

CONCILIUM

Allocutio 17 March 2024

The Incarnation, the Angelus, The Acies

We cannot overlook ever the importance of the Incarnation. It is the great moment of history when God united himself to his Creation and dwelt among men, even among animals, living with a body made from the clay of the earth. The Te Deum of the Church puts it this way, "When you took our nature to save mankind you did not shrink from birth in the virgin's womb". That word "shrink" evokes the following thought in me. It is not easy for us to grasp what this step involved for God. Can I suggest as a possible current image that might scratch the surface of what this meant for God: if someone living a comfortable middle-class lifestyle in the 1st World opted to live in Haiti or Gaza or Sudan. Do I see any hands up in those communities for such a step? What our Lord did, in coming among us to be so shamefully treated as he did, was to do an act even humbler than what a well-off person might do in moving to one of the poorest countries. But to show how committed he was he chose to be born in an animal shed and died on a Cross. As Saint Catherine of Siena commented, only a great love can explain someone taking such a step. The Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, in doing his Father's will, also had the help of the Third Person of the Trinity, The Holy Spirit of love. That Spirit fashioned a place for the Second Person to land and connect. We know her as Mary. As Frank Duff pointed out she is so close to the Holy Spirit of love that, while remaining pure creature, she is the perfect expression of the Holy Spirit. In this way the Holy Spirit prepared in Mary the fitting place for the incoming God to have a soft landing and make his dwelling among men. She, by her welcome and love made him feel at home, assisted of course by St. Joseph. We celebrate this great event in the prayer we call the Angelus. It is the prayer which commemorates the great event in history, the moment God affirmed his Creation and ourselves. In a way that is what we celebrate at Christmas, God among us. But the moment of sheer genius is the Incarnation, the greatest feat of engineering, the moment of the hypostatic union, when God connected to us and began sharing our journey. For us lost sheep it has to be our redeeming moment. It gives us the firm anchor of faith and hope that God so loved the world that he sent Jesus to us. And the Angelus gives us a chance each day to reflect on it and to thank God for the gift he has offered us. I am not overlooking the death and Resurrection of Christ but they follow on from that first step of Christ entering our world. That "Here I am Lord, I come to do your will" of Hebrews (10:5-10) begins radically in that descent from Heaven by the second Person of the Trinity and continues through his whole mission. And with him in that mission Creation adopts a similar disposition through her who represents Creation and Humanity: "Be it done unto me according to thy word". So it is most fitting that we in the Legion also make our great act of commitment on that day, namely the Feast of the Incarnation, or as close to it as makes no difference. The Acies, the great annual ceremony for all legionaries, gives us a chance to be united with Mary in her act of total cooperation with the incoming God. By uniting ourselves to her and identifying as best we can to her fiat, we too open ourselves to the incoming God so that he can take flesh in us. As St. Patrick, whom we celebrate today, would say, "Christ in all eyes that see me, in all ears that hear me, in all hearts that think of me!" The more we offer Mary ourselves the better will all that Christ means become a reality in our world. "I am all yours my Queen and Mother, and all that I have is yours." That is the disposition of all in the Legion of Mary. We allow her among us who knows best how to respond to God to take our offering and use it to the glory of God. We go to her because we are, in a way, unworthy to go to God. We wish to imitate as best we can the humility of Mary. We know we have so little. But it is also fitting that we who are sinful members of the Creation should align with her, the sinless one of humanity, who, on all our behalf, said "Yes" to God. She who organized the servants in Cana, can take our offering of water and get her son to change it to finest wine. So I pray that you will all celebrate the Acies with the best of disposition and intentions. And even if you are aware of your less than perfect hearts, still, offer your service to her the refuge of sinners, because, after all, she is the one who enabled God to come among men and got Our Lord to change water into wine. She can do this for us all. Amen.

REPORTS

DUBLIN NORTHSIDE CURIAE

Presentata Curia organised an **Advent retreat** and have planned a **retreat in St Saviour's Church for Good Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and invite all to attend.** A traditional Irish music night was held in Presentata House on March 16th. They are also **planning Mass to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of now Venerable Edel Quinn in May.** A **Sodality for women** has recently commenced and meets on the last Friday of the month in the Regina Coeli Hostel. **Six members have transferred from the Morning Star praesidium into a new praesidium attached to the hostel.** A praesidium's main works are **street contact and volunteering in the Morning Star Hostel and men's shed.** A non-Catholic met on street contact has been received into the Church. **Six members of this praesidium took their Legionary Promise in the last year.** Another praesidium is mainly engaged in **street contact and hostel work.** They have **regular Patrician meetings.** **Members visited Cuan Mhuire rehabilitation centre a number of times last year.**

