have been introduced.



The Holy Year Prayer was recited, and participants broke for lunch. This was a good opportunity to engage with other legionaries and with the two speakers

Father Bernard Fox began the second session explaining the meaning of Synodality in the life and mission of the Church. He proposed a group exercise in which we tried to be still and listen profoundly to The Holy Spirit speaking through each one and discern how we can improve our present Legion of Mary apostolate both individually and collectively. While the appointed facilitators

were being briefed on their role, the others prayed in front of the Blessed Sacrament in the church of Our Lady and St. George.

The group interactions proved to be both challenging and fruitful with many experiencing this format of discussion for the first time. Having spent time in prayer and then listening attentively to everyone in the group, the members discussed what they believed the Holy Spirit was inspiring them to do. Some of the points emerging from these groups were: perseverance in prayer; more courage in our Legion work; listen with our hearts and pray with people; be more welcoming and give people hope; support our existing groups and look for more innovative ways to recruit, especially among young people, and realise that priests need our help.

The overwhelming sentiment of those present was that the day had been a resounding success, and legionaries left with renewed enthusiasm and zeal for their work, undertaken in union with Mary, Mother of the Church.

The day was totally spiritual, reflecting deeply on the Legion Promise. It was a wonderful opportunity to pray and reflect together with so many fellow legionaries from various parts of Scotland. It certainly helped us in this Jubilee Year to start 'Walking Together in Hope.'

'Walking together in Hope'



I wonder what it was like on the 7th of September 1921 when that small group gathered along with Frank Duff in Myra House, just down the street from the church here.

As that little group gathered, they would have had no idea of how their vision, which was supported by their prayer and hard work, would grow and flourish into the future. So much so that here we are 104 years later remembering that moment and the people who had that vision in their hearts.

The words of the Gospel this evening speak powerfully to their vision and mission; Jesus outlines how no one tears a new piece of cloth to put it on an old piece; they just won't go together. He goes further to talk about putting 'new wine into fresh skins.' There is a sense of something new and fresh about the Gospel. Jesus

104th Anniversary of the Legion of Mary

*St Nicholas of Myra Church,
Francis Street, Dublin*

Homily by Bishop Paul Dempsey

invites us to a new understanding and way of doing things. Those of us who are called to follow him as disciples in Baptism are called to something new and fresh. The people who gathered on the 7th of September 1921 were creating something new and fresh in the life of the Church. They were ahead of their time living out what the Church calls Catholic Social Teaching, which at its heart recognises the dignity and worth of every person, including the poor and those on the peripheries. This work of reaching out was sustained by a life of deep prayer and participation in the Eucharist.

This vision and mission must have been in the heart of God because it could not have grown in the way it did without the Lord's blessing. Frank Duff's vision of 'faith in action' is something that continues to inspire us today.

There is no doubt that his faith must have been very strong as it sustained him and helped him face great challenges over the years. My sense is that these challenges never fazed him because of his deep and unwavering faith. Later in his life he attended the Second Vatican Council as a lay observer. One of the central teachings to come from the Council, in the Document on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, reminds us of the ‘universal call to holiness.’ It sounds nice but perhaps holiness can seem a long way away from the reality of our lives at times. It depends on how we define holiness. For me, the best definition of holiness was by one of the early Church fathers, Origen. He defined holiness as ‘seeing with the eyes of Christ.’ That definition speaks to me. Holiness challenges us to see with the eyes of Christ. In reality we are called to see Christ in the situations in which we find ourselves. We are called to act as Christ would in the situations we all experience along the journey of life.

Those who gathered down the street from here back in September 1921 were living out their call to holiness. They were reflecting upon the reality of the situation in Dublin at the time and they were looking at it through the eyes of Christ. They reflected and prayed on how they could reach out to those on the margins, the sick, the poor and those in all sorts of need. That mission grew and developed in so many ways over the following decades. Indeed, that mission continues right up to today and is now in your hands as members of the Legion. Thank you for your generosity and commitment.

Just as that group gathered back over a hundred years ago to reflect upon the needs of society and how the Gospel could speak to it, that mission remains the same today. Yes, it is a very different context and the world we live in is a very different place. And yet there are similarities: we still have people who suffer from illness, addiction, poverty, homelessness, imprisonment, the fragmentation of family life, so many find themselves on the peripheries of society.



Bishop Dempsey with members of the Legion of Mary



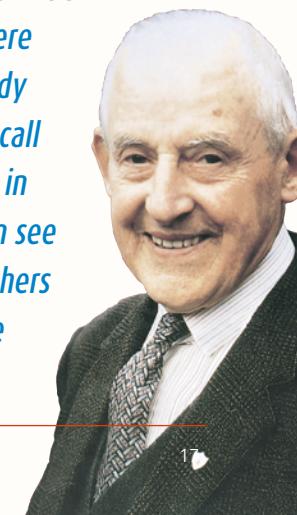
The need for prayer is great and the need for the Lord's loving, compassionate and healing touch is much needed today. That universal call to holiness to 'see with the eyes of Christ' and act in his name is needed today more than ever.

As we celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the Legion of Mary may we be inspired by the vision of those who gathered in prayer on that September evening in 1921. They faced many challenges, it must have felt daunting, how could their effort make a difference? But they weren't discouraged, they were motivated by prayer and the call of Jesus to reach out to all.

May we be encouraged by this example of prayer and service. Yes, we too face many challenges. The temptation to follow the road of pessimism is strong. But the Gospel doesn't call us to pessimism, it calls us to hope! The words of the Gospel this evening bring that home to us; it inspires and

encourages us. Jesus reminds us that his disciples are called to new ways of thinking, something for which our world and society longs. Our mission is not about putting old wine into new skins, it's about new wine and fresh skins. The Gospel is forever young, new and fresh; it always brings life and newness to situations that may initially seem impossible.

May our hearts be open to the possibilities the Gospel offers us today. May our faith be strengthened to know that it is the Lord who is in charge, something of which Frank Duff and his companions were convinced. May Our Lady help us to live out our call to holiness given to us in Baptism so that we can see the world and our brothers and sisters through the eyes of Christ.



Talk at Annual Commemoration for the Servant of God Frank Duff

By Fr. Bernardo de Nardo

The following Talk was given on Sunday 5th June 2025 at Glasnevin Cemetery on the birthday of Frank Duff

The annual commemoration of Frank Duff's birthday is once again an opportunity to reflect on his life, his achievements and his legacy. This ordinary Dubliner who has influenced millions of people all over the world lived a very simple and at the same time extraordinary life.

There are several things about his life that make it really unique, but what I think is the most amazing one is the fact that he was very much ahead of his time in almost everything.

