

A detailed illustration of the Nativity scene. The Virgin Mary is kneeling on the left, wearing a blue mantle over a red gown, with her hands clasped in prayer. She is looking down at the infant Jesus, who lies in a manger of straw, wrapped in white swaddling clothes. The infant has a golden halo with a starburst pattern. Behind the manger, Joseph stands, also with a golden halo, wearing a purple robe and holding a wooden staff. The scene is set in a rustic stable with wooden beams and a green cloth hanging from the ceiling. In the background, a town with stone buildings is visible under a dark blue night sky filled with stars. A glowing lantern hangs from the ceiling on the right. In the foreground, a white lamb and a brown cow are present, looking towards the manger.

# Maria Legionis

*“Gloria in excelsis Deo”*  
*Glory to God in the Highest*

# Maria Legionis

*The Voice of the Legion of Mary*

Edition 4 of 2024

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

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## Please note new address for all correspondence



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# Talk at Meeting of Concilium Correspondents

By Br. Philip Neri -  
Dominican Student

*In a meeting of Concilium Correspondents in 1976, Frank Duff said that the very fate of the Legion throughout the world depends on these correspondents.*

Why did he say this? Because the correspondents are the links between the highest council, the Concilium, to all the bodies below them. They are the links which transmit legionary idealism, the spirit of the Legion, throughout the ranks. For this reason, Frank Duff says that “accordingly, the responsibility of the individual correspondent is really great.” With this in mind, I think it is worthwhile reflecting on how to carry out that responsibility well and on some examples of how this kind of communication ought to be done.



An initial question is: why would we look to St. Paul and the early Christians for guidance in this area? How much can we really have in common with them? After all, the letters St. Paul wrote - the ones that we possess today in the Bible are different in a number of ways from the ones you are asked to write today.

The biggest difference is that, while the words St. Paul wrote were truly his own, they were also and primarily the words of God. All of the Pauline epistles are the inspired word of God. Obviously, the correspondence of the Legion of Mary is not inspired in this way.



Secondly, the situation and context in which you write to your brothers and sisters is very different. When St. Paul wrote to the Church in Corinth, he wrote as a bishop, as an apostle, as the very founder of that Church. None of us, can presume to correspond with that level of authority.

Then there's also the fact that we're talking about letters that were written to groups of Christians two-thousand years ago. The culture, the language, the society was very different.

And yet, we should not exaggerate the differences either. I think that in many parts of the world, the Church today looks like and will continue to look more like this nascent Church of the Apostolic Age. Some of you at this meeting today perhaps come from parts of the world where the possibility of martyrdom, of dying for your faith, is very real. The early Christians, as we know, were also familiar with terrible persecution.

And in Ireland, the Church continues to shrink; it continues to be side-lined in society and become less and less relevant in the daily lives of Irish people; as the difficulty of holding on to one's faith and the risk of persecution increases, we too will be able to relate to the experiences of our forefathers in faith.

For Christians who seek to answer the call to preach the Gospel, to engage in the work of evangelisation, however that may look, St. Paul is an unparalleled model.

In the words of Frank Duff:  
**"A soul that is to win others must be great and wide as the ocean."**

St. Paul was such a soul, which is to say that he loved greatly, and he loved generously. He says in the first letter to the Corinthians: “If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.” Ultimately it was love that made St. Paul an extraordinary missionary.

You don’t need me to give you the full story of St. Paul; you all already have it in the Book of Acts and in his letters.

The point is that we have here an example that God has given us to imitate. By virtue of our Baptism, we are all called to holiness and to be missionaries in our own ways, sharing the truth with souls who are utterly deprived without it. Legionaries strive to live out this calling in a particularly intentional way, under the protection of the Mother of God. And since the Handbook has named St. Paul as one of the Legion’s patrons, we must look to him for his intercession and for his example. There are a few themes from St. Paul’s epistles to which I think we should pay particular attention.

Those are encouragement, instruction and intercession.



## Encouragement

In writing to various churches and individuals like Timothy and Titus, St. Paul was motivated by charity. He loved these people and considered them his children. He wanted what was most important for them, which was for their souls to be saved and to enjoy eternal life with God.

So, when he saw that his brothers and sisters in Christ were striving for this goal, that they were on the right path, it was a great consolation for him. It was something to celebrate and make known to other communities of Christians.



## 1 Thessalonians:

*We give thanks to God always for you all, constantly mentioning you in our prayers remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

We read that, despite their sufferings and hardships, the Christians of Thessalonica were striving to imitate Christ and his apostle Paul, labouring with faith and love, and were succeeding by the grace of God. And we find that not only was this to the benefit of the Thessalonians, but Christians throughout Macedonia and Achaia were benefitting from the example that they were setting.

We see here a kind of mutual encouragement.

The Thessalonians are blessing and consoling St. Paul and other Christian communities by their faithfulness and endurance. Upon receiving this news, St. Paul seeks to hearten the Thessalonians and motivate them to persevere.

Is this not exactly what Legion correspondents should do?

When, for example, a Senatus in Africa or South America gives their testimony of graces and blessings to the Legion throughout the world, how encouraging and consoling this can be. It reminds legionaries that they are part of something far bigger than themselves, far bigger than their own praesidium or Curia.

And it is in your correspondence that you can become an example and sign of hope for other legionaries; those who may be posted in places where there are very few new members, seemingly very little fruit. You can be the source of encouragement which fires up those legionaries to take new action, to recommit themselves to prayer and the apostolate.

## Instruction

The second theme for us to look at is instruction or teaching.

*1 Timothy 3: I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.*

When you read St. Paul's letters you see quite quickly that one of his chief aims is to teach others how to live as Christians; how to live virtuously and avoid sin; and how individuals are to behave in relation to their neighbours, their fellow believers.

Now, we are all Christians first, but we are speaking specifically of the role of instruction among legionaries. Most of the instruction is to be found in the Handbook, of course. But the Handbook itself also allows for higher councils, particularly the Concilium to instruct in various ways.

Frank Duff, in the Correspondents Meeting I mentioned above, envisaged that

correspondents in the Concilium would pass down what he called a 'Legionary Education.' What did he mean?

He thought that legionaries situated here in Dublin at the nucleus of the Legion are especially privileged. You get to see the workings of the Legion from a top-down view. You inhabit the milieu of the Legion's founder, and some of you have likely met or known him. You receive something that Frank Duff considered priceless, and it is for you to pass it out from the centre here in Dublin to praesidia which are very far away.



## Intercession

*2 Thessalonians 3 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed on and triumph, as it did among you, and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men; for not all have faith.*

One of the most important doctrines communicated to us by St. Paul is that of Christ's Mystical Body. Christ is the Head of His Body, and we are His members.

We are knit to Christ and to



each other in such an intimate way that I can call people thousands of miles away

my brothers and sisters, pray for them, and rejoice for them as members of my own family.

How crucial it is for us to remember this truth, and not least for Legionaries of Mary, who commit themselves to living this reality of the Mystical Body in a very intentional way. One becomes a legionary to glorify God through a holy life,

developed by prayer and work for Our Lady. But they do it not as isolated individuals; they are members of a lay organisation far bigger than themselves.

Members of the Legion are joined together by spiritual bonds, by their promise to the Holy Spirit and their service to Our Lady. But this means that legionaries should be praying, not just for the success of their own apostolates, but those of praesidia throughout the world.

How can legionaries pray for the success of their brothers and sisters abroad, how can they pray for them in the midst of trials and difficulty, if they do not know what's going on with them? We know that prayer, imploring God's help, is simply non-negotiable. Thus, it would be good for us to pray for our correspondents and ask them to pray for us.

## Conclusion

“A soul that is to win others must be great and wide as the ocean.” All of the saints were like this on earth, and this is what made them such powerful instruments in building up the Body of Christ.



It was love that had grown their souls, that had raised them up above selfishness and petty concerns, and that had made them magnanimous and generous in the service of God.

St. Paul is an outstanding example of this greatness of soul, and we are called to imitate him. In your

work as legionaries, encourage, instruct and intercede, but above all love.

And read and pray with his epistles, which are a bottomless fountain of wisdom, and which can guide us to conform our lives more and more to God's will.

## EXPLANATION OF FRONT AND BACK COVERS – *The Editor*



The two paintings on the front and back covers are modern depictions of the Nativity.

Unlike earlier Renaissance paintings, which generally depicted the Nativity as the Holy Night in which Christ was born, these modern paintings depict the Nativity as a daylight scene, thereby suggesting that the arrival of the Baby Jesus heralded a new and glorious day for all mankind.

*The angel of the Lord appeared to them (shepherds) and the glory of the Lord shone round them and they were terrified. But the angel said:*

*“do not be afraid, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.*

*(Luke 1:9-12).*



# Talk at Meeting of Correspondents 25 May 2024

By Fr. Paul Churchill -  
Spiritual Director

*The role of the correspondent is to provide a line of communication between Concilium, and the many councils of the Legion scattered around the world; and then though that communication, to the actual members across the globe.*

I put before you my first model for reflection which is the Annunciation. Heaven has a message to communicate. It is Good News. The Correspondent at God's end is the Archangel Gabriel. He communicates information to Mary. She is taken aback; so, to calm her he says: "Do not be afraid, Mary!" Every communication in the Legion should be done in Peace. The Lord himself, as he sent out his disciples, admonished them: "Let your first word to them be Peace." So, in all communications strive

to establish a good, friendly environment.

There are people who lift my heart. They come positively, friendly, easy to get on with and don't pigeon-hole you. There are others who are always trouble. You must work to be someone with whom the person at the other end will be happy to engage. Strive to be a correspondent who lifts and encourages. Be a Gabriel who can communicate effectively that message: "Don't be afraid." So, be a true friend, a helper, an encourager, to all who contact you.

Our Lady in that scene reminds me of the correspondent at your end who receives the communication. You get the minutes or the messages from abroad.

Of Our Lady St. Luke records more than once that she pondered all these things in her heart. Like her, you must ponder the material you get. What is it really saying: what is it not saying. What is left unsaid or unanswered?

In that most awesome communication, Gabriel had put to Mary God's will, namely that she be the Mother of the Redeemer. But Mary needed clarification. Not that she was opposed to God's proposal but sought in what way she was to carry it out. "How is this to come about since I am a virgin." And it is the same with you. You may get some communication that begs a question. Indeed, as you ponder over the report you received you may wonder about some matters not so clear. "How is it that Elizabeth, who belongs to another Curia, became

President of this Curia?" "Why was the Acies there celebrated on the Feast of the Assumption?" Now there may be a very good explanation, just as Gabriel had for Our Lady. But you may have to follow up in case some council opts to do its own thing out of harmony with the rest.

One thing I have learnt working in our Marriage Tribunal over the years is that you cannot know another person based on what he or she writes. You may glean some facts. But once you meet that person you learn far more and you may have to re-read the first communications that were sent in writing. I know that when we sometimes correspond with a person who plans to visit Concilium, the letters and emails will never reveal what you later meet: the face, the smile, the energy.



I am saying this because it may help to have an occasional video chat (be it zoom or What's App) with the correspondent at the other end. I know that it too is not as good as an actual meeting. But my concern is that in the mannerisms and the culture of another person we can also learn better how to read their communications. Also, better if they know you are a concerned human with a heart. Or maybe to chat and get a sense of the person and his or her life's circumstances can help understand better.

But social media is not always possible and may be impractical. I know that in some cases of dealing in "foreign languages" some can read the other language quite well but if they were to attempt to speak it with a person who had a certain accent you might be more confused. But still, the better a sense of the other person the better communications and the interpretation can be. For instance if you know that the correspondent at the other end is of a certain age, has such burdens

in the culture or family, you may better understand why no report was received. And then wait.

We also have the problem of people who come from a different culture and history. I learnt very early in my Marriage Tribunal work that you must be careful not to jump to conclusions about people and situations based on your limited experience of life. Let me put it this way: I had to learn to be very humble and appreciate that you cannot jump to conclusions about where another person was going in their comments. A very careful listening is required. Facilitate them telling their story. E.G. the African mind thinks differently from the European mind. The Filipinos seem on the whole to have a gentler way than the Irish. We must take care not to interpret quickly something that might have a different intention.

And so again it may be necessary to ask clarification about what was intended by some sentence in a report. It was because she was humble and needed clarification that Mary asked the angel: "How is this to come about!"



What we are about is truth. It is hoped that each report presents the actual truth about what is going on; a report that does not exaggerate or minimise. We have to beware of that human tendency to make a good impression. The positives and the negatives must be shared. The problems and struggles must be shared. Life after all has just about everything in it. Let us all take care to share the full balanced truth for “The truth will set you free” (Jn 8:31-32).

It may help another correspondent to be more open and honest if we can sometimes show our own vulnerability and struggles. Here I cannot but also refer back to something after the Annunciation. Our Lady was in a unique situation. She knew

how she will be perceived. To whom can she go? There is one person. Elizabeth. She too had conceived in a strange event and she had kept herself hidden. Two women under a similar situation, yet different in their circumstances but could talk and encourage each other. And as we know it went even better than either might have thought.

And so, that brings me to another point. You are not on your own. Do not be afraid to share your challenges with others who do similar work or with retired correspondents. You may be helped by someone saying: “Yes, I have similar problems,” or “They were always like that over there. It has nothing to do with you!”

Frank Duff’s essay on Correspondents has real value still. Oh yes, with the arrival of Internet and a world with proliferation of pornography and drugs, the scene has altered somewhat. And certainly where legionaries manage to help confront these new issues they should share what helped and worked and also

share failures too; or perhaps I should say “perceived failures” because to stop and speak to others on their struggles in these areas, well, I think that that is already positive.

But there is one paragraph of Frank that struck me, and I’ll read it to you: “Now a word as to the tone to be adopted by you in your letters. Never dictate. Your method must be that of patient explanation. Let your

opposite number understand the reason for everything that is put down as required by the Legion system.

Never merely come down on people. If they are put into a bad mood they will tend to resist, and perhaps to defend a wrong point of view. A blunt “no” will be resented whereas if you say that “no” in a thousand words, showing that you have taken trouble, it will be cheerfully accepted. This attitude of taking trouble pays rich dividends. Show it in every way in your letters. The more trouble you take with your letters, the more

they will be appreciated at the other end.”

Would you permit me to make a few comments on that piece based on my own experience? A gentle approach always pays off. Humans are very fragile. Any perceived threat and they clam up into their shells. We need to create an atmosphere in which people can honestly confront and tell the truth. If the guy in Barings Bank had only opened up about the mess he was in before it was too late! I recall once listening to a woman who had suffered a broken marriage. Something about her story didn’t quite add up. But I left her just to tell me it as she wanted to without challenge. When at the end I asked her if there was anything else she’d like to share, she said: “I get the impression that you are a compassionate man. So, I’ll tell you about an event in my early life.”

And as she told it, all those question-marks I had were fully answered. Had I challenged her early on, that her story wasn’t adding up, she might never have told me.



Frank speaks about the need to lay out the full story as to why that regulation is in the Legion. Law always has a reason. Once you know the background to any law, the better it is understood. I recall once being asked by a party in a marriage-nullity case to fill her in on the progress of her case. I re-read the file and sent her a letter with the four essential points. I got a reply that knocked me back. She rubbished my letter and said it was of no help. I again sat down with the file and painstakingly explained it all in four pages. She thanked me profusely for my new letter. Now all was clear! I re-read my letter to see why it made such a difference and I could conclude only that I had said it all in that first letter of four short points. But sometimes we forget that with our experience and training where we have arrived on life's journey is miles from where another person is beginning.

This brings me to how you synthesise your reports. I have heard the occasional comments that the reports went on too long. And sometimes that has merits. Sometimes it might have to do

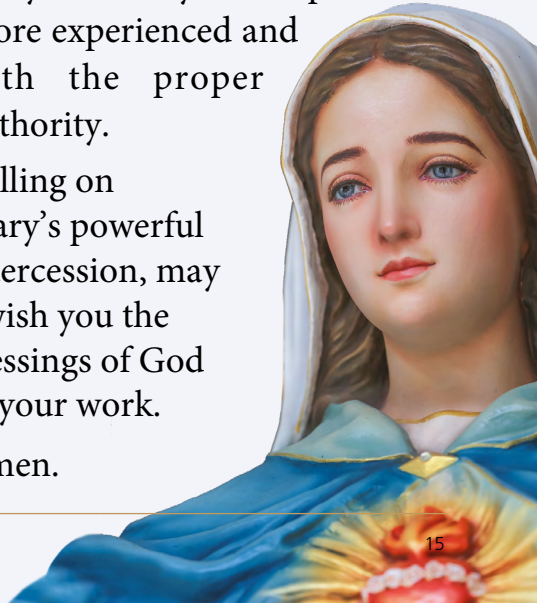
with the mood of the listener. Or might it be because it is too terse and analytic and lacking flesh?

What is certain is that there are no simple solutions. What is important that the balanced truth be conveyed, outlining the problems and challenges that others are facing. Matters involving individuals are best left to officer's meetings or other fora. Then not all that is conveyed at Concilium needs be published.

But it is important that you try to understand accurately what is happening elsewhere, and in your reports to Concilium convey what the body needs to hear. And again, following Mary's humility, ask help of those more experienced and with the proper authority.

Calling on Mary's powerful intercession, may I wish you the blessings of God in your work.

Amen.



# Interview with Concilium Secretary for Maria Legionis

*Conducted by The Editor*

**Q1.** *Miriam, you are now Concilium Secretary: Please tell us what work you actually do as Secretary?*

As Secretary it is my responsibility to keep the minutes of Concilium and furnish them at the monthly Concilium Meeting. There are also other ancillary meetings which take place at Legion Headquarters, and I keep a record of these as requested. As a Concilium Officer I share responsibility in the governance of the Legion and have legal responsibilities as a trustee within the de Montfort Trust.

**Q2.** *When did you first join the Legion of Mary and what motivated you to do so?*

I first joined the Legion of Mary in January 2015. I was at a Mass in Hampton Carmelite Monastery on Gracepark Road, where I sat beside a friend of my mother's – Moira Hayden. Afterwards, she asked what I did in my spare time, and I said I would like to work with the homeless. "I have a bit of work for you" she said and invited me to a meeting in Regina Coeli Hostel. I

didn't really know what to expect. When I entered the room, a group of women were kneeling around a table with an Altar to Our Lady, praying the Rosary. I knelt down and joined in.

**Q3.** *Since becoming a Legionary, what has membership meant to you?*

Membership of the Legion of Mary has meant the world to me. From the moment I joined I felt as if I belonged. The idea of having others with which to pray the Rosary was something special – a shared experience of Faith in Jesus under the Mantle of Mary. As well as this was the brand-new experience of working in Regina Coeli Hostel. Getting to know the residents became something to which I looked forward and thankfully, I still enjoy.





My favourite part of the week is our 'Residents' Bible Prayer Meeting where we pray the Rosary and share the Gospel for the following Sunday. Mass is celebrated in the Oratory most mornings. We are also rostered to do housework and prepare evening meals.

In addition to hostel work, there are Outreach Projects with door-to-door visitation and street contact. This is something I could never have envisaged doing, and certainly involved moving out of my comfort zone. The fact that legionaries work in pairs, learning from one another means that we can participate in this work within a short period of time – the Master and Apprentice system. Very soon all fear disappears, and we relax into the work. We are simply extending an invitation to 'Come and See' what the Catholic Church has to offer. We provide a listening ear to those who perhaps find it difficult to talk about faith within their own environment.

Being a legionary has extended my vision and made me realise that the world is a big place, but no matter what time or age in which we live, we are all in search of happiness and fulfilment. As legionaries we get to share the Good News of the Gospel.

**Q4.** *Please list three benefits you have gained from being a Legionary.*

(i) There is a quiet confidence of being loved by Mary and wanting to do my best to please her.

(ii) It brings discipline that comes from belonging to Our Lady's spiritual army. The willingness to make sacrifice and contribute.

(iii) The joy of working for the Lord. All the Gifts of the Holy Spirit flow in abundance through Mary.

**Q5.** *From your experience, what is the general image or opinion of the Legion of Mary among the general population?*

That general image is in the process of change. When I joined first, a common response was: 'Does the Legion of Mary still exist? Is that still going? – followed by vague recollections of legionaries calling to the door when they were young. Over the past few years, a revival has been taking place. There are Catholic Media reports of sales of Miraculous Medals on the increase: 130,000 were handed out in Dublin over three years. There has been strong response to the Legion of Mary at major public events such as the Fleadh Cheoil and Ploughing Championships, with many contacts made among the younger population.

There is a new praesidium at Radio Maria. To quote one Spiritual Director – “The Legion of Mary is becoming trendy.” It is beginning to catch the imagination of our younger generation.

**Q6.** *How should the Legion of Mary counteract any erroneous opinions you may have encountered?*

I think some of the erroneous opinions stem from lack of knowledge. Frank Duff said that many people disagree with the Catholic Church because of what they think they know. Very few disagree with Church Doctrine when they discover the truth. As legionaries we are one of the few Outreach Catholic organisations doing home visitation and crowd contact. There, we can speak to people about the treasures of our Faith. We speak about the Sacraments, the True Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, and the role of Mary Our Mother in God’s plan of salvation. It is about personal contact and working for salvation one soul at a time.

**Q7.** *From your experience, how would you encourage someone to become a member of the Legion of Mary?*

I would encourage them by simply

inviting them to come along. The joy in the disposition of a legionary plays an important role in how people respond. When they see you happy and fulfilled in what you are doing, they will want the same. That is what happened to me. Some months before Moira invited me, I was at a Mass where a resident from the Morning Star spoke about his experience and life with legionaries. When he finished, he received a great round of applause. I looked around and saw Moira’s late husband, Liam Hayden, standing at the back of the church with a quiet look of joy and satisfaction. I wanted the same thing.

**Q8.** *What ideas have you for making the Legion better known among the general population?*

In the Handbook we read about ‘Intensity of Effort.’ A few years ago, the Legion of Mary in Dublin launched Project 300. Inspired by Gideon’s Army, it is an attempt to gain 300 new members as a Gift to Our Lady. We are almost there. In his writings, Frank Duff guards against ‘Solitary Striving.’ This year, to motivate and mobilise others there were two ‘Call to Arms Days’, one in Dublin and one in Newbridge



where legionaries from around the country gathered. There was a vibrant sense of Renewal at each event. Members were inspired to redouble recruitment efforts and increase membership. I think one of the best ways to make the Legion known is to bring it up in general conversation. The Maria Legionis itself is a great instrument in spreading the Good News. There are also Legion of Mary programmes on Radio Maria reaching an ever-growing audience.

**Q.9.** *Finally, In the 1920s Frank Duff became involved with certain moral and social issues of the day. Should the Legion become involved with similar issues of today?*

We are still very much involved in the moral and social issues of the day. During Home Visitation and Street Contact we promote the message of Jesus Christ in the Gospel and invite people to the practice of the

Catholic Faith. In so doing we also promote Sacramental Marriage and Family Life.

In our Outreach to marginalised communities, the Legion of Mary run two homeless hostels – the Regina Coeli for women and the Morning Star for men. These are staffed entirely by Legion volunteers who also take an interest in the social and spiritual welfare of residents.

With regard to social integration, we have many new legionaries from among our New Irish and migrant population. This has enhanced and strengthened our membership. It provides a sense of belonging to newly arrived members in our communities, from around the globe, as we work united in the service of Our Lady.



**Q10.** *Is there any other comment or observation you wish to make?*

This year President Brother Lawlor and I had the special privilege of representing the Legion of Mary at the Meeting of Moderators of the Faithful, Ecclesial Movements and New Communities in St Peter's Basilica, in the Vatican where we met with Pope Francis. It was a very moving experience for both of us; a huge honour for which we are very grateful.

I would also like to encourage an increase in the uptake and sales of Maria Legionis. As a publication it

is a unifying force for the Legion of Mary around the world. I also wish to take the opportunity to thank our Editor, and to those who contribute, for superb work in its production.



Miriam McKane Concilium Secretary meeting Pope Francis

## *The Coming of Christ*

*His coming was foretold on David's harp of gold*

*For centuries proclaimed by prophets to a heedless crowd*

*Yet, when he came, he crept into the world unknown-*

*Save lowly shepherds tending sheep and lambs.*

*When told by angels of Emmanuel*

*To the manger came with their little lambs*

*And kneeling down before the Infant Child*

*Adored the Lamb of God.*

FH



# Letter from Legionary in Cape Town South Africa

*By Anna Niekerk*

I am writing to you from Capetown, South Africa. I stay in Kraaifontein and am a parishioner of St. Anthony of Padua, but in our parish, we have two other churches: St. Owens and St. Elizabeth.

I grew up in a very close-knit family environment, being one of nine children, and yes, I am a twin as well. We are three sets of twins in my family. My late parents were staunch Catholics and legionaries until their death. My Mom passed on in 2015 at the age of 80, being a legionary for 67 years. The day she died she was supposed to go on home visitation and her partner was waiting on her. My Dad died in 1991 and was an active legionary as well until the end; plus he served as a deacon in that diocese.



When I grew up, it was in a legionary set up. Many times, I had to take control of the household when my parents went on legionary work. We then lived on a farm without electricity, no running water in the house, no telephone communication. But they were heavenly years. My parents walked many miles by foot to do home visitations, because we did not have the luxury of a car.

Just after matriculation I moved to Cape Town to become a nurse. I got married and am a mother to three beautiful children. Whenever I went back home to visit my parents, they would plead with me to start a praesidium where I lived. And every time I said no.

When my dad passed on, mamma kept on asking me. Every time I would tell her that I am scared. What if no one joins the legion? I will be ashamed.

Three years after my mom's passing, I had the opportunity to go on a pilgrimage to Ngome in KwaZulu Natal. At this shrine, Our Lady appeared many times to Sr. Reinolda, a nun. Many people visit the shrine daily, from every denomination. Ngome is about 27 hours' drive from Cape Town.



My twin and myself, another sister of mine and my son, undertook the pilgrimage with 56 other people. Of course, with a Spiritual Leader, Reverend Fr. Audacious and two nuns. It

was heavenly on that bus. We prayed the Rosary many times, singing, more praying and much laughter. We stayed for a week in Ngome. Beautiful place, tropical weather and plantation. On a hill side.

When the three priests walked in to commence Holy Mass, all stood up and singing began. I just said yes in my mind, yes Lord, Yes Mother Mary and yes Mamma, I will start a praesidium in Kraaifontein. At once I felt this tremendous inner peace and the most joyful feeling that I cannot explain until today.

Back home I made an appointment with our priest who was overwhelmed with excitement. I contacted two legionaries whom my parents knew, and they came to my place. We had lovely guidance and had our first Legion meeting on 8 November 2018 with six active members and our parish priest present. My son, 37 years, with special needs, is also a member and a wonderful asset to the praesidium; he joined the Legion because his grandma also had been a member of the Legion!

When it was time to choose the name of our praesidium, I said: “Our Lady Tabernacle of the Most High.” Our Legion address is: St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Kraaifontein, Capetown, South Africa.

We are currently five active members and have 54 auxiliary members. It is a privilege to be a worker, a soldier for Our Lady. I never looked back. In fact, I am so sorry for not listening much earlier to my mother.

Every single time the praesidium meet, it is just this feeling of meeting in the Upper Room. The weekly meeting is really a highlight on the week’s agenda. We are this happy Marian family.

Our spiritual work consists of many activities. Besides home visitations, we have street evangelisation; and it is wonderful to interact with all kinds of denominations and how people actually love the Rosary! Every single one will ask for a Rosary beads and spiritual cards. At the beginning of the month of November we took the initiative whereby our parish went to the graveyard, walking

in procession while praying the Rosary, with our parish priest leading and playing the guitar, singing hymns. We concluded with Father blessing the graves. Then once a week in November we will go and pray the Rosary at the cemetery. On such an occasion one lady thanked us for praying for all deceased and not just for Catholics. Of course, not forgetting Holy Mass Celebration for all deceased legionaries.

In 2022 we undertook a pilgrimage from Cape Town far into South Africa. We covered two-thousand kilometres, starting at the shrine here in Kraaifontein. We interacted with everyone we met, reminding them of the love Jesus has for them and that He is truly risen. We visited many churches along the way and met wonderful priests and nuns. Many rosaries were prayed en route and under a tree we would stop and pray the catena! It was wonderful We were fortunate to visit two cathedrals on the way. We stayed for a week in Uppington before returning home.

Last year we had quite big recruiting exercises at all three churches whereby we put up banners outside of the churches, with our Legion altar set up. Initially we approached the congregation after Mass. Many showed interest in joining the Legion, but none did. However, many joined as auxiliary members. One can only but try.

One thing I must mention is our eagerness to take part in the activities at the AGR. The praesidium of Our Lady Tabernacle of the Most High is always busy rehearsing for some kind of a play. Last year it was Our Lady of Fatima; it was very beautiful. The year before we acted on the Second Joyful Mystery, Mary visits Elizabeth. By now all know that we are the acting praesidium. For the past five years we have been busy at the AGR.

Our praesidium falls under Curia, Immaculate Conception with eight praesidia attached to it. Then there is the Senatus with six praesidia attached to it. I am fortunate to be the secretary for Curia and thus also attend Senatus meetings; In addition, I am correspondent for the Comitium of Port Elizabeth and for two other places.

One can tell much about the Legion of Mary, but then I will have to write a book. I really do hope that you will find it okay to publish some of this information. We do our year planning diligently and it was always a heartfelt idea to have something published in the Maria Legionis.

Stay blessed. God be with you.

With much Marian love and greetings.

*Anna Niekerk*





# Early Memories of the Legion of Mary

By Jacqueline O'Dwyer

*“Knock Knock open wide, see what’s on the other side, Knock Knock any more, come with me through the magic door.”*

Two Legion of Mary members had arrived in the classroom of our secondary school run by the Presentation Congregation in South-County Dublin. I was seventeen years old then and it was the year 1980. Further on I became a member of the Legion with my sister Lesley. We learned about Frank Duff, and also about Edel Quinn and Alfie Lamb on envoy work. Moving on again, among care-taking jobs and college gaps, I remember going on the Exploratio Dominicalis in Ballymun for a week; another project was held in Co. Galway for a full week. The most challenging one was Turf Lodge in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

As a member of the Legion, I visited many schools, hospitals, nursing homes. The home visitation was done in many different places. We went out together in pairs as this

is a requirement for support and safety. Ordinary people like me receive the benefits to live single or family life. My son arrived in January 1990.

I first heard about True Devotion to Mary by Louis Marie de Montfort, and I loved it immensely; the most magical topic of Mother and Son of which I have ever heard.

The Acies ceremony held in March each year celebrates devotion to Mother and Son: “We are all yours our Queen, our Mother, and all that we have is yours.” All members participate in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Accumulation of graces abound!

In our praesidium members have different roles to play e.g. President, vice President, Secretary, Treasurer. The monthly Curia is the second level upwards. In Dublin the third level is the Concilium headquarters in De Montfort House. Curia reunion: Christmas parties each December and legionaries produce entertainment of choice; my choice is Irish dancing.

# Conference of Spiritual Directors, Delhi

ARCHDIOCESE of Delhi and Diocese of Meerut

By Carlton D'Souza, President Senatus



On a bright Sunny day, the legionaries of Delhi and Meerut gathered at the Sacred Heart Cathedral Delhi on Saturday 17th August 2024 just a couple of days after India celebrated its 76th Independence Day.

The occasion was the first of its kind for the Legion of Mary in Delhi and Meerut. All anxiously awaited the presence of the Archbishop of Delhi His Grace Anil J. T. Couto. Present at this gathering were 16 spiritual directors from 23 Parishes of Delhi and Meerut.

The proceedings began with the 'Lighting of the Lamp' - a tradition of India for all auspicious occasions. The lamp was lit by Archbishop Couto, the spiritual directors of the three Curiae of Delhi and all the other spiritual directors present at the gathering.

In the keynote address, His Lordship reminded the audience that the lamp continues to burn from the time of our baptism until now. As baptised Lay Catholics, the light lit at our baptism continues to shed light and we must

keep it alive. For priests consecrated, keep it alive and together, work for the Church's mission - of carrying out the work of Jesus. The Legion of Mary is rooted in prayer and the Blessed Virgin Mary. A Marian feast is commemorated every month and celebrates Mary's fidelity to the Lord. In the Legion of Mary, family visitation is its main work; legionaries supplement and compliment the Pastor's work; as legionaries, you bring the Church to the homes in your parishes through your home visitations.

Fr. J. Rebello, the Spiritual Director of the Legion of Central Delhi Curia and the appointed Priest for the Legion in the Archdiocese spoke about his 35 odd years as the Spiritual Director of the Legion. Fr. Lawrence Royappan, Spiritual Director of Meerut Diocese, reminded all that he had happy memories of the Curia in Meerut. The Legion is the right hand of the priest. He was hopeful that a Curia will be started soon in Meerut Diocese. Fr. Peter Anthony, the newly appointed Spiritual Director of the Legion in Meerut Diocese, said that although he

was not familiar with the Legion; he is a very strong Marian devotee and will do all he can to assist the growth of the Legion in his diocese.

It was then time for Br. Carlton D'Souza, Senatus President to give a presentation of the Mumbai Senatus jurisdiction, explaining the spread of the Legion in the region of Western, Eastern and Northern India along with the international area of Nepal and Bangladesh. He further explained the various apostolic works being done by the Legion in the parishes where they are and made a request to all the spiritual directors present to help us spread the Legion in the parishes where the Legion is yet to start.

After a refreshment break the spiritual directors were put into three groups for discussion. This was followed by a sharing of the group discussions.

### 1. How does the Legion contribute to Parish Work and Activities?

Rosary recitation; home visitation; communion to the sick; teaching catechism; evangelisation; bereaved and sick visitation; bringing the lapsed Catholics back to the Church; encouraging the lay faithful on devotion to Mother Mary; reaching out to other faiths and conducting prayers during feast days.

### 2. Suggest how the Legion can be better utilised in your Parish.

Visit sick and homebound and

ensure that those visited have received the sacraments; on home visitation encourage to join church organisations; coordinate with other associations; assist in the making of the parish census; bringing the lay faithful to Mass; encourage rosary recitation in families; nurture nature; accompany the priest on sick calls; actively work with basic ecclesiastical communities. Legionaries should meet the spiritual directors at regular intervals to keep in touch and update him on the growth of the Legion.

### 3. As a Spiritual Director, does the Legion Apostolate interest you and how can it be made more interesting to you?

Yes, it interests us; must be introduced to youth; focus more on spiritual development; forum of catechesis; members are dedicated and committed; extend a helping hand to the parish priest; attract people to the Legion of Mary; definite interest: sick and marginalised; Marian devotions; catechesis; unity among legionaries; reach out to other faiths.

### 4. What are the good qualities you like about the Legion?

Devoted to Mary; service minded; obedient to church; encourage others; committed; solidarity of members; reaching out to the lay faithful.



**5. Please share the duties of the Spiritual Director.** Direction in spiritual matters; attend the Legion meetings and check the background of officers and members joining the Legion of Mary; deliver the allocutio; have meetings with officers once in a quarter; veto power; sign the officers' appointment form; praesidium report.

It was then time for a Question-and-Answer Session with Br. Carlton.

The Conference concluded at about 12:40pm followed by Fellowship Lunch.

Bro. Carlton along with the officers of the three Curiae of Delhi and the three correspondents of the Curiae of Central, East and South from Mumbai were present and spent time with the Archbishop and with spiritual directors. Visitors had a spirit - filled experience; gained a deeper learning of our Apostolate and a fulfilment that the Legion is most loved by our Priests.



# Madonna delle Galline

By Michael Walsh

*The story of the Madonna delle Galline has an extraordinary mixture of ingredients: dreams, miracles, a framed picture of the Madonna with the Infant Jesus, floods, hens, and a decree with which the Chapter of Saint Peter in the Vatican decided solemnly to crown the 'Madonna delle Galline' which may be translated as 'Our Lady of the Hens.' It is a Vatican-approved Marian shrine in Pagani, a town and commune in Campania, Italy, and part of the Province of Salerno.*

The source of this Marian shrine dates back to Easter time in 1609: an invalid man had fallen asleep in front of a dressing room belonging to the parish of San Felice. Nearby, hens were roosting under a table-like hen coop. The invalid reported that he saw the Madonna in his sleep and she invited him to get up and throw away his crutches because he was healed. The man walked away cured. The evident miracle



attracted the general excitement and interest of the local people.

Between 1609 and 1610 there were seven other miracles confirmed through devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary; the news of these events spread rapidly to other areas and people started flocking to Pagani wishing to find out more about these portents.

It is believed that this painting had its foundations outside of the Pagani area: The wooden panel portraying Mary holding Baby Jesus was originally housed 18 km from Pagani, in a mountain Church in Tramonti.



The story passed down from one generation to the next is that the Blessed Virgin appeared in a dream to the Church sacristan in Tramonti, requesting him to tell the priest to repair the crumbling Church or she would leave for a town where “even the hens” would honour her. It is believed that the priest ignored the message- despite the pleadings of the sacristan.

Soon afterwards, a violent rain storm severely damaged buildings in the area, including the Church, resulting in widespread flooding, and the original painting portraying Mary holding Baby Jesus was washed all the way to Pagani. Due to the deterioration of the painting through water damage, mud and age, it was replicated on canvas and housed in the Oratory at Pagani Parish.

In 1610, it was decided by the parish to build a larger Church to facilitate the increasing number of worshippers. A fund-raising group was set up and that year, Monsignor Lunadoro, Bishop of Nocera de’ Pagani, stated that “thanks to the help of the devout people, who give substantial alms, a much more capable Church is begun to be built in the place where the hens had found the table.”

Five years later, in 1615, the new Church was completed, and the replicated painting of the Madonna and Child Jesus was placed inside the Church. Msgr. Stefano de Vicari, in his pastoral visit, spoke of a newly built Church at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Hens.

In August 1786 the diocesan bishop, Msgr. Benedetto dei Monti Sanfelice, published a decree with which the Chapter of Saint Peter in the Vatican decided solemnly to crown the ‘Madonna delle Galline’, (Our Lady of the Hens) in gratitude for the Blessed Virgin Mary’s protection of the population.

The coronation ceremony for Our Lady of the Hens took place one year later, in 1787, and the shrine became a major centre of pilgrimage for people of all ages from district and distant places. The Feast of Our Lady of the Hens, which takes place annually during April in Pagani, is an important annual celebratory event blending religious and cultural elements, including prayer, music, singing of hymns and traditional outdoor cooking.



## CHRISTMAS

*By John Betjeman*

*And is it true*

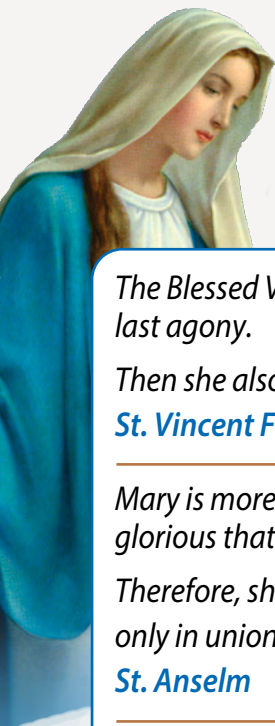
*This most tremendous tale of all,  
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue*

*A Baby in an ox's stall?*

*The Maker of the stars and sea  
Became a Child on earth for me?*

*No love that in a family dwells  
Can with this simple Truth compare*

*That God was man in Palestine  
And lives today in Bread and Wine.*



# Praises of Mary



*The Blessed Virgin Mary comforts and refreshes those who are in their last agony.*

*Then she also receives their souls at death.*

**St. Vincent Ferrer**

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*Mary is more exalted than the Patriarchs, greater than the Martyrs, more glorious than the Confessors, and purer than the Virgins.*

*Therefore, she alone and with them can do what they can accomplish only in union with her.*

**St. Anselm**

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*When Mary asks for graces from God, she does not ask but, so to speak, commands.*

*For her Son honours her by refusing her nothing.*

**St. Peter Damian**

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*What a wondrous book is the Heart of Mary!*

*Blessed are those who read with intelligence what is written therein, for they will learn the science of salvation.*

**St. John Eudes**

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*Mary is the living "mould of God." It was in her that God was made a true man.*

*It is also in her that human beings can be truly fashioned into Christ, insofar as that is possible for human nature, by the grace of God.*

**St. Louis Grignion de Montfort**

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*May each one of us possess the soul of Mary to proclaim the greatness of the Lord.*

*And may each one of us possess the spirit of Mary to rejoice in God.*

**St. Ambrose**





# Legion world news



## NORTH AMERICA

**USA:** A Comitium in **Arlington Senatus** has gained nine praesidia, giving them 28 in total. It was reported Pilgrim Statue visitation resulted in a husband deciding to become a Catholic. Patricians, Exploratio and crowd contact at county fairs featured in reports. Praetorian and adjutorian membership are evident. Providence Comitium, attached to **Boston Senatus**, do conversion work and lead junior praesidia. A Vietnamese curia assisted eight adults to baptism. A new Ugandan praesidium has fourteen members. They catechise the young and do prison visits with their Spiritual Director. They presented Senatus with a Legion Altar cloth made in Uganda recently. **Chicago Senatus** reports Milwaukee Curia set up Legion of Mary booths at parish festivals and at a county fair. A praesidium in Indiana evangelise at a grocery store. The Hispanic Comitium in Chicago reported helping a community, impacted by gun violence, to convert. A Curia in Joliet had attendance of 30 at a Legion Congress and carried out crowd contact at a Filipino festival. A newly formed Spanish Curia works with youth, recruiting couples to the 'Marriage Encounter' group which results in sacramental marriage. They mentor young people to remain Catholic. The **Cincinnati Senatus** participated in the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage in three parishes. They worked at the congress booth and at a fair booth in Montgomery, making good contacts. A new praesidium with seven members had gained three new members

during the year. The president and assistant treasurer of the **Houston Senatus** visited Concilium in June. A Curia in Beaumont, Texas, went from five to nine praesidia. Tyler Comitium reported on a Legion booth at the Hawkins Oil Festival. Pharr Curia, established in June 2023, has increased from three to five praesidia. The Korean Curia in Houston started a college praesidium. In **Los Angeles Senatus** West San Fernando Valley Curia started fifteen Frank Duff prayer meetings. **Philadelphia Senatus** reports their apostolate includes visiting retirement homes, street contact and evangelisation days. They have recruiting tables at all parish events. Their Maria Legionis committee is seeking help to promote both the English and Spanish version. Teaching Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) and visiting prisons also feature. Some 100 attended a Marian Day. In **San Francisco Senatus** 23 legionaries visited 250 homes to promote the Eucharistic Revival Mass at the Cathedral followed by the Eucharistic Procession to Golden Gate Bridge. Columban Drives took place in several councils. In one Comitium, 69 people signed up, resulting in the establishment of a new praesidium of thirteen active and 46 auxiliary members. Elsewhere 32 people attended an information meeting. **St. Louis Senatus** reported some fruits of their apostolate included four baptisms, 21 confessions, sixteen confirmations, four Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), three Last Rites, several marriages saved, and one woman planning to visit an abortion clinic changed her mind. In Nebraska, 6,200 rosaries were distributed

by two Curiae. In Kansas, 24 legionaries participated in Peregrinatio Pro Christo visiting 1,400 homes and 375 follow-up calls planned. **Miami Regia:** A Curia reported works included home visitation, hospital visitation, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), jail contacts, crowd contact and work with juniors.

**Canada:** In Scarborough Comitium, attached to **Toronto Senatus**, 62 legionaries did a Columban Drive resulting in a praesidium of fourteen members. Follow-up continues with 60 other people who had signed up. Another praesidium visited a junior school to explain Adoration to children. Subsequently, the teachers brought three classes to weekly Adoration for twenty minutes where legionaries led a decade of the Rosary. Recruitment drives by two praesidia in **Montreal Senatus** yielded 43 names for follow up. An immigrant mother and baby were guided to baptism at Easter. The **Edmonton Comitium** plans a junior retreat and a young adults retreat. One Curia in Calgary will commit three pairs to guide the extension in three new parishes. **Vancouver Comitium:** Circulation of four Pilgrim statues was instrumental in three children being baptised, one marriage being validated, successful cancer treatment and reconciliation of a family feud. Works of an attached Curia include book barrow apostolate and bereavement counselling.

## WEST INDIES

**Dominican Republic: Santa Domingo Senatus** reported apostolate included 5,800 visits to the sick, 6,700 homes visited, and visits to 97 prisoners. The **Santiago de los Caballeros Senatus** held a successful Lenten

Retreat and a Marian afternoon.

**Haiti:** Works undertaken in the **Haiti Senatus** include visiting homes, hospitals, mental health facilities and marginalised people. They organise Catechism, prepare people for the sacraments and accompany priests on sick calls.

**Puerto Rico:** Apostolic work in the **Puerto Rico Senatus** included visiting the sick and elderly and people with sight impairment for spiritual contact and to help them with medical appointments. Book barrow work in some churches facilitates good discussions on Faith.

**Trinidad and Tobago:** The **Regia** have been visiting attached praesidia and curiae. They had some virtual meetings with officers of distant councils to guide them on resumption of meetings post covid. St. Lucia, Dominica, Barbados, Antigua, Guyana and Suriname are in correspondence with the Regia. They were setting up some junior praesidia also.

## EUROPE

**Cyprus:** In Nicosia the two praesidia continue to meet every Sunday and each have grown in membership in the past year. New officers have been appointed in the Limassol praesidium. Reports from North Cyprus indicate that the praesidium in Kyrena continues to hold their meetings every week. The last communication from Famagusta reported that the praesidium there had restarted.

**Malta:** A praesidium in **Malta Regia** engages in a good apostolate at the Seaport where those on board the ships are met and

encouraged in their faith. Mass is said on board when a priest is available. The praesidium in Qawra is doing well and the legionaries have resumed their apostolate in Mount Carmel hospital. Visitation of the Little Sisters of The Poor residential home is done by the junior legionaries. In Marscala contact was made with Chinese, Indian and Filipino communities with the aim of forming a praesidium for them. After much follow-up a Jehovah Witness has now returned to the Catholic Church. Patrician meetings are held every month with an average of 28 in attendance. The apostolate includes book barrow apostolate and home visitation. A day Retreat was held in March with 30 in attendance. In Floriana a three day apostolate resulted in many good contacts being made.

**Portugal:** The praesidia directly attached to the **Lisbon Senatus** visited Lisbon prison and attended Mass with the inmates. Missionaries and priests were accompanied on visits to two troubled neighbourhoods. A Curia in Amadora held a three-day Lenten Retreat for young people. Following a Columban Drive, a praesidium was founded with six active members. A Comitium in Ponta Delgada, Azores, organised a retreat which was attended by 72 people. A Curia in Massama visits the recovery centres, takes care of children while the parents work and also helps with literacy. Legionaries in Viana do Castelo Comitium lead two groups of catechesis, one for adults, the other for young people with cognitive difficulties. They supported a project of social integration of young Brazilian students.

**Spain:** A praesidium in **Madrid Senatus** which has an enclosed community of nuns as

adjutorian members hold their praesidium meeting once a year in the convent with all their adjutorians present. Home visitation is done in apartment blocks in the city centre. This year the Legion Standard was carried in the public streets for the Corpus Christi Procession. Immigrant legionaries hope to use the twin praesidium system because of their irregular employment hours. The international Peregrinatio Pro Christo project organised by Brazilian legionaries is planned for Tarragona, Spain in November. The Curia at Santander in **Bilbao Senatus** participates in a wide spectrum of prayer and religious formation groups. They have an excellent religious education club for children aged five - twelve years, with an average attendance of 25. The praesidium in Durango assists in welcoming new immigrants, and in human dignity and mental health programmes. Basauri Curia has acquired some new recruits from the book barrow apostolate.

**Turkey:** The Curia in Istanbul has five praesidia in three parishes. The apostolate includes statue visitation, and visitation of the sick and housebound.

## AFRICA

**Gambia:** **Banjul Curia** is working hard to establish a new praesidium in Star of the Sea parish.

**Kenya:** **Nairobi Senatus:** Most Rev. Wallace Nganga, Auxiliary Bishop of Nairobi, was the chief celebrant at the Mass at Venerable Edel Quinn's grave, along with eighteen priests. A large gathering of legionaries from all over Kenya and some from Tanzania attended also despite torrential downpour. The first praesidium set up by

Venerable Edel in December 1936 reported 20 active and 24 auxiliary members and this praesidium supervises a junior praesidium. Reports from the two attached Regiae and Comitiae and Curiae indicate extensive home visitation and street contact work resulting in many returns to the sacraments, Church marriages, children baptised, and contact with Muslims and Protestants with a view of interesting them in the faith. Several new praesidia and Curiae were set up.

**Malawi: Blantyre Senatus:** Many reports include visits to the sick in their homes and hospital, preparing children for the sacraments and instructing catechumens. Works include visits to the elderly and helping them with household chores, along with counselling cohabiting couples, some of whom have now received the sacrament of matrimony. Legionaries visited a school for deaf and dumb children and assisted with repairs to their hostel and harvesting their crops. **Maula Senatus:** Reports show extension drives, Church marriages, visiting the sick, aged, orphans and bereaved, aftercare of auxiliaries, Catechism instruction, visiting lapsed Catholics and legionaries and arranging Requiem Mass for departed legionaries.

**Nigeria:** The **Senatus of Abuja** held a seminar for catechists with the theme: 'Go Make Disciples of All Nations: The Role of the Catechist'. 299 legionaries attended this event. The new edition of the Legion Handbook has been printed. **Enugu Senatus** has thousands of legionaries and there are reports of the establishment of over 134 new praesidia, 79 junior praesidia, five Curiae and two Comitiae. Great numbers are being prepared for sacraments, including over 8,000 adults for baptism. **Ikot Ekpene**

**Regia:** A Comitium prepared catechumens for the various sacraments, recruited over 160 legionaries and formed two new praesidia. **Lagos Regia:** A Regia quiz competition on the Legion handbook was organised with great success. Many councils report home and hospital visitation, crowd contact, visitation of police cells and orphanages and teaching Catechism. The Regia encouraged all legionaries to intensify efforts as it works on its extension program with Exploratio Dominicalis projects and the establishment of many new senior and junior curiae. **Onitsha Regia:** Nnewi Comitium held a fruitful congress. Legionaries from the Regia participated in the Archdiocesan Rosary Carnival in May. All reports indicate preparing people for the various sacraments and encouraging and helping couples to marry in Church.

**Tanzania: Dar-es-Salaam Regia:** Reports indicate great outreach to Catholics, Muslims and Lutherans. Their efforts result in many returns to the sacraments. They also visit the patients in the hospital, orphans, motor cyclists, food vendors, and pubs. Hai Moshi Comitium: Works reported include home and hospital visitation, contact with youth, encouraging couples to marry in Church and preparing adults and children for the sacraments.

