Maria Legionis



Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shall bear a Son and call his name Jesus.

LUKE 1: 26-38

Maria Legionis

The Voice of the Legion of Mary

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INVITATION Readers of Maria Legionis, and other legion members, are invited to submit articles and other contributions with a view towards publication in future issues of the magazine. Ideally, submissions should be made by e-mail attachments (Word Documents or jpg images) to: concilium@legion-of-mary.ie and marked 'Maria Legionis.' Hard copies of articles, marked 'Maria Legionis', may be sent to: Legio Mariae, De Montfort House, Morning Star Avenue, Brunswick Street. Dublin 7. *Thank you, The Editor.*

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Saint Mary Magdalene

("The Apostle to the Apostles")

By Michael Walsh

Mary Magdalene was born in Magdala, a fishing village on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. Sometimes referred to as 'Mary of Magdala', she is mentioned 12 times in the Gospels. The following quotes are examples:

"Luke 8: 1-3: "And it came to pass afterwards, that he was journeying through the towns and villages preaching and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God. And with him were the twelve and certain women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities, and Mary who is called the Magdalene from whom seven devils had gone out." "John. 20: 32." "Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him. 'Lord if thou hadst been here my brother (Lazarus) would not have died.'"

(Matt 27: 55-6): And many women were there looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

Luke. 27: 61: "But Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the sepulchre." Mark. 15:47: "But Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were looking on and saw where he was laid." Luke. 28:1: "Now late in the night of the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the sepulchre." Mark. 16; 1: "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, that they might go and anoint him."





Painting of Christ's Appearance to Mary Magdalene after the Resurrection (1835), by Alexander Andreyevich Ivanov. John, 20: 1. "Now on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, and she saw the stone taken away from the tomb." John. 20: 11. "But Mary was standing outside weeping at the tomb." John. 20:16. "Jesus said to her, 'Mary.' Turning, she said to Him, 'Rabboni!' (That is to say, 'Master.' John. 20: 18. Mary Magdalene came, and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord…."

Mary Magdalene was a prominent follower of Jesus, but what happened to her after the death of Jesus is not documented in the Bible.

The traditional belief is that Mary Magdalene fled to southern France with a group of disciples to escape arrest and imprisonment, and spread the Gospel in that country. The mode of transport across the Mediterranean was one the Merchant Ships, which sailed from Israel to southern France, a distance of almost 2,000 nautical miles. Such ships could also carry passengers.

Soon after landing in the Camargue, southern France, they began their apostolate. Because of their close association with the life, miracles and Crucifixion of Jesus, it is believed that they enjoyed extraordinary success in converting the natives through their example of faith, sincerity and conviction.

The traditional belief is that Mary Magdalene, along with her assembly of disciples spent 30 years in and around Marseille, instructing people in the faith, speaking about the life of Jesus, and baptising those who wanted to embrace His teachings. She is regarded as one of the first, if not the first, to introduce Christianity into the region of Provence, but her influence spread much further, as evidenced by practical tributes paid by following generations who dedicated churches to her long after her mission had concluded. She is regarded as an important figure in the cultural and religious identity of Southern France and beyond.

Towards the end of her life, Mary lived in a cave dwelling in the Sainte-Baume mountains, doing penance before she finally passed away. The refuge is also known as 'Mary Magdalene's Cave,' (now a Grotto). The site is managed by Dominican friars who run a hostelry for pilgrims and has been a place of pilgrimage for many centuries.



The town of Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume is home to the Basilica of Sainte Marie Madeleine, which is believed to have been built over the tomb of Mary Magdalene. The basilica is a Benedictine and Cluniac monastery with an abbey church attached built in the 13th century to house Mary Magdalene's relics; it was constructed with the approval of Pope Boniface VIII. The interior has a tall nave, a 17th-century altar, and a pulpit with finely-crafted sculptures depicting Mary Magdalene's life. Portrayals of her are also carved on the altars in several chapels. The crypt houses the tomb of Mary Magdalene, dating back to the 4th century. Her relics, including her skull, are contained within the Basilica, and the cranium is displayed in a gold reliquary, accessible to visitors.

Examples of other prominent churches in France named after Mary Magdalene: Sainte-Madeleine, Strasbourg; Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, Rennes-le-Château; Abbey of la Madaleine, Vézelay in the north-central France, where for centuries, thousands of pilgrims have flocked to view the saint's relics.

Saint Mary Magdalene was the first person to see the Risen Christ and was tasked with announcing His Resurrection to the apostles. By delivering this news, she served as the prime witness and herald of the rising of Jesus from the dead; hence the title "Apostle to the Apostles." This title was formally recognised by Pope Francis in 2016, while elevating



her liturgical celebration to a Feast Day on the liturgical calendar and affirming her important role in the early Church. She was recognised as a Saint by the early Church, and her unique title: "The Apostle to the Apostles" is a fitting tribute to this devoted disciple of Jesus.

Saint Mary Magdalene's Feast Day falls on 22 July.

Talk at London Call to Arms Conference 2025

By Declan Lawlor-President Concilium

Many thanks for allowing us to join you today for your London conference.

In some respects, the Call to Arms is essentially an attempt to renew our spiritual zeal and fervour. Coming out of the covid years, we realised in Dublin and in Ireland that we needed to try to renew the faith within our city, our country and ourselves.

As legionaries of Mary, we met to focus on the basics of the legionary system, primarily personal contact. We are aware that home -to -home visitation is the primary work of the legionary, but the intention behind the work is to make personal contacts. For legionaries, the more contacts we are making either in quality or quantity allows us to 'pour ourselves into another soul' as stated in the handbook.

INTENSITY OF EFFORT:

It was interesting to observe that before the Legion of Mary commenced in 1921, there was a monthly meeting which distributed miraculous medals and religious literature.

Clearly this was a forerunner of the Legion of Mary, but it was not intense enough. For that reason, Frank Duff highlighted the need to hold a weekly meeting with weekly work allocation and weekly reporting.

This 'intensive effort' is also highlighted in the handbook because half-baked or lacklustre membership will not be preserved.

We either go forward or fall backwards. On the basis that the Legion is concerned with the sanctification of its members, then we have no choice but to try to go forward and increase our efforts and our intensity.

If we are not working on our intensity and our efforts, the standard just becomes a routine or maybe even a bad habit. This could lead to spiritual sloth or laziness. On an aside, Frank Duff was very critical of officers failing in their attendance duties. He said it led to malaise in the system; and we must be mindful of that cardinal point.

OUT MINISTRY/ POST COVID STREET CONTACT

Frank Duff was very keen on the idea of symbolic action. Accordingly, when we were allowed to contact people after the covid years several legionaries agreed that we would try to reclaim our city by contacting people in an intense way and not in a vague non-zealous way.

Following the model of football matches and on Saturday morning we decided to commence the work every Saturday on the north side of the city for two hours from 10AM until 12PM.

This has now grown to two segments of the city on the north side: one allocated to Presentata Curia and the other allocated to a new Curia Queen of Peace.

It is interesting to observe that after four years of intense effort, about 800 medals are distributed every Saturday morning.

You might like to ask me why am I talking about this? And I will reply that a way to increase your fervour or zeal and improve your membership is based on the NIKE idea of 'just do it'……. the idea of getting out and talking to people, making personal contacts, following up with them and bringing them closer to Our Lord.

Fulton Sheen spoke about the 'in ministry' and the 'out ministry' in his address to the Legion of Mary in 1964. He said that the Legion of Mary was an out ministry in that we are out on the highways and the byways and that is where we should be. Jesus and the apostles were also out ministry …….so it's important that we follow that model.

FRANK DUFF ESSAYS AND THE MEASURE OF OUR UNION WITH MARY

The title of this talk is on the essays of Frank Duff, and I do want to refer you to the website where all his writings are available.

The reason why I think it's important that legionaries read those essays is because it puts flesh on the bones of the handbook. Frank Duff has more time to express his ideas, and in a very clear and concise way he deals with many religious topics that can fill your soul with fervour.

In order to assist your role as a Legion of Mary member, I think it's very important at least to read those essays and if they are embraced, then you will be able to understand the spirit in a clearer way.

The purpose of today's visit is to spread that spirit to yourselves here in London.

I never met Frank Duff, but I do feel I have a better knowledge of him through the essays; therefore, I highly recommend that all legionaries renew their Legion membership by focusing on those essays.

On page 305 of the handbook, it says that the Legion of Mary is at the forefront of the church's battles. There's one line that I think is important and it is that in accordance with 'our measure of a union with Our Lady that the Holy Spirit will be made available' to us to participate in the church's battles.

The idea that the measure of our union with Our Lady determines the operation and the capacity of our soul to make an impact or cooperate with Our Lord's work is interesting.

With that in mind one might say: how do I improve my union with Our Lady? I would humbly suggest that one improves one's union with Our Lady when one focuses on the interior life. We must try to do our work with love and intensity, but more importantly we must understand the importance of the Legion of Mary's spirituality and system.

A very good place to start to renew that membership is to reread or alternately read for the first time the Frank Duff essays.

The measure of our union is paramount and will feed our souls for eternity.