It is impossible to disconnect the life of Frank Duff with that of the Legion of Mary; but even before this connection started, he had already come to the conclusion that holiness was a duty for all baptised catholics, regardless of what was their specific vocation. And that is clearly expressed in his first writing 'Can we be saints?' There he gives a very comprehensive explanation of the call to holiness; that it is for every single catholic and also provides practical examples and recommendations on how to achieve it. That brings us to another great

talent Frank Duff had; being a very practical person, he not only stated the ideals, but also gave concrete methods on how to achieve them.

Personal holiness means to respond to this call with the best you can offer during the particular time and historical context in which you are called to live. Frank Duff understood that very well, not trying to look back at things of the past, and even though he was very much ahead of his time in the way of seeing things, he also was able to accept in humility the limitations imposed by contexts that sometimes were not able to share his vision. At the same time he knew when to take risks and how to bear the consequences of knowing that some of his proposals and undertakings were not going to be well accepted by all.

In times of poverty, fights for freedom and unrest, a young Frank Duff already committed to Christ by a desire of obtaining holiness, shared the sufferings of his fellow nationals and helped many in their necessities. This led him to discover a deeper necessity of those in need: the spiritual eagerness for the truth.

He had read the 'True Devotion to Our Lady' by Saint Louis Marie de Montfort, but didn't quite understand it very well. But during a retreat and being obedient to the suggestion of his spiritual director of reading it again, he finally understood its most deep meaning and implications. In this episode of his life we see how a simple act of obedience of this man already fully committed to holiness led him to the accomplishment of the foundation of the largest Lay Catholic Organisation, the Legion of Mary.

Divine providence without human collaboration doesn't work and Frank Duff had understood that very well. Divine providence was telling him to do something about this new realisation of the Role of Our Blessed Mother he had come to know by reading the True Devotion, and he saw in a group of ladies very much interested in helping the work of the men of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, a possibility to develop this new insight. These ladies were invited along with Frank Duff and Fr. Toher to discuss the True Devotion and how to practise it; the result as we all know was the birth of the Legion of Mary.

The initial apostolic endeavour of these women, the visitation of terminal patients, something really new for that time, led them to the following adventure that was the



rescue of women involved in prostitution. Only worried about the salvation of those poor souls trapped in this horrible business, their efforts were focused in providing for them first of all a spiritual rebirth, and later an accommodation and means for a decent living. All these remarkable events and the closure of the whole area known as Monto, of which this year we commemorate 100 years, is narrated in the wonderful book 'Miracles on Tap,' whose author is Frank Duff himself.

This infant organisation that was producing fruits of holiness and conversion, was mainly composed of women, and not only that, it was being led by women. Although since the beginning Frank Duff had had a leading role together with Fr. Toher, the women were not only doing the work but in fact also leading the organisation. We have to remember only that the very first president of the first group was a woman, Mrs. Kirwan, and that when the first council was organised in 1924, that later on became the Concilium Legionis, the same lady was elected to be president. Once again, we see how much ahead of time Frank Duff was, forming an organisation for the laity that was being led almost completely by women, more than 100 years ago.

As the organisation grew and eventually men were accepted into it, the need for spreading it all over the world arose, and the first envoys were sent, the first of all of them being again a woman, Mary Duffy. Later on many more will be added to the list of those who left their land for a certain period of time to go abroad to extend the Legion. In this process of selecting envoys we can see how Frank Duff trusted the youth; most of the envoys were young people and he was not afraid to let them fulfil their vocations as lay missionaries; he took risks sending people the world might not have considered suitable. The Legion rapidly spread all over the world, the lives of Venerable Edel Quinn and the Servant of God Alfie Lambe bore witness to the possibility of obtaining holiness through Legion membership while the Legion consolidated its presence in the Catholic Church as a worldwide organisation for evangelisation.

The coronation of the recognition Frank Duff already had as the leader and founder of the largest Catholic lay organisation came when he was invited to attend the Second Vatican Council as a lay observer. The ovation he received by the council fathers when they knew he was present in Saint Peter's Basilica, was the high moment of his life.

He continued for many more years leading the Legion of Mary, as an



officer of the Concilium, and keeping a vast correspondence with so many people around the world. Reading some of those letters gives you an insight into his personality and show he could be sometimes a father, a brother, or a friend, and why not a spiritual advisor.

He wrote many articles that cover different subjects, some of them are very much prophetic. To read them is to embark on a spiritual journey that is a delight for the soul and that, at the same time, provides solid formation to the reader.

Reading them we easily perceive that his union with Mary was really profound. Some of the things he wrote about Mary produce in the reader emotions that make you want to experience that same union with Her. His reflections on Our Blessed Lady lead you to a deeper knowledge of the Mother of Christ, which naturally redounds in a better comprehension of the mysteries of Jesus himself.

But what I think really stands out is his particular relationship with the Holy Spirit, something that we can understand by reading some of those mentioned articles. In some of them, the insights regarding the Third Person of the Holy Trinity and his relationship with Mary are of such newness and depth, that I think are completely unique in the history of the Church.

Even more amazing is the fact that Frank Duff never received formal theological formation, which proves that his union with the Holy Spirit and with Mary was so profound as to produce this level of originality.

Today on Pentecost Sunday, when we are called once again by the Church to meditate on the Third Person of the Holy Trinity and his action in our lives, especially through Baptism and Confirmation, let's make use of this material at our disposal written by Frank Duff as a means to enlighten ourselves and grow in knowledge and love of the Holy Spirit. Let's renew our Legion Promise addressed to the Holy Spirit and let us inflame the world by using the gifts of the Holy Spirit we all possess like Frank Duff did. Let's not forget that the colour of the Legion is red, the colour of the Holy Spirit that represents that fire and love with which we want to enkindle the world and also the blood of the martyrs, so many legionary martyrs who have offered their lives for the same cause.

To be a collaborator with the Holy Spirit means to use the talents given by the Father for building up the Church of Christ. Like in the parable of the talents, Frank Duff received many and made well use of them- all making them produce hundredfold. His capacity for administration was remarkable, using it as a tool for the cause of evangelisation. The functioning of the Legion councils is an idea that works wonderfully well.

Furthermore, his idea of creating higher councils that don't lose their local government but that combine it at a larger scale is a development that, again, is absolutely unique and fruit of the genius mind of Frank Duff.

But even more interesting is the fact that since the beginning of the formation of Legion councils in the first decades of the last century, the idea of government and authority is not based on the officers of that council but on the whole body. The instructions we find in the Handbook regarding making decisions in councils show that the principles are: prayer, free discussion of all matters, reflection, discernment and finding together the will of God, in which all members without distinction are involved, showing once again that he was ahead of his time.