Exaltata Curia: **Two new praesidia** are being set up, one in **Mountview** and one in **Mulhuddart.** The **Acies** will be held on March 24th. A praesidium's main **works are home visitation, street contact and assisting with the weekly children's Rosary in the parish.** **Follow up visits** are undertaken to families encountered on home visitation, where necessary. **Volunteering** is done in the **Morning Star Hostel** and particularly in the **men's shed** by legionaries from two praesidia. **Visitation of former residents in hospitals or nursing homes is undertaken.** **Weekly street contact work in Temple Bar, includes distribution of Rosaries, Brown Scapulars and Miraculous Medals.** Catholics are encouraged to join the Legion. **Lapsed Catholics are encouraged to return to Mass and the Sacraments.** Legionaries are involved in organising the **annual afternoon of prayer in their parish.** In another parish, the **Frank Duff prayer is prayed after the weekly Holy hour.** **Curia visitation of praesidia is continuing.** **Zoom details for Mary's Channel of Grace (identification code 811 4083 3503, passcode 876433)** are circulated with the monthly agenda.

Veneranda Curia: **Reunion** was held recently and included a **visit to Frank Duff house.** **Acies** will be held on March 24th. Curia is planning **recruiting drives** in a number of parishes. A **praesidium with low membership delivers ninety (90) Maria Legionis journals.** Members carry out **home visitation** where they meet many **lapsed Catholics and encourage them to return to the practice of their faith, and to have their children baptised.** They also engage in **street contact.** Another praesidium also **distributes ninety (90) Maria Legionis journals and visits TLC nursing home.** Members **volunteer at the church shop where a variety of religious goods are sold.**

Bethlehem Curia reunion was held recently and **Acies** is taking place on March 24th, **both with Porta Coeli Curia.** A recent discussion at Curia focused on the need for **home visitation.** It was suggested that **praesidia team up to support each other with this vital legionary work.** **Schools should also be approached.** **Praesidia were encouraged to organise an Exploratio Dominicalis this year.** **Frank Duff prayer group meets monthly.** **Recruiting drive is planned for March in Seán McDermott Street.** A praesidium's works include **home visitation, Pilgrim Statue visitation and street contact in Fairview Park, where many different nationalities are met.** Members also **visit a local centre where they were invited to pray the rosary.**

Consolata Curia: **Recruitment is ongoing in all praesidia and there are currently a couple of probationary members.** Thirty people attended the **Curia annual retreat** which was held on February 17th. The **Acies** is arranged for Saturday 23rd March in St. Colmcille's Church, Swords. A **junior praesidium's works include distribution of Miraculous Medals and Legion literature.** The **juniors also prepare bottles of Holy Water, collect used stamps for the Missions and deliver religious papers to homes.** They participate actively in all **Curia functions and events.** Mass was celebrated in Swords on Sunday January 21st, to commemorate the anniversary of Servant of God Alphonsus Lambe. A senior praesidium's works include **home visitation and nursing home visitation, where they pray a decade of the rosary and sing hymns with the residents and staff.** A large **Statue of Our Lady of Fatima** is brought to the church for the **First Saturday** each month and is

then taken to homes of parishioners. Legionaries assisted in the **promotion of the Brown Scapular**. **Frank Duff prayer meeting and Patricians continue monthly**. Recent titles were **'How can you vote with your conscience?'** and **'Does baptism remind you of your identity and mission?'** Three praesidia carry out regular visitation to local schools.

Porta Coeli Curia has four (4) active praesidia, twenty-one (21) full members and one probationer. **One new member recently took her Legionary Promise**. Works include **nursing home visitation and home visitation during which homes are consecrated to the Sacred Heart**. **One praesidium occasionally visits another parish where the Legion of Mary closed down some years ago**. A **book barrow is operated on Saturday mornings outside a shopping centre, weather permitting**. **Holy Communion is taken to sick people**. A praesidium with six (6) members reported at the February meeting. Works include **volunteering in the Morning Star Hostel and hospital visitation, where Mass has restarted in the Oratory thanks to the efforts of legionaries**. A **long-standing contact of the praesidium who is a Hindu is now taking the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) course with a view to becoming a Catholic**. The **'Night Fever' apostolate is to recommence in June**. Legionaries from another Curia have been **visiting Porta Coeli Curia with the view to helping it with officerships and restarting praesidia which closed during recent years**.

IRISH PROVINCIAL REPORTS

COMITIA:

Cork Comitium: have set out their plans for 2024 which includes plans for **recruiting** and to have a **Congress towards the end of the year**. One praesidium has ten members, two of whom are praetorians, and a Spiritual Director. Their works include **Pilgrim Statue visitation, visiting a care home and the housebound on the first Wednesday of each month**. The **rosary is recited on three floors of the care home**. The Comitium **plans to recruit by circulating Legion packs which will include contact details**. **Muire na nGrás Curia:** Two reporting praesidia, both have five members. One of the praesidia carries out **home visitation, and Pilgrim Statue visitation**. **Visits are made to the first Holy Communion and Confirmation classes**. A **recruiting drive resulted in gaining two new members**. **Coronata Curia** has five praesidia attached. Increasing membership here is being targeted.

Kerry Comitium: Legionaries in **Killarney** arranged activities for the young including holding **Children's liturgy groups** and a **Faith Camp**. The **Fatima Statue** continues to be brought to the homes. **Bishop Brown who sometimes attends the Comitium meeting spoke about more lay involvement in the Church**. The **Fatima Statue** was brought to **many homes in Millstreet** during the year, as well as the **community hospital for Christmas**. An **Exploratio project** was organised to recruit members **for the praesidium in Tralee** which has low membership.

Cloyne Comitium: The praesidium in Mallow has nine members. Their works are **home visitation, visiting the schools with packs for First Holy Communicants** and during the year they organised a **public Rosary at the Grotto**.

Thurles Comitium: A **new president of the Comitium was elected at the February meeting**. The **annual reunion** took place in December and was very much enjoyed by all. Tipperary Curia were at the Plaza in Tipperary town from 9a.m. to 3p.m. **One thousand (1,000) Miraculous Medals were offered and accepted during that time**. **Some contacts asked for Miraculous Medals for their sick friends and relatives**. **One man with a truck company asked for five (5) Medals for the other truckers**. **Visits were made to the schools with Miraculous Medals and rosary beads**. The Curia gained three new members in November.

CURIAE

Birr Roscrea: The Curia Spiritual Director is Fr. Michael Reddan SVD who is back from the missions. He received his vocation in the Legion. The praesidium in Borrisokane gave its report. With four members they **organise Eucharistic Adoration** and **promote the rosary at the Grotto**. The **Acies** will be held in Kinnity on 23rd of March. **Limerick:** A **Maria et Patria (MEP)** project will take place in Raheen Parish on April 4th and 5th. **Each Friday evening six members from the University praesidium carry out street contact in the city.** **Ross Curia:** There are **six praesidia currently operating and all have presented reports in recent times**. The **Knock pilgrimage** was reported on and all who participated said it was a very uplifting day. **Waterford:** A **new praesidium in the Dunmore area is actively being pursued at present**. The **Legion of Mary website in Waterford continues to be updated and includes Frank Duff's writings**. **Lismore Curia:** the attached praesidia were to give their reports at the February Curia meeting. The **Acies** is planned for early April. **East Clare Curia:** The Curia has a total of twenty one members. The praesidium in Killaloe has seven members who are doing **home visitation** with the **Pilgrim Statue**. Our Lady Queen of Peace praesidium in Ennis has ten members and they have recently started **home visitation**. **Two members went on Peregrinatio Pro Christo (PPC) in 2023.**

AFRICA

GHANA

The Senatus of Accra: **Great efforts** are being made to **visit and revive areas with dormant praesidia with particular emphasis on prison visitation** and the **establishment of praesidia in senior high schools**.

MOZAMBIQUE

Tete Comitium: In **February, celebrations took place in various parishes across the diocese**. The aim was to **encourage and motivate legionaries**. **Quelimane Comitium** has **thirty-two (32) affiliated Curiae**. The **future is promising**, however, the **correspondent has highlighted that the Legion system needs to be faithfully followed before the raising of the Council**. **Nacala Diocese:** There are six praesidia in the city of Nacala. Work has been done on the **establishment of new praesidia in the neighbouring districts**.

ANGOLA

Benguela Senatus: **Elections** for president, vice president, secretary and treasurer took place during the period October 2023 to January 2024. **Concilium established a new Regia in the Diocese of Menongue also**. The **new Regia has five (5) Comitias, twenty-eight (28) Curiae and twenty-one (21) praesidia affiliated to it**. The Council continues its work of **visiting its affiliated praesidia** as well as **highlighting the Master and Apprentice system in the Legion of Mary**. The **Senatus of Luanda** continues to **meet monthly and discuss expansion and extension work throughout its jurisdiction**. The area is large with many affiliated councils and praesidia being far from the Senatus headquarters.