PPC/ PERSONAL CONTACT PRINCIPLES:

One final document that I was reading during the week was a document on peregrini to Europe and mainly to England. Any efforts you can make to assist the PPC projects would be gratefully appreciated.

However, I do want to finish this talk by focusing on one of the writings which is about the Peregrini but I've slightly adapted it by referring to personal contact which can be street contact, crowd contact or home-to-home.

For ourselves on a weekly basis, I suggest if you read this before you go to your Legion work it will help to retune oneself in setting what you need to try to achieve in the personal contacts that you will make.

Frank Duff describes this operation as a 'hit and run' operation as we don't have much time to explain the full catechism but with the medal and the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, we can make an impact for our Lord.

Interestingly, in appendix 6 of the handbook {in the week of the feast of the medal} it refers to the fact that the Legion of Mary member is a living miraculous medal.

It highlights devotion to the Immaculate Conception in a time when the sacramentals and scapulars were not seen as very credible and were dismissed by the Catholic intellectuals over the years.

However, in 2025, we can see the importance of the medal in making personal contacts.

MONKS OF THE WEST AND PPC

I will finish my comments in relation to the principles of peregrinatio which are slightly adapted for crowd contact and any other personal contact to which I have referred earlier.

We have travelled over from Dublin, following in the footsteps of the Monks of the West, in some symbolic action to try to help the Legion here in England today. However, it is really yourselves who can achieve that purpose. Once again, we thank our brothers and sisters for your perseverance and membership here in England. We thank you for organising today to make plans in this jubilee year for the years ahead.

We are here to attempt to stimulate your membership, and, in many ways, we are experiencing the same secular pushback in our city and in our country that you are experiencing. So, in the same family of Our Lady, we try and encourage each other.

We know Our Lady is with us: we know she guides, and we ask her never to fail to enkindle everywhere the fires of divine love …….to enlighten those who are in darkness and in the shadow of death ..... to inflame those who are lukewarm to bring back life to those who are dead in sin and which will guide our own feet in the way of peace so that the battle of life over our Legion may reassemble without the loss of anyone in the Kingdom of your Love and Glory. Amen.

https://www.frank-duff-essays.com



Annual Visit of Concilium Officers to Dicastery

By Concilium Secretary
Miriam McKane

The Legion of Mary was invited to attend the Annual Meeting with the Moderators of International Associations of the Faithful, Ecclesial Movements and New Communities in Vatican City from 4th – 6th June 2025.

Karen Wynne, Concilium Treasurer, Rev. Fr. Paul Churchill, Concilium Spiritual Director, and I Miriam McKane, Concilium Secretary, were greatly honoured to represent the Legion of Mary's four- million active members throughout the world.

Upon arrival on Tuesday, we spent some time in prayer in the Church of Santa Anna, followed by Holy Rosary, Holy Mass and Vespers.



On Wednesday at 2pm the Conference began in the New Synod Hall of Paul VI. Under the title, *Hope Lived and Proclaimed, the Gift of the Jubilee for Ecclesial Communities,* the main themes revolved around evangelisation and formation in the light of Christian Hope. In his opening address, Cardinal Farrell, Prefect for the Dicastery of Laity, Family and Life, said our new Pope, this Jubilee, wishes to help all Lay Associations ***Walk with the Church.*** Each year, we gather in order to tune into the whole Church, so that we may grow. Pope Leo XIV has expressed the importance of our Mission having a Universal Spirit. This spirit enables us to proclaim the Gospel with courage, in filial obedience to the Holy Father. *Hope Lived and Proclaimed* is in reverse from what we observe in history. By virtue of Hope, the history of humanity does not run towards a dark abyss ending with death. To discover Hope is to discover Christ - Tm 1:1. The early Church was one of fullness of heart, and led by Apostles who became the courageous proclaimers of the Resurrection to all people. This spirit of Hope must continue to be experienced and proclaimed.

The Jubilee is an opportunity to rediscover Hope. Pope Leo said our associations are gifts from God and that the love of the Church

accompanies us with great trust and faith in our charisms to realise Hope in the Mission of the new generation.

Day I – *What Challenges for Movements Today?* Prof Andrea Riccardi, historian and former Minister for Integration, gave a reflection on the situation of Christianity and movements in our world today. He said the history of the Church is important and that without memory there is no future. It is the duty of the Church to listen to the signs of the times in the light of the Gospel. We are now at a crossroads in history and are called to live the Gospel with eyes wide open. He thanked the Dicastery for beginning to look at the challenges of the world, without being afraid. Since 1989 we live in a homogenous society of globalisation, one made up of fragments, forgetting the human dimension. Religions are used as instruments for conflicts. Currently, the EU has estimated there are 59 open wars in the world, and we are at real risk of World War.

What can Christian communities do? We need to sow the seeds of peace and go beyond the platforms of hatred. We must develop the aspiration of universality which challenges individualism. This optimism is the sum of hopes and is a brother to enthusiasm which is a vital and contagious element of spiritual initiatives. Do not be content with mediocrity.

Prof Luigino Bruni, economist


CARDINAL FARRELL

and historian spoke of how new communities develop. In the second half of the 20th Century, he has noticed a New Spring in the growth of charisms enriching the Church. Since 1980, society has been marked by consumerism and individualism. Capitalism does not like strong personal relationships. It prefers individualism which replaces the importance of people with goods. Charismatic communities are essential to the life of the Church. Pope Francis urged us not to become managers of fears, but entrepreneurs of dreams.

The day included a penitential liturgy and invocation to the Holy Spirit led by Cardinal Farrell in St. Peter's Basilica. Having listened to the Word of God, there was a recognition of failures, errors and omissions by the movements. The Legion of Mary was honoured to participate by reading one of seven requests for forgiveness.

That evening we were treated to a guided visit of the Sistine Chapel, followed by dinner in the Vatican Museum. This was a spectacular event, providing more opportunity

to converse with members of other organisations and movements. There was a wonderful spirit of welcome and friendship, with one guest likening the event to sharing at a Banquet in Heaven.

On Thursday Morning we gathered for Holy Mass in St. Peter's Basilica. Fr. Churchill was among the many priests to concelebrate Mass with Cardinal Parolin.

Conference Day II began with a talk by Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Pro-Prefect for the Dicastery for Evangelisation, entitled *Rethinking Mission in the Light of Hope*. He said: 'All Church is missionary and is made up of living members of the Church.' Mission renews the Church. However, often the good work of Mission is eclipsed by the injustice of war. We face the bleak reality of a tired humanity and must re-imagine mission in the light of hope. Christian hope is different from desires and dreams of a good life. It is confidence in Christ's promises, relying on the graces of the Holy Spirit. Hope is a pursuit of happiness and converts our human desires into God's Love. It makes us desire Eternal Life with the Risen Lord.

We heard testimony from a young married couple – Camilo Conejeros Anobile and Margarita Sillano Moya, from the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation in Chile. They have been working in Santiago with children as young as 8-15 years old, whose lives are marked by addiction, poverty and violence.

In the afternoon we met in small groups to share reflections on

1) How our association can bring Hope, in the light of challenges mentioned in the reports?

2) What aspects of training contribute to forming members of Hope in our associations?

Theologian Donna Orsuto gave a reflection on the theme 'Being People of Hope.' She highlighted the jubilee as a time to renew personal and community commitment and the importance of pastoral formation in our associations.

Further testimonies were offered by Eva Fernandez Mateo from International Forum of Catholic



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Action, and Manoj Sunny of the Jesus Youth Movement, who shared concrete experiences of formation.

In his concluding address, Cardinal Farrell described the conference as an extraordinary meeting. He encouraged us to reflect on what has occurred during the last week, saying that it has been an inspiration to us all. In his remarks, Cardinal Farrell reflected back to when he was ordained in 1965. At that time the Archdiocese of Dublin rejected as many applicants as it accepted. Today there are no seminaries and this year there were only two ordinations. It is now time to focus on the work of lay missionaries, who are called to bring back a sense of Christianity to our world; a world in which so many of our young people are walking without hope or vision. We are historically at a different moment of cultural change, and the Holy Spirit is calling us to reflect on the way we do things. We must not allow our movements to become pieces in a museum. Lay movements are the only construct that the Church has to instil a different way of preaching the Word of God. Cardinal Farrell thanked us for all we do and urged all never to lose courage or become afraid. Christ has sent the Holy Spirit to guide us.

Upon departure, we spoke with Cardinal Farrell and thanked him for the gathering which had taken place.

On Friday Morning we had the great privilege of an audience with Pope Leo XIV in the Clementine Hall. It was a very moving experience, as with great joy we welcomed His Holiness with warm and resounding applause. In his address, Pope Leo encouraged leaders of lay associations and charismatic movements always to keep Jesus at the centre of our journeys. He said that the groups to which we belong differ, but our desire to work together for a common purpose reflects an essential reality -no one is Christian alone. The Christian life is lived with others because the Risen Lord is present wherever disciples gather in His name. As a result, a much richer harvest can be hoped for, than if each member acted alone. These observations by His Holiness, echo

the writings of Frank Duff, in which he guards members against the dangers of solitary striving.