We are the heirs of Frank Duff's legacy; we have been enriched by our Legion membership, in our hands lay the responsibility of making the Legion grow and be faithful to the original spirit and charism that Frank Duff and those first women created. It is also our responsibility and duty to work for the canonisation of our founder; not in search of vainglory but as a means of presenting to the world a model of holiness to be followed and that can be achieved.

As individual legionaries and as part of our own councils we must make his cause progress; we have to do simple things like distribute his prayer to everybody; ask for graces and miracles through his intercession and when granted, report it to Concilium, make his writings known to people, legionaries and non-legionaries. We have to speak about him, we need to make him known; his life is an example and inspiration that many more need to be aware of so that they can imitate him.

Another very remarkable aspect of his personality was his deep knowledge and understanding of the human mind, of the particularities and similarities of every human person as a child of God. He was aware of the cultural differences and richness of each country, but at the same time very much aware too of the universality of the message of the Gospel and of



the necessity of that Gospel to be preached to each person. This knowledge of the human nature, his union with Mary and the Holy Spirit and the awareness of the task entrusted by Jesus Christ to the

Church and to each member of it to go and be missionaries, enabled him to create the Legion of Mary in order to make this commandment a reality.

The system of the Legion is so simple and effective that it has been adopted already by almost every country of the world and every diocese of the Catholic Church. All of this thanks to the conviction, determination and faithfulness of Frank Duff, who was as I mentioned above ahead of his time in almost everything and for this even suffered opposition and persecution. That never diminished his commitment and above all the joy and happiness of being simply a legionary of Mary, a happiness that was evident in his great sense of humour and in his contagious and unique laughter.

Let's imitate Frank Duff in his virtues, in his determination and in his love for souls.

Let each one of us be faithful to our legionary vocation, like he was, proclaiming by word and example the Good News of Jesus Christ.



Our Lady of the Pillar Zaragoza, Spain

By Michael Walsh

other disciples to evangelise the local tribes. In the year 40 A.D., while praying one night on the banks of the Ebro River, the Virgin Mary accompanied by angels appeared to him with the Child Jesus in her arms, standing on a pillar.

The following account of the apparition is from Venerable Mary of Agreda, a 17th-century Spanish nun known for her writings and experiences of mystical phenomena, particularly her reports of bilocation and revelations received directly from the Blessed Virgin Mary. She is best known for her work, *The Mystical City of God*: “So now, the Blessed Mother consoled St. James, saying: “My son James, the Most High and Mighty God of Heaven has chosen this place that you may consecrate and dedicate here a temple and house of prayer where, under the invocation of my name, He wishes to be adored and served, and all the faithful who seek my intercession will receive the graces they ask if they have true faith and devotion, and in the Name of my Son I promise them great favours and blessings, for this will be my temple

Our Lady of the Pillar Marian Shrine is situated in the Basilica-Cathedral of Our Lady of Pilar on the banks of the Ebro River in Zaragoza, Aragon, in the north-east of the interior of Spain.

A wooden image commemorating the apparition is enshrined in the Cathedral-Basilica. Pope Callixtus III (1456) granted indulgences for visitors to the shrine. Pope Innocent XIII in 1730 mandated Mary's veneration throughout the Spanish Empire.

In the early days of Christianity, the Apostles of Jesus spread the Gospel throughout the known world. It is traditionally believed that Saint James the Greater, brother of Saint John the Evangelist, travelled to Roman Hispania (modern-day Spain) with

and my house, my own inheritance and possession, and in testimony of my promise, this pillar will remain here, and on it my own image that, in this place where you will build my temple, will last and endure with the Holy Faith until the end of the world.

This must be done at once, and when your work is accomplished, you will return to Jerusalem where it is the will of my Divine Son that you make the sacrifice of your life where He gave up His for the redemption of mankind."

Prior to experiencing the apparition, James had been undergoing great obstacles while preaching the Word of God and enjoying scant returns from his endeavours in terms of conversions. On the night of the apparition, he was at a low ebb because of his perceived apostolic failures. The appearance of the Blessed Virgin and her message consoled him. Her presence signified hope for future success in his preaching, a new dawn beyond his dreams. Subsequently, James and his disciples built a small church on the site, believed to be the first church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This small church was replaced over the centuries by more elaborate structures, culminating in the present-day Basilica-Cathedral.

Over the centuries the Shrine and Basilica-Cathedral has been a momentous part of Spanish Catholic



VENERABLE MARY OF AGREDA

devotion, and a significant pilgrimage site as the location became better known and miracles were happening. Above the high altar is a carving of the Virgin extending her hand to the Apostle, and over an altar to the right of this is a

picture of the seven disciples of Saint James. On the left is the altar where, under a rich canopy of silver, against a dark background thickly studded with diamonds, stands the miraculous pillar with the statue of the Blessed Virgin and the Infant Jesus.

This appearance of the Mother of God in Zaragoza is believed to be the only recorded instance of Mary exhibiting the mystical phenomenon of bilocation. She would, at that time have been living in Jerusalem, or Ephesus. The apparition is traditionally considered to be the first such event in the history of Christianity, having occurred while Mary was still living on this Earth. During the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), three bombs were dropped on the church from an airplane; the bombs tore through the roof and hit the floor, but miraculously, none of them exploded.

In 1771, the artist Goya was appointed to produce this picture for the vault of the Coreto of the Basilica-Cathedral of Our Lady of Pilar, in Zaragoza.

The current structure of the Basilica was completed in the 17th century; the first stone having been laid on the feast of Saint James in 1686. The impressive edifice now enshrines the column and statue of the Blessed Virgin.

On 20 May 1905, Pope Pius X granted the image Our Lady of the Pillar a canonical coronation, adding to the number of popes who had given approval to the Shrine. This pilgrimage site has been a popular choice for multitudes of pilgrims of various denominations over the centuries since 40 A.D.

The traditional belief is that after building the first church dedicated to Mary in Zaragoza with his fellow disciples, and four years of missionary work, Saint James the Greater returned to Jerusalem in AD 44, and what happened next is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles 12:1: 'King Herod commenced persecuting certain members of the Church. He beheaded James, the brother of John'... In AD



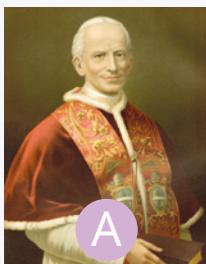
44, King Herod himself died in the same year he sanctioned the death of Saint James the Greater, brother of Saint John the Evangelist.

However, tradition holds that his disciples carried his body back to Spain where he was buried in what is now Santiago de Compostella-a place of pilgrimage to the shrine of Saint James within the cathedral.

The apparition of Our Lady of the Pillar is accepted by tradition. Moreover, it is implicitly approved by the Catholic Church due to the elevation of the shrine to Basilica status and the widespread devotion to Our Lady of the Pillar. The Feast Day of Our Lady of the Pillar falls on 12th October.