CAPE VERDE

Cape Verde Regia: Celebrations to mark the **70th Anniversary of the establishment of the Legion of Mary in Cape Verde** took place in **December in the Diocese of Sao Lourenco dos Orgaos**. The Regia has **plans to extend and restructure its areas of jurisdiction as well as establish junior and intermediate praesidia and organise Apostolic Days**. There is a **strong emphasis on the importance of contributing financially to higher councils**. **Two Curiae worked together on extension, resulting in the establishment of two new praesidia**. A **Comitium reports visiting prisoners, prostitutes, alcoholics, and drug addicts**.

LESOTHO

Works reported include **family and hospital visits, distribution of rosary beads, lapsed Christians returning to practice, teaching children catechism, encouraging attendance of Church and the Legion of Mary and receiving the Sacrament of First Holy Communion.** The Senatus was delighted to welcome one hundred and seventeen (117) visitors, many from councils that had not reported for some time. Useful contacts were made, and visitations have been arranged as a result. An invitation to establish a new praesidium was received from Bishop Cenez.

SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town Senatus: Attached councils are visited. A new correspondent was appointed to Port Elizabeth. **Masses for deceased legionaries** were organised in November and the **annual general reunion** took place in December. It was well attended and enjoyed by all. A praesidium reports three (3) new probationary members. **Matatiele (Kokstad) Comitium:** A praesidium of eight (8) active and six (6) auxiliary members organised a retreat and an **Exploratio Dominicalis** in February. Other works include **visits to the sick and alcoholics and teaching the Catechism.** Mothers are encouraged to study the Catechism in preparation for the baptism of their children, and cohabiting couples are encouraged to get married in Church. **Annual Masses** to commemorate the anniversaries of now **Venerable Edel Quinn** and now **Servant of God Frank Duff** are celebrated. In **May, home visitation is carried out and the rosary is recited where possible.** As a result of their efforts **twelve children were baptised, nineteen children received their First Holy Communion, one convert joined the Catholic Church and three lapsed Catholics returned to the Sacraments.** **Esigodini Comitium Durban:** The Comitium has **seventeen (17) attached Curiae.** The need for more directly attached praesidia is being reviewed. **Having directly attached praesidia is very important for all councils.** Elected officers of attached Curiae are ratified by the Comitium. **Works undertaken by the legionaries include home visitation, hospital visitation, conducting catechism classes.** Their **Acies** was held on March 16th.

Harare Curia: The **Acies** was planned for March 13th. The number of praesidia in the Curia is under review. A praesidium in a nearby seminary is planning to visit parishes and recruit new members and to visit praesidia that are experiencing challenges.

We look forward to hearing from Johannesburg (South Africa), Hwange (Zimbabwe) and Egypt in their next report.

ASIA

PHILIPPINES

Mindanao Senatus. The correspondent reports the provision of great detail on governance but would like more information which would reflect the intensity of effort of works being carried out there. While the global pandemic and the challenges of age have had an impact on many praesidia, **there seems to be a big effort to rebuild the Legion of Mary in the area.** Visitation of lower councils and praesidia is being systematically carried out by Senatus officers.

Bicolandia Senatus. Reports include **baptisms organised, hospital and home visits to the sick and elderly and Holy Communion distributed.** A **twelve year old and siblings in the same family were baptised.** A women's praesidium in Naga District Jail has **thirty- five (35) members who teach fellow inmates to pray the rosary.** Mass is celebrated there each Sunday. **Three (3) new praesidia have been established in Daet Comitium** while other Curiae are reconvening now after Covid.

Cebu Senatus. Minglanilla Comitium has six (6) Curiae and fourteen (14) praesidia. Works include home visitation, teaching prison inmates to pray the rosary, crowd contact and a campaign to participate in "Clean and Green" projects as per True Devotion to the Nation. Dumaguette Regia has seven (7) Comitia, four (4) Curiae and seventeen (17) praesidia. Works include home visitation, promoting baptism, marriage validation and accompanying a priest in anointing of the sick. Two Catholics who had abandoned the Church returned to practice after a visit by the Legion of Mary. Bareli Comitium organise a book-barrow and conducted Exploratio Dominicalis and an elderly man, lapsed for forty (40) years returned to Church. Two Born Again Christians converted to the Catholic Faith.

Northern Philippines Senatus. Cabantuan Comitium recruited thirty-nine (39) new members, twenty-four (24) took the Legion Promise. Two senior praesidia and four junior praesidia were established. Comitia of San Pedro, San Pablo and Mayapa catechised six hundred and twenty-eight (628) children for First Holy Communion, one hundred and ninety-seven (197) for baptism and three hundred and twenty four (324) for confirmation. Tuguegaro Comitium has eighteen (18) parishes with Legion of Mary presence and thirty-two (32) without. Nine (9) new members were recruited, and three (3) Patrician Meetings units were set up. Novaliches has seventy (70) parishes with Legion of Mary presence and sixty-two (62) without. Visits to prisons, home visitation, and Patricians were also conducted. While membership has declined in some areas due to health issues and the impact of Covid, six (6) praesidia have been revived, and twenty (20) junior legionaries have been recruited.

Western Visayas Senatus. As there are only eight (8) praesidia directly attached they are urged to recruit and increase the membership. Regia of Negros Occidental has nine (9) directly attached praesidia, six (6) Curiae and six (6) Comitia. School children are catechised, Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in homes is carried out, a family has converted to Catholicism, a seminar was organised for twenty-three (23) couples as part of preparation for their Church wedding and street children are taught basic prayers. Iloilo junior Curia has six (6) praesidia, and some of their works include encouraging eighty-six (86) families to pray the rosary and attend Mass. Children and adults are encouraged to speak and dress modestly. They serve at Mass also.

AUSTRALIA.

Melbourne Senatus. Reports include distribution of Holy Communion to the housebound and nursing homes and organising for Mass and anointing for nine Catholic residents. One hundred (100) parishioners attended October Public Rosary. Praesidia transport parishioners to Mass and medical appointments. Retreats and Congresses came through in reports also. Juniors, with their families attended the Junior Fun Day and presented a short play on the Wedding Feast at Cana. Adelaide Comitium has thirteen (13) praesidia, three (3) Curiae and one hundred and twenty-one (121) members. The Vietnamese Curia has six (6) praesidia. Northern Territory Curia has three praesidia. Praesidia in Adelaide handed out three hundred (300) Christmas flyers outside the Central Market on Saturday December 16th. Public Rosaries held on 1st Saturdays of July to December on the west side of the Cathedral after the 8:00 a.m. Mass are well attended. The Senatus held their Summer School on February 10th and 11th with one hundred and seventy (170) attending on Saturday and one hundred (100) on Sunday. Fifty-six (56) of these were legionaries from attached councils, i.e. seventeen (17) from Naura Island, twelve (12) from Fiji, Adelaide, Perth, Darwin and others. Bishop Columba McBeth Green graced them with his presence.

Sydney Senatus. Works reported include Pilgrim Statue visitation, transport of elderly people to Mass, consolation visits to hospitals, nursing homes, praying of the rosary before funerals if requested by families, children's liturgy and visits to auxiliaries. Catechism is taught in state schools, Easter/Christmas Mass times are posted out to non-practicing Catholics. Baptism gift packs are prepared for the newly baptised,

enthronement of the Sacred Heart is carried out, and public rosaries are prayed in May and October. Korean Comitium **contact non- believers and instruct them in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) programme, with thirty- three (33) were baptised in February. Masses to commemorate Anniversary of Servant of God Alfie Lambe on January 6th and Servant of God Frank Duff in November were both well attended. Senatus visited Dili Comitium in Timor Leste and they celebrated Mass for cause of Servant of God Frank Duff on November 11th. Comitium has five (5) Curiae with five hundred and twenty-six (526) members and six (6) junior praesidia with one hundred and ten (110) members.**

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland Senatus. The junior Curia has four (4) praesidia, works with seniors on some works and has set a challenge for all senior praesidia to establish a junior praesidium. A senior praesidium journeyed on the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) course with five (5) participants and they will be received into the Church at Easter. The Curia in Tonga has five (5) praesidia. All councils are urged to hold planning meetings and organise a Congress and conduct their Annual Audits.

SOUTH AMERICA

BOLIVIA

Senatus of La Paz. The Comitium of Cochabamba reports the setting up of a praesidium with eight (8) new legionaries who are all young adults. On their Legion work they invite people to be legionaries. All members of an attached Curia do street contact and, during the week, make personal contacts. Another Curia reports keeping in contact with Bolivian emigrants living abroad. Spiritual topics are explained to them, they are encouraged to join the local praesidium, or where there is none, to get permission to start one. The Comitium of Tarija report excellent results from their Exploratio Dominicalis projects.

CHILE

Senatus of Santiago: During summer months legionaries on holidays contact local praesidia and speak to parishioners where the Legion is not present. A praesidium report mentioned organising a football club. Young boys who easily can be involved in mafia drug gangs are invited to youth projects in the parish. A praesidium with married couples carry out street contact late at night whereby they speak with people who are homeless and sleep on the streets. Recruiting new legionaries is high on their priorities. People who engage in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament are invited to come and see what a praesidium meeting is like, and, when they join, to see what Legion work is like.

URUGUAY

Senatus of Montevideo, Uruguay: During this period one praesidium, two Curiae and one Comitium reported. One Curia is comprised of young legionaries. They have held a Congress. They carry out extension work, visiting parishes with a view to establishing new praesidia. Prison work stands out and an apostolate to people in street situations and women considering an abortion. The correspondents are visiting all the councils and trying to rejuvenate praesidia impacted by the pandemic. Legionaries are asked to pray a lot in advance of elections to be held during 2024 for three Senatus officerships. The Senatus is encouraged to send to all its councils the excerpts from Some Handbook Reflections in the monthly Concilium bulletin,

which is sent to them. All councils are asked to ensure the excerpts from Some Handbook Reflections subsequently reach all praesidia.

PERU

Senatus of Lima: In this period three (3) praesidia, thirteen (13) Curiae and seven (7) Comitia reported. There are two hundred and eighty (280) new members on probation. Very positive news has come from Lima which is that of a very strong Curia there being divided and leading to the creation of another Curia. Several councils have reconvened since the pandemic. One legionary has regularised his situation by getting married. All councils are working well in disseminating information about the Legion of Mary and extension, as well as recovering praesidia that they had lost. New praesidia are also being created. One Curia has morning and afternoon praesidia; in addition, they advertise all the parishes in which the Legion exists so as to give options to new people who they invite to join. Another Curia is made up of older legionaries and have reactivated ten praesidia by visiting various villages.

Comitium María Asumpta works in difficult places and areas of conflict and has four newly formed praesidia. They also work in Chinatown. **Comitium Santa María** works in the women's prison and hope to form a praesidium of prisoners.

COLOMBIA

Senatus of Bogota: The Senatus comprises fifty thousand, two hundred and ninety-eight (50,298) active members, four thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven (4,887) praetorians, fifty eight thousand six hundred and twenty two (58,622) auxiliaries, two thousand, three hundred and seventy-two (2,372) adjutorians and nine hundred and eighty-three (983) junior members. In this quarter, three (3) praesidia, two (2) Curiae, four (4) Comitia and five (5) Regiae reported. They carry out Columban Drives a lot. The pre-juniors result in united families, better integrated into their parishes and activities. A Curia gave a spiritual retreat to adults, young people and children on the Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and seventy-six (76) people made the Consecration. Several praesidia- which were closed due to the pandemic- have recovered. Many senior and junior praesidia are being formed. Like all areas the need for people to step up and make any necessary sacrifices to take on officerships is important there. They are addressing the development of better understanding of the handbook for officers and correspondents through the master and apprenticeship model. They encourage lower councils to place much focus on extension. Many councils work in prison pastoral care and one reports visits to prisoners in police stations with Christian books and Gospels to encourage them in such dark moments. They have done mini Peregrinatio Pro Christo Projects (PPCs) in foreign and local councils.

VENEZUELA

Senatus of Caracas: The Senatus is making progress building up councils and praesidia post-Covid. Most councils are extending and all reports indicate recruitment of new members. One Comitium has nine praesidia in formation, and a new Curia was set up. A praesidium gave a talk in an Evangelical Church on the virtues of Our Blessed Lady. This resulted in the baptism of an infant baby, and following instruction, two people were received into the Catholic Church and made their First Holy Communion. Home visitation and street contact is done as well as visiting the sick and accompanying the priest to visit the sick when requested.

ECUADOR

Senatus of Quito: Difficulty is being experienced in building up praesidia and councils after Covid. The Senatus was complimented for the efforts they are making despite these challenges. Attendance at the Senatus meeting is reported as low. At a recent meeting, Concilium officers expressed earnest desire for

great improvement in this regard. Other praesidia are trying to recruit and are giving particular attention to auxiliaries in the hope that the prayers will help. One new praesidium has been set up.

PARAGUAY

Senatus of Asuncion: All praesidia of the Senatus have carried out *Exploratio Dominicalis* in 2023. Last December, during a National Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Caacupe, legionaries engaged in stewarding and apostolic work, explaining the need for confession and the importance of the Rosary. At the end of the Holy Mass, the Legion of Mary participated in the ceremony of throwing globes in the form of a Rosary. Sixty-one (61) legionaries visited Buenos Aires for the anniversary of now Servant of God Alfie Lambe, where there was great fellowship with the Senatus of Uruguay and the Senatus of Argentina. In February, thirty-eight (38) legionaries carried out a three-day mission to a town 30km from Asuncion; six (6) adult praesidia and one (1) junior praesidium resulted. Fifty-seven (57) legionaries from a Regia in the east of Paraguay did mission work which yielded visits to seven hundred and five (705) families of other religions and seventeen (17) people returning to the Faith.

Permission sought and granted

Sr. Ann Murray made the following proposals at the Concilium Meeting of March 17th 2024:

a) to raise the Curia in Asti, Northern Italy to Comitium status and to affiliate the praesidia in Milan, Genoa and Tortona and the Curia in Verona to the new Comitium in Asti and to affiliate the new Comitium in Asti to the Rome Senatus

b) to affiliate the praesidium in Padua to Rimini Comitium. These proposals were seconded by Sr. Mary Murphy.

Holy Mass for the Beatification of now

Servant of God Alphonsus (Alfie) Lambe

Over three hundred people, many of whom are legionaries attended this Mass at **St. Agnes' Church, Crumlin** on Sunday March 3rd 2024. We are very grateful to Fr. Tony O' Shaughnessy, Principal Celebrant and Homilist, and all who assisted in the preparations for this beautiful ceremony and on the day.

The following is the **prayer for the Beatification of Servant of God Alphonsus (Alfie) Lambe:**

O God, who by your infinite mercy inflamed the heart of your servant, Alphonsus Lambe with an ardent love for you and for Mary, our Mother; a love which revealed itself in a life of intense labour, prayer and sacrifice for the salvation of souls, grant, if it be your will, that we may obtain, by his intercession, what we cannot obtain by our own merits. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen

(With ecclesiastical approval)

Favours granted through the intercession of Servant of God Alphonsus (Alfie) Lambe should be reported to Concilium.

80th Anniversary of Venerable Edel Quinn.

May 12th 2024 will mark the **eightieth (80th) anniversary of the passing of now Venerable Edel Quinn- in Nairobi, Kenya- from this life.** She was declared Venerable on December 15th 1994 by Pope John Paul II. As we prepare for the celebration of Holy Masses for her Beatification throughout the world and pray for her cause, we may experience heightened enthusiasm for the **prayer for the Beatification of Venerable Edel Quinn:**

Eternal Father, I thank you for the grace you gave to your servant, Edel Quinn, of striving to live always in the joy of your presence, for the radiant charity infused into her heart by your Holy Spirit and for the strength she drew from the Bread of Life to labour until death for the glory of Your name in loving dependence on Mary, Mother of the Church.

Confident, O Merciful Father, that her life was pleasing to you, I beg you to grant me, through her intercession, the special favour I now implore....., and to make known by miracles the glory she enjoys in Heaven, so that she may be glorified also by your Church on earth, through Christ our Lord, Amen

(With ecclesiastical approval)

Favours granted through the intercession of Venerable Edel Quinn should be reported to Concilium.

Legion of Mary Handbook

Concilium is delighted to announce that the latest edition of the Legion Handbook is available for three euro (E3).

Maria et Patria

It is always a source of deep joy to hear the planning and carrying out of Maria et Patria projects, which are usually carried out over a couple of days, coming through in reports. The booklet "**Maria et Patria. Evangelisation projects in one's home country, carried out in union with and in dependence upon Our Lady**" is available from Concilium. It provides a **very practical, step-by-step guide to preparing for and carrying out a Maria et Patria project.** It focuses- beyond the **objectives, method and time-tabling** of such a project- on the vital aspect of the **Spirit in which it should be carried out. Councils may wish to translate it into other languages.**

True Devotion to Mary

Many many legionaries are currently engaged in **33-Day Preparation for Total Consecration to Jesus Through Mary** as set out by **St. Louis- Marie de Montfort** as we approach the annual Acies ceremony. We know that this preparation can begin on any day, and we tend to select a Marian Feast Day as the Day of Consecration. **We pray that we all receive an infusion of knowledge of the nature of True Devotion to Mary, that we understand at the core of our hearts and souls- as well as our minds- that the 33- Day preparation does not lead to a Consecration Ceremony alone, but that that the preparation and then Consecration are to lead to a way of life, that True Devotion to Jesus Through Mary permeate our lives.** Frank Duff reminded us: ***"In that process of Redemption from beginning to end, Mary played a vital part, such that all benefitted by it must not separate her from it. She must figure prominently in the tribute of gratitude which we offer to Heaven. All generations must call her blessed."***

Acies

We are delighted to hear of preparations being well underway for Acies Ceremonies all around the world, and **all auxiliary and adjutorian members being invited to the Acies, the central event of the Legion of Mary.** We are reminded of the importance of the advance preparation, and bringing along to the Acies, of a **Spiritual Bouquet to present as a gift to Our Lady from each council.** All who have not held the Acies Ceremony are encouraged to do so as close as possible to the Feast of the Annunciation (usually celebrated on March 25th, but on April 8th in 2024 due to March 25th falling in Holy Week in 2024).

Some Handbook Reflections

In recent months extracts from Some Handbook Reflections have been those about Council Reports, Attendance at Council Meetings, Planning the Year's Programme, The Legion Congress, and True Devotion to Mary.

This month we are focusing on Annual Audits (p.29- 30):

Annual Audits

"The Treasurer's books shall be audited annually. It is suggested that two members of the Praesidium or the Council (as the case may be), other than the Treasurer, be appointed to that duty." (Legion Handbook, 35.8)

The attention of Council Officers is drawn to this requirement of the handbook. Councils have the duty of seeing that this requirement is met. **Curiae should ensure that the annual audit is carried out by each of its Praesidia. Higher Councils should ensure that it is carried out by each of its affiliated Praesidia and Councils.**

It is **suggested that reference to the audit should be made in the annual reports of Praesidia to their Councils and also during visitation of Praesidia by Councils.** It seems desirable that the audit should be carried out at the same time each year. In the case of a Praesidium it might be considered suitable to have it done when the annual report is being prepared.

It is also **suggested that reference to the audit be made in the Minutes of Praesidia and Councils and in reports of Councils to Higher Councils.** Correspondents are requested to draw the attention of Councils to this requirement and to monitor Minutes and reports with this in mind.

It is important that **the audit should cover all income and expenditure and any monies on deposit and that the auditors verify, through current bank statements and/or actual cash in hand, the balance shown.** The audit should also cover all financial transactions related to the works of Praesidia, for example, sales newspapers, books and magazines, clubs, Patricians, etc. and also financial transactions related to property, sales of Maria Legionis, Handbooks and other Legion literature, etc.

It is **desirable that the auditors' report be presented at a meeting of the Praesidium or Council.** It would be of assistance to all Councils in carrying out their responsibilities towards the Praesidia and Councils affiliated to them if copies of the auditors' reports could be presented or forwarded to them.

"It would be impossible to associate the idea of wastefulness with Our Lady's housekeeping. Therefore it goes without saying that every Legionary body must handle its property and its funds watchfully and economically." (Legion Handbook, 35.9)

Mary's Channel of Grace goes out to the whole world **three hundred and sixty-five days per year at 8:00 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)**, providing the **opportunity for all to pray the Legion of Mary prayers and Rosary together**. The **identification code is 811 4083 3503 and the passcode is 876 433**. It is a **powerful instrument in bringing people to the Rosary and has unlimited potential regarding recruitment and extension for the Legion of Mary**. As legionaries, we place much emphasis on encouraging the praying of the Rosary as we distribute rosary beads and speak with contacts encountered. Mary's Channel of Grace offers freely to all the daily opportunity to join with others to pray the Legion prayers and Rosary together. It provides a **means of gently introducing others to the Rosary and Legion prayers**. It is a very good way of connection for **auxiliary members** should such a means appeal to them also. **Souls contacted through home visitation, street contact, nursing home and hospital visitation etc. may be very grateful to hear of Mary's Channel of Grace from us, as it could well provide a life-line for a person who is lonely or living in an isolated situation with rare opportunities for interaction with others. Perhaps your council might consider having some cards with the Zoom identification code and passcode for Mary's Channel of Grace printed...** we know of and extend particular thanks to one legionary who has had thousands of cards printed and very generously shares them with legionaries in an effort to make Mary's Channel of Grace known and thus available to as many people as possible.

Mary's Channel of Grace details

Legion of Mary prayers and Rosary

365 days per year at 8:00 p.m. (GMT)

Zoom ID: 811 4083 3503

Passcode: 876 433

General Correspondents' Meeting

The General Correspondents' Meeting will be held in **Nazareth Hall, De Montfort House, Dublin 7** on **Saturday May 25th 2024**. Please place the date in your diary and pray for the success of the day. We look forward to seeing all correspondents and prospective correspondents there.

Holy Week and Easter

Frank Duff reminded us *"In that process of Redemption from beginning to end, Mary played a vital part, such that all benefitted by it must not separate her from it. She must figure prominently in the tribute of gratitude which we offer to Heaven. All generations must call her blessed."*

We pray that our Blessed Mother help us all to enter Holy Week and Easter in the way God desires of us.