



Mary's Notebook

June 2007

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Issue 14

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Richmond Retreat

The Richmond, Virginia Curia is holding a retreat on Friday, November 9 and Saturday, November 10, 2007. Active members of the Tidewater Curia of the Legion of Mary are welcome to attend the retreat, as well. Please contact an officer at your praesidium for more information about how to sign-up for this retreat [Cont. p.2]

May Crowning

Members from the Tidewater Curia joined with others for the annual May Crowning on May 20th. About 50 people joined together in this spiritual exercise, with included praying the Rosary. [Cont. p.2]

Website Workshop

The Arlington Regia held its first-ever website workshop on May 5th from 1:00pm until the evening that day. Nine people attended the workshop, which focused on helping to teach members of the Legion of Mary how to build and maintain a Legion website in accordance with Concilium guidelines [Cont. p.2],

Why Does an All Powerful, All Loving God Allow for Suffering?

Suffering is, according to the papal encyclical Salvifici Doloris (SD), in itself, an experience of evil. But Christ has made suffering the firmest basis of the definitive good, namely the good of eternal salvation (SD). Suffering is present in the world in order to release love, in order to give birth to works of love towards neighbor, in order to transform the whole of human civilization into a "civilization of love" (SD). [Cont. p.4]

News and Events

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May Crowning

The May Crowning was held and Christ the King Parish in Virginia Beach, and helped spread devotion to Mary.

Website Workshop

The website workshop, in addition to being an excellent learning experience for those who attended, also included a number of content-rich handouts for those interested in more information about building a Legion of Mary website, but who were unable to attend. These documents are available from the Arlington Regia website (<http://www.arlingtonregia.com>) in the "forms" section.

Richmond Retreat

The Richmond Curia retreat on November 9 – 10 in the Richmond, Va. Area will be held at Mary, Mother of the Church Abbey 12829 River Road, Richmond, VA 23238. The cost of the retreat, including meals is \$30. For an additional \$35 (total of \$65) one can stay overnight.

For more information, or for specific contact information for the event, e-mail: webmaster@legionofmarytidewater.com, or contact an officer at your praesidium.

Richmond Retreat Schedule

Friday, 9 November 2007

- 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. Evening Prayer and Holy Hour with Benedictine Monks (optional)
- 5 – 6:00 Dinner followed by Registration
- 6:40 Legion Prayers and Holy Rosary
- 7:00 – 7:45 Talk: Father Collins
- 8:15 Calena and Concluding Prayers
- Optional: Viewing of Legion of Mary DVD

*** All retire for the evening ***

Saturday, 10 November 2007

- 7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer with Monks
- 7:30 Holy Mass
- 8 – 8:30 Breakfast
- 8:40 Legion Prayers and Holy Rosary
- 9 – 9:45 Talk: Father Collins
- Between talk Silent Reflection/Confession
- 11:45 Recitation of Calena
- 12:00 – 12:15 p.m. Noon Prayer with Monks
- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:45 – 2:30 Talk: Father Collins
- 2:35 Concluding Prayers
- Silent Reflection/Confession
- Optional..... Viewing of Legion of Mary DVD
- 4:30 – 5:30 Evening Prayer and Holy Hour with Monks
- 5:45 Vigil Mass offered by Father Collins

Handbook Study

Extension of the Legion

The Handbook states that the extension of the Legion forms an important part of the work of a Curia. (See Legion Handbook, Government of the Legion).

1. Enlist the prayers of both active and auxiliary legionaries and others for this intention;
2. List the Parishes in their area where the Legion is not yet established;
3. Each month appoint two legionaries to visit the Parish Priest of at least one of these Parishes;
4. Having obtained permission from the Parish Priest, send in a team of legionaries to help with the establishment of a Praesidium;
5. Give the Extension team guidelines such as the following for carrying out this work:
 - a. Contact people after Masses with invitations to a first meeting;
 - b. Visit those who give their names;
 - c. Hold first meeting with specific duties for the members of the team;
 - d. Give special attention to Allocation of Work. A variety of works should be offered. The second meeting should be set for the following week on a day suitable to most people present;
 - e. Members of the Extension team should work with the new legionaries, in this way training them in the apostolate and imbuing them with the spirit of the Legion;
 - f. Acting Officers should be selected as soon as possible and clearly briefed on their duties and made aware of the grace of office;

NOTE: The new Praesidium having been affiliated, it is vital that the Curia maintain contact with it.

