

CONCILIUM

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The Cross calls us to penance

Very Rev. Fr. Paul Churchill, Concilium Spiritual Director

Anniversary remembrances are as old as you can get. I wonder how the Apostles and disciples dealt with the first Anniversary of Christ's death? Since that occurred at Passover those early Jewish Christians could not celebrate it without also remembering how Christ, hanging on the Cross, so resembled the lamb of sacrifice of the Passover. So Lent began fundamentally as a reflection with great devotion on the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord, the New Passover of the Lamb of God.

In those early days this reflection was all the more real as the disciples were threatened by persecution and death itself. The deacon Stephen was stoned to death early on, St. James was beheaded soon after and Paul of Tarsus began his rampage against followers of the way. St. Peter and St. John were imprisoned a few times. Those early Christians were partaking in Christ's Passion.

They were also very aware that it was due to sinfulness that Christ died. Be it their own cowardice, the jealousy of the Jewish leaders, the indifference of Pilate, all of us by our sins contributed and contribute to that axis of evil in which Christ suffered such an undeserving death and so many others suffer to this day. So the question arises: how can we show our appreciation of all that Christ suffered and reassure him that his sacrifice was not in vain. At the same time how can we work on ourselves so that this effect of the sin of the world can be overcome in us, now that we have the great example of Christ to inspire us?

And this is where the thought of penance and fasting came in. A variety of practices and time-scales were in place before Pope Gregory would determine that it should begin on a Wednesday followed by six weeks of prayer and penance, excluding the Sundays. But the heart of Lent was the same: penance by us all in solidarity with Our Lord who had suffered and died for our sins.

You cannot practice Lent properly unless you consider all that the Lord suffered for us. He is misunderstood and judged to be evil. His sound teaching is rejected as a step too far despite its deep truths. He cared and loved and had compassion but he received little or none himself. His friends said they would support him but were just not there for him when he needed them. And his physical sufferings must have been worse than all the physical pain he had removed from those who sought his healing. One exercise we must all do for Lent is reflect on what he suffered.

But we cannot reflect if we do not in some way share his suffering even in some little way and work against our pride and selfishness. So doing without, fasting in some way, penances, prayer, almsgiving yes. Provided they help replace our sinful side with charity. A useful meditation will be on the section on Mortification in the Handbook in number 13 of Chapter 13.

When we look at the Cross we are looking at the One who had one deep down attitude we all need: to trust completely in God through everything. That faith was so strong that he could not be tempted, even on the Cross. And that gift of trusting in God, no matter what, is the grace above all we should seek in Lent because all sin is in some way caused by a failure to take God at his word. Lord grant that true faith, hope and charity grow in us this Lent.

There is one person I have overlooked: Mary. When Jesus' first anniversary came up what did she think? Yes, she could not forget the pain of those hours as she saw him so ill-treated. But she also knew that all was well, that he had risen triumphantly from the dead and that he had ascended back to heaven. One thing she knew for certain was that her Son was safe, in heaven, the dream and hope that any mother should have for her child. Her mission to him was over. No need to pray for his soul!

The promise made her by the Lord had been fully fulfilled. She had kept the faith through the events of Good Friday and she had not wavered even though the sight on the Cross seemed to annul the message given her by the archangel. But she believed and trusted completely.

We can ask the question: surely she who had remained faithful, and had seen her faith vindicated, surely she was exempt from any form of Lent? And indeed God exempted her from the road all of us who lack faith and who sin must go: death! Having lived through Good Friday I'd say that she was exempt from any form of Lent. Lent is for sinners who still have not yet, unlike her, come to trust God completely and slip back into sin.

It is indeed time for us all to repent, to come back to God, to seek forgiveness. But if it does not produce an increase in complete trust in God, proven by turning to him in prayer and loosening our dependence on worldly goods, we must ask are we really benefitting from it. May Mary, whose faith was completely vindicated in the events we celebrate and reflect on, help us.

When Pilate condemned Jesus to death he was judged no longer relevant or of any use in this world. But Jesus knew that he had another home in Heaven and so allowed himself to take up the Cross, his way back to the Father. His greatest support on that way was his mother who shared his faith and trusted with him. As we also take up the way of the Cross may we find, as Jesus did, a mother who stays with us along the way, a mother who on our death also will receive us into her arms, not as on Calvary but into her heavenly arms, and so welcome us among the saints. So be with us, O Holy Mother of God, now as we follow the way of the Cross and at the hour of our death. Amen.

REPORTS

DUBLIN SOUTHSIDE CURIAE

Mater Ecclesiae Curia: Street contact in either Dún Laoghaire or Blackrock every Saturday is continuing. A Holy Hour where attendees pray for the cause of Servant of God Frank Duff continues monthly. ‘Suggestions as to Works’ (Chapter 37 of the Legion of Mary Handbook) which suggests eighteen different works was discussed at the Curia meeting. Each praesidium was encouraged to plan ahead and decide which work should be prioritised this year. A prayer group for young mothers like that set up by the praesidium in Newcastle was one suggestion. A recruiting drive in each praesidium area is a top priority for the coming year. A praesidium leads the rosary in St. Patrick’s Church, Monkstown each month ending with the prayer for the beatification of Venerable Edel Quinn. The title of the January Patrician Meeting was ‘Olivia Mary Taaffe, Founder of St. Joseph’s Young Priests Society.’ There were eight legionaries and eight non-legionaries present. Recruiting is done in the Curia. Mary’s Channel of Grace is supported and promoted by the Curia.

Annunciata Curia: The Curia meeting in December held a discussion about recruiting. The Curia emphasises the importance of keeping recruiting on the weekly agenda at praesidia meetings. Legionaries should be encouraged when trying to recruit. It is recommended that legionaries undertake a Holy Hour for the intention of increasing membership. It was generally felt that the Curia recruiting drive on the first Saturday of each month is well worth continuing.

Benedicta Curia: The junior praesidium currently has nine members. They are in contact with junior legionaries in Dún Laoghaire. The juniors invite their friends to the Legion of Mary and they distribute Legion leaflets. The members attended the Santo Nino Ireland Novena Masses. A senior praesidium delivers journals in Drimnagh parish. They visited a former legionary who is missing active membership due to health issues; the praesidium encourages use of the Legion Breviary and promotes praetorian membership, and it has had a couple of visitors to its meetings recently, the fruits of recruitment efforts. Over the winter months the members of another praesidium have been visiting St. James’s Hospital’s Mercer’s Institute for Successful Ageing (MISA) Unit where they are well known and welcomed by the staff. Miraculous Medals, rosary beads and Legion of Mary three causes leaflets are distributed. Spare copies of the Maria Legionis are given to those who are well enough to read them, and many comment on the beautiful depictions of Our Lady therein. The Maria Legionis has also helped the legionaries to connect with workers from other countries, for example a carer was delighted to accept a journal containing an article on Cameroon, her home country. The legionaries chat with the staff they meet, including Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Baptists, Buddhists, etc., as well as Catholics and Protestants, in their work. The Miraculous Medal is always offered and explained, most take it, some don’t, but all are respectful. A praesidium with low membership has resumed its work of visiting a block of flats near James’s Street.

Ancilla Domini Curia: Street contact is done on Saturdays in the Temple Bar area in Dublin. Rosary beads and Miraculous Medals are distributed to contacts encountered. Results have been very positive and some have started to pray the rosary. Public rosary is recited at 4.45p.m. The junior praesidium is going well. They have the usual weekly meeting and arts and crafts activities also. Recruiting cards are now available for all the

praesidia and all legionaries are encouraged to carry a supply. A recruiting drive was held in Whitefriar Street Church recently. Legionaries spoke at the Sunday Masses and then met the parishioners afterwards. The results were positive and people have a better idea of the work carried out by the Curia. A yearly plan for the Curia was prepared. The Inner City project will be from 1st to 7th June. Plans have been made to begin Patrician Meetings and also to hold public rosaries in May. Another goal is that the Frank Duff prayer meeting will be restarted.

Assumpta Curia: A praesidium's main work is **street contact. Miraculous Medals, rosary beads, confession leaflets and Divine Mercy cards are distributed. During Advent and Christmas, street contact was done with a crib. The Curia also organises rosary processions in the city centre and recruits outside St. Teresa's Church, Clarendon Street.**

Immaculata Curia: The Curia engaged in **pre-Christmas recruitment and street contact around City West. They also brought a crib along to the shopping centre having received permission from the management there. Legionaries encouraged return to Mass and practice of the Faith. Praesidium planning meetings are in train. Each praesidium is to plan a recruitment drive this year. The Curia is organising the Annual Mass for Servant of God Alfie Lambe on Sunday 3rd March. A praesidium distributes forty- five (45) Maria Legionis journals every quarter. Members also volunteer in the Morning Star Hostel and carry out home visitation. The praesidium is planning an Exploratio Dominicalis into a neighbouring parish this year. Members lead a public rosary on Wednesday evenings during May, June and October at an outdoor Statue of Our Lady in the parish. The title of the last Patricians Meeting was 'Focus on Jesus'. Seven legionaries and five non-legionaries attended.**

Gloriosa Curia: The Curia celebrated the **65th anniversary of the death of now Servant of God Alfie Lambe with Mass and a recruitment drive. Banners relating to his life were displayed in the church. In Maynooth a praesidium's works include contact with students, home visitation, street contact, public rosary and distribution of holy water. The film *The Scarlet and the Black* was shown in the Pastoral Centre.**

IRISH PROVINCIAL REPORTS

COMITIA:

Elphin Comitium: The Comitium is working well in all aspects of Legion of Mary activity. Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal praesidium, comprised of six active members and fourteen auxiliary members, presented their annual report. Their Spiritual Director is Fr. Larry Ebuk. As part of their **recruitment drive they promoted Eucharistic Adoration and a Retreat** in the parish of St. Attracta's Ballinameen. The Retreat drew a **large number of people** and the **sacrament of reconciliation was well attended.** The praesidium **endeavours to recruit new members at every opportunity.** **North Elphin Curia** welcomed their **new Spiritual Director** Fr. Franklin to the first monthly meeting of the Curia and look forward to working with him this year.

Tuam Comitium: **Extension efforts** are being made to begin a praesidium in Caherlistrane. **One legionary spoke from the altar and some legionaries recruited outside the church**

after Masses. The apostolate of two praesidia- with five members and four members respectively- has in recent times been comprised of **door to door Pilgrim Statue visitation, organising and holding two Rosary Rallies** which resulted in a great turnout, and the **placing of a Legion altar in the church from 3rd to 7th September.** Several people availed of the **Miraculous Medals and leaflets for the three causes provided at the Legion altar.**

Carlow Comitium: The Comitium has three praesidia attached and two Curiae. The legionaries in Carlow town are doing **home to home visitation in housing estates each week.** **Plans are being made to visit the first Holy Communion and Confirmation classes.** **Kildare Curia** is represented at most of the Comitium meetings. The works are **nursing home visitation, cleaning of graves and a weekly rosary for children.** **Five pairs of legionaries from the praesidium in Newbridge carry out home visitation each week.**

CURIAE

Galway Curia: The Curia **organised and held a well-attended Weekend Retreat** directed by Fr. Colm Mannion OP and assisted by Fr. Declan Lohan Spiritual Director of Galway Curia and Fr. Kellan Scott OP for **active legionaries of all Connaught Councils** at St. Mary's Knock in February. A praesidium runs, on behalf of a parish, a **Faith Club serving children between seven and eleven years old in two primary schools during term time.** **Activities include praying of the rosary, reading the Gospel for the following Sunday and playing games, along with going on various outings throughout the year.** **Attendance is high and participating children and their families are becoming more involved in the life of the parish.**

Clonfert Curia: A praesidium of five members presented its thirty- third (33rd) annual report. Works undertaken include **visitation of the elderly, hospital and nursing homes.** The legionaries **co-ordinate Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every Sunday and a Holy Hour and praying of the rosary each Tuesday night when Mass is celebrated for parishioners.** The **primary and secondary schools were visited and Miraculous Medals were given to each student.** **Recruitment is a priority for the praesidium** whose members held a meeting in Portumna in an **effort to start a praesidium** there.

Kilalla Curia: A praesidium of four members in Kilglass **visits the local nursing home and leads prayers in the church on most Fridays.** The legionaries **attended a Legion of Mary stand at Enniscrone Show where many good contacts were made.** The Curia is **planning a Maria et Patria (MEP) project for June.**

Ferns Curia: The Curia is **working hard to recruit new members** for the Legion of Mary. A **suggestion was made to have a brief talk at the Masses in the Cathedral and to hold a recruitment drive.** The new Spiritual Director is Fr. Michael Doyle. **Patrician Meetings** were held by New Ross and Coolgreaney praesidia. **A good attendance was recorded** at both meetings. **One member took part in a Peregrinatio Pro Christo (PPC) Project** in Britain during which many homes were visited and good contacts made.

Achonry Curia: The praesidium in Kiltimagh has a Spiritual Director, Deacon Martin Lynch and five members. The **Transition Year students are being prepared by the Spiritual Director for the Pope John Paul II Awards.** The students **serve at Mass and lead the**

rosary each morning from Monday to Friday during term time. The legionaries visit bereaved parishioners and engage in many other parish activities.

EUROPE

AUSTRIA

Senatus of Austria: The seventy fifth (75th) anniversary of the Legion of Mary will be celebrated in Austria this year. Extension: One new praesidium was set up in Floridsdorf. A new praesidium was set up for seven people from the African Community who expressed interest in joining the Legion of Mary. Praesidia reports: Two praesidia feature in this report. The main works of the praesidia are home and hospital visitation, street apostolate and Pilgrim Statue visitation. Curia and Comitium reports: All Curiae and Comitium reported efforts being made to establish praesidia in new parishes. Curia Bruno reported one new praesidium following a Colomban drive. In another Curia three legionaries have taken their promise, a church marriage for a couple was organised, two people returned to the sacraments and one person went to confession and received Holy Communion after fifty years. Peregrinatio Pro Christo (PPC) projects were carried out to Merano, South Tyrol in Italy, Hamburg (red light district), Medjugorje and a mini PPC project was carried out in Villach.

Countries under the care of Austria: - **CZECH REPUBLIC:** Comitium Prague has fourteen directly attached praesidia and four Curiae. Street contact is included in the apostolate. **MOLDOVA:** In Curia Chisinau street contact resulted in two people returning to the practice of their faith. One praesidium organised a tea party with a short talk on the role of Mary for every Christian. **SLOVAKIA:** Curia Travana has been raised to Comitium status to govern the Legion of Mary in Penoiz with seven praesidia.

BELARUS

Belarus Comitium: The Comitium has eleven praesidia and seven Curiae attached. All praesidia are visited following their annual report. Extension efforts are continuing. A good variety of works is undertaken including distribution of Miraculous Medals, visits to the sick and elderly, encouraging people to Mass and the Sacraments, contact work at train stations, and street contact at a shopping centre near the Red Square.

CROATIA

Petrinja Comitium: Five Curiae reported with a total of one hundred and eighty-five (185) active and six hundred and sixty (660) auxiliary members. Works included visitation of the sick and elderly, inviting the lapsed back to practice, reciting prayers at a church which was destroyed, and reciting the rosary at a resettlement camp. The junior Curia has five praesidia with forty-four (44) members.

Zagreb Regia: Very good efforts are being made to extend the legion to new parishes. Three praesidia feature in this report. Home, hospital and street contact are the main works. In one praesidium three new members took the promise. The legionaries were instrumental,

through home visitation, in one person going to confession after fifty (50) years. Curiae reports: - Our Lady of Fatima Curia with eight (8) praesidia and twenty-one (21) auxiliaries got a glimpse of the fruits of their apostolate with returns to the sacraments after long and short periods. Comitium reports: Comitium Zadar has eight praesidia and two Curiae attached. One of the attached praesidia has an apostolate to a shelter for people who are homeless. People with special needs are visited. The legionaries take them to Mass, play social games and pray with them.

Split Comitium has thirteen praesidia and two Curiae. Ten (10) people received the sacraments after long periods, two were baptised and two received confirmation.

Countries under the care of **Zagreb Regia: BOSNIA HERZOGOVINA: Sarajevo Curia** has four (4) praesidia with twenty-one (21) active members and one hundred and sixty (160) auxiliaries. **Home and hospital visitation** are the main works. The **Regia officers visited the Curia and became better acquainted with the difficult conditions in which the Curia works. SLOVENIA:** A request was sent to the Bishop of Colje for permission to expand the Legion of Mary in the diocese.

LITHUANIA

Telsiai Comitium has six senior praesidia and one junior praesidium and three Curiae with a total of twenty- six (26) praesidia. **All attached praesidia and two attached Curiae have been visited by the Comitium officers.** Works include **hospital visitation, visitation of people who are housebound, visitation of nursing homes, home visitation, and crowd contact. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the rosary are promoted. Excellent apostolate among sick people is done, many patients made their confession and received the sacraments due to the efforts of legionaries. The legionaries of Taurage Curia helped to organise the Living Rosary Congress of Telsiai and great efforts are being made by the Curia to set up a new praesidium.**

Kaunas Comitium: A very successful Congress was held in October with very good attendance and participation.

LATVIA

Riga Comitium has seven directly attached praesidia and two Curiae. The Comitium has been without a secretary since last October. A praesidium with very low membership visits the local hospital and arranges for the priest to bring Holy Communion to the patients.

ROMANIA

Satu Mare Regia. Praesidia reports: The attendance at the praesidium meetings is quite good. The apostolate includes **visits to auxiliary members, leading the rosary before Mass, visits to the elderly and sick people in their homes and hospital, helping the priest and many other works of service.** Comitium and Curiae reports: Three Comitium are included. In Comitium Oradea meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month with **95% to 100% attendance.** The legionaries lead the rosary every day before Mass and organise Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Visits are made to the house bound to help them to receive the sacraments.

HUNGARY

Budapest Regia: Extension efforts have resulted in the formation of three praesidia in Tarnaleles and two other villages with the support of the parish priest. Praesidia reports: - Blood of Martyrs reported reduced numbers due to ageing membership. Some of the work of this praesidium is assisting children to grow up in their faith. Mother of Faith praesidium leads a public rosary and carries out street contact. **Curiae:** Holy Family Curia gained three new members and have two members on probation. Distribution of Catholic papers, rosary beads and Miraculous Medals, and visitation of hospitals are the main works.

POLAND

Praga Comitium: The Comitium has eleven praesidia that are directly attached and three Curiae. The apostolate carried out during the year included an outreach to non-Catholics, those in non-sacramental relationships, visitation of people who are homeless, of people who are in hospitals and in nursing homes. Over nine hundred (900) Miraculous Medals were distributed.

Warsaw Comitium: The Comitium prints five thousand (5,000) copies of the Legion of Mary bulletin twice a year. One hundred and sixty (160) bishops receive a copy. A new praesidium of ten members of the younger age group was set up in Zalesie. Praesidia reports: All praesidia were encouraged to keep recruiting on their agenda. The Parish Kiosk is open every Sunday from 7:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. where many good contacts are made. Hospital visitation is carried out, as are leading family prayer in the home and distribution of Miraculous Medals. Many other church activities are included in the apostolate also.

Lublin Regia: Attendance at the Regia meetings of praesidia and Curiae is good. Eight people joined the Legion of Mary from an information Sunday. The plan for the year is to recruit more young people for the Legion of Mary. Twelve people returned to the sacrament of reconciliation. Anointing of the sick was received also.

SOUTH AMERICA

ARGENTINA

Buenos Aires Senatus: Huge crowds of legionaries and non-legionaries took part in the ceremonies which continued for three days at the graveside of Servant of God Alfie Lambe. Mass was celebrated in the Cemetery Church. There were all-day visits in groups to the vault, which was opened for the anniversary. Street contact was carried out in the nearby tourist area also. The Mendoza Regia have now begun street contact in an area where there is prostitution. The Comitium of Rio Gallegos stretches to the Antarctic. Visits to praesidia and Curiae are done in spite of long distances, snow and ice.

Salta Senatus: Five new junior praesidia have been started by grandmothers who are active legionaries. Grandchildren and their friends belong to these junior praesidia. The Sacred Heart picture was enthroned in a local police station. Legionaries doing home visitation explain to families the importance of Sunday Mass attendance. Other legionaries do a nine day mission in outlying shanty towns while meeting and greeting the poorest of the poor.

Cordoba Senatus: Legionaries from the Senatus of both Buenos Aires and Salta arrived in Cordoba on 31st January to begin the project to be carried out by ten legionaries for the month of February. This project will assist with extension and the rejuvenation of the Legion of Mary in the city of Cordoba.

Corrientes Regia: The Regia presented a report on the 5th Young Adults' Conference which was held in Corrientes. One hundred and seventy-eight (178) youths from all over Argentina came together for the three days from 15th to 17th July. The Conference received a video message from Concilium President Declan Lawlor and a message of support from the Archbishop of Corrientes Mgr Stanovnik while Auxiliary Bishop Larregain was present at the Conference.

BRAZIL

Belo Horizonte Senatus: A meeting of Spiritual Directors had attendance of eleven priests present as well as a religious sister and a deacon. It was considered to be very productive. A Retreat for young people had an attendance of forty (40). A Comitium reported two thousand eight hundred (2,800) visits to families and the preparation of seventy-five (75) children for First Holy Communion and fifty-two (52) young people for confirmation.

Ponta Grossa Senatus: Legionaries visited families and led Apostolic Days in neighbourhoods and streets. They distributed Holy Communion to the sick and elderly, at home and in hospitals and enthroned the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary in homes.

Recife Senatus: Legionaries visited the Men's and Women's Prison. A group of young legionaries dramatised the Passion of Christ in the streets. Thirty-nine (39) couples were prepared for and received the Sacrament of Matrimony. The City Council honoured the Legion of Mary on the 102nd anniversary of its foundation.

Rio de Janeiro Senatus: The correspondent with Rio de Janeiro Senatus thanks all at Rio de Janeiro for their latest communication and is eagerly awaiting further news from Rio de Janeiro. Concilium is delighted to hear of the appointment of Bishop Edson de Castro Homen as Spiritual Director of the Senatus and looks forward to hearing details of the latest elections of officers in addition to the details already received of the election of the Senatus President.

Salvador Senatus: Legionaries visited families in conflict and far from the Church. They also provided assistance with prayers and words of comfort to young people living on the streets, drug addicts, and some were sent to hospitals with the necessary support. The Regia of Vitória da Conquista raised a Curia to Comitium and the Regia of Aracajú set up a Curia and two praesidia and reactivated four praesidia. They also organised the Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary, with twenty-seven (27) legionaries making the Consecration.

Santa Maria Senatus: Works included visits to hospitals and homes and to the bereaved. Holy Communion was brought to the sick at home. They held a Retreat for young people and participated in a Mariology Symposium at a University. **São Paulo Senatus:** Legionaries bring Holy Communion to a great many sick people in their homes. Visits to families are also being done. One Comitium visited three hundred and three (303) families, most of them with the Statue of Our Lady, prayed the rosary with them and

reflected on the Gospel with them. They had **Enthronement of the Sacred Heart** carried out in **thirteen (13) homes**. Another **Comitium** made visits and revisits to **two thousand six hundred and thirty- two (2,632) families**. Reports show **many visits to wakes**. A **Regia** reported that **thirty- eight (38) migrant families** were helped to find shelter and employment.

Brasilia Regia: A **Curia** reported on the apostolate in the cemetery on **All Souls' Day**, making excellent contacts with visitors. **Legionary seminarians** and a **deacon** were also present.

ASIA

MALAYSIA

Kuala Lumpur Regia

Four **Curiae** reported, giving quarterly reports. The **Chinese Curia** reported **visitation of Catholics at home and hospital**. Some non-Catholics were also contacted.

Hong Kong Regia

Three **Curiae** reported. A total of one hundred and thirty one (131) active, eight (8) praetorian, nineteen (19) probationary, twenty-nine (29) junior and five hundred and forty- five (545) auxiliary members are attached to the **Curia**. Works reported included **classes for the formation of the newly baptised with the hope that they might become legionaries and teaching catechism to primary and secondary school teachers**.

INDONESIA.

Malang Senatus

One **Regia**, two **Comitia**, ten senior **Curiae**, one junior **Curia** and four **praesidia** reported. Works included visitation to prisons and orphanages, marriage and sacramental preparation. **The report from Sulawesi detailed that the Regia had two thousand one hundred and eighty-two (2,182) active and nine hundred (900) auxiliary members**. The **officers** are active in visiting attached **Councils** including those in distant areas such as **Merauke West Papua**.

Jakarta Senatus

Steps are being undertaken to establish a Comitium for the three Curiae in South Jakarta. The **officers** intend to visit the three **Curiae** in **North Jakarta** with a view to **raising one to Regia status**. Works reported included teaching literacy to people experiencing extreme poverty. The **university praesidium** is made up of **twenty- four (24) members**.

Kaupang Senatus Concilium thanks you for your latest correspondence and looks forward to hearing your latest news in the next report.

SINGAPORE

Singapore Senatus

Works reported on include **organising retreats and outdoor functions**, visiting the elderly with Holy Communion and **reciting the rosary at wakes and funerals**. **Thirty (30) attended a Spiritual Formation Day organized by the junior Curia**. **Brunei English Curia in East Malaysia conducted crowd contact**. **The Filipino Curia held its Anniversary Mass in September and its Reunion in November**.

KOREA

Seoul Senatus Two Comitia reported, with eight hundred and ninety-one (891) and six hundred and twenty-nine (629) members respectively. Starting from January this year the **publication of the monthly journal is being transferred to the Mokpo Legion of Mary museum**. At the September meeting the **Senatus Spiritual Director said “We pray that God will listen to our petitions through Brother Duff’s intercession. I hope for many miracles leading to the Beatification and Canonisation of Brother Duff.”**

Gwangju Senatus: Reports to the Senatus show many works undertaken, including contact with Catholics, both lapsed and newly- baptised, as well as those in **hospitals and orphanages**. **One Comitium at the January meeting reported forty-three (43) baptisms and two hundred and forty-three (243) returns to the Sacraments**. **Ninety (90) active and sixty-three (63) auxiliary members were also recruited during the period**.

Daegu Senatus: Most Councils reporting show a varied apostolate undertaken and recruitment of active and auxiliary members. **GuWon Pyong Curia reported a recruitment drive in a newly built complex of one thousand six hundred and ten (1,610) households**. Street contact was carried out as an alternative to calling on each apartment. **Many lapsed Catholics were contacted as well as potential converts**. **The Senatus has reestablished contact with the Curiae in China, which was disrupted by Covid**.

JAPAN

Osaka Senatus Kyoto Comitium: the praesidium Mother of the Savior, founded in 1951, recently celebrated its three thousand three hundred and thirtieth (3330th) meeting. Through the efforts of the **Spiritual Director, five new members joined, three of whom were young people**. A **praesidium attached to Imaichi Church visited a mother and her son for two years, continuing when they moved to live independently and following the death of the son**. This visitation was of great benefit to the family. **In the same praesidium, an auxiliary member returned to active membership after fifteen years**. **The following day the vice president went to eternal reward after praying the rosary**. The husband of a deceased member sent a New Year’s Day card to the members whom he greeted as “Hail, Army of Mary.” The members were very encouraged by this title. **The praesidium at Koschien Church, Hanshin Curia, is planning a Bible Study group as a means of recruiting**. **Question and Answer Sessions which are proving very useful now follow reports at the Senatus meetings**.

TAIWAN

Legionaries in the Taipei Deanery are actively recruiting to replace legionaries who have not returned since Covid. They have gained some new members as a result. **Curia officers are supporting new praesidia in Hiben Dingong parish and Janshi township**. The Legion

apostolate includes **work with youth in the parishes where they bring children from affiliated schools to visit the church and lead them in prayers.** Other works reported are **praying in the homes of families and carrying out prayer room services in a number of hospitals. Single mothers and mothers of disabled children were invited to a special Mass on Mother’s Day.** Legionaries participated in the Christmas Lighting Ceremony, organised by the diocese and held in a public square. The legionaries also carry out an **apostolate to indigenous tribes.**

New Postulator for the Cause of Servant of God Alfie Lambe

Sr. Mary Murphy formally proposed at the Concilium Meeting of February 2024 the appointment of Dr. Waldrey Hilgeman as Postulator for the Cause of Servant of God Alfie Lambe. This was seconded by Sr. Lóirín O’ Leary.

Availability of Legion of Mary Literature in languages other than English

Br. Phelim Lally gave a very comprehensive presentation on the foreign literature currently available from Concilium for all legionaries throughout the world. He informed all that the **Legion of Mary Handbook is available in thirty-seven (37) languages, Tesseræ in forty-six (46) languages, three causes leaflets in seven (7) languages Miraculous Medal leaflets in twelve (12) languages, books and pamphlets in twenty-seven (27) languages with Missals and Gospels available in seven (7) languages.**

He emphasised the **importance of having materials available for people in the language they read, particularly for active and auxiliary legionaries.** He also underlined the **need for- and value in having- materials available in a variety of languages when we are engaging in extension and recruitment.** He recommended that we all equip ourselves with Legion of Mary literature in various languages and organise such literature so that we can readily distribute it to contacts we encounter. This will facilitate the initial contact that people experience with the Legion of Mary being very welcoming and positive.

Br. Phelim can be contacted at asttrvexillum@legiomariae.ie. He very much welcomes queries about any requirements you have regarding materials in various languages and loves preparing your orders and packaging and posting parcels. Perhaps we might all reflect on how we can be instrumental in this very important work with him, by considering the linguistic needs of those we know and encounter, equip ourselves with the relevant literature and thus participate in breaking down language barriers and opening the gates for greater extension of the Legion of Mary for all in our own circles and ultimately for all people throughout the world.

The Acies

The Handbook (p.173) tells us that the **Acies**, a Latin word meaning “**an army ranged in battle array, is appropriate to a ceremony in which the legionaries as a body assemble to**

renew their fealty to Mary, Queen of the Legion, and from her to receive strength and blessing for yet another year's battle with the forces of evil."

The Handbook (p. 173) also tells us "The Acies will take place on the 25 March or on date close thereto."

We are reminded of the need to stress the importance of all legionaries attending the Acies, which is the **"central annual function of the Legion"** (Handbook p.173). It states **"The essential idea of the Legion, upon which all else is built, is that of working in union with and in dependence on Mary, its Queen. The Acies is the solemn expression of the union and dependence, the renewal- individual and collective- of the legionary declaration of fealty. Hence it is manifest that any legionaries who can attend, and yet fail to do so, have little or none of the spirit of the Legion in them. The membership of such persons is not an asset to the Legion."**

It refers to **A Marian Synthesis (p.358- 360 in the Handbook)**, saying on p. 175 that **"Perhaps the Synthesis could be made the subject of the spiritual reading and of the Allocutio at a praesidium meeting shortly before the Acies. It is suggested that it be also used as the collective act of consecration at the ceremony itself."**

True Devotion to Mary

The Handbook p. 9 speaks of the Legion as being "for service in the warfare which is perpetually waged by the world and its evil powers." We know that this is a battle for us human beings given our sinful nature and yet that being in the Legion demands of us to actively engage in the battle. True Devotion to Mary is so important for us.

"All our perfection consists in being conformed, united and consecrated to Jesus Christ; and therefore the most perfect of all devotions is, without any doubt, that which the most perfectly conforms, unites and consecrates us to Jesus Christ, it follows that, of all devotions, that which most consecrates and conforms the soul to Our Lord is devotion to His holy Mother, and that the more a soul is consecrated to Mary, the more it is consecrated to Jesus."

St. Louis- Marie De Montfort in "True Devotion to Mary with Preparation for Total Consecration" 2010, p. 65, TAN Classics.

St. Louis- Marie De Montfort has written extensively to assist us in coming to understand True Devotion to Mary. He addresses aspects such as the **Fundamental Truths of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the Nature, Motives, Wonderful Effects and Practices of True Devotion to Mary.** His writing on **False Devotion to the Blessed Virgin and False Devotees** makes for very worthwhile reading also in helping us reach an **honest appraisal of where we are regarding True Devotion to Mary** and which areas may need attention.

The Handbook p. 22 says of the True Devotion to Mary that **"if the devotion is to be in real truth a legionary tribute, it must be an essential part of the Legion- as much an obligation of membership as the weekly meeting or active work: all must participate in it in a perfect unity."**

We know that we can begin the 33 Day preparation for Consecration to Our Lady at any time, and we often tend to select a feast day of Our Lady as the Consecration date.

Many legionaries may at this time be carrying out the 33 Day Consecration to Our Lady in preparation for the annual Acies which as mentioned above is the annual individual and collective consecration of legionaries to Our Lady.

For those who are not currently doing so, or have not carried it out in a while, you may be interested in joining in the **True Devotion to Mary beginning on Mary's Channel of Grace on Sunday 10th March** mentioned below. It would be so pleasing to Our Lady for us to lead others- legionaries and non- legionaries alike- to the 33 Day Consecration to Mary also.

Some Handbook Reflections

The extract selected for this month is

True Devotion to Mary (p. 1)

It is desirable that **the practice of the Legionary devotion to Mary should be rounded off and given the distinctive character which has been taught by St. Louis-Marie de Montfort under the titles of "The True Devotion" or the "Slavery of Mary",** and which is enshrined in his two books, "True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin" and "Secret of Mary." (Legion Handbook Chap 6.5).

"Furthermore, Marian spirituality, like its corresponding devotion, finds a very rich source in the historical experience of individuals and of the various Christian communities present among the different peoples and nations of the world. In this regard, I would like to recall, among the many witnesses and teachers of this spirituality, the figure of **St. Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort, who proposes consecration to Christ through the hands of Mary, as an effective means for Christians to live faithfully, their baptismal commitments.** I am pleased to note that in our time too new manifestations of this spirituality and devotion are not lacking." (Pope John Paul II: *Redemptoris Mater*, 48)"

"It is intriguing that the Legion should start immediately after what I might call a "Patrician discussion" on the subject of the True Devotion, as if the minds of the future members had to be fully acclimatised to Mary before they were fit for membership; before they could become the Legion of Mary". (Frank Duff: *Virgo Praedicanda*, 21).

"The fact is that one cannot emphasise too much the value of the True Devotion as a supplement to the Handbook and the entire Legion system. St Louis- Marie's words of fire uplift Our Lady from the level of pure doctrine and give her substance as a person, our Mother with intimate charge of our lives, utterly indispensable to us, our Queen, our leader, the very thought of whom inspires courage and stimulates one to undertake the impossible." (Frank Duff: *Victory through Mary*, 39)

The following books on the True Devotion to Mary are available from the Concilium:

Treatise on the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin (St. Louis- Marie de Montfort)

The Secret of Mary (St. Louis- Marie de Montfort)

The De Montfort Way (Frank Duff)

True Devotion to Mary (Rev. Michael Kennedy, C.C.)

**Mary's Channel of Grace
and True Devotion to Mary**

Concilium is so grateful to all who work so faithfully in running Mary's Channel of Grace, and to all who promote and tune in to Mary's Channel of Grace.

Mary's Channel of Grace is a most splendid gift to all, operating each evening at 20:00 (GMT), freely available for all throughout the world to pray- in true legionary spirit- the Legion of Mary prayers and rosary with people from all over the world.

The 33 Day Consecration will begin on Mary's Channel of Grace on Mother's Day Sunday 10th March 2024 and ending on Thursday 11th April 2024 the eve of the Feast of Our Lady of Charity, Cuba.

Zoom ID: 811 4983 3503

Password: 876433

All are welcome.

PPC Conference

An Invitation to all active legionaries

Date: Saturday 24th February 2024

Morning session for PPC Organisers begins at 10:30 a.m.

Afternoon session for all legionaries interested in PPC begins at 2:00 p.m.

Venue: De Montfort House, Morning Star Avenue, Dublin 7, D07 VA 03.

Annual Mass for Servant of God Alfie Lambe

Sunday 3rd March at 12:30 p.m. in The Church of St. Agnes, Crumlin, Dublin 12, D12 KC 99.

Celebrant and Homilist: Fr. Tony O' Shaughnessy, PP Crumlin Parish.

Mass will be streamed live on www.crumlinparish.ie/watch-live

Parking to right of the church.

Buses 54, 83, 150, 9.

Our Lady Needs You

An Invitation to all Dublin officers (Curia officers and praesidia officers)

Date: Saturday 2nd March 2024

Begins: 10:00 a.m.

Venue: De Montfort House, Morning Star Avenue, Dublin 7, D07 VA 03.

Concludes with Mass at 4:00 p.m.

Call to Arms Conference 2024

An Invitation to all Active Legionaries across Ireland.

Date: Saturday 16th March 2024

Venue: Dominican College, Newbridge, Co. Kildare.

Begins: 10:00 a.m.

Concludes: Holy Mass at 4:00 p.m.

The Legion of Mary in Down and Conor presents Matt Fradd from Pints with Aquinas:

Matt's Testimony and Seven Myths Exposed about Porn

Date: 23rd March

Venue: Belfast Titanic Hotel: Drawing Office (Ballroom)

For further information, please contact:

universe.com/MattFraddBelfast

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+44 7955 386 288

legionofmarydc.co.uk

Tickets available at: <https://www.universe.com/MattFraddBelfast>