Competition Result

Here are the answers to our competition featured on page 29 of our last issue, number 3, 2025.



A. Pope Leo XIII; B. Cardinal John Newman; C. Saint Maria Faustyna Kowalska

Our winner, who was the first to identify these images is:
Maureen Breen
Benvoran, Cooraclare
Kilrush, Co. Clare.
Congratulations from
Maria Legionis.

My Experience Working in the Regina Coeli Hostel

By Beatrice Orsenigo

I'm not fond of the usual kind of holidays at the seaside or in the mountains. I usually look for something different - experiences where I can be useful but also learn and reflect on life. This summer took me to the Regina Coeli Hostel in Dublin, where I spent four weeks between July and August. The hostel offers temporary accommodation to women in need, for a variety of reasons. For a small weekly fee, they receive a room, breakfast and dinner, and support in many other ways.

My tasks varied from day-to-day: preparing breakfast for the residents, running the laundry, cleaning bathrooms and common areas, working at the front desk, or helping to serve dinner - always together with the indoor sisters or the volunteers who came daily to assist in running the hostel.

I went there with the idea of helping, of offering my time and work, of lending a hand. And I did - but what the Lord gave me in return was so much more. As I have experienced before, I ended up receiving far more than I gave.

I encountered many faces during those weeks, and even now, back home, I find myself thinking of them

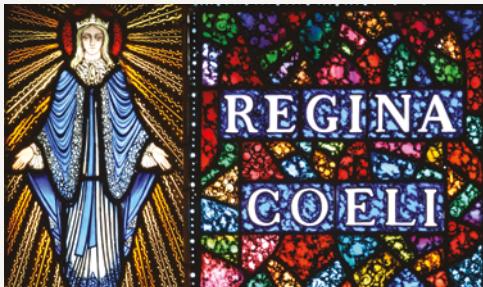
all, recalling moments and situations. The first faces were those of the young women staying at the hostel. At the beginning they were strangers, nameless, but little-by-little I began to recognise them, to recall what had happened the day before, to exchange a few words about the Irish weather or about my efforts to improve my English. I saw them sharing spaces and rooms and offering thanks for even the smallest things. Thank you, sister - for the bag of clean laundry, for opening the front door, even for checking their bags when they came back in! Some were more private, often away at work during the day; others smiled at me and welcomed a short chat. From them I learned not to lose heart, to keep hope alive, and to face difficulties without being crushed by them. I hope and pray for their future - that they may make wise and far-sighted choices, perhaps supported by professional services; that their stay at the hostel may truly be only temporary; and that they may one day rebuild the family life that is now so fragile.

Then there were the faces of the volunteers. After a week, I realised they were organised in groups - Monday's group, Tuesday's group, and so on.

What I appreciated most was the friendly time before starting work, filled with thoughtful conversations and shared smiles; then their steady commitment, week-after-week, to tasks that were often humble; and finally, the moment after service, gathered again over a cup of tea and the cakes or fruit they had prepared and left for everyone (the kitchen table in the front office was always full of something to share). They welcomed me warmly, as if they had been expecting me: "Oh, you must be Beatrice..."

At dinnertime, before and after, they prayed together with anyone who wished to join. I watched them: prayer gave meaning to their service. They drew inspiration from the words of Jesus and the example of Mary, and from that they seemed to receive the strength to serve with love, respect, and closeness - towards each other and towards the residents.

But the faces I came to know best were those of the indoor sisters, with whom I lived at the hostel, and of the legionaries of the Regina Coeli praesidium, the group that ensures the hostel's daily life runs smoothly. With them I prayed every morning before beginning any activity. The Rosary and the Catena prayer gave meaning to the work of the day; and for me, not used to community life, those moments were truly precious. They helped me pray, supported me, and made me feel part of something



greater. I don't often pray with others, apart from Mass and a few other occasions; but with the legionaries I witnessed a daily commitment to prayer, to coming together with the awareness of being a group. I was also impressed by the Tuesday evening meetings of the praesidium - serious, orderly, and well attended.

This spirit of sharing continued in the work shifts, never carried out alone, and in the everyday management of our common spaces like the kitchen and the living room. I could also talk openly with Sabrina and the other sisters about situations we had witnessed, hear the reasoning behind certain decisions, or share what I had noticed, exercising both critical thought and charity.

So many faces, so many stories, I carry them all with me. Stories of people who, like me, are searching for a life of meaning and fullness. I am grateful to the Lord for this experience, to Mary who consoles and protects on the path toward God, to the priest who pointed me to the hostel, and to everyone I met there. All, in their own way, made my month at the Regina Coeli Hostel unique and rich. I remember them all, and I pray for them.

Pilgrimage of Hope: Walk to Four Dublin Churches

By Gordon Celender

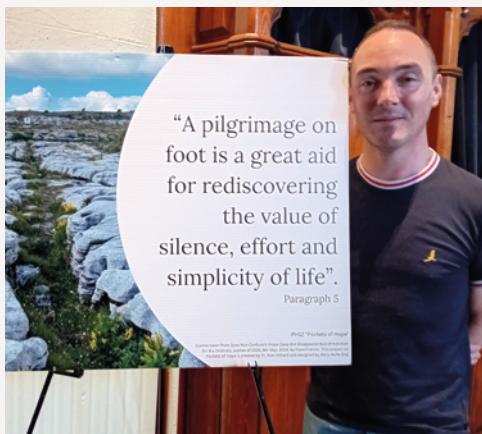
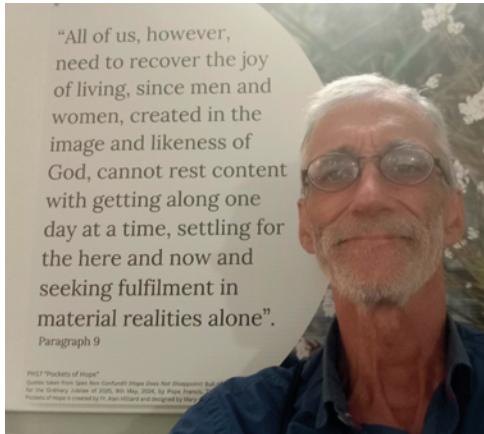
On a lovely summer day in mid-July, ten legionaries of Mary from Ancilla Domini Curia gathered at 9:45AM at St. Andrew's Church, Westland Row, Dublin. We offered the 1st Joyful Mystery and then attended the 10AM Mass with the small but reverent congregation. The celebrant was Fr. Anthony, a friendly Chinese priest who offered a special prayer for us and all embarking on the four-church pilgrimage. He also heard confessions of those who wished to avail themselves of that Sacrament. Inside, there were several posters with reflections on the theme of hope.