Pope Leo spoke of ***Unity*** and ***Mission*** as two essential aspects of the Church's life, lived in finial loyalty to the Pope. He said that we are called to be a leaven of unity in a world so torn by discord and violence, and to promote throughout the Church, the unity we experience in our own organisations – a unity given to us by the Holy Spirit. Pope Leo said that our personal encounter with the Lord has given rise to our desire to make Him known to others and that our movements have a fundamental role to play in the work of evangelisation. We are all called to imitate Christ, who emptied Himself to enrich us. In our lay ministry, we too are called to enrich others through emptying of self. The Pope described this as a source of freedom and great joy. He thanked us for being who we are, and entrusted us to the protection of Mary, Mother of the Church, before imparting his Apostolic Blessing on all, and on those we represent.

Following the Papal Audience, we visited the Tomb of Pope St. John XXIII, where we prayed Legion Prayers and Rosary for the Legion of Mary worldwide. We also visited the shrine of our patron, St. Louis Marie de Montfort, before our appointment with Fr. Patrick Dorelus in the office for the Causes of Saints.



DIVINE MERCY CHAPEL

Fr. Dorelus confirmed that his office had recently received correspondence from Archbishop Dermot Farrell, clarifying that we, the Legion of Mary are the Actor for the Cause of Alfie Lambe. He advised us to contact Dr. Waldrey Helgeman informing him of the current situation and await his reply. This we duly did.

In the afternoon we went to the Vatican photographers to obtain some portraits of our new Holy Pontiff. We also visited the Church of the Swiss Guard and prayed a Chaplet of Divine Mercy at 3pm. We made our final visit to the Church of Santa Anna for Holy Mass and Vespers, before departure for our journey home.

With deep gratitude we thank the Dicastery for the invitation to participate in this gathering, and for the immense joy and privilege of meeting with our new Holy Father Pope Leo XIV. We ask the Lord of the Harvest to continue to bless and guide his Pontificate, and to bless the Legion of Mary in our Mission to serve Christ Jesus under the Banner of Mary – Amen.

Appendix - Request for Forgiveness

Text of Request for Forgiveness as read by Miriam McKane, Legion of Mary, at the Penitential Liturgy in St. Peter's Basilica.

For our lack of openness

We ask forgiveness for all lack of openness that has led us to isolate ourselves from God, from others, from ourselves, thus hindering the action of the Holy Spirit.



For the times when we thought that our group, our association, our community was superior to other realities or superior to parish communities, looking with judgement and scorn at 'ordinary people.' For the times when we have been self-referential, concerned only with the cohesion of the group and the good quality of our relationships, while ignoring requests for help from 'outside.' For the times we have rejected wise counsel, useful correction, and timely warning simply because it did not come from our 'inner circle.' For the times we have considered ourselves enlightened as the only 'true Christian,' the only 'bearers of truth', the only ones inspired by the newness of the Spirit, the only ones capable of renewing the Church, the only ones capable of speaking to the younger generations, the only ones truly committed to serving the poor, the only ones who practise active charity, the only ones who understand the present times, the only ones who possess a prophetic voice, the only ones who embody the Church of the apostles today, or the only ones who live authentic fraternal communion.

God of mercy, forgive us.

Remembering the Acies

This issue of Maria Legionis allows ample time for legionaries to distribute copies to all auxiliaries in good time before the acies ceremony and to encourage auxiliaries to attend, giving date, time and venue.

As the acies ceremony is perhaps the one of the few if not the only event which gives auxiliaries the opportunity to know in a tangible way that they are an integral part of the wider Legion family, it is very important to encourage their attendance at the acies ceremony. *Editor.*



Jubilee of Youth in Rome – Deus et Patria Project

By Áine Blake

The Jubilee Year of 2025 announced by Pope Francis was the occasion of many of the faithful from all over the world making a pilgrimage to Rome. A special week for the Youth took place there from 28 July to 3 August. An eight-person team from Ireland, comprising of young adult legionaries and spiritual director Fr. Bernardo De Nardo undertook a Deus et Patria project in Rome during that week.

The Senatus in Rome kindly planned for our stay, and we were blessed to have access to a chapel for Mass and daily prayer together. During the week, we undertook sessions of crowd contact, engaging with pilgrims, tourists, and locals in areas near sacred sites. There was great excitement and liveliness everywhere with throngs of young people gathered in celebration of their faith.



Our team of legionaries had wonderful encounters with people from many different countries. More than 900 miraculous medals were given to individuals, and literature shared about the Jubilee Year, on associated indulgences and on the Legion of Mary. We entered the Holy Door of each of the four papal basilicas: St. Peter; St. John Lateran; St. Paul Outside the Walls; and St. Mary Major. Several local legionaries met with us, and we spent a lovely evening sharing our experiences of being members of the Legion of Mary. Our team also participated in a programme of events organised by the Irish bishops, including catechesis given by Bishop Robert Barron and Sr. Mary Grace SV, together with a gathering of Irish pilgrims that took place at the Pontifical Irish college.

At the end of the week, we made our way on foot out of Rome to Tor Vergata where we camped overnight and were amongst one million young adults addressed by Pope Leo XIV at a vigil ceremony and Mass on Sunday. The Pope encouraged us to "aspire to great things, to holiness, wherever you are. Do not settle for less." He appealed to us to remain united to Jesus: "let us remain in His friendship, always, cultivating it through prayer, adoration, Eucharistic Communion, frequent confession, and generous charity, following the examples of Blessed Piergiorgio Frassati and Blessed Carlo Acutis -now declared saints."

Our project to Rome was a wonderful experience, a most blessed, fruitful and memorable adventure. Praise be to God and His Blessed Mother.

Frank Duff Anniversary Mass

Homily by Bishop Donal Roche

This homily was given on 8 November 2025 in the Pro-Cathedral, Dublin on the 45th anniversary of the Servant of God Frank Duff.

At the recent funeral Mass for Sr. Stanislaus Kennedy, there were many



references made to the great pioneering work she did for the poor, the homeless and the immigrant. There were many tributes paid to her for the difference she made to the lives of many of the poorest in our society. But the homilist, Br. Richard OFM, was at pains to point out that the source of power behind all the good she did was her deep faith in Jesus Christ and her vocation to serve him as a member of the Religious Sisters of Charity. This is an aspect of her life that is often overlooked by many in public life, so I was delighted to hear him speak so eloquently of her faith in God and her dedication to daily prayer and contemplation. Sr. Stan was faithful to Christ and served him daily as she lived out her Christian vocation.

Throughout the history of the Church, there have always been extraordinary people who stood out from the crowd because of their holiness and who inspired the people of their time in their living out of the Christian faith. From the early Christian martyrs who witnessed to Christ by the shedding of their blood to the holy men and women in every century since who witnessed to Christ by preaching the Gospel: some by contemplation or prayer, others by works of charity or by providing education; the calendar of saints is full of inspirational people who drew others to Christ by their personal holiness, right down to the present day with the recent canonisation of St. Carlo Acutis who drew many to Christ by his own personal devotion to the Eucharist.

Ireland is rightly proud of our monastic and missionary traditions that brought the light of the Gospel, firstly throughout Europe and then to all the continents of the world, earning us the name of the Island of Saints and Scholars. Of course, not all the saintly people are officially canonised by the church, and we wait in hope for people like Nano Nagle, Edmund Rice, Mary Aikenhead, Matt Talbot among others to be officially recognised as saints.

This brings me to the great Frank Duff whose life and legacy we celebrate today: not officially recognised as a saint but one who lived a saintly life, dedicated to serving God as the way

to holiness. One of the things that struck me on reading about Frank's life was his vision that *"every single person is called to be a Saint. Take it as most certain that you -- no matter how unfitted your life may seem -- are being given graces sufficient to bring you to sanctity. We have seen that nothing beyond our strength is expected; neither is sanctity the exclusive property of any grade or manner of life. Among the saints canonised by the Church are kings and beggars, and representatives of every trade, slaves, hermits, city people, mothers of families, invalids, soldiers, and persons of every race and colour."*



It was that vision which drove him to heroic levels of personal holiness, striving daily to put his love for Christ into practice by pouring himself out in service of the poor, doing so with the power of prayer, daily Mass and Holy Communion. It was that vision that inspired him to found the Legion of Mary in 1921, an organisation that continues to thrive more than 100 years later.

I never had the privilege of meeting Frank Duff in person, but I can say I had the honour of being a member of the choir that sang at his funeral Mass, 45 years ago this week. I was only in First Year in Clonliffe, about six weeks into the term. To tell the truth, I knew very little about Frank Duff at that time. It was only later I came to realise the huge influence he was in the Church and on the lives of the countless people who were inspired and helped by him. So, while I didn't know Frank Duff personally, I have a real appreciation for him from all the stories that have been told about his goodness and holiness of life and from the people I've met whose dedicated work in the Legion of Mary is a reflection of the work of Frank Duff himself.

