The Legion of Mary - Rochester Comitium
Instructions for All Praesidium Officers

The most important duty of an officer is to attend the Council Meeting once a month. Anyone who is unable or unwilling to attend the Council Meeting is not eligible for an office and cannot be appointed. This is because the officers are the Council. The Spiritual Director and four officers of each Praesidium make up the Council body, just as the active members make up the Praesidium body. The handbook says that zeal in other aspects will not compensate for failure to attend the Council Meeting.

Officers are appointed by the Council to supervise the Praesidium in their parish. You are **not** sent by your Praesidium to represent it at the Council Meeting. It is the other way around: **you are sent by the Council to preside over the Praesidium**. There are five members of the Council present at your Praesidium every week – the Spiritual Director and the four appointed Officers. Council attendance is an individual obligation, not a collective one. That is, **each Praesidium officer is expected to attend the monthly Council Meeting.**

Praesidium officers are a team, a unit. They should be familiar with the duties of each other. **Everything is not up to the President; each officer has the responsibility of preserving and developing the Legion spirit and system**. The more each officer knows, the better will be the teamwork. **Officers should develop a "Legion Mind," learning the Legion inside and out. Duties of the officers** are found in Chapter 34 of the handbook; these **should be read before you are appointed and periodically thereafter.**

Officers should get along well together and act as one before the Praesidium. Differences should be settled privately in the Spirit of Mary. The President is never interrupted or openly contradicted at the Praesidium Meeting.

It is most important that Officers' Meetings be held periodically to discuss any differences or problems in the Praesidium, new works, etc. The Council officers will always be available if you have anything you would like them to help you with. A Praesidium officer who feels their Praesidium is drifting into careless ways or loss of spirit should discuss it with the Praesidium's Spiritual Director and the other Praesidium officers. If unsuccessful in resolving the problem, the Praesidium officer(s) should discuss it with the Council. This is not being uncharitable. **Each Officer has a responsibility to the Legion to do all possible to ensure its well-being.** It would be uncharitable not to speak!

Officers should be diligent in observing the rules and developing spirit. Members will usually be a step beneath the officers in spirit and dedication. If officers are working for **perfection**, the members will be good; if officers are content with only being **good**, the members will be **indifferent**; if the officers are **indifferent**, there won't be any members! **"There are no bad soldiers, only bad officers."** Members will never rise above the standard of spirit and work set for them by the officers.

The term of office is three years. An officer can be appointed for a second three year term. A member can act in an office before taking the Promise; the formal appointment is made after the Promise is taken. Let the Vice-President of the Council know when it is taken so that the Council can appoint the new officer. When a member makes his Promise, it is a good idea to have light refreshments after the meeting to celebrate his reception into the Legion. **Junior Legionaries do not take the Promise.**

When officers cannot attend their Praesidium Meeting, it is most important that they get the records of their office to the Meeting. A report of the Council Meeting is to be given at the Praesidium Meeting immediately following the Council Meeting. The President has the responsibility of seeing that the Council Report is included on the agenda, and is not substituted for the Handbook discussion or some other point. **All the Officers should participate in the report on the Council Meeting** highlights.

At the Council Meeting you should obligate yourself to **participate in the discussions**, or to ask questions and make comments to the body. The same Legionary courage that you use on your weekly work will be enough to get you on your feet. The Council Meeting is what you make it. Make it a point to get to know all the members of the Council.