We prayed former Pope Francis' Jubilee Prayer and made our way to

Immaculate Conception Church at City Quay. There we recited the 2nd Joyful Mystery in front of a large statue of Our Lady. Some of the group lit candles or said short prayers at a few shrines and we took a group photo.

We crossed the Liffey River and went to our next stop: Our Lady of Lourdes Church on Sean McDermott St. The remains of Ven. Matt Talbot are enshrined there; there is also a replica of Lourdes grotto and a display of the life and work of St. John Bosco, patron of youth. At the grotto we recited the 3rd Joyful Mystery and a healing prayer in honor of St. Bernadette.





As we walked to the final church, one of our newest members led the 4th decade and soon we reached St. Mary's pro-Cathedral in the heart of city-center. After a short period of silence, we recited the 5th Joyful Mystery and Concluding Prayers of the Tessera at Our Lady's altar behind the sanctuary in the nave. It was a splendid way to end our Curia outing. We were all inspired by our shared experience of entering more deeply into the Jubilee spirit.

After our short Curia pilgrimage, most of the group walked to the upper restaurant of Dunne's Stores to eat a light lunch and share some relaxed conversation and comradery. A wonderful family spirit of prayer and fellowship pervaded this three-hour Legion gathering and made a most inspiring and memorable day for us all. I hope you also can make this Pilgrimage of Hope during this special Jubilee 2025. May it prove to edify your faith, strengthen you in hope and fill you with God's love.



Walk to Four Dublin Churches during Jubilee Year of Hope 2025

By Mayolisia Ekayanti
Bethlehem Curia

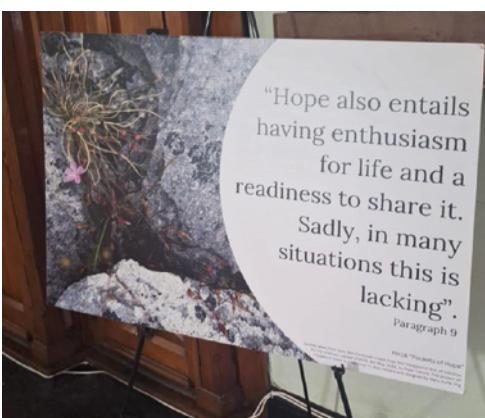
On Saturday 14th June 2025, nine members of Bethlehem Curia set off on pilgrimage to visit the four churches assigned by the archdiocese of Dublin to gain the indulgence in this Jubilee Year of Hope. This was my first pilgrim experience with the Legion of Mary in Dublin, after leaving the Maria Guadalupe praesidium in Indonesia a year ago.

Our first stop was to attend 10.30am Mass in St. Mary's Pro Cathedral where the priest welcomed all pilgrims and wished them a good day. As we contemplated the message on the posters around the church we prayed for our Holy Father, Pope Leo.

We made the short walk to Our Lady of Lourdes Church on Sean McDermott Street. We recited the Rosary before the statue of our Lady of Lourdes and

prayed for the intentions of addicts in front of the tomb of Venerable Matt Talbot. The church reminded me of Venerable Matt's life of repentance as one proof of Hope. When things seem impossible, we must turn to God with a sincere heart. Matt's life helps me to contemplate that sometimes we tend to seek our own benefit and ignore people who love to cause trouble: instead, we should help them to find the "light" in God. Frank Duff took the uneasy way to help the prostitutes in the Monto area and helped them see the "light." It is important not to lose our Hope in God and to be bold in becoming God's instruments.

Despite the rain we continued by Luas (*local tram*) to our lunch stop, a very welcome interlude and also had time to dry off before we continue to our third stop at St. Andrew's Church on Westland Row. As a legionary from Indonesia this church was special for me as it reminded me that this was the church in which our founder Frank Duff's funeral Mass took place.



We prayed our Catena and were inspired by the posters of Hope that were on display around the church.

Our last stop was at church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary on City Quay; a beautiful hidden church; again, one can only be inspired not to lose Hope in our everyday struggles in life. We recited our concluding prayers here, prayer for the beatification of Frank Duff, the Pope's intentions, and thus we did not lose out on our indulgence.

This pilgrimage was special for me because as someone from Indonesia,

it was a privilege to take this journey through the streets of Dublin. We should always be full of Hope for others and as legionaries follow Frank Duff's life to be the instruments of God's love and to remember in our concluding prayer to ask God to "grant us a lively faith, animated by charity, which will enable us to perform all our actions from the motive of pure love of you, to serve you in our neighbour, a faith firm and immovable as a rock, to bring back life to those who are dead in sin, and which will guide our own feet in the way of peace."





Praises of Mary



Go to Mary, then. Praise her, and you will be enlightened.

For it is through her that the true Light shines on the sea of this world.

St. Ildephonsus

See the confidence that the Church places in Mary.

In all public calamities she invariably calls upon the faithful to enlist her protection through novenas, through prayers and processions, and through visits to her churches and shrines.

St. Alphonsus Liguori

All the gifts and graces that we receive from God are dispensed by the hands of Mary.

They are given to whom she pleases, when she pleases, and as she pleases.

St. Bernardine of Siena

There are many graces that we will not obtain if we ask them of God.

But if we ask them of Mary, we will obtain them, not because she is more powerful but because God wants to honour her in this way.

St. Anselm

Those who fail to do the works of their Mother, renounce their lineage.

Mary is humble, but they are proud. Mary is pure, but they are wicked.

Mary is full of love, but they are full of hate for others.

St. Peter Chrysologus

This faithful handmaid never, in either thought or word or deed, contradicted the Most High.

Entirely despoiled of her own will, Mary lived always and, in all things, obedient to the will of God.

St. Thomas of Villanov





Legion world news

ASIA

THE HOLY LAND: Three praesidia in Iblin were formed into a Curia and two new praesidia started in Ramleh. There was joy at the February meeting when the Curia in Galilee resumed after eighteen months. They started a new praesidium of ten in Jordan which last had Legion of Mary presence in the 1960s.

INDIA: Works in **Chennai Senatus** include enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in homes, visits to destitute homes, orphanages and the sick, preparation for the sacraments and restoration of peace in families. **Pondicherry Senatus**

reports that a number of suicides were prevented. A Rosary Rally attended by over 6,000 was organised in **Kerala Senatus**. **Karnataka Senatus:** The reporting councils and praesidia visited 3,608 Catholic and 54 Hindu homes. 1,214 scapulars were distributed.

Mumbai Senatus: The Hindi, Marathi and Konkani handbooks are being printed. In Mumbai; 1,000 contacts were made at a church bookstall.

Kottar Regia recorded a large increase in Legion membership.