Frank Duff's influence has spread far beyond his native city, and the Legion of Mary is active in over 160 countries; it is particularly strong in South Korea, the Philippines, Brazil,







Argentina, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The Legion was created to organise and encourage lay Catholics to perform voluntary work. Coming from a privileged background himself, it was only as a young man that Frank Duff encountered real poverty when he became a volunteer with the St. Vincent de Paul Society. He was appalled by the conditions of the poor who were forced to live in squalid tenement buildings, but he soon saw that they needed more than material help, and that there was a real spiritual poverty in their lives as well. Together with a small group of others, he established the Legion of Mary to be a source of both material and spiritual strength to the poor of Dublin.

Some of the first causes the Legion pursued was to become involved with homelessness and prostitution in Dublin city. There was widespread hostility within the Church and the wider society in Ireland towards both prostitutes and other allegedly "fallen women" but Frank Duff followed the example of Jesus himself, the friend of tax collectors and sinners, and began an outreach to the prostitutes living in often brutal and inhuman conditions in Dublin's red-light district, the notorious Monto, one of the largest in Europe at the time.

Many of the prostitutes he encountered were unmarried mothers who had been disowned both by their families and by their babies' fathers. Although middle-class Dubliners looked dismissively at these women, the impoverished but devoutly Catholic residents of the Monto tenements referred to them as 'unfortunate girls,' showing them support and understanding, knowing that they had often turned to prostitution as a last resort.

In recent times, when we hear so much about the harsh way that unmarried mothers were treated in Ireland in Magdalene Laundries and Mother -and -Baby homes, it is a great injustice that recognition is not given to the fact that Frank Duff and the Legion of Mary took a very different approach: one that was quite radical for its time. Unlike some of the other institutions, they did not force women to give up their babies for adoption; instead, they actively encouraged them to keep their children, even if this meant being disowned by their families and community. The hostels for mothers and babies that the Legion provided were exceptional for their time and were a real haven of shelter and security for women in vulnerable situations.

In this, Frank Duff showed extraordinary courage, even going against the wishes of the archbishop who originally did not approve of his involvement with these so-called 'disreputable' women. The archbishop



asked him why he wanted to get involved in this kind of work and made it clear that he was uneasy about it. Being a devout Catholic, Frank Duff did not want to defy his archbishop, so he came up with another plan. Being a civil servant, he asked the archbishop if he could write a letter to him outlining why he should not open the hostel for unmarried mothers. The letter never came and the hostel was duly opened.

Another sign of his courage is



outlined in the book: 'To Hell or Monto' by Maurice Curtis. It outlines the campaign orchestrated by the Legion in collaboration with the civil authorities to close down the brothels that were causing so much misery and hardship to the women forced to work there. There was a major police raid on March 12, 1925, which involved the newly formed Garda Síochána, leading to numerous arrests and which was the final blow that effectively ended the district. It was a dangerous operation, but Frank Duff and the Legion members faced it fearlessly.

Frank Duff was profoundly influenced by John Henry Newman, who was canonised by Pope Francis in 2019 and was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Leo just last week. He frequently quoted Newman and considered him a major inspiration for his work. Both men were key figures in the Church, with Newman as a Cardinal and Frank Duff as the founder of the Legion. Their connection is rooted in a shared belief in the universal call to holiness and the vital role of the laity in the Church, the handbook of the Legion providing a structured way for lay Catholics to live out their faith and serve the Church.



Frank's devotion to Mary, Mother of Jesus, was one great source of his strength and conviction. He clearly saw in Mary a true Mother who knows and understands the human condition and who is always on hand to intercede for us. He referred to Mary as the 'Mother of our soul' and the 'Mother of all grace.' His devotion was shaped by St. Louis de Montfort, emphasising a 'true devotion' that involved both prayer and active

works, encouraging members to live in a spirit of union and dependence on her.

The two scripture readings chosen for today's Mass can give us an insight into the reason for his devotion to Mary.

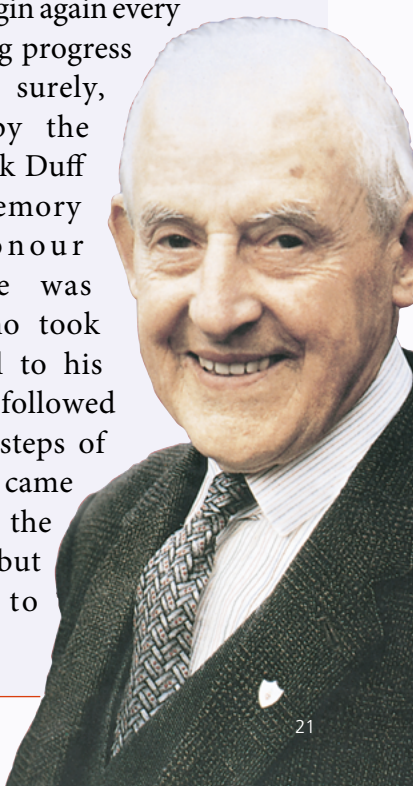


◆ In the story of the wedding feast at Cana, Mary sees the shame and embarrassment of a young couple who have run out of wine at their wedding feast and, with total confidence in her son, deals with the situation. Despite his seeming reluctance to get involved – 'why turn to me? My hour has not come yet' – she confidentially tells the stewards to 'do whatever he tells you.' It is a powerful line, giving meaning to all Marian devotion. To honour Mary is to do the will of Jesus - 'do whatever he tells you.'

◆ And in the first reading from the Book of Ecclesiasticus, the virtue of Wisdom is portrayed as 'the Mother of Divine Hope.' 'I am the mother of pure love, of knowledge and of holy hope. Whoever listens to me will never have to blush, whoever acts as I dictate will never sin.'

Frank Duff was an extraordinary man, not yet officially declared a saint, but certainly a saintly man who showed us in his life something of the love and compassion of God. We honour him today for his holiness of life, his faithfulness to Christ, his devotion to Mary, Mother of God and his courage in showing compassion to those who were often unloved and despised.

His legacy lives on in the lives and work of the members of the Legion of Mary, many of you here today. The best way we can honour him is to strive for that personal holiness that he wrote about and tried to live himself. We are all called to be saints. We may feel very far from that ideal and wonder is it beyond us; we may fall short of the goal, but we get to begin again every day, making progress slowly but surely, inspired by the life of Frank Duff whose memory we honour today. He was a man who took the Gospel to his heart and followed in the footsteps of Jesus, who came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.



Ploughing For Our Lady

By Donal Fallon

The Annual National Ploughing Championship held over a three-day period is a major social and agricultural event in the national calendar of Ireland and attracts upwards of 100,000 people, many from abroad.

In September 2025 it was held in County Offaly in the Irish midlands and close to the birthplace of the Servant of God Alfie Lambe.

Concilium Officer Donal Fallon led a team of legionaries who went among the hundreds of trade stalls, more interested in sowing seeds of faith than ploughing the land. Armed with the usual Legion materials, including 4,000 blessed miraculous medals, hundreds of Rosary beads, leaflets, posters, pamphlets, books, pamphlets, and booklets on various legionaries such as Frank Duff, Alfie Lambe and Edel Quinn, we plied our trade among the many stalls promoting chip-shops, souvenirs, radio stations, toys, tools, religious organisations, insurance, agricultural machinery, pubs, clubs, gyms, the Gardaí and Defence Forces, sports jerseys and equine paraphernalia.

While most traders were concerned with the material or physical, we were thinking in terms of the spiritual. So, while they, for a living, eagerly enticed customers to try out their goods, we engaged with people of all ages on matters of the heart, the soul, the mind and the spirit. I think we were more than a match for the professional salespeople and, perhaps because we were not looking for money. We had little time for food or rest as our Legion stall was thronged with curious passersby. We were not complaining as we had hundreds of opportunities to chat with people about the value of prayer, the story of the Miraculous Medal, the cost of living and dying, the vital importance of the Mass, the number of suicides, the beauty and power of Our Lady's Rosary, daily disasters in the media, and daily miracles that go unreported.

As the day progressed and more legionaries arrived to lend a hand, we had time to explore the vast territory covered with state-of-the art tents, temporary roads and walkways, cafes, clean-toilet blocks, agricultural products as far as the eye could see, and very helpful staff helping people



find their way. Because under foot can become wet, wellingtons are cool at The Ploughing for young and old, male and female, urban and rural. As with every Irish show or festival, an atmosphere of enjoyment prevailed and funny incidents abound.

In conversations with a group of students, we shared our thoughts on suicide and how prayer, if they only knew, might have prevented some. Worry and stress among 'young fellas' was seen as a factor in excessive use of drink and drugs. We warned them always to wear their new Miraculous Medals. A group of student girls, having listened attentively and expressed thanks for their medals, returned later to ask for more medals as they were blessed, and so they could literally give their siblings, parents or grandparents a blessing.

Reflecting later on people's response to the presence of a Legion stall at the Ploughing, we remarked on a number of things. The first was that Ireland is not nearly as anti-Catholic as we are led to believe by the media. The second was that a particular age group, now in their 30s and 40s, were understandably somewhat resistant and even dismissive of our efforts, given the history of the Church in their growing years. Please God the Spirit of Wisdom will prevail in time. The third is that young people from 25 years and younger are much more receptive to the Christian message than their predecessors, both to listening, discussing and asking questions. This should be a source of encouragement for all legionaries as they go out on street contact and on home visitation.