**Uganda:** The Regia of Western Uganda, attached to **Uganda Senatus**, has 84,000 members. During the year, 2,649 couples were married and 10,000 children were baptised. They also carry out an apostolate in prisons and refugee camps. A Congress was held in Arua which was attended by legionaries from ten schools, six tertiary institutions and nine parish praesidia. Two

legionaries spent three weeks on a visit to Ethiopia on behalf of the Senatus. Ethiopia is a large country, where the Catholics comprise only one per cent of the population. The legionaries met with Cardinal Berhaneyesus Souraphel, Archbishop of Addis Ababa, who is supportive of the Legion of Mary. They visited four parishes, addressed the National Annual General Meeting of Catholic Priests and started three praesidia in the Archdiocese of Addis Ababa. They made plans for the handbook to be translated into the local language of Amharic, to return for a follow up visit in August and to invite Ethiopian priests to the next Spiritual Directors' Conference, August 2025.

**Zambia:** To commemorate the anniversary of Venerable Edel Quinn all councils were instructed to organise for Masses to be celebrated at Curia or parish level. Visitation of attached councils is done periodically and two new praesidia were established in Livingstone

## SOUTH AMERICA

**Bolivia:** In **La Paz Senatus** one work is the distribution of bottles of Holy Water. The meaning and use of Holy Water is explained. Servant of God Alfie Lambe started the Legion of Mary in Bolivia and special remembrance was given to his birthday. The Rosary is promoted as people are asked to pray for their country which is going through difficult times. Legion work is done in Spanish and in two local dialects.

**Chile:** **Santiago Senatus** reports many immigrants are becoming active legionaries; their work is usually with their own communities, many of whom have

just arrived in Chile. A parish praesidium, which includes two married couples in its membership, trains altar boys. A short history of the founding of the Legion is being written which will help legionaries to remember their roots.

**Columbia:** The **Senatus of Bogota** has workshops focusing on development of skills and spiritual formation for autistic adults and adults with sight impairment. Other works include apostolates on different radio stations; outreach to homeless people and outreach to those detained in police stations. A Comitium prepared 100 people for the Consecration to Our Lady, while a Curia prepared another consecration with children and their families. There is recital of the Holy Rosary every 13th of the month in different police stations. Also undertaken are catechesis for children, young people and adults, a homework club for children, pre-junior groups for small children, and Enthronement of the Sacred Heart. They report that the Rosaries in parks have become gatherings of families and allow for the recruitment of active and auxiliary members. Many use the Columban recruitment method. In the **Senatus of Medellín** the legionaries teach devotion to Our Lady and distribute Rosaries made by legionaries so that those contacted can practice praying it. They provide Catechesis for children, adults and prisoners. Some legionaries do heroic work with alcoholics and drug addicts. Peregrinatio Pro Christo, Exploratio Dominicalis and missions in villages are carried out.

**Paraguay:** **Senatus of Asuncion:** A Comitium in San Lorenzo set up nine senior and three junior praesidia. A former junior legionary

## WORLD NEWS

joined the seminary recently. A Curia in Carapeguia does apostolic work with unmarried couples; a couple who had been together for 42 years confessed, received Holy Communion and were married recently.

**Peru:** Works undertaken in the **Senatus of Lima** include visitation of homes and sick people in homes and hospitals, street contact, catechesis of children, young people and adults, Enthronement of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Frank Duff Prayer Groups, and evangelisation in two police stations. They visit a youth rehabilitation centre for drug addicts, alcoholics, or those with behavioural problems. They also visit two prisons.

**Uruguay:** In the **Senatus of Montevideo** the works include: visitation of nursing homes, hospitals and palliative care patients, street contact, outreach to young people, visits to families, book barrow, and street work with people in difficult situations. On May 4th they celebrated the feasts of St. Philip and St. James, informing all the people who came to the beautiful Legion of Mary stand about it.

## OCEANIA

**New Zealand:** The **Auckland Senatus** has plans in place to visit attached councils of Tonga, and American and Western Samoa towards the end of the year. A new praesidium with sixteen members has been established. Christchurch English Curia has nine senior and two junior praesidia. Holy Communion is brought to the sick and housebound. Juniors are altar servers, and share Faith with friends. A Korean Curia has six praesidia of 49 members.

**Australia:** Many praesidia in **Melbourne Senatus** have started Frank Duff prayer groups following the encouragement of the correspondent to do so. They were advised to open those Frank Duff prayer group meetings to non- legionaries also. Enthusiastic legionaries have begun a new book barrow apostolate on the steps of the Legion of Mary house and great contacts are being made through this. Dandenong Curia consists of eight senior praesidia of 55 members, and one junior praesidium of five members. Intensive recruitment drives have resulted in ten new members being recruited in Keysborough. A Congress is planned for August.

**New Caladonia:** Noumea Comitium has eight local Curiae and one Curia on Wallis Island. Visits are made to retired priests and Catechism is taught in the tribes and villages. Legionaries continue with their apostolate in preparing the children and adults for the sacraments on Belep Island.

## ASIA

**Philippines:** **Bicolandia Senatus** reports the Rosary is taught in four city jails. In Cabantuan Comitium, home visitation through the block Rosaries resulted in the conversion of five born-again Christians. The Comitium of Imus and Silang cover 91 parishes, with the Legion of Mary present in 70 of these. **Cebu Senatus: Maasin Regia** has twelve Comitium, six Curiae and six attached praesidia. Membership is comprised of 5,850 active legionaries, 210 probationers and 1,608 juniors. Prison and home visitation is carried out. San Remegio Curia has nine senior and five junior praesidia. Complete healing took place for an active member after prayers were offered for his recovery.

Other reports include the Baptism of two youths and returns to the sacraments. **Senatus of Northern Philippines (Manila):** The Legion of Mary is present in five of the six parishes in a Curia in the Archdiocese of Manila. There are fifteen senior and one junior praesidia. A new praesidium has also been set up. Several people received the sacrament of confession with the efforts of the legionaries. Visitation of 146 families resulted in five couples receiving of the Sacrament of Matrimony, two baptisms, two people receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation and four people receiving the Sacrament of the Sick. There is difficulty in recruiting younger senior members due to work and study schedules. Metro Manila Comitium covers 30 parishes with the Legion of Mary present in all of them. In **Mindanao Senatus**, several Curiae report apostolic work such as home visitation, sick and hospital visitation, jail apostolate, block rosary, Catechesis, promotion of marriage validation, Baptism and Confirmation. In Rayna sa Mga Angeles Curia, praesidia are concentrating on promotion of the sacraments especially encouraging couples who are living together to receive the sacrament of marriage. Thirty-five have been baptised and confirmed and 40 couples have received the sacrament of marriage. A legionary was invited to catechise on local radio and she did Our Lady and the Legion proud. Many prayers for the success of legionary endeavours and for healing from sickness have been answered. **Western Visayas Senatus:** Cabatuan Comitium facilitated the conversion of a Seventh Day Adventist family to the Catholic Faith. In **Dumaguete Regia** apostolic work includes home and jail visitation, crowd

contact and marriage validation. Guimaras Comitium: After multiple visitations to thirteen couples who had been living together, two of the couples were baptised into the Catholic Faith, four of the couples received the sacrament of Confirmation, and all thirteen couples were married in the Catholic Church. Other reports include the assisting in facilitating the reception of the sacraments for people who were sick and terminally ill, and people suffering from cancer, and depression. A fifteen year-old with a brain tumour was assisted to receive the sacraments leading to a temporary recovery and happiness before she passed away. Tigbauan Comitium assisted in the Church wedding of a couple of mixed religion who had already had a civil marriage ceremony after Catechism and the Baptism of the husband into the Catholic Faith. In addition to this, two inmates and two minors also received the sacraments in prison.





*Puer Natus Est Nobis*  
*Introit for Mass of Nativity*