INDONESIA: Works mentioned in reports from **Malang Senatus** included home and hospital visitation. Prisons and other detention centres were also visited. Semarang Regia has 2,278 active and 1,000 auxiliary members. Juniors were mentioned in three Curia reports. There was mention of praesidia in Merauke city which is in West Papua. **Jakarta Senatus:** East Jakarta Comitium has 1,000 members and the North Jakarta Comitium has 829 senior and 119 junior members. The South Jakarta Curia has a seminary praesidium. Works reported

on include *Patricians* and prison visitation. Five new praesidia were set up by the Pontianak Comitium.

JAPAN: Osaka Senatus: A praesidium with ten members, works closely with the priest. Through his influence they were able to visit local hospitals and nursing homes. Another praesidium has four members. They reported finding it difficult to recruit new members. Their spiritual director, advised them to promote friendship first. To this end they organise a 'Sparrow School', a twice monthly gathering of faithful and others. The members went on pilgrimage to the church nominated as a Jubilee Church for the Holy Year. Another praesidium, with four members, assists with the liturgy, and does some home visitation.

KOREA: Seoul Senatus: Middle Seoul Regia, has eight Comitia, 92 Curiae and 814 praesidia, with 6,449 active members. The 70th Anniversary of the Legion of Mary in Cheongju Diocese was celebrated. The Seat of Wisdom Curia, attached to the **Gwangju Senatus**, is comprised of visually impaired members. Some of their works mentioned included visits to welfare centres and the recruitment of auxiliaries. A Comitium organised a Rosary Night with Our Lady, which was attended by 1,200 members. A celebration was held before the February meeting of the **Daegu Senatus** to mark the 800th meeting of the council. Archbishop Thaddeus Cho Hwan-Kil of the Archdiocese of Daegu graciously visited to celebrate the occasion and offered words of encouragement to the council members and legionaries in attendance. A Comitium reported that many members took part in

street evangelisation at an Amusement Park. The February minutes show 532 catechumens recruited, 302 baptisms and 1,183 returns to the Sacraments.

LEBANON: Two new praesidia started in the Bekaa and Byblos regions. They prepared children for First Holy Communion and organise summer camps for children. The praesidium in Beirut organised days for elderly, people suffering from mental health issues and a retreat around the Feast of the Annunciation.

MALAYSIA: Kuala Lumpur Regia: A second Comitium was established in the Malacca region. Two annual reunions had attendances of 150, and 130 respectively.

MYANMAR: Sixty-two couples were prepared for Catholic marriage. Eighteen homes were consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Pakistan: Karachi Comitium has fifteen praesidia attached and a Curia with twelve praesidia. Sick people are visited and this apostolate includes an outreach to Protestants. Three new praesidia were formed. 350 attended the Acies.

PHILIPPINES: A Comitium in **Bicolandia Senatus** reported they had eleven people for adult baptism, conducted Sacred Heart Enthronement, and did home, hospital and jail visitation. A university praesidium carries the Statue of Our Lady from department to department. Prayers are said on arrival and departure. Reported works by all councils in **Cebu Senatus** include marriage validation where 14 cohabiting couples received the sacrament of matrimony and six couples became legionaries. Jail apostolate, crowd contact, book barrow and Exploratio Dominicalis are also conducted. A non-Catholic was converted.

Senatus of NORTHERN PHILIPPINES: Works include home visitation, visitation of Pilgrim

Statue of Our Lady of Fatima to 850 families and many people have been brought to receive the sacraments. Crowd contact is carried out in two markets. **Mindanao Senatus:** Iponan Curia reported 150 children were prepared to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of First Holy Communion.

Western Visayas Senatus reports show extensive provision of catechesis, sacramental facilitation, jail visits, home and hospital outreach, and crowd contact. Several new praesidia have been established, including in the seminary.

SINGAPORE: In **Singapore Senatus** crowd contact took place at bus stops, markets and in the Botanic Gardens. The lapsed were encouraged to resume practice of the Faith, and prayers were recited at funeral homes. One of the two university praesidia held a *Patricians* meeting with the title 'Introduction to the Devout Life.'

SRI LANKA: Homes, hospital visitation and teaching catechism feature, as well as organising many devotional exercises. The juniors operate in five schools and four parishes.

THAILAND: The Nativity of Mary Senatus, Bangkok, initiated a one-day seminar for officers and members of praesidia under direct supervision of the Senatus on September 6, 2025, with an aim to develop potential of legionaries and for members to have a clearer and better understanding of the functions of the four officers to reinforce the Army of our Blessed Lady. There were 109 participants, out of a total of 167 members. The seminar was very well-received, and it re-invigorated all legionaries who attended. This is the first of its kind and after 1.5 months of the seminar, two councils set up a plan for the same seminar to be done in their curiae. The spiritual director is translating the 33- Day Preparation for Consecration to

Jesus through Mary into Thai.

VIETNAM: Thirty new members were recruited. There is great support from the clergy in all councils reporting.

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA: **Sydney Senatus:** Works reported include bringing Holy Communion to people in nursing homes and to the sick at home, and teaching scripture in school, visitation with Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, and crowd contact. In **Melbourne Senatus**, three new praesidia were set up. In Albury-Wodonga Comitium, catechism is taught in eight state schools. Children are taught how to pray the Rosary and a *Patricians* meeting attracted 22 people. The Curia in Hobart conduct Pilgrim Statue apostolate and distribute Miraculous Medals at the shopping centre.

New Zealand: **Auckland Senatus:** The Northwest Curia reported visiting rest homes and hospitals and distributing Holy Communion. Juniors help seniors with the cleaning of homes of some elderly people. They performed a play in the nursing home and pray the Rosary in college before school starts while 25 attended the most recent one. A praesidium in Auckland started their first street contact and book barrow apostolate near the busy train station. They were well received.

Papua New Guinea: The **Madang Senatus** is one year old. Since the last report, much visitation of the sick, aged and disabled has been carried out. Many cases were encountered for the reception of the sacraments and legionaries taught catechism. Follow up was carried out with auxiliaries. Youth were encouraged to become active in church so to avoid drugs and alcohol. Visits were made to prison and police holding cells to counsel people there to hope

for a new life. Remote villages are visited and inhabitants were introduced to the Catholic Faith. The **Regia of Port Moresby** reported extension was carried out at Alotau Diocese for one month. A visit to Trobriand Islands resulted in the revival of ten senior and four junior praesidia. The **Regia of Rabaul** has Legion of Mary presence in 79 out of 119 parishes. Works reported include visitation of lapsed Catholics, non-Catholics and auxiliary members.