From Some Handbook Reflections

Divine Mysteries

May 2007

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The Mystery of Suffering

[Cont. from page 1]

Before Christ's death on the cross, suffering remained only a painful mystery.

The Jews could understand suffering as punishment for sin. As the consequence to disobeying God and eating from the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil." As Geneses 3:17 say, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat, "Cursed be the ground because of you! In toil shall you eat its yield all the days of your life."

The conscious and free violation of the law is at the same time an offence against the Creator, who is the first Lawgiver. This sin requires punishment, to uphold the law.

From this there also derives one of the fundamental truths of religious faith, namely that God is a just judge, who rewards good and punishes evil (SD)

In the Old Testament we note an orientation that begins to go beyond the concept according to which suffering has a meaning only as a punishment for sin, insofar as it emphasizes at the same time the educational value of suffering as a punishment. Thus in the sufferings inflicted by God upon the Chosen People there is included an invitation of his mercy, which corrects in order to lead to conversion (SD). As said in 2 Maccabees 6:12 "... these punishments

were designed not to destroy but to discipline our people." This punishment is of the same nature as how a parent disciplines a child, in that God allows us to undergo suffering so we can learn right from wrong. We can now start to see why the tree was called the Tree of Knowledge.

But in order to perceive the true answer to the "why" of suffering, we must look to the revelation of divine love, the ultimate source of the meaning of everything that exists (SD). In the Cross of Christ not only is the Redemption accomplished through suffering, but also human suffering itself has been redeemed (SD). In bringing about the Redemption through suffering, Christ has also raised human suffering to the level of the Redemption. Thus each man, in his suffering, can also become a sharer in the redemptive suffering of Christ (SD).

In the most literal sense, suffering cannot be understood outside of the New Testament...in fact, as Pope John Paul II points out, the Jews did not even have a word for suffering outside of the word evil. The word suffering, itself, comes from the Greek verb paskos, and thanks to this verb, suffering is no longer directly identifiable with (objective) evil, but expresses a situation in which man experiences evil in a passive sense.

Christ in willfully undergoing suffering caused by the sins of others redeems mankind on the Cross. By Christ accepting the consequences of mankind's sins, he personally, pays the price of our sins with

his own body. Showing mercy, while upholding justice.

Forever immortalized are His words, "Take this, all of you, and eat it: this is my body which will be given up for you." "Take this, all of you, and drink from it, this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and all so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me."

All humankind is called to share in Christ's redemptive suffering, for as Paul says in his first letter to the Corinthians, "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?"

As Jesus is quoted saying in Matthew's Gospel, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."

Those who share in the sufferings of Christ are also called, through their own sufferings, to share in His glory. As Paul writes to the Romans: " We are ... fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed in us" (SD).

Thus, we learn by willingly undergoing undesired suffering caused by the sins of others, we merit crowns of glory we will receive in heaven.

Suffering also has a strictly evangelical characteristic, which becomes clear by reference to the Cross and the Resurrection. The Cross was to human eyes Christ's emptying of himself, at the same time it was

in the eyes of God his being lifted up. On the Cross, in weakness, he manifested his power, and in humiliation he manifested all his messianic greatness (SD)

But if at the same time in this weakness there is accomplished his lifting up, confirmed by the power of the Resurrection, then this means that the weaknesses of all human sufferings are capable of being infused with the same power of God manifested in Christ's Cross. To suffer means to become particularly susceptible, particularly open to the working of the salvific powers of God, offered to humanity in Christ. In him God has confirmed his desire to act especially through suffering, which is man's weakness and emptying of self, and he wishes to make his power known precisely in this weakness and emptying of self. (SD)

Over the last two millennia, it has been through suffering and martyrdom that the saints have most powerfully spread the message of God's love, for what can be a better testament to the Glory awaiting the saints in the next life, as their willingness to give up pleasures in this life (and even life itself) in exchange for rewards in the life to come?