Christ: Eternal Ploughman

Who will plough the fields now

And paint the meadows brown?

And who will drive the horses

To turn the lea-field down?

And who will see the mystery

In a dark and silent sod?

The heart that knows beauty,

The heart that knows God!

Lord, plough my fallow land
of idle years

Lest I, thy child, should
reap in tears;

Oh drive the iron coulter deep

To plough the sinners' soul
from sleep.

Oh Ploughman, Ploughman,
Eternal Ploughman

Our winter-weary world is
cold indeed,

Give to us a sowing for a
New Spring

Thy Sacred Blood for Seed.

F.H.

Interview with Concilium Officer for Maria Legionis

Conducted by The Editor

Q1. Donal, you are now a Concilium Officer. Briefly, what is that position, and what are your responsibilities in that position?

I'm one of a number of assistant secretaries that make up the Legion Concilium. My responsibilities include promoting the Legion of Mary in Ireland outside of Dublin by means of reports, visitations, symbolic events and supporting the efforts of the councils around the country in their evangelising endeavours. Our annual Pilgrimage to Knock, Calls to Arms, Cluster Conferences, evangelising at secular events like 'The Ploughing' or 'The Fleadh', adjustment of councils, promoting praesidium start-ups, developing new contacts and dispensing information countrywide as Concilium sees fit, are all part of the role but it's the action of the membership, both spiritual and practical, that produces results.

Q2. When did you first join the legion of Mary, and what inspired you to do so?



I'm a relatively recent convert to the Legion and its system, only realising recently, thanks to our much loved former President Mary Murphy, that the first Handbook was compiled in Leixlip where I live, by Fr. Michael Toher, former Spiritual Director and then a curate of Dublin Archdiocese, and Frank Duff who cycled out from the city to meet and confer with him. However the immediate catalyst was my search for some means of counteracting the evil that showed itself in the result of the 2018 referendum on the right to life of the unborn.

Q3. Briefly, how has membership of the Legion of Mary changed your life?

Apart from taking me so long to get a handle on how the Legion works, it has slowly transformed my prayer life in acknowledging the central role of Our Lady in the story of the Incarnation, her intercessory role as our Mediatrix of Grace, her maternal role for John the Baptist, for the Apostles, for the Church, the saints and visionaries

through the centuries and finally for us. I still have to remind myself at Mass or at Eucharistic Adoration that where Jesus is - there is his Mother Mary whom He loves.

Q4. What challenges are currently facing the Legion of Mary- both nationally and internationally?

Nationally the Legion has been losing ground since the onset of the secular society we now inhabit. There are an infinite number of distractions to draw us away from facing the decisiveness of our short sojourn on earth. The degree to which the Legion of Mary sounds old-fashioned to Irish ears is the degree to which we are off-side where the next life is concerned. However, legionaries are detecting a change with three aspects to it. The first is that young people are more open and inclined to listen. The second is that they feel 'this can't be all there is.' The third is that new shoots are appearing and new praesidia are starting. Therein lies the first challenge. Internationally, the divide between rich and poor can be depressing. For legionaries however it can be the poor who are to be envied in their joyfulness, their simplicity of life and their legionary activity on an incredible scale, resulting in many priestly vocations from which Ireland now benefits. There the challenge is to maintain the Legion system, which does work, against the vagaries of human nature.

Q5. How do you think the Legion of Mary should respond to a society of increasing secularism?

We need to be more courageous on the street and going from door-to door. Irish people are more tolerant than we realise. Once you are not looking for money or votes, the majority can be surprisingly patient. Under-selling the message of the Gospel is not an option but neither is failing to listen to and respect what we hear from people in all manner of situations and degrees of preparedness.

Q6. How do you think the Legion of Mary should counteract any erroneous views of the Legion held by some in society.

By telling the truth as we legionaries know it to be, verbally or perhaps in writing but always calmly and with evidence which is available in abundance.

Q7. Are you optimistic on the future strength of the Legion of Mary – both nationally and internationally?

Nationally I believe we are emerging from a downturn born of poor catechetics, the rise of materialism and misbehaviour, none of our making. In Legion reports from correspondents abroad, I am struck by the fact that legionaries are to be found working constantly in the trouble spots of the world, born of war, drug abuse, corruption and natural disasters. The Lord and His Blessed Mother are

with them so I must be optimistic. However, we desperately need more correspondents at home.

Q8. In the early years, Frank Duff involved the Legion of Mary with the moral and social issues of the day. Do you think the legion of Mary should do likewise today?

The line between moral and political issues can be very thin, as we have seen in recent times. The nature and degree of involvement with an issue may vary but the good name of the Legion can be protected, not by fear or inactivity but by Christian discretion when a necessary action must be undertaken.

Q9. What would you say to a prospective member contemplating joining the Legion of Mary?

Pull out the laptop or phone, read what's there and go for it. When you're at it, bring a friend!

Q10. What ideas have you for making the Legion of Mary better known among the general population?

1) Inviting or encountering people at public events, including our own, and also before and after Mass, fully equipped with Legion materials. 2) Using local or national media wisely to present the Catholic side of life. 3) Visiting towns where the Legion is weak or non-existent in larger numbers than heretofore - from a wider cluster of councils perhaps. 4) More targeting of schools, with their cooperation, for simple prayer participation, for dialogue and for creative use of the arts.

Q11. Do you think that the creation of junior praesidia in parishes, schools and colleges are the way forward for the Legion of Mary in Ireland?

It is one of the ways by which the life-blood of the Legion can be reinvigorated as members can become the adult legionaries of the future. There are already junior praesidia in all four provinces. The adults involved are willing to share the details of how they got them established with anyone who wishes to take on the challenge.

Q12. Finally, is there any further observation or comment you wish to make?

Having been involved in other bodies with an evangelisation remit offers a chance to compare. The Legion, by virtue of its structure, its rules based system and its constant devotion to prayer seems to be more muscular and dynamic, driving its members to new heights of endeavour while also setting great store by discipline in times of difficulty. The graces from Our Lady that accrue from all this striving are immeasurable. With the Mass and the Rosary on our side, 'who can be against us?'

Rosary Rally in Trivandrum India



By A. James Vice President South Comitium

This year the Rosary Rally conducted by the Legion of Mary South Comitium Trivandrum as usual took place on 26th Oct 2025 at Our Lady of Good Voyage Church, Vizhinjam.

Adverse weather continued for days until 25th Oct. But on the day of the Rosary Rally, and because of our continuous prayers, Blessed Virgin Mary blessed us with good weather and a bright and sunny atmosphere which surprised everyone.

The venue this year was far off from the city at Our Lady of Good Voyage Church, Vizhinjam. Banners were placed in and around the city at important points, and also in parishes. Copies of The Rosary Rally details such as venue, date and time in printed format were distributed to all the parishes in the diocese.

Circa 8000 legionaries and parishioners took part in the Rosary Rally. Our Lady of Good Voyage Church is the largest parish in our diocese comprising of more than 15,000 parishioners. The 150th Anniversary of the Church was also celebrated this year.

The legionaries from the north and south of the city concentrated at two places about 2 km., away from the Church on either side as decided by the Comitium officials. Since it was a distance from the city, the participation of the priests was low; the Feast of St. Jude being celebrated in most of the parishes in our diocese was also one of the reasons.

The spiritual director along with the Comitium officials had visited almost all the parishes of the diocese inviting the parish priests, the Legion members and the parishioners to take part in the Rosary Rally. The Archbishop Most Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Netto was The Principal



Celebrant of The Concelebrated Mass offered along with twelve priests, while children replicating Marian Apparitions in different places was one of the highlights of the Rosary Rally.

The message of the bishop to the legionaries and the people who gathered there was to educate and work for the eradication of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol, and for the uplift of the poor and downtrodden. The bishop emphasised to the congregation the Catholic phrase: "To Jesus Through Mary." He also said there was a need to become members of the Legion of Mary, to carry out Legion works, and thus be completely devoted to Blessed Virgin Mary.

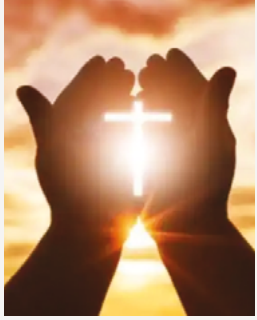
The Comitium Vice President A. James in his thanksgiving speech asked all legionaries and the people gathered there to recite many rosaries for these intentions.





From Football To Faith

Report on Men's Conference



By Sean Grace

Our Lady Queen of Peace Curia was established one year ago. It is based in Morning Star Hostel in Dublin and comprises of circa 50 members over four praesidia.

Recently the Curia organised a Men's Conference in Nazareth Hall de Montfort House. The theme of the conference was "From Football….to Faith."

We were very privileged to have two outstanding speakers to address us: Fr. Philip Mulryne OP, and Keith Fahey. Both were successful professional footballers in England and Ireland and at international level; they talked to us about their respective careers and their faith journeys.