SOUTH AMERICA

ARGENTINA: The **Regia of La Plata**, attached to the **Buenos Aires Senatus** has a praesidium at a university, which carries out many works on the campus. A special outreach is made to immigrants from other South American countries as well as Haiti. New works include visitation of bars. A Pilgrim Statue was offered to the owner of one bar. He accepted. He told those who were in the bar that Our Lady wanted to visit them. The music was switched off, and some prayers were said to welcome Our Lady's visit. **Salta Senatus** reported many new praesidia are started in rural towns where there is no priest. All legionaries in rural towns, some of whom are illiterate, do wonderful work, sometimes while they are working in the fields with fellow workers. An apostolate to travelling circus as well as long distance truck drivers is carried out. A plaque has been placed in the Basilica of Salta where Alfie Lambe commenced the Legion. **Corrientes Regia:** A new youth praesidium was established. A Curia reported legionaries carry out home visitation each week with images of Our Lady.

Rosario Regia: On the occasion of the Acies, the Archbishop requested the establishment of many new praesidia. Some of the reported works include visiting homes and businesses

with a Statue of Our Lady.

BOLIVIA: Senatus of La Paz: Visitation with Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima is carried out and people who receive the Statue invite their neighbours to their homes to pray with them. During home visitation legionaries pray and explain the Gospel.

BRAZIL: In **Ponta Grossa Senatus** the legionaries made 11,339 visits to homes, hospitals and households. They distributed Holy Communion in hospitals and homes for the elderly. They contacted a prostitute and helped her to lead a different life. They evangelised in the streets and led the Rosary in various places. **Recife**

Senatus: Many visits were made to homes and hospitals. Four people from the same family started to attend Sunday Mass again. A couple returned to Eucharistic Communion after 30 years. A report shows 41 visits to detainees in the public prison. One detainee was prepared and received the Sacrament of Baptism. Personal contact and counselling carried out by legionaries were instrumental in the prevention of two abortions. **Rio de Janeiro**

Senatus: A legionary who was in hospital, met a mother who was weeping as her son was dying and was not baptised. With the permission of his mother, the legionary baptised the child, who died a few minutes after. Tribute was paid to praesidia in a Comitium in Amazonas for their commitment to the lay people in the Amazonian region through innumerable devotions which are a great help to them in the absence of priests. Legionaries in **Salvador**

Senatus visited 335 families. 40 people returned to practising their Faith. Protestant families were also visited. The Aracaju Regia founded three senior and two youth praesidia and organised a Peregrinatio Pro Christo to Spain.

In **Santa Maria Senatus** a Congress about Alfie Lambe took place from 25th - 27th April. It was very well- attended. A Regia in Cuiabá, attached to the **São Paulo Senatus** reported on a great variety of works, which included 734 visits to homes, 540 visits to the sick, and 460 revisits, some visits with Holy Communion.

Brasilia Regia: An attached Comitium made 1,151 visits to families. Visits to the sick at home and in hospital, to the elderly at home and the bereaved are mentioned in reports.

CHILE: Home visitation is carried out by most praesidia. A number of married couples who are members of various praesidia in the **Senatus of Santiago** help those who have family problems. Legionaries engage in spiritual works of mercy with the aim of preventing abortions. Special celebrations were held to mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Legion of Mary in Chile by Joaquina Lucas.

COLOMBIA: Senatus of Bogota: Pre-marriage catechesis and Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) instruction is given to soldiers in a military hospital. **The Regia of Villavicencio** evangelised ten co-habiting couples culminating in marriage, and they provide catechesis to indigenous people in their own language. The **Regia of Cartagena** does street contact and young legionaries run a book barrow. The **Regia of Cúcuta** reported evangelisation in police stations. The Legion has an outreach to immigrant Venezuelan families. **Senatus of Medellin:** Visitation with Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima is widespread. Legionaries bring people to and from Holy Mass on Sundays and give Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) instruction.

ECUADOR: A Curia attached to the **Senatus of Quito** set up two new praesidia.

PARAGUAY: A Comitium attached to the **Senatus of Asunción**, reported that during the year seven senior praesidia and one junior praesidium were founded. Works include home visits, visits to the sick and elderly, *Exploratio Dominicalis*, catechesis of unmarried couples, and prison visitation.

PERU: In the **Senatus of Lima** works include home and hospital visitation, street contact, catechesis, pre-junior groups, book barrows, Enthronements of The Sacred Heart of Jesus and The Immaculate Heart of Mary, *Patricians*, *Exploratio Dominicalis*, Frank Duff prayer groups, outreach to alcoholics and evangelisation in police stations.

URUGUAY: **Senatus of Montevideo:** Works include visiting the sick and the military hospital, cemetery apostolate and book barrows.

VENEZUELA: A Comitium attached to the **Senatus of Caracas** set up two new praesidia. Schools and homes of the children who have not received the sacrament of Baptism were visited. Prison visitation is carried out. A three-day mission was carried out in an indigenous community. A young man suffering from addiction was brought to Holy Mass.

EUROPE

AUSTRIA: The **Senatus of Austria** and the attached councils are working hard to recruit and extend to new parishes. One of the directly attached praesidia carried out a presentation about the Legion of Mary on three occasions, after which an information meeting was held with five in attendance. It was planned to start a praesidium the following week.

BELARUS: A praesidium—in **Minsk Comitium** reported the apostolate includes the visitation of two hospices and the preparation of couples for the sacrament of Matrimony. A Curia is

working very hard with information stands at the Church to recruit more members.

CROATIA: In the **Zagreb Regia** praesidium reports show home visitation is done, especially for the house bound, sick and lonely people. A non-Catholic lady expressed a desire to be baptised. Following home visitation in this territory ten people received the sacraments. In **Petrinja Comitium** the praesidium in Kravarsko visited a troubled family and two other young families struggling with addictions. Another praesidium organised an *Exploratio Dominicalis* project to a nearby village. Another praesidium brought the statue of Our Lady to 74 homes and visit a home for the elderly rebuilt after the earthquake. Several parishes have been visited with a view to setting up Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. During a Lenten retreat organised by the Legion two people returned to the sacraments, one after 30 years, and another after 60 years.

CZECH REPUBLIC: The Prague Comitium reported four new members and a new praesidium in Brno.

HUNGARY: **Budapest Regia** reported a new praesidium was formed in Levelek. In September, they launched a Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady. This statue stays in a different family's home for two to three weeks at a time, helping to strengthen faith. *Csíksomlyó* Curia reported that during Advent, they led the "The Holy Family Seeks Shelter" Devotion, visiting a different family each day. In January, during the Week of Christian Unity, they prayed for unity by visiting each other's churches.

LATVIA: A praesidium in **Riga Comitium** visits the palliative care hospital in Riga and on Fridays the legionaries bring patients to Eucharistic Adoration in the hospital chapel. Legionaries

are also active with visiting the sick in their homes and arranging first Friday visits for the priest.