The parable of the Good Samaritan belongs to the Gospel of suffering. For it indicates what the relationship of each of us must be towards our suffering neighbor. A Good Samaritan is one who brings help in suffering. He puts his whole heart into it, and does not spare his material means (SD).

This parable, reminds us of Christ's words of the Final Judgment, noted by Matthew in his Gospel: "Come, O blessed of my Father,

inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was in prison and you came to me." To the just, who ask when they did all this to him, the Son of Man will respond: "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." The opposite sentence will be imposed on those who have behaved differently: "As you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me" (SD).

Christ himself is present in all suffering persons, since his salvific suffering has been opened once and for all to every human suffering. And all those who suffer have been called once and for all to become sharers "in Christ's sufferings," just as all have been called to "complete" with their own suffering "what is lacking in Christ's afflictions." At one and the same time Christ

has taught man to do good by his suffering and to do good to those who suffer. In this double aspect he has completely revealed the meaning of suffering (SD).

The ultimate meaning of the suffering is visibly present for us each time the priest... acting in the person of Christ... holds up Christ's body, and with it all the sufferings Christ and His Church, and says, "Take this, all of you, and eat it: this is my body which will be given up for you." Take this, all of you, and drink from it, this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and all so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me."

For, in the Eucharist are all the sufferings of Christ and His Church, which were offered up, once and for all, on the cross at Calvary.

Select Legion of Mary Contact Information as of 6/1/2007

Tidewater Curia Legion of Mary

- Treasurer: Christopher - treasurer@legionofmarytidewater.com
- Extension Coordinator: Chelyse - extension@legionofmarytidewater.com

Arlington Regia Legion of Mary

- President: Dennis - president@arlingtonregia.com
- President: Mary - vicepresident@arlingtonregia.com
- Secretary: Scott - webmaster@arlingtonregia.com
- Treasurer: Trudy - treasurer@arlingtonregia.com
- Assistant Treasurer: Linda - orders@alingtonregia.com

Concilium Legion of Mary

- Main Contact - concilium@legion-of-mary.ie
- Maria Legionis - marialeionis@eircom.net

Fairfax Curia Legion of Mary

- Spritual Director: The Reverend Richard M. Guest - SpiritualDirector@fairfaxcuria.org
- President: Ron - president@fairfaxcuria.org
- Vice-President: Rose Mary - vicepresident@fairfaxcuria.org
- Secretary: Betty - secretary@fairfaxcuria.org

Legion Spirit

May 2007

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Legion Handbook: Suffering in the Mystical Body

The mission of the legionaries brings them into close touch with humanity, and especially with suffering humanity. Therefore, they should possess insight into what the world insists on calling the problem of suffering. There is not one who does not bear through life a weight of woe. Almost all rebel against it. They seek to cast it from them, and if this be impossible, they lie down beneath it. Thus are frustrated the designs of redemption which require that suffering must have its place in every fruitful life, just as in weaving the woof must cross and complement the warp. While seeming to cross and thwart the course of man's life, suffering in reality gives that life its completeness. For, as holy scripture teaches us in every page God "has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well." (Phil 1:29) and again: "If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him." (2 Tim 2:11-12)

That moment of our death is represented by a cross, all dripping with blood, upon which our head has just finished his work. At the foot of the cross stands a figure, so desolate that it seems impossible for her to continue to live. That woman is the mother alike of the Redeemer and of the redeemed. It was first from her veins that the blood was drawn which now lies scattered cheaply about, but which has ransomed the world. That Precious Blood will henceforth flow through the Mystical Body, forcing life, so to speak, into every

crevice of it. But all the consequences of this flowing must be understood, so that they can be applied. That precious stream brings to the soul the likeness of Christ; but it is the Christ complete: not merely the Christ of Bethlehem and Tabor - the Christ of joy and glory, but as well the Christ of pain and sacrifice - the Christ of Calvary.

