



Mary's Notebook

October 2007

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Issue 18

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October 13th Prayer Rallies

To celebrate the ninety-year anniversary of the Marian apparitions of Fatima, Portugal. Faithful from coast to coast will commemorate the occasion rosary rallies on October 13, from noon to 2:00 pm; in Virginia Beach, the Rally will be held at Mount Trashmore. [Cont. p.2]

Richmond Retreat

The Richmond Curia is holding a joint retreat with the Tidewater Curia on Friday, November 9 and Saturday, November 10, 2007. Please contact an officer at your praesidium for more information about how to sign-up for this retreat [Cont. p.2]

Praesidia Under Formation

The Tidewater Curia is in the process of starting-up a number of new praesidia in the area. At St. Bede Catholic Church in Williamsburg Virginia, a new Praesidium is being formed. The first meeting was September 8th at 8:00 A.M. For more information about this praesidium, contact us at extension@legionofmarytidewater.com [Cont. p.2]

CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING PROPOSALS TO GIVE LEGAL RECOGNITION TO UNIONS BETWEEN HOMOSEXUAL PERSONS

INTRODUCTION

1. In recent years, various questions relating to homosexuality have been addressed with some frequency by Pope John Paul II and by the relevant Dicasteries of the Holy See.(1) Homosexuality is a troubling moral and social phenomenon, even in those countries where it does not present significant legal issues. It gives rise to greater concern in those countries that have granted or intend to grant – legal recognition to homosexual unions, which may include the possibility of adopting children. The present Considerations do not contain new doctrinal elements; they seek rather to reiterate the essential points on this question and provide arguments drawn from reason which could be used by Bishops in preparing more specific interventions, appropriate to the different situations throughout the world, aimed at protecting and promoting the dignity of marriage, the foundation of the family, and the stability of society, of which this institution is a constitutive element. [CC p. 4]

News and Events

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Rosary Rallies

Everyone is welcome to attend the events coordinated by The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) and its America Needs Fatima campaign. The organization hopes for 2,000 simultaneous prayer rallies on October 13, from noon to 2:00 PM. For the Virginia Beach area, the rally will be held at Mount Trashmore by the Lake Off Edwin Drive

Forming Praesidia

Likewise, plans are underway to start new praesidia at St. John Catholic Church in Virginia Beach, and at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Norfolk. If you know of people in those parishes interested in more information about the Legion of Mary, please contact us at extension@legionofmarytidewater.com.

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, e-mail webmaster@legionofmarytidewater.com.

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 Catena 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 Catena
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

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The Secret Bag Collection

Immediately after the allocutio, a secret bag collection is made, to which every member shall contribute according to means. The purpose is the defraying of the various expenses of the praesidium and the contributing to the Curia and the higher councils. It is repeated that these latter bodies have no means of support or of discharging their functions of government and extension other than what comes to them from the praesidia. (See chp 35, Funds)

The meeting is not to be interrupted for the making of this collection. The bag should be passed unostentatiously from member to member, and each one should place his hand in the bag, even though he may not be contributing anything to it.

A proper bag should be provided for the purpose of receiving the members' offerings. A glove or a paper bag is not a proper receptacle.

The collection is secret because it is necessary to place those who have resources and those who have not, on precisely the same level before the praesidium. Therefore, the principle of secrecy should be respected, and no member

should disclose to another what his contribution is. In the second place, all should appreciate that not alone the praesidium, but also the main running of the whole Legion, depends on what is put into the secret bag by the individual legionary. Accordingly, the matter is not to be viewed as a mere formality. The obligation to subscribe is not complied with by the giving of a sum so inconsiderable as to mean nothing to him. The fact is that he is being afforded the privilege of sharing in the wider mission of the Legion. Therefore the act of contributing to this Fund should be one for the exercise of the sense of responsibility and generosity.

It is only the individual gift which is secret. The total amount may be announced, and of course it must be properly entered up and accounted for.

"When Jesus praises the offering of the widow 'who gives not of her abundance but of her indigence' (Lk 21:3-4), we suspect that his thought is of Mary, his Mother." (Orsini: History of the Blessed Virgin)

Legion of Mary Handbook pp 115 - 116

Divine Mysteries

Homosexual Unions Must be Opposed

(CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF
THE FAITH) [CC. p.1]

The present Considerations are also intended to give direction to Catholic politicians by indicating the approaches to proposed legislation in this area which would be consistent with Christian conscience.(2) Since this question relates to the natural moral law, the arguments that follow are addressed not only to those who believe in Christ, but to all persons committed to promoting and defending the common good of society.