The venue was packed with over 100 men of all ages present. Shane O'Reilly, President of Our Lady of Knock Praesidium, and an accomplished musician and singer, commenced proceedings with a mixture of old and new tunes as the men arrived, establishing an energetic buzz early on. Declan Lawlor, Concilium President opened the formal proceedings and introduced Fr. Philip. A hush descended on the gathering as Fr. Philip led 100 men in praying the rosary on their knees. It is always a powerful experience to witness such an occasion. As is always the case, when the rosary is recited at the commencement of any meeting, the atmosphere changes. The outside world miraculously fades away, and a calm and reassuring atmosphere encompasses the room and the hearts of the participants.

Fr. Philip then talked about his football career which commenced with Manchester United at the same time as David Beckham and Paul Scholes. He said that professional football is a glamorous but challenging sport as there is fierce competition among players, and injuries and bad luck are obstacles that are ever present.

Fr. Philip intimated that he was not always the mature and measured character we know today.

As regards his faith journey, Fr. Philip was fortunate to grow up in a devout Catholic household and his family prayed for him always, through the good times and not so good times of his career. He was not always observant, but he never let the spark of faith disappear altogether;

he attributes that to the prayers of his family, particularly his sister.

He was invited to enter the priesthood by Noel Traynor, The Bishop of Down and Connor. During his studies he felt a call to join the Dominicans and was ordained to the priesthood in 2017. He has since served as Novice Master in St. Mary's Priory which is the Novitiate for the Dominicans' Province of Ireland.

Fr. Philip's main message to the attendees was that he never felt as fulfilled in his football career as he does now as a priest. We should not seek fulfilment in earthly things because we will be disappointed. We should keep those things in perspective and seek out the higher things, the spiritual and the holy.

Declan then introduced Keith Fahey who is now happily married with a young family. He grew up in Tallaght and was a promising footballer from an early age. His football career started at Arsenal, then Aston Villa and several other English and Irish clubs. Whilst playing for St. Patrick's Athletic, he won PFAI Player of the Year in 2008. Keith also had an illustrious football career at international level, earning sixteen senior caps for the Republic of Ireland.

In his personal life, Keith's family unfortunately broke up, and he was an anxious child who made bad choices, culminating in addiction which lasted 23 years. People were good to him, however, and he feels they gave him much latitude. He lived in a football and addiction bubble, led by falsehoods and deceptions. In rehab at 35 years old, he started to pray and God revealed himself to him every day. He was actively seeking to know God more and more. He encountered Jesus Christ during Covid and now he wants to help people in addiction, to help them step out from the dark. He says he is blessed to be where he is now. His prayer life gives him structure, and his ambition is to get to heaven. Having the trappings of fame does not compare with how he lives today.

There was a break for tea and cake and there were many volunteers to serve the food and tidy up.

After the break both speakers returned for a question-and-answer session with legionaries Shane O'Reilly and Ian O'Cuinneagain. Keith, who now lives in Spain, was encouraged to form a Legion of Mary praesidium and fly the Legion flag in Spain.

The Legion has run a series of Men's Conferences in the last few years – and will do so again in the near future.

Patrician Meeting on St. Mother Teresa



By Sean Grace

Our Lady Queen of Peace Curia recently hosted a very successful Patrician Meeting in de Montfort House. There were 27 in attendance, a mixture of legionaries and non-legionaries. The theme was: St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

We were honoured to be joined by Fr. Seamus McEntee and by two religious sisters who are members of The Missionaries of Charity, namely Sr. Martina Valentine and Sr. Timothy.

The first speaker was Ante Dzojkic, Our Lady of Good Counsel praesidium, who gave us a short talk on Mother Teresa. He highlighted that she is one of the saintliest figures who has ever lived. Though small in stature, she carried the compassion of Christ himself. She was born Anjezë Gonxhe Bojaxhiu in Albania in 1910. At 18 she came to Dublin and trained as a teacher in Loreto College in Rathfarnham. She later moved to India to teach and in 1950 she left the convent to establish the Missionaries of Charity, a religious order dedicated to serving the poorest of the poor on the streets of Calcutta. She heard the voice of Jesus say: "come be my light, I cannot go alone: they do not know me so bring them to me."

Mother Teresa's simple white sari with the blue border became a symbol of hope on the streets and across the world. She said: "not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love." To her, every person, no matter how poor or broken, was the face of Jesus. She loved the poor because she saw in them the suffering of Christ. In the poor we meet Jesus in his most distressing disguise.

In 1979 Mother Teresa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. When asked what we could do to promote peace she said: "Go home; love begins at home; love your family; smile at your family; smile at your husband or wife; let us make our homes centres of compassion." Mother Teresa said the greatest destroyer of peace is abortion.

Mother Teresa faced moments of spiritual darkness, yet she never lost faith. Her strength came from daily prayer and her deep union with Christ in the Eucharist; let us imitate her. If you ever feel distressed during the day, call on Our Lady. "Mary, Mother of Jesus, please be a mother to me now."

Ante ended with the following words: My friends, the message of Mother

Teresa is timeless. Love begins at home; faith begins in the heart, and holiness begins with one simple yes to God. Let us not simply admire her, let us imitate her.

Sr. Martina then made a very interesting contribution where she recalled her own vocation and her experience with Mother Teresa who took a personal interest in her and alleviated her American father's concerns about her vocation. She also shared that she started out as a midwife and suffered discrimination because of her pro-life stance whilst working in a hospital that carried out abortions. Mother Teresa again took a personal interest in her and fought her case.

After a short break, Fr. McEntee shared his memories of Mother Teresa. Growing up in Rathcoole, he joined the Legion there. He later moved to London and joined the Legion there also. Later still, on a return journey from Australia, he stopped in Calcutta and met Mother Teresa there. He volunteered to stay and work with her, helping the poorest of the poor. He had not forgotten that he was still a member of the Legion of Mary, and he asked Mother Teresa if she would write a letter to its members giving them some encouragement. She granted his wish and following is the text of the letter. It reads:

Dear Members of the Legion of Mary

This brings you my love and prayers. It is wonderful to think of God's great love for you and me - to give us the opportunity to do something beautiful for God. The more we allow Him to use us freely the more He can do with us for the glory of His Church and for the good of his Poor. Keep up the good work you are doing and remember whatever you do to the least you do it to Jesus. Do everything with Jesus, for Jesus and to Jesus through Mary. My prayers will be with each one of you, asking Our Lady to be a Mother to each one of you.

God bless you,

Mother Teresa MC

Fr. McEntee joined the Missionaries of Charity Fathers (of Mother Teresa) in 1993 and served in Mexico and Italy. He later joined the Dublin diocese and was ordained a priest in 2014. After various appointments and a move in 2024, he rediscovered the Mother Teresa letter and presented it to Declan Lawlor and Sean Grace at the end of the evening.

Fr. McEntee told us that Mother Teresa founded the Missionaries of Charity with the very distinct and simple - but profoundly demanding charism: To quench the infinite thirst of Jesus on the cross for love and for souls. This charism is expressed in three inseparable dimensions: To love Jesus passionately, to serve the poorest of the poor, to bring souls to Christ.

Legion *world news*

EUROPE

BELGIUM: In **Brussels Regia** reports from legionaries in two praesidia in the same parish show visitation of the sick and infirm and widows and helping people, who are housebound, with housework, and bringing Holy Communion to those who request it. They carry out evangelisation and meet non-Catholics, and couples with marriage difficulties. The main works in **Antwerp Regia** consist of bringing people to Mass, visiting homes for the elderly, and recruiting auxiliary members.

ENGLAND: In **Birmingham Senatus** a good number of Peregrinatio Pro Christo projects were held. Four legionaries participated in a project in Rotterdam and worked with the Cape Verdean Curia. Over 2,000 homes were approached. Many people accepted the invitation to come to Church. In Bambury legionaries from two praesidia carried out visitation to 426 homes. Bristol Curia had a public rosary for peace in the town square. A person away from the sacraments for some time was very moved during the rosary and asked to be brought to a priest for confession. One praesidium in Brentwood East Curia completed a three-year parish wide door-to-door visitation, calling at approximately 14,000 homes. A praesidium in **Central London Curia** reported on street contact, book barrow and dissemination of Catholic literature. In **Liverpool Senatus** Leeds Curia has successfully established six new praesidia in the Leeds and Sheffield areas, all with strong membership.

FRANCE: Legionaries in Dax are evangelising in the town centre distributing Miraculous Medals. Legionaries in Dax and Saint Sever promoted the Legion in the Parish of Saint Giron's de Charousse. They were warmly welcomed and now an information meeting is being planned. The presidium in Lourdes has nine members and works include maintaining an active presence in the Sanctuary. Legionaries contact pilgrims while standing outside Parvis of Saint Bernadette.

GERMANY: The 700th meeting of the **Frankfurt Senatus** took place in May. The Papal Nuncio, seventeen priests and approximately 300 legionaries were present at the opening Pontifical High Mass. The Senatus of Vienna, Pris, Strasbourg, Antwerp, Brussels, Amsterdam and Munich were represented. In the **Regia of Cologne** candidates are prepared for Confirmation and children are prepared for First Holy Communion. Over 500 Miraculous Medals were distributed in Lourdes to an international soldiers' pilgrimage. A Peregrinatio Pro Christo was carried out in Maria Einsiedel with 30 participating.

THE NETHERLANDS: The **Amsterdam Regia** has an online Rosary in different languages. The public Rosary in Dam Square continues to thrive. Birmingham Senatus organised a Peregrinatio Pro Christo Project in Rotterdam at the invitation of Cape Verde legionaries.

NORWAY: There are ten praesidia in Norway, and a new praesidium has been established in Odda which is 130km from Bergen. Works include the strengthening of Catholic life and culture, particularly Catholic marriage and assisting the priest with funerals and burials. Legionaries regularly visit Bergen prison, assist with preparations for baptisms, teaching Catholicism to the youth and visit the sick in hospitals and nursing homes.

SCOTLAND: In the **Senatus of Scotland** legionaries

in Greenock Curia took the crib to a nursing home on Christmas morning. A recruitment drive at Saint Ninian's resulted in eight names being received for active membership. Fr. Des Broderick, the oldest priest in Scotland died in April, one month before his 100th birthday. He was a former Spiritual Director of the Senatus. R.I.P.

SWEDEN: Our Lady of Mercy Curia is starting a new Swedish- speaking praesidium. They are also, at the request of the Spanish chaplain, considering starting a Spanish- speaking praesidium.

NORTH AMERICA

U.S.A.: **Arlington Senatus**: The theme of the annual retreat for young adults was "Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati and the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist". Holy Mass was celebrated at the retreat, and there was Benediction and a lively Praise and Worship session. Knoxville Curia had 70 people attend an outdoor candlelight Rosary ("Light up the Night") at a Shrine of Our Lady. **Houston Senatus**: Dallas Comitium held their 800th meeting in March. A Curia carries out crowd contact twice monthly at Oyster Creek Park. The new Curia in Pharr is experiencing rapid growth with ten senior praesidia and three junior praesidia, plus two more in formation. The **Los Angeles Senatus** carries out regular contact work at the train stations, organises Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) and Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) and promotes Frank Duff prayer meetings. Columban drives are held frequently. A website has recently been established. Legionaries in Tucson helped at a homeless shelter. **San Francisco Senatus**: The Maria Legionis Journal is well promoted from San Francisco up along the west coast to Anchorage Curia in Alaska. A praesidium in Nevada, recruited 13 auxiliaries. San José and Oakland Comitia and Portland Curia extended the Legion into a total of five new parishes. **St. Louis Senatus**: A praesidium carried out over 5,000 nursing home calls where they arranged for the reception of the sacrament of the sick many times and helped six people return to the sacraments. A Curia in Kansas has 16 praesidia with 85 active members and 590 auxiliaries. They are making great efforts to establish junior praesidia. **Philadelphia Senatus**: Camden Comitium had an article promoting the Legion of Mary published in the diocesan newspaper to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the founding of Camden Comitium. **Miami Regia**: A successful Jubilee Pilgrimage was organised. Highlights included one conversion and one return to sacraments. Bahamas Curia is trying to revive dormant praesidia. A visit was made to Jamaica. **Rochester Comitium** has ten directly attached praesidia and one Curia. There are eight junior praesidia. Hudson Valley Curia has 101 active members and 373 auxiliary members. Westchester Curia has 140 active members in ten praesidia.

CANADA: **Toronto Senatus**: At the Acies in Durham Curia, a priest agreed to commence two praesidia in his parish. The Korea-speaking Curia revived a praesidium. A conference on the Three Legion Causes and St. Louis Marie de Montfort was held. **Montreal Senatus**: Two praesidia reporting had a total of 25 members of whom 11 were probationers. A family of five was brought back to the sacraments. The one remaining praesidium in Sherbrooke Curia area carries out monthly crowd contact and invites people to light a candle during evening Eucharistic Adoration. **Vancouver Comitium**: A praesidium reported 57 Pilgrim Statue visits which often included contact with neighbours. During

weekly street contact, six auxiliary members were recruited. In an attached Curia, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) and Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) work resulted in one Baptism and two returns to Confession after long lapses. Concilium representatives visited their Comitium Congress in May which had 400 attendees. Some attached praesidia and the Curia for people who speak Korean were also visited. **Edmonton Comitium**: An attached Curia held a junior retreat for 111 children. Home visitation and 100 Enthronements of the Sacred Heart were carried out. The Rosary is prayed monthly with 80 jail inmates.

MEXICO: A Curia attached to **Mexico City Senatus** with 21 praesidia has been blessed to be able to establish a new Curia with 10 of the praesidia moving to it. Information was sought on the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association (PTAA). The movement exists in Mexico City due to the influence of a priest, a Kiltegan Father, who was based there some years ago. The former president of the Senatus is a pioneer and has indicated that he will give guidelines to other members who are interested. The Senatus was represented at the 15th anniversary of the foundation of the Regia in Puebla in August. There are nine praesidia, two Curiae and three Regiae attached to the **Guadalajara Senatus**. The praesidia work closely in conjunction with their parishes giving particular attention to the needs of the sick and housebound. Parishioners are invited to all parish functions, rosaries, processions etc. Neighbours are invited by families to take part in the family rosary. The Miraculous Medal is explained and distributed to contacts in the course of Legion work. **Senatus of Merida** Parishioners are prepared for First Holy Communion, confirmation, and baptism. People who are sick are visited in hospital and at home. The prison is visited also. New praesidia have been set up and it is planned to continue extending in parishes that do not currently have any Legion of Mary presence. Arising from the home visitation a number of lapsed Catholics have returned to the practice of the Faith, and contact has been made with non- Catholics.

CENTRAL AMERICA

COSTA RICA: Exploratio Dominicalis was carried out by a number of praesidia in the Costa Rica Senatus with great success. After studying the Rosary Confraternity in the Handbook, the Senatus invited active and auxiliary members as well as Legion contacts to a talk on the Confraternity.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: Legionaries in **Santo Domingo Senatus** provide religious instruction to 642 children and young people. A home for people suffering from drug addiction was visited. Legionaries in **Santiago de los Caballeros Senatus** helped with the preparation for eleven baptisms, 30 First Communions, 82 confirmations and three marriages. One praesidium was established. Legionaries visited the prison.

EL SALVADOR: In **Salvador Senatus** particular attention is given to contacting people who have left the Catholic Church. One such person has returned and joined a praesidium. A number of couples have had their children baptised, and some couples have regularised their marriage. Contacts met on home visitation are offered the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in their homes. A number of people who are sick and were met on hospital visitation have availed of the sacrament of reconciliation. Twenty-six young people attended a retreat for their age group.

PANAMA: After a few attached Curiae in the **Panama Senatus** held a Congress, the programme for extension is very active in areas and parishes where there is no presence of the Legion of Mary currently. This is yielding positive results. The priests in the area are also eager to have a praesidium in their parishes.

PUERTO RICO: The **Puerto Rico Senatus** reported a number of praesidia and Curiae, which ceased to function for different reasons, have been re-established. Legionaries have positive dialogue with families who have joined other religions and also with families who have stopped practising their Catholic faith.

CUBA: A recently established Curia with four praesidia reported visiting the sick in hospital and at home. The attached junior praesidium visits a home for people with physical disabilities where they are made welcome. The Miraculous Medal is distributed.

AFRICA

BENIN: They have a good number of catechumens, both adults and children. One Comitium started three new praesidia.

BURKINA FASO: A new Regia is being set up through the raising of the Comitium of Our Lady of Yagma in Ouagadougou to a Regia.

BURUNDI: Guidelines for apostolates for the 75th Jubilee of the Legion of Mary in Burundi in 2029 have been recommended. 'With Mary and the support of our auxiliaries and like an army set in battle array, allows the Holy Spirit to make us witnesses for Christ' was the theme for young legionaries learning about the spirituality and mission of the Legion. Rev. Fr. Charles spoke on the importance of moral and Christian values for the youth of today. 1.066 people who are suffering from sickness were visited. Elizabeth Charlotte Ndabahgamye R.I.P, one of the first legionaries in Burundi, died on 9th April 2025.

CAMEROON: Reports to **Douala Senatus** show a good number of conversions, prison visitation, catechesis, home and hospital visitation as well as street contact and Exploratio Dominicalis.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: Reports to **Lubumbashi Senatus** showed 1,328 homes were visited. In August, a project took place in Kasenga with 164 legionaries participating. They reached out to many people of Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox backgrounds, as well as non-believers. Lubumbashi Central Prison was visited. The **Bukavu Senatus** is still shaken by the dire situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The apostolate is focusing a lot on people displaced by war, victims of fires and other natural disasters, the sick, widows, orphans and all who have lost family members. **In Kinshasa Senatus** during the month of the holy Rosary, members visited many families and recited the Rosary with them for peace in Congo and all the other countries stricken by war. A High Mass was celebrated by the Archbishop for the Jubilee Year for all the Marian movements. **Kisangani Senatus** reported 1,418 people were contacted to enrol in catechesis in preparation for the sacrament of Baptism and hundreds were contacted in preparation for other sacraments. 625 sick people in various hospitals in Kisangani were visited. The retreat in preparation for the **Kananga Senatus** Acies drew a very large attendance.

REPUBLIC OF CONGO: Reports to **Brazzaville Senatus** showed works of home visitation to Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants, Muslims, pagans and new religious movements. Sixty lapsed Catholics were brought back to the Faith, couples were reconciled, and unmarried couples were exhorted to get married in the

Catholic Church. Many people who were sick asked for confession. Holy Communion is brought to the housebound. Many people accepted the invitation to attend for catechism classes. Prisoners, widows and widowers were visited, and many said they would come to the church to pray.

GABON: Works include home and prison visitation, recruitment of catechumens and helping out with baptisms.

GUINEA: The **Guinea Comitium** currently has thirteen Curiae and eight attached praesidia. They engage in home and hospital visitation as well as visitation of orphanages and funeral homes.

IVORY COAST: The **Ivory Coast Senatus** will be celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Legion of Mary in Ivory Coast in September. Some examples of legionary work reported are: reconciliation of families, regularisation of marriages, inviting people to return to Mass, and recruitment of catechumens. The legionaries also prepare people for reception of the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, and Confirmation and the sacrament of the sick. They teach catechism, and visit people in prostitution, people suffering from drug addiction, and people in police stations. A special case was reported at the last meeting about a landlord of two legionaries who was not a Christian and did not believe in life after death. The legionaries encouraged him to pray with them. He accepted to recite the rosary with them every evening after work. Years passed and he started going to Church on Sundays. Then he started working with the Sisters of Charity and eventually agreed to enrol in catechism classes, at the request of the Mother Superior, and was baptised.

KENYA: **Senatus of Kenya**: Auxiliary Bishop David Kamau celebrated the annual Mass at Venerable Edel Quinn's grave with 31 priests, and thousands of legionaries from Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania in attendance. Edel's first praesidium reported sixteen active members, five probationers, and 37 auxiliaries, focusing on hospital visitation, street contact, and junior praesidium care. **Kisumu Regia** contacted 679 cohabiting couples, 171 couples had their marriages validated in the Catholic Church. Contact was also made with witchdoctors and illicit brewers. Of 155 street girls contacted, 19 left the lifestyle. **Bungoma Regia** established two new Curiae. Two praesidia undertook Exploratio Dominicalis projects.

MALAWI: **Blantyre Senatus**: Reports reflect a mix of the three Cs: Conversion, Consolation, and Conservation. Lapsed Catholics are visited, with many returning to the Faith. Cohabiting couples are counselled, with many opting for marriage regularisation. Elderly people are assisted with chores and visited regularly. Bereaved families are supported through visits and prayer. Youths absent from Mass are encouraged to return. Catechism is taught to children, and parents are urged to have their children baptised. Praesidia at Domasi and Chancellor Colleges exchange visits to promote Legion of Mary membership. **Maula Senatus**: Several youth groups were formed, including Catholic Scout and Guides. The Congress for junior legionaries held in August 2024 was well attended. Maula Senatus hosted the annual general meeting in August 2024 with chaplains and officers from both Malawi Senatus and Blantyre Senatus. Blantyre Senatus will host the next one. The Legion report to the Laity Council was well received. A membership census is planned at the request of the Archbishop. The Legion of Mary Jubilee

celebrations took place in May 2025. Council works include catechism, children's formation, visitation of families, people who are sick, people who have been bereaved, auxiliaries, elderly people, and cohabiting couples, six of eight marriages were ratified.

MAURITIUS: The Regia reported 66 legionaries from the island of Rodrigues, accompanied by their Spiritual Director Fr. Jean-Rex Casimir, visited Mauritius. Highlights included the Jubilee Mass of 7th September, visits to various pilgrim sites and places such as those associated with Venerable Edel Quinn who brought the Legion of Mary to Mauritius, visits to Holy Cross cemetery where many Irish priests are buried, and the visit to the Shrine of Père Laval, a saintly priest who evangelised the slaves in years gone by. Many legionaries travelled from Reunion Island also.

NIGERIA: **Abuja Senatus**: Over 200 legionaries were recruited in Maitama Comitium. In March 245 legionaries attended a Catechism Instructors Seminar, which was facilitated by two priests. **Enugu Senatus**: Extension work continues with many of the attached Councils of the Senatus reporting growth. An attached Regia has 18 praesidia in secondary schools and five praesidia in the seminary. Works undertaken include helping to prepare hundreds of people for the Sacraments. Three prisoners returned to Church following their release and prayer was considered instrumental in the prevention of eleven abortions. Many other apostolic works were undertaken, and all reports include great results from Exploratio Dominicalis projects. **Ibadan Senatus**: The works of an attached Regia include sacramental preparation for thousands of people, 71 marriages ratified, and 84 lapsed Catholics returned to practice. One Jehovah's Witness was converted. **Jos Regia**: Works include home visitation, hospital visitation, crowd contact, teaching the catechism and book barrow apostolate. 109 persons were recruited into the Legion of Mary. Legionaries helped prepare many people for the various sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion. Sixteen marriages were blessed and eighteen lapsed Catholics returned to practice of the Faith. **Ikot Ekpene Regia**: 52 catechumens were baptised, 342 candidates received First Communion, seven converts joined the Church, and four lapsed Catholics returned. **Lagos Regia**: Works undertaken include visitation of homes, hospitals, shops, maternity hospitals and prisons, teaching the Catechism, marriage classes, care of children at Mass and care of junior praesidia. The Regia has many catechists and reports helping hundreds of people prepare for various sacraments. **Onitsha Regia**: Legionaries helped prepare many for the sacraments, including 130 couples for matrimony. Twenty lapsed Catholics returned to practice.

RWANDA: In **Kigali Senatus** works include home, hospital and prison visitation. There are many junior praesidia. One Comitium has nearly 1,700 legionaries who are under eighteen years of age

SENEGAL: The **Dakar Regia** reports thirteen new praesidia and two new Curiae have been established and another two new Curiae are in the process of being set up. Their works include home, prison and hospital visitation as well as catechism classes. Two conversions were also mentioned.

TANZANIA: **Dar-es-Salaam Regia**: Visitation of praesidia and Councils is carried out on an ongoing basis. Emphasis is placed on recruiting youth to secure the future of the Legion of Mary. Members who relocate to other areas

are encouraged to establish the Legion of Mary in their new locations. Hai Moshi Comitium: Works reported on include home visitation and hospital visitation, encouraging couples to marry in Church and preparing adults and children for the sacraments. Rombo Comitium: 125 new members have been recruited. Works include home visitation and hospital visitation, preparing candidates for the sacraments, and teaching adults and children the Rosary.

TOGO: Reports to **Lomé Senatus** show Exploratio Dominicalis projects, days of evangelisation, new praesidia, both senior and junior and new Curiae, as well as a Peregrinatio Pro Christo to Ghana in August.

ASIA

INDONESIA: **Jakarta Senatus** reported a total of forty-five legionaries took part in Peregrinatio Pro Christo projects to remote areas in July. Frank Duff's birthday on 7th June was celebrated on a webinar via Zoom between three councils. One of his books was discussed by the participants. Works featured in reports include home visitation, teaching catechism, and providing sign language at Mass. Legionaries were encouraged to protect the environment by participating in waste management projects.

JAPAN: A praesidium with 22 members in **Osaka Senatus** brings Holy Communion to people who are sick and housebound. A Curia which has three Korean-speaking praesidia and one Japanese-speaking praesidium presented its report. The works there are mainly parish related.

KOREA: A report from Daejeon City Regia, in **Seoul Senatus**, referred to praesidia in each of two prisons holding an Acies and a Reunion. A praesidium made up of adults with a disability was also reported. The establishment of eight new junior praesidia was mentioned. Among many conversions reported was that of a former Protestant missionary, whose legionary sister helped her to overcome her problems with Catholic devotion to Mary. Her mother is now receiving instruction. Another report mentioned the conversion of a shaman. Latest minutes received from **Gwangju Senatus** record legionaries carrying out an extensive apostolate including street evangelisation. 56 active members were recruited. **Daegu Senatus** reported many conversions, returns to the sacraments and Baptisms being arranged. 1,570 catechumens were recruited. The Regia organised a 'Night of Mary' at the Marian Shrine, on 1st May. In spite of heavy rain throughout the evening, 1,110 legionaries took part. The Spiritual Director was moved to remark that attending with such devoted legionaries and in such circumstances deepened his own devotion and convinced him that with such faith the Legion of Mary could accomplish anything.

MALAYSIA: Good notice was given of a Congress to be held in September by **Kuala Lumpur Regia.** Kota Kinabalu Comitium (Sabah, East Malaysia), celebrated its 75th anniversary on 21st September.

SINGAPORE: Reports to **Singapore Senatus** show many activities. A junior praesidium staffed a booth at the Church Youth Fair, distributing Miraculous Medals and other sacramentals and engaged in recruiting efforts.

TAIWAN: Works included accompanying the priest to bring Holy Communion to people who are homebound, assisting catechumens in their preparation for Baptism, prison visitation, staffing hospital prayer rooms and acting as sponsors at Baptisms and Confirmation.



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