Every Christian should be made to realise that he cannot pick and choose in Christ. Mary realised this fully even in the joyful Annunciation. She knew that she was not invited to become only a Mother of Joys, but the Woman of Sorrows as well. But she had always given herself utterly to God, and now she received him completely. With full knowledge, she welcomed that infant life with all it stood for. She was no less willing to endure anguish with him than she was to taste bliss with him. In that moment, those Sacred Hearts entered into a union so close as to approach identity. Henceforth, they will beat together in and for the Mystical Body. Thereby Mary has become the Mediatrix of all Graces, the Spiritual Vessel which receives and gives our Lord's Most Precious Blood. As it was with Mary, so shall it be with all her children. The degree of man's utility to God will always be the closeness of his union with the Sacred Heart, whence he can draw deeply of the Precious Blood to bestow it on other souls. But that union with the heart and blood of Christ is not to be found in a phase of his life, but in the life entire. It is as futile, as it is unworthy, to

welcome the King of Glory and to repulse the Man of Sorrows, for the two are but the one Christ. He who will not walk with the Man of Sorrows has no part in his mission to souls, nor share in its sequel of glory.

It follows therefore that suffering is always a grace. When it is not to bestow healing, it is to confer power. It is never merely a punishment for sin. "Understand," says St. Augustine, "that the affliction of mankind is no penal law, for suffering is medicinal in its character." And on the other hand, the passion of our Lord overflows, as an inestimable privilege, into the bodies of the sinless and the saintly in order to conform them ever more perfectly to his own likeness. This interchange and blending of sufferings is the basis of all mortification and reparation.

A simple comparison with the circulation of blood through the human body will make this place and purpose of suffering more vivid. Consider the hand. The pulse which throbs in it is the beat of the heart. The warm blood from the heart courses through it. That hand is one with the body of which it forms part. If the hand grows cold, the veins contract and the flow of the blood is impeded. As it grows colder, the flow diminishes. If the chill is such that the movement of blood ceases, frost-bite sets in, the tissues begin to die, the hand becomes lifeless and useless. It is as a dead hand, and if left in that condition, gangrene will result. Those stages of cold illustrate the possible states of members of the Mystical Body. These may become so unreceptive of the Precious Blood flowing through that body that they are in danger of dying, like the gangrenous limb which must be cut off. It is plain what must be done in the case of a frozen limb. The blood must be induced to circulate again in order to restore it to life. The forcing

of the blood through the shrunken arteries and veins is a painful process; yet that pain is a joyful sign. The majority of practising Catholics are as limbs not actually frost-bitten. Scarcely even in their self-satisfaction do they regard themselves as chilled. Yet they are not receiving the Precious Blood to the degree that our Lord wills for them. So he must force his life upon them. The movement of his blood, dilating their reluctant veins, gives pain; and this makes the sorrows of life. Yet, when this idea of suffering is grasped, should it not turn sorrow into joy? The sense of suffering becomes the sense of Christ's close presence.

"Jesus Christ has suffered all that he had to suffer. No more is anything wanting to the measure of his sufferings. His Passion then is finished? Yes: in the head; but there remains the Passion of his body. With good reason therefore does Christ, still suffering in his Body, desire to see us share in his expiation. Our very union with him demands that we should do so. For as we are the Body of Christ and members, one of the other, all that the head suffers, the members ought to endure with it." (St. Augustine)



Special Excerpt

May 2007

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**ARLINGTON REGIA
LEGION OF MARY
FORM FOR VISITATION TO PRAESIDIA**

Revised 3-07

Praesidium Name _____

Parish _____

Visitors _____

Date of Visit _____ **Number of Members Present** _____

Officers Present _____

**Y
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NOTES

MEETING TIME AND PLACE

- Was the meeting place adequate?
- Do the officers come early to set up?
- Was the altar and meeting place properly set up?
- Was the altar in good condition?
- Did the meeting begin on time?
- Was the President's worksheet prepared in advance?

ROSARY

- Did members kneel for the rosary?
- Did members use a rosary?
- Did members reverently pray the rosary?