2. The Church's teaching on marriage and on the complementarity of the sexes reiterates a truth that is evident to right reason and recognized as such by all the major cultures of the world. Marriage is not just any relationship between human beings. It was established by the Creator with its own nature, essential properties and purpose.(3) No ideology can erase from the human spirit the certainty that marriage exists solely between a man and a woman, who by mutual personal gift, proper and exclusive to themselves, tend toward the communion of their persons. In this way, they mutually perfect each other, in order to cooperate with God in the procreation and upbringing of new human lives.

3. The natural truth about marriage was confirmed by the Revelation contained in the

biblical accounts of creation, an expression also of the original human wisdom, in which the voice of nature itself is heard. There are three fundamental elements of the Creator's plan for marriage, as narrated in the Book of Genesis.

In the first place, man, the image of God, was created "male and female" (Gen 1:27). Men and women are equal as persons and complementary as male and female. Sexuality is something that pertains to the physical-biological realm and has also been raised to a new level – the personal level – where nature and spirit are united.

Marriage is instituted by the Creator as a form of life in which a communion of persons is realized involving the use of the sexual faculty. "That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife and they become one flesh" (Gen 2:24).

Third, God has willed to give the union of man and woman a special participation in his work of creation. Thus, he blessed the man and the woman with the words "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen 1:28). Therefore, in the Creator's plan, sexual complementarity and fruitfulness belong to the very nature of marriage.

Furthermore, the marital union of man and woman has been elevated by Christ to the dignity of a sacrament. The Church teaches that Christian marriage is an efficacious sign of the covenant between Christ and the Church (cf. Eph 5:32). This Christian meaning of marriage, far from diminishing the profoundly human value of the marital union

between man and woman, confirms and strengthens it (cf. Mt 19:3-12; Mk 10:6-9).

4. There are absolutely no grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God's plan for marriage and family. Marriage is holy, while homosexual acts go against the natural moral law. Homosexual acts “close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved”.(4)

Sacred Scripture condemns homosexual acts “as a serious depravity... (cf. Rom 1:24-27; 1 Cor 6:10; 1 Tim 1:10). This judgment of Scripture does not of course permit us to conclude that all those who suffer from this anomaly are personally responsible for it, but it does attest to the fact that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered”.(5) This same moral judgment is found in many Christian writers of the first centuries(6) and is unanimously accepted by Catholic Tradition.

Nonetheless, according to the teaching of the Church, men and women with homosexual tendencies “must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided”.(7) They are called, like other Christians, to live the virtue of chastity.(8) The homosexual inclination is however “objectively disordered”(9) and homosexual practices are “sins gravely contrary to chastity”.(10)

II. POSITIONS ON THE PROBLEM OF HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS

5. Faced with the fact of homosexual unions, civil authorities adopt different positions. At times they simply tolerate the phenomenon; at other times they advocate legal recognition of such unions, under the pretext of avoiding, Mary's Notebook

with regard to certain rights, discrimination against persons who live with someone of the same sex. In other cases, they favour giving homosexual unions legal equivalence to marriage properly so-called, along with the legal possibility of adopting children.

Where the government's policy is de facto tolerance and there is no explicit legal recognition of homosexual unions, it is necessary to distinguish carefully the various aspects of the problem. Moral conscience requires that, in every occasion, Christians give witness to the whole moral truth, which is contradicted both by approval of homosexual acts and unjust discrimination against homosexual persons. Therefore, discreet and prudent actions can be effective; these might involve: unmasking the way in which such tolerance might be exploited or used in the service of ideology; stating clearly the immoral nature of these unions; reminding the government of the need to contain the phenomenon within certain limits so as to safeguard public morality and, above all, to avoid exposing young people to erroneous ideas about sexuality and marriage that would deprive them of their necessary defences and contribute to the spread of the phenomenon. Those who would move from tolerance to the legitimization of specific rights for cohabiting homosexual persons need to be reminded that the approval or legalization of evil is something far different from the toleration of evil.

In those situations where homosexual unions have been legally recognized or have been given the legal status and rights belonging to marriage, clear and emphatic opposition is a duty. One must refrain from any kind of formal cooperation in the enactment or application of such gravely unjust laws and, as far as possible, from material cooperation on

the level of their application. In this area, everyone can exercise the right to conscientious objection.

III. ARGUMENTS FROM REASON AGAINST LEGAL RECOGNITION OF HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS

6. To understand why it is necessary to oppose legal recognition of homosexual unions, ethical considerations of different orders need to be taken into consideration.

From the order of right reason

The scope of the civil law is certainly more limited than that of the moral law,(11) but civil law cannot contradict right reason without losing its binding force on conscience.(12) Every humanly-created law is legitimate insofar as it is consistent with the natural moral law, recognized by right reason, and insofar as it respects the inalienable rights of every person.(13) Laws in favour of homosexual unions are contrary to right reason because they confer legal guarantees, analogous to those granted to marriage, to unions between persons of the same sex. Given the values at stake in this question, the State could not grant legal standing to such unions without failing in its duty to promote and defend marriage as an institution essential to the common good.

It might be asked how a law can be contrary to the common good if it does not impose any particular kind of behaviour, but simply gives legal recognition to a de facto reality which does not seem to cause injustice to anyone. In this area, one needs first to reflect on the difference between homosexual behaviour as a private phenomenon and the same behaviour as a relationship in society, foreseen and approved by the law, to the point where it becomes one of the institutions in the legal

structure. This second phenomenon is not only more serious, but also assumes a more wide-reaching and profound influence, and would result in changes to the entire organization of society, contrary to the common good. Civil laws are structuring principles of man's life in society, for good or for ill. They “play a very important and sometimes decisive role in influencing patterns of thought and behaviour”.(14) Lifestyles and the underlying presuppositions these express not only externally shape the life of society, but also tend to modify the younger generation's perception and evaluation of forms of behaviour. Legal recognition of homosexual unions would obscure certain basic moral values and cause a devaluation of the institution of marriage.

From the biological and anthropological order

7. Homosexual unions are totally lacking in the biological and anthropological elements of marriage and family which would be the basis, on the level of reason, for granting them legal recognition. Such unions are not able to contribute in a proper way to the procreation and survival of the human race. The possibility of using recently discovered methods of artificial reproduction, beyond involving a grave lack of respect for human dignity,(15) does nothing to alter this inadequacy.

Homosexual unions are also totally lacking in the conjugal dimension, which represents the human and ordered form of sexuality. Sexual relations are human when and insofar as they express and promote the mutual assistance of the sexes in marriage and are open to the transmission of new life.

As experience has shown, the absence of sexual complementarity in these unions creates obstacles in the normal development of

children who would be placed in the care of such persons. They would be deprived of the experience of either fatherhood or motherhood. Allowing children to be adopted by persons living in such unions would actually mean doing violence to these children, in the sense that their condition of dependency would be used to place them in an environment that is not conducive to their full human development. This is gravely immoral and in open contradiction to the principle, recognized also in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, that the best interests of the child, as the weaker and more vulnerable party, are to be the paramount consideration in every case.

From the social order

8. Society owes its continued survival to the family, founded on marriage. The inevitable consequence of legal recognition of homosexual unions would be the redefinition of marriage, which would become, in its legal status, an institution devoid of essential reference to factors linked to heterosexuality; for example, procreation and raising children. If, from the legal standpoint, marriage between a man and a woman were to be considered just one possible form of marriage, the concept of marriage would undergo a radical transformation, with grave detriment to the common good. By putting homosexual unions on a legal plane analogous to that of marriage and the family, the State acts arbitrarily and in contradiction with its duties.

The principles of respect and non-discrimination cannot be invoked to support legal recognition of homosexual unions. Differentiating between persons or refusing social recognition or benefits is unacceptable only when it is contrary to justice.⁽¹⁶⁾ The denial of the social and legal status of marriage to forms of cohabitation that are not

and cannot be marital is not opposed to justice; on the contrary, justice requires it.

Nor can the principle of the proper autonomy of the individual be reasonably invoked. It is one thing to maintain that individual citizens may freely engage in those activities that interest them and that this falls within the common civil right to freedom; it is something quite different to hold that activities which do not represent a significant or positive contribution to the development of the human person in society can receive specific and categorical legal recognition by the State. Not even in a remote analogous sense do homosexual unions fulfil the purpose for which marriage and family deserve specific categorical recognition. On the contrary, there are good reasons for holding that such unions are harmful to the proper development of human society, especially if their impact on society were to increase.

From the legal order

9. Because married couples ensure the succession of generations and are therefore eminently within the public interest, civil law grants them institutional recognition. Homosexual unions, on the other hand, do not need specific attention from the legal standpoint since they do not exercise this function for the common good.

Nor is the argument valid according to which legal recognition of homosexual unions is necessary to avoid situations in which cohabiting homosexual persons, simply because they live together, might be deprived of real recognition of their rights as persons and citizens. In reality, they can always make use of the provisions of law – like all citizens from the standpoint of their private autonomy – to protect their rights in matters of common interest. It would be gravely unjust to sacrifice

the common good and just laws on the family in order to protect personal goods that can and must be guaranteed in ways that do not harm the body of society.(17)

IV. POSITIONS OF CATHOLIC POLITICIANS WITH REGARD TO LEGISLATION IN FAVOUR OF HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS

10. If it is true that all Catholics are obliged to oppose the legal recognition of homosexual unions, Catholic politicians are obliged to do so in a particular way, in keeping with their responsibility as politicians. Faced with legislative proposals in favour of homosexual unions, Catholic politicians are to take account of the following ethical indications.

When legislation in favour of the recognition of homosexual unions is proposed for the first time in a legislative assembly, the Catholic law-maker has a moral duty to express his opposition clearly and publicly and to vote against it. To vote in favour of a law so harmful to the common good is gravely immoral.

When legislation in favour of the recognition of homosexual unions is already in force, the Catholic politician must oppose it in the ways that are possible for him and make his opposition known; it is his duty to witness to the truth. If it is not possible to repeal such a law completely, the Catholic politician, recalling the indications contained in the Encyclical Letter *Evangelium vitae*, “could licitly support proposals aimed at limiting the harm done by such a law and at lessening its negative consequences at the level of general opinion and public morality”, on condition that his “absolute personal opposition” to such laws was clear and well known and that the danger of scandal was avoided.(18) This does

not mean that a more restrictive law in this area could be considered just or even acceptable; rather, it is a question of the legitimate and dutiful attempt to obtain at least the partial repeal of an unjust law when its total abrogation is not possible at the moment.

CONCLUSION

11. The Church teaches that respect for homosexual persons cannot lead in any way to approval of homosexual behaviour or to legal recognition of homosexual unions. The common good requires that laws recognize, promote and protect marriage as the basis of the family, the primary unit of society. Legal recognition of homosexual unions or placing them on the same level as marriage would mean not only the approval of deviant behaviour, with the consequence of making it a model in present-day society, but would also obscure basic values which belong to the common inheritance of humanity. The Church cannot fail to defend these values, for the good of men and women and for the good of society itself.

The Sovereign Pontiff John Paul II, in the Audience of March 28, 2003, approved the present Considerations, adopted in the Ordinary Session of this Congregation, and ordered their publication.

Rome, from the Offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, June 3, 2003, Memorial of Saint Charles Lwanga and his Companions, Martyrs.

Joseph Card. Ratzinger
Prefect

Angelo Amato, S.D.B.
Titular Archbishop of Sila
Secretary

Legion Spirit

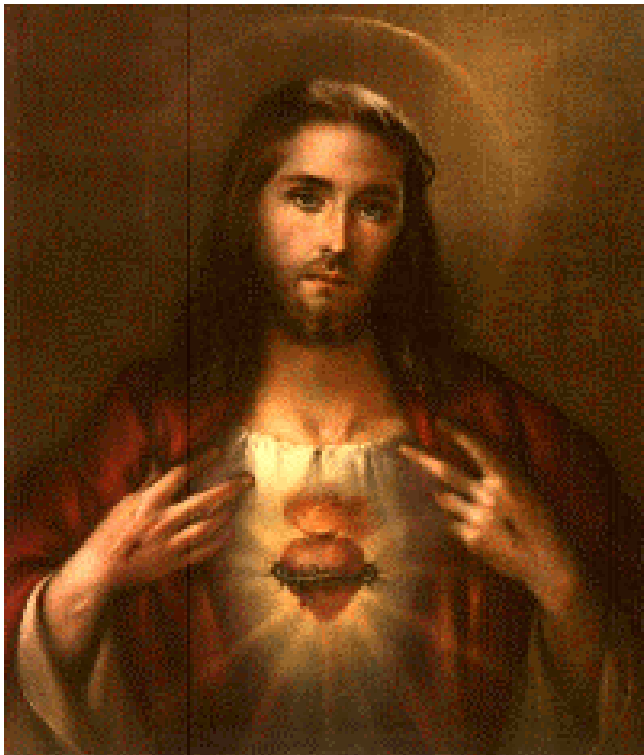
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The Legion of Mary and the Sacred Heart

Frank Duff, our founder was born on June 7th 1889 and died on November 7th 1980. What those dates have in common is the fact that they were both First Fridays, days that are probably devoted to the Sacred Heart in the life of the Church. Probably the last thing Frank Duff saw before he died was the picture of the Sacred Heart hanging on the wall opposite his bed. Of course, the picture of the Sacred Heart played a significant role in many stages in the life of the Legion and it still does in the prayer life and apostolate of the Legion.



The picture of the Sacred Heart presided at the first meeting of the Legion in 1921 along with Mary represented by her statue on a little altar. The headquarters of the Legion were

consecrated to the Sacred Heart and the Concilium Officers were also consecrated to Him during a special Mass. The first invocation the Legionary makes in the opening prayers is: "Most Sacred Heart of Jesus have mercy on us". The Enthronement of the Sacred Heart is one of the oldest and most treasured apostolates of the Legion and one that Frank Duff himself personally engaged in. The month of June would be a good time to reflect on the and renew our devotion to the Sacred Heart.

In Sacred Scripture the heart is the symbol of the deepest centre and identity of a person. In the case of Jesus it means that it is love that defines Him. Love is His most specific characteristic. The Sacred Heart is the human language for revealing the basic fact that God is Love. In devotion to the Heart of Jesus we are honouring the human and divine love that Jesus has for each one of us. That is essentially what the Gospel is: that God loved us while we were still sinners. In a few words, devotion to the Sacred Heart means that we have a practical understanding and realisation of the place that Jesus has in our lives as God and man and especially His Love for us. And we try to respond to Him by dedicating and entrusting ourselves to His Sacred Heart as the symbol of His infinite and personal love for us. This devotion goes to the very heart of evangelisation. What else are we called to but to let every one that we meet know that they are infinitely important to God and eternally loved by Him.

Pope Leo XIII is remembered for many great things: we think, for example, of his great social encyclicals, his preaching of the Rosary, his promotion of the teaching of St. Thomas in Universities, seminaries and houses of religious formation. But he said that his act of Consecrating the human race to the Sacred Heart was the greatest act of his pontificate. It would be a beautiful thing for a legionary to be able to say that he or she was instrumental under God for enthroning the Sacred Heart in the centre of a family home. To enthrone or consecrate a home to the Sacred Heart means to put God's love at the centre of the home, to place a reminder of the central teaching of the Gospel in the midst of the family. The Handbook tells us that this apostolate would mean that we could take to ourselves the fullness of the Twelve Promises of the Sacred Heart. Even the tenth: 'I will give to Priests the grace to touch the most hardened hearts'. Because we go everywhere, even to the most difficult and forbidding places as representatives of the Priest. For this reason legionaries will go with perfect confidence to grapple with cases branded 'hopeless'. It would be wonderful if every praesidium in every part of the world would make the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in homes an important part of its apostolate. To really undertake this particular Legion work fully it would be good to read and study and pray about devotion to the Sacred Heart and practice some concrete way of showing our love and gratitude for the infinite gift of Himself that he gives us as symbolised by the Sacred Heart.

Of course, devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is intimately associated with devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Pope Pius XII wrote: 'By the will of God, the most Blessed Virgin Mary was inseparably joined with Christ in accomplishing the work of man's redemption,

so that our salvation flows from the love of Jesus Christ and His sufferings, intimately united with the love and sorrows of his Mother. It is then, highly fitting that after due homage has been paid to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Christian people, who have obtained divine life from Christ through Mary manifest similar piety and the love of their grateful souls for the most loving heart of our Heavenly Mother'.

I leave the last words to the Handbook once more: 'As it is the mission of Mary to bring about the reign of Jesus, so there is a special appropriateness (which should attract the special graces of the Holy Spirit) in the Legion of Mary propagating the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart.

Concilium Allocutio June 2007

By Fr. Bede McGregor O.P.

Spiritual Director to the Legion of Mary.

Twelve Promises of the Sacred Heart

1. I will give them all the graces necessary for their state of life.
2. I will give peace in their families.
3. I will console them in all their troubles.
4. They shall find in My Heart an assured refuge during life and especially at the hour of death.
5. I will pour abundant blessings on all their undertakings.
6. Sinners shall find in My Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.
7. Tepid souls shall become fervent.
8. Fervent souls shall speedily rise to great perfection.
9. I will bless the homes in which the image of My Sacred Heart shall be exposed and honored.
10. I will give to priests the power to touch the most hardened hearts.
11. Those who propagate this devotion shall have their name written in My Heart, and it shall never be effaced.
12. I promise thee in the excess of the mercy of My Heart, that its all-powerful Love will grant to all those who shall receive Communion on the First Friday of Nine consecutive months the grace of final repentance; they shall not die under My displeasure, nor without receiving the Sacraments; My Heart shall be their assured refuge at that last hour.

Special Excerpt

Giving of the Work Report

The standing instruction of the Legion of Mary says:

“Legionary duty requires from each legionary: First, the punctual and regular attendance at the weekly meetings of the praesidium, and the furnishing there of an adequate and audible report on the work done;”

The Legion of Mary Handbook, says that a Congress should “apply itself to the fundamentals ... and listed among suggested subjects to be dealt with in a Congress: “The methodical system of the Legion, including the conducting of the meeting and the vital matter of the member’s reports, that is, the manner of giving them and of commenting on them.”

Thus, this talk will describe the vital matter of the member’s reports, that is, the manner of giving them and of commenting on them.

As any experienced legionary will tell you, the giving of the work report starts before the meeting where the work assignment is given. The legionary remembers and takes his notebook to the meeting. At the meeting, he takes note of what his work assignment is, and with whom it is to be done.

The legionary brings his notebook to the work assignment, and takes careful notes during the assignment. Just as no reporter, analyst, auditor, student, scientist, or other professional would ever fail to take a notebook, or perhaps a PDA, so should not the legionary of Mary be deficient at this. If those who labor for temporal profit are cunning enough to take notes, so should those who labor for God be so cunning, for Our Lady does not desire us to be slothful, lazy, and dim, but a light onto the world.

With careful notes taken, the legionary then discusses the work with his partner. Together they break-up the work into two reports that compliment each other. If the legionary is with a new recruit, he should carefully instruct the probationary member (or member new to the work) on how to give his report at the next meeting, following the Master-Apprentice system taught in the Handbook. By the time the legionary arrives to his meeting, he has careful notes indicating the statistics for his visit, and his highlight.

When called upon to give his report, the member, remaining seated, delivers his report orally, aided by his notes. He would be wise to start the report with a brief glance at the statue of Mary, to inspire and aid him. If, sadly, he was prevented for performing his work, he should furnish some explanation. According to the Handbook, the absence of a report, if unexplained, conveys the impression that neglect of duty is in question and constitutes a bad example for every member.

The report should be given to the entire praesidium, not just to the president. It must be yelled or spoken in a loud voice, so as to ensure that every member can hear it without the straining of ears. A member should rightly fear that – should he talk too quietly – the praesidium president will do his duty and refuse to accept the report, for it is the president’s duty to both speak loudly, himself, at the meeting and to demand that all others

speak loudly also. Given that, in its own way, the work report is as important to the meeting as the prayers, we must always seek to give our report in an audible manner.

The report connects the work with the praesidium and therefore it must be a clear presentation of the doings of the member — in a sense as vivid as the picture on a cinema screen — such as will enable the other members mentally to engage in that work, to judge it, to comment on it, to learn from it. Accordingly, the report must show what has been attempted and achieved, and in what spirit; the time spent; the methods used; what has not been gained and the persons who have not been touched.

The meeting should be bright and cheerful. Therefore, the reports should be such as will interest as well as inform the meeting. It is impossible to believe that the praesidium is healthy if the meeting is deadly dull, and undoubtedly it will repel young members. Some classes of work are so full of variety that it is easy to make a good report. Other works do not offer the same possibilities, so that each unusual feature, however small, should be remembered for mention in the report. For example, a group of junior legionaries making rosaries could report on the color of the rosary. The report must not be too long; nor too brief; above all, it must not be a routine phrase. Failure in these directions not only shows that the member is neglecting his duty but also that the other members are assisting him in that neglect. This strikes at the whole legionary idea of the supervision of the work. The praesidium cannot supervise a work unless it is fully informed about it.

It is mainly through the meeting that the legionary discipline is exerted which overcomes those weaknesses and drives the member on to accomplishment. But if the report gives little indication as to what the legionary is really doing, then the praesidium can exert only a vague control over that member's actions. It will not stimulate him. It will not safeguard him. He will be deprived of the interest and guidance of the praesidium and he cannot afford to be without those vital things. Legionary discipline loses its grip on that member with unhappy results all round.

No legionary should be content to give a merely good report. Why not aim very high, and deliberately set out to add to the perfect performance of the work a model report to the praesidium; and thus train the other members both in the doing of the work and in the way of reporting on it?

“Example,” says Edmund Burke, “is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other.” Acting on this, one individual can raise an entire praesidium to the highest pitch of efficiency. For the report, though not the whole meeting, is so much its nerve-centre as to cause everything else in the praesidium to react in sympathy with it either for better or worse.

Before and after giving his report, the legionary should listen intently to the reports of others. He should prod them with questions. He should offer advice, suggestions, and raise his concerns. Indeed, the legionary who goes an entire month without commenting on another's report, can hardly claim to be fulfilling his vocation in the Legion of Mary. St. John Chrysostom said that Christians will render an account [to God], not only of themselves, but of the whole world. If we fail to correct and help our fellow legionaries, we have failed our Christian duty.

Let us then, through the prayers of the Mother of God, always strive to give glory to God though the delivering of our work reports, and through our comments and questions raised regarding the reports of others, giving glory to The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit who live and reign now, and forever, unto ages of ages, Amen.

Some Suggestions for Giving Work Reports

Before doing assigned work:

1. Write down your assignment in your notebook
2. Determine which statistics must be collected

During the assignment:

3. Take out your notebook and collect needed data (discreetly & protecting confidentiality)

After the assignment:

4. Talk with partner and determine who will say what to avoid repetition
5. Ensure that each partner has a reports to give (one partner should not do 80% of the talking)
6. Decide who will give the statistics, (i.e No. of visits, contacts, leaflets, sacramentals, etc.)
7. Combined, the reports show what has been attempted and achieved, in what spirit; the time spent; the methods used; what has not been gained and the persons who have not been touched. Also, share, as appropriate: follow-up actions suggested, problems, questions, and concerns in how work was executed, as well as new things learned, new ideas, etc.

During the meeting:

8. Have your notebook open to your notes on the assignment
9. When your name is called to report, glance at statue & silently say a **short** prayer
10. Speaking audibly, say, "I was assigned to [WORK] with Br/Sr [ASSIGNED PARTNER]"
11. Give your report (Speak loudly, you should feel as if you are yelling)
12. This includes giving your highlight; reports should typically be about 1 minute.
13. Indicate when you are finished giving your report (i.e. "This concludes my report")
14. The report should be fact-based and faith-based; opinions and personal views should be reserved. Information reported should be on spiritual issues, not secular ones. Do not say, "he lives near the park," or "the home was large and well-furnished."

When others give a report

- † Do not interrupt the report (except for the President)
 - Neither the Secretary, nor the partner, should interrupt
- † Listen carefully to the report, look at the speaker; and take notes as appropriate
- † If it does not appear that a notebook was used, ask if it was
- † Ask relevant questions after the report is given

Example Report:

I was assigned door-to-door with Br. Chris on Tidewater Dr. We performed our work despite 98-degree heat. We had 15 visits, 10 not home, 8 contacts, 3 practicing Catholic, 1 not practicing. We gave 9 leaflets, including 5 bulletins, and gave 3 sacramental. There are 2 follow-ups. We spent 3 hours on the work. My highlight is that we met a young Hispanic woman who just moved into town. She said that she was attending Tidewater Episcopal, and was curious as to which services were Holy Mass and which were just prayers, because she said she gets confused. She said sometimes she goes though what appears to her to be a Mass, but they don't give out Communion. We explained that it was not a Catholic Church. She didn't appear to understand. We gave a bulletin and explained when Mass is for St. John's. She said she is going to start going to St. John's, because she can't figure out Tidewater Episcopal. We think she is a follow-up for a Spanish Priest. That concludes my report.

Suggestions are an unofficial hand-out provided by the speaker of the preceding talk.