LITHUANIA: A praesidium in **Kaunas Comitium** takes elderly people to Mass on Sundays and visits the hospital. Another praesidium reports on street contact and visiting the homeless shelter where the Miraculous Medal is promoted and explained to those met. A praesidium in **Telsiai Comitium** organised a men's prayer group, where they read and study the scriptures. The Curia of Klaipeda reported that four people received the sacraments and became practising Catholics.

POLAND: A praesidium in **Warsaw Comitium** has a good programme of works including street apostolate. **Lublin Regia:** The apostolate includes visits to the sick and lonely and those in need. Care of neglected graves is also carried out. One of the attached Comitia reported that 98 apartments were visited where Miraculous Medals and explanatory leaflets were distributed.

ROMANIA: In **Satu Mare Regia** the apostolate includes close collaboration with the priest, visiting the sick and elderly in their homes and helping so that they can receive the sacraments. One Curia reported returns to the sacraments of three people after 15 and 20 years. On 15th February a day retreat was held with 130 active and auxiliary members in attendance, including the bishop and the spiritual director. In his address the bishop thanked all the legionaries for their work and he reminded all of the rules of the Legion of Mary. He said that the handbook is our spiritual thread. Nothing more and nothing less.

UKRAINE: One new praesidium was set up, the chance of which happening had initially

seemed very highly unlikely.

AFRICA

ANGOLA: Senatus of Benguela: Reports showed over 234 homes were visited, and 123 visits were made to families in need, offering hope and encouraging participation in the sacraments. There were many visits to the sick. **Senatus of Luanda:** Works reported include catechesis for children and adults, assisting at wakes, visits to auxiliary members, the sick and cohabiting couples, prisons and children's homes, and inviting people to attend Holy Mass and *Patricians* meetings.

BENIN: The reports from **Cotonou Regia** mention many new catechumens, adult and child baptisms and returns to the sacraments.

CABO VERDE: Cabo Verde Regia: The Legion of Mary is present on nine of the ten Cabo Verdean Islands, with 4,400 active members. Nine *Exploratio Dominicalis* projects, including projects to islands which resulted in 1,350 visits to families, 399 street contacts, 77 children being referred for catechesis, and contact with 25 people from sects. In May, during a visit to the Concilium, five officers of the Cabo Verde Regia participated in the general correspondents' meeting and attended the Concilium meeting, and visited many locations of legionary interest, including Frank Duff's house and his grave. They also visited the Eucharistic and Marian Shrine at Knock.

CAMEROON: Douala Senatus reports work of home, hospital and orphanage visitation, street contact and catechism classes given.

REPUBLIC OF CONGO: Our Lady of Congo Senatus: Many thousands of people were met on street contact. Visits are made to the sick in hospitals and homes, prisoners, widows and widowers, orphanages and those suffering in poverty. As a

result, 339 accepted to take catechism classes, 288 returned to the sacraments, 26 asked to be baptised and 200 couples were reunited, Most legionaries are also involved in parish ministry.

EGYPT: Senatus of Egypt: Fr. Hedeya reported that a meeting with Patriarch Ibrahim Ishaq was held at the Patriarch's request on 14th January, following a visit request from a Jordanian delegation. During the meeting, the Patriarch spoke about the current situation in Egypt, while the delegation representing 30 churches in Jordan discussed opportunities for collaboration. Commending the Legion of Mary as the largest apostolic movement, one that fosters vocations and encourages lay service in the Church, the Patriarch asked Fr. Hedeya to help promote Marian Spirituality across the Middle East. Alexandria Curia organised a day of missionary work visiting three shelters, a day of prayer at the Resurrection Cathedral, celebrations for the Immaculate Conception, and organised a blood donation event.

GHANA: Senatus of Accra. As part of its spiritual preparation for the New Year, Kumasi Regia organised a vigil in which three priests and 120 legionaries participated. Tema Comitium members undertook home, hospital and school visitations, street contact, and teaching catechism at Sunday school in their various parishes. They organised a Brown Scapular investiture where about 250 received the Scapular.

GUINEA: Conakry Comitium has just over 1,000 active legionaries. Two new praesidia have been established and works include home, hospital, prison and orphanage visitation and the running of catechism classes.

Lesotho: Senatus of Lesotho: Fr. Matsoro OMI described Legion work as "quite unique",

especially as described in reports coming from distant regions. There was general appreciation for the newly printed edition of the Legion Handbook. Regular activities include home, hospital, and prison visitation, religious instruction for all age groups, family faith guidance, and encouragement toward Holy Mass attendance.

MOZAMBIQUE: The Legion of Mary continues to grow in the Dioceses of Inhambane and Xaixai. A Curia comprised largely of young adults established a new praesidium as a result of its outreach efforts to young people. Chimoio Comitium's apostolic work includes home, hospital, and prison visits.

SENEGAL: Dakar Regia is in the process of creating two new Curiae and two new praesidia. Works include home, hospital and prison visitation and running catechism classes.

SOUTH AFRICA: Senatus of Cape Town: The 75th annual report of Queen of Peace praesidium was presented. The apostolate there includes assisting at wakes and funerals, praying the Rosary in the homes of the deceased, and visiting the sick at home and in hospitals. Another praesidium reported visitation focused on the elderly, lapsed Catholics, the sick, the dying, and the bereaved. They also visit old age homes, where residents greatly appreciate their visits. A praesidium in Matatiele Comitium reports home and prison visitation.

TOGO: Lomé Senatus: There was mention of many *Exploratio Dominicalis* projects and weekend evangelisation projects undertaken. Home, hospital and prison visitation as well as street contact and book barrow contacts are some of the works mentioned as well as recruitment of many catechumens, conversions and abortions averted.

Remembering the arrival of The Servant of God Alfie Lambe in Brazil in 1955

Translated from the Portuguese by former Envoy Paddy Fay



On 26 July 2025, the liturgical memorial of Saint Ann and Saint Joaquim, the legionaries went to the Sanctuary of Christ the Redeemer to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the arrival in Brazil of the young Alphonsus Lambe, Envoy of the Concilium Legionis Mariae, to take part in the 36th International Eucharistic Congress in July 1955, in Rio de Janeiro. Tourists and visitors to the Sanctuary were contacted and told about the Legion and Alfie and invited to the recitation of the Rosary, the Legion Prayer and to Holy Mass concelebrated by Auxiliary Bishop Dom Thiago Stanislaw and Rev. Fr. João Damasceno Furtado Câmara, Vicar of the Sanctuary of Christ the Redeemer and with the assistance of Deacon Waldecir Ferreira de Carvalho, representative of the clergy of the Archdiocese of Niteroi. Photographs taken in front of the 98 feet high statue of Christ the Redeemer which overlooks Rio de Janeiro from the Sanctuary on the top of Corcovado Mountain.