SPIRITUAL READING & STANDING INSTRUCTIONS

- Was the spiritual reading taken from the Handbook or Legion-related books/articles?
- Was the reading a suitable length?
- Did members have their handbooks?
- If the first meeting of the month, were the Standing Instructions read?

THE MINUTES

- Were the minutes written in ink or typed?
- Were the minutes complete and written in full sentences?
- Did the reading of the minutes set a good tone for the meeting?

THE ROLL CALL

- Did the Vice President call the roll?
- Were there legitimate reasons for excused absences stated?
- Were absent members noted?

TREASURER'S REPORT

- If the meeting prior to a Council meeting, is a Council donation given?
- Are income and expense items stated?

**Y
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NOTES

ACTIVE RECRUITING REPORT

- Did members report on active recruiting contacts?

WORK REPORTS

- Were the reports adequate and audible?
- Did members include the number of calls and contacts, and names of the place and partners?
- If two members worked together, was the report divided between the partners?
- Were comments made after each report?
- Are religious articles and sacramentals given out?
- Did each member use a notebook?
- Were back reports given when a member missed a previous meeting?
- Did all members pay attention to each report?
- Were reports called for and excuses received from all members including those who were not able to perform their assigned work?

THE CATENA & THE ALLOCUTIO

- Do members stand for the Catena and pray it properly?
- Was the Allocutio given on a Legion topic?
- Was the Allocutio a talk, not a reading?
- Was the Allocutio given by the Spiritual Director. If the Spiritual Director was not present, was it given by the President or a member designated by the President?
- Was the Secret Bag quietly passed after the Allocutio?

THE WORK ASSIGNMENTS

- Was specific work assigned by the President to each member?
- Is the work assigned in pairs and substantial?
- Is the work appropriate Legion work?

THE HANDBOOK DISCUSSION & OTHER BUSINESS

- Did all members participate in the handbook discussion?
- Do the officers report on the Council meeting and events?
- Are announcements made?

OTHER

- Does the presidium do Door to Door, including call backs?
- Do members kneel for concluding prayers?
- Do members seem to understand the Legion system?
- Was the president in control of the meeting?
- Did the officers appear to be prepared for the meeting?
- Do members show respect for each other and the Praesidium?
- Do members participate in discussions?
- Were supplies available?

Review of Praesidium Books and Meeting with Officers

- After the Praesidium meeting, the visitors should meet with the officers **to review the books and discuss findings**. If the books are not available for inspection at that time, tell the President to bring them to the next Council meeting. If an officer cannot stay, ask him to leave his books.
- If there are any **officer vacancies** or terms near completion, discuss efforts being made by the Praesidium and Council to identify suitable candidates.
- Ask if they have **officer meetings**? Have they had a **yearly planning meeting**?
- Have they had their presidium outing, auxilliary breakfast or event this year?
- How many members have **Virtus certification and who are they**?
- Have they had **an Exploratio Dominicalis** this year?
- What system does the presidium use to handle **call backs** to Door to Door or any visitation? How long does it take to get back to a contact?

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NOTES

PRESIDENT'S BOOK

- Does the President maintain worksheets in a notebook?
- Is the worksheet prepared in advance of the meeting?

VICE PRESIDENT'S BOOK

- Is there a roster of active members?
- Is there a roster of auxiliary members with the date last visited?
- Is Praetorian/Adjutorian membership noted in the rosters?
- Is there a record of attendance for each member?
- Are probationary members there no longer than six months without taking their promise?

SECRETARY'S MINUTES

- Are the minutes neatly written or typed?
- For meetings prior to a Council meeting, is a Council donation noted?
- For the first meeting of the month, are the Standing Instructions read?
- For meetings after a Council meeting, is there a report on the Council meeting?

TREASURER'S BOOK

- Were the books audited by two members (other than the Treasurer) in the past year?
- Are the records kept neatly in ink?
- Are donations regularly given to the Council?
- Are the sources of funds clearly identified (e.g., Secret Bag, Handbooks)?
- Are the reasons for expenditures clearly identified (e.g., supplies)?
- Is there a stipend for a November Mass for deceased Legionaries?
- Are all expenditures appropriate?

