



Mary's Notebook

April – May 2009

www.legionofmarytidewater.com

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Sharing Mary's Notebook

Sharing Mary's Notebook with new active members, handing it out at recruiting drives, and providing it to auxiliaries is an excellent way to help introduce the Legion of Mary to those unfamiliar with it. *(Continued on page 2)*

Prayers Needed

Prayer is, among other things, a school for hope. In a sense, even when no one listens to a person's needs, God still listens. If you or someone you care about are in need of prayers, e-mail webmaster@legionofmarytidewater.com - we'll add you to our prayer list. *(Continued on page 2)*

Catholic Home Missions Appeal: Sharing One Faith in America

The national Catholic Home Missions Appeal will take place in parishes across the country from April 25-26. Home mission dioceses in the United States are characterized by a lack of resources to provide basic pastoral services for the faithful. Home mission parishes often struggle with priest shortages, parishioner poverty, unemployment, difficult or isolated terrain, religious hostility and other practices that impact the practice of the faith. *(Continued on page 2)*

Divine Mysteries: Excerpt from Can We Be Saints

Devotion to Mary

"Show me how you say your Hail Marys," said a great Saint, "and I will tell you how to love God." The fingertips of the other saints - hardened by the use of their beads - show this same idea in practice.

You must have a tremendous love for Mary. Read and pray, and pray again, until you get that love. Implore our Lord to give you just the love for her that He would wish you to have. A great love for her is a great sign of sanctity.

Do not treat her only as the Queen of all Saints. She is much more than that. She is the most beloved Daughter of the Father, the Mother of the Son, and the Spouse of the Holy Spirit. When you pray to any one of these Three Divine Persons, let her be near to recommend your prayer. *(Continued on page 6)*

News and Events

Please Pray For:

Pope's Prayer Intentions

April

Pope Benedict's general prayer intention is: That the Lord may bless the farmers with an abundant harvest and sensitize the richer populations to the drama of hunger in the world

Pope Benedict's mission prayer intention is: That the Christians who work in areas where the conditions of the poor, the weak and the women and children are most tragic, may be signs of hope, thanks to their courageous testimony to the Gospel of solidarity and love.

May

Pope Benedict's general prayer intention is: That the laity and the Christian communities may be responsible promoters of priestly and religious vocations.

Pope Benedict's mission prayer intention is: That the recently founded Catholic Churches, grateful to the Lord for the gift of faith, may be ready to share in the universal mission of the Church, offering their availability to preach the Gospel throughout the world.

Catholic Home Missions Appeal

Although many Catholics in the U.S. have the option of attending any number of

Masses throughout the day on Sunday, others face the more dire situation of being hours away from their parish. In the Archdiocese of Anchorage, Alaska, for example, each priest is responsible to cover an average territory of over 4,500 square miles. For more information about how you can help visit www.usccb.org/hm.

Sharing Mary's Notebook

Reading of Mary's Notebook helps strengthen the link of auxiliary and active members to the Legion, and provides solid, Catholic reading material for many in nursing homes, hospitals, schools, and elsewhere. For those who are interested in sharing Mary's Notebook with others, here are some suggestions:

- Take a couple copies to a praesidium or curia meeting. Just mention the word "free" and the copies will soon be gone
- When you read an article you think someone else will find interesting mark it, and suggest a friend read it – if he like the article, his eyes will likely wonder to others and he may ask what the Legion is – you've just made a recruiting attempt
- Leave some copies out during recruiting drives, Patricians meetings, etc
- Bring a couple copies for nursing home visits; if the right moment comes, share
- Leave a copy in your bathroom, (next to your handbook) guests are always looking for something to read
- Add your name and phone number to copies you share; this way people can call you and ask about joining the Legion

Handbook Study

Order of the Praesidium Meeting

This is the second in a series that seeks to discuss the order of the praesidium meeting. Last issue we discussed Chapter 18 of the Handbook, section 1, and this issue we will discuss section 2:

Punctually at the appointed time, the members shall be in their places, and the meeting shall begin. But a punctual start (so necessary for the efficiency of the praesidium) will not be possible unless the officers are in attendance some time in advance in order to make the requisite preparations.

I suggest that praesidium presidents aim to arrive 30 minutes before the meeting, while other officers aim to arrive 15 minutes in advance. This allows time to set-up and chat before the meeting.

Later in the Handbook, it says,

Punctuality paramount. *Without punctuality the Lord's command: "Set your house in order" (Is 38:1) cannot be fulfilled. A system that is training its members to disorder is warping them in a radical way. In addition, it is forfeiting that respect which is the basis of all right education and discipline. Surely that neglect of something vital which could be so easily supplied, is as insane a proceeding as the proverbial spoiling of the ship for the halfpenny worth of tar!*

Sometimes a watch is placed carefully on the table but exercises no influence whatever on the course of the meeting. In other cases it does play a part in regard to the beginning, middle, and end of the meeting but none in regard to the regulation of the reports and other business; whereas the principle of punctuality and order must apply to everything from beginning to end.

If the officers are at fault in the above directions, the members should protest. Otherwise they are aiding and abetting.

The need for promptness is no less important today that it was in the past. TV and radio stations fit their programs within exact times. Schools open, close, and hold their lunch periods at set times. When election polls open a few minutes late, lawsuits are filed. To say, therefore, that the Legion of Mary meeting can be held 1, 2 or even 5 minutes late, is to say that God and Mary are less important than a TV schedule. Further, with many members working, raising children, or involved in other activities, the Legion has now less time than ever to waste. There is great harm done to the ability to recruit, retain, and rise up members when meetings are not started on time, ended on time, and/or do not proceed according to order.

Chapter 18, section 2 continues:

No praesidium meeting is ever to begin without its written program, termed the "Work Sheet". This should be drawn up in advance of each meeting, and from it the President will call the business.

Information on what exactly to include in this program can be obtained from your curia. Having a program is one of many steps needed to hold an efficient meeting. As key Legion events, such as Acies, the Annual General Reunion, an out door function, or a Congress approach, the president should make note of this on his work sheet to remind the praesidium and ensure that needed planning is being done for the event. Also, on the meeting directly following each Curia meeting, the president's work sheet should include a note to discuss that meeting with the praesidium.

Section 2 continues:

In the Work Sheet should be set down in detail all the work being done by the praesidium, and opposite to each item, the names of the members assigned to it.

This list should include the works assigned last week so reports can be given on those works. It should also include any works assigned in previous weeks to members who have not yet reported on those works.

The Handbook continues:

The various items need not necessarily be taken in the same order at succeeding meetings, but every member's name should be called and a report taken from each one, even though they may be working in parties of two or more.

Each member gives his own report; however the reports of legionaries assigned together should complement each other. Thus, when two legionaries report on a work they did together. It is best for one to report first, and then the other, followed by questions and comments.

Section 2 continues:

Before the end of the meeting it is to be ensured that each member has been provided with his work for the coming week. The President should have a bound book in which the Work Sheet can be compiled each week.

It is very important for a president to prepare before giving out work assignments. Each work should include at least one Legionary who knows how to conduct the work, and consistently does it well. Each assignment should also be one that will help the legionary grow in holiness, and thus should be one that is neither too hard for him, nor too easy.

Section 2 concludes:

"Idealism, however fervent and absorbing, must never be an excuse for vague and unpractical emotion. As already pointed out, the genius of St. Ignatius consisted in his careful and methodical exploitation of religious energy. Steam is of no use, rather a nuisance, until we have a cylinder and piston for it. How much spiritual fervor goes to waste, without a particular examen and definite application! A gallon of petrol might be misused to blow a car sky-high; with care and inventiveness it can be employed to propel it to the top of the hill." (Msgr. Alfred O'Rahilly: Life of Father William Doyle)

To this is now added a later section of the Handbook which states:

Good order the root of discipline. Upon

- a. *the setting of the meeting faithfully according to rule;*
- b. *the orderly succession of duty to duty;*
- c. *the punctual taking of business as prescribed;*
- d. *the pervading note of Mary as the mainspring of that order; does the Legion rely for the development in its members of the spirit of discipline, without which the meeting is as a clear head on a paralyzed body, powerless either to restrain its members or to drive them on, or to form them in any way. Without discipline, the members will be at the mercy of the natural human tendency to work alone, or with as little control as possible, at the work dictated by the whim of the moment, and in the manner one pleases--and out of which no good will come.*

The Handbook also says:

The following, written in the first years of its life, represents now as it did then the outlook of the Legion on the subject of organization, and thus upon the importance of the meeting, which is the focus-point of such organization: - "In the organization the individuals, however notable, are content to play the part of cogs. They yield up much of

their independence to the machine, that is to their associates as a body, but thereby the work gains a hundredfold in the fact that a number of individuals, who would otherwise have been either ineffective or else standing idle, are brought into action - each one, not with his or her own individual weakness, but with the fervor and power of all the greatest qualities amongst them. Consider pieces of coal lying unused, and the same in the heart of the furnace. Such is the parallel, which suggests itself.

Then the organized body has a well-marked life of its own, apart from the individuals who compose it, and this characteristic, rather than the beauty or urgency of the work done, seems in practice to be the magnet which attracts new members. The association establishes a tradition, begets a loyalty, enjoys respect and obedience, and powerfully inspires its members. Talk to the latter, and you will see that they lean upon it as upon a wise old mother. And well it may be so. Does it not save them from every pitfall: the imprudence of zeal: the discouragement of failure: the elevation of success: the hesitancy of the unsupported opinion: the timidity of loneliness: and, in general, from the whole quicksand of inexperience? It takes the raw material of mere good intention and educates it: sets about its work with regular plan: secures expansion and continuity." (Father Michael Creedon, first Spiritual Director of Concilium Legionis Mariae)

By Christopher Miller

Divine Mysteries

CAN WE BE SAINTS: WEAPONS AND AIDS

(CC from p. 1) And she is also our Mother. Is this idea real to us? The love of our own dear earthly mothers is a wonderful thing. What seas of fire and water would they not go through for us! Yet their love is faint and weak compared with hers.

There is a beautiful traditional custom, which unhappily seems less common than it was - the consecration of babies by their parents to this Blessed Mother. The terrible power of the Evil One over the bodies of people possessed by him should be the best recommendation of this Devotion. More than he can do for evil, a million-fold, she can do for good.

Let us consecrate to her not only our children, but ourselves in the most solemn manner - remembering that what belongs to Mary is all for Jesus.

St. Joseph

Our Lord and His blessed Mother looked to St. Joseph for their daily bread. What wonder then that the Church tells us: "Go to Joseph." He was very dear to the Saints. In particular that great master of prayer - St. Teresa has glowing things to say of the fruits of devotion to him.

There seems to be no occupation or condition of life, which cannot claim some point of likeness to him, from which to draw encouragement. Above all, as the Patron of those who work hard and are hard used, we

address ourselves to him, knowing that to be like him in this way brings at once the arms of the Divine Babe around us.

We might make a frequent practice of saying some little prayer to him, such as "St. Joseph, called Father by Jesus pray for us."

This was his greatest dignity.

The Necessity of Spiritual Reading

Read good literature; get others to read good literature; and later, all of us will do good deeds.

We must form a taste for religious literature. It must take a definite place in each day. From it we will acquire an interest in our religion; extend our knowledge of the doctrines of the Church; learn of its history, glories, institutions, opponents, and be able to answer the innumerable questions and objections, which constantly proceed from friend and enemy.

There is a dearth of good religious libraries. Probably we shall have to buy the books we wish most to read. But let there be a little sacrifice, an occasional book purchased and read thoroughly, and more than once. If an author has put deep thought into his work, this will not be appreciated in one reading

After that, let its mission be not to gather dust, but souls. Send it on a busy apostolic round amongst those friends who can be trusted to return a borrowed book. Some good religious

periodical should enter our home regularly - one which will keep us in touch with the worldwide doings of the Universal Church.

We Must Read the Lives of the Saints

We were taught to read by means of a headline. Unconsciously, we shape our lives by some headlines, too: God's purpose in bringing about the Canonization of the Saints was to provide a headline, which would draw us on to goodness and heroism.

Saints are the doctrines and practices of holiness made visible. If we frequent their company, we will soon imitate their qualities.

The Question of the Newspaper

We are inclined to think it necessary to read the daily papers in order to keep in touch with what is going on in the world. Let us beware lest they place us in the world's grip.

The modern newspaper is so well written, so attractive to the eye that it tends to become an absorbing taste. It is a tendency of the day to wallow in the daily papers.

Endless discussion, a prejudiced outlook, a little scrappy knowledge, a distaste for serious or good literature, loss of power of concentration, faulty memory such are the products of those wasted hours during which God's Kingdom could have been so powerfully advanced.

Meditation, Realization, Action

Reading is a direct preparation for prayer and intimacy with God. To meditate on religious matters, one must have read, otherwise there is nothing to meditate on. The lamp has no oil. But, read slowly and think upon what has been read. Books rapidly run through and

unreflected upon are as valueless as food eaten but not digested.

We must, therefore, accuse ourselves of waste of time if we read without the desire to profit by our reading. Yet such is our ordinary habit. We do not meditate, hence we do not realize. We leave in the unexplored depths of our souls the divine truths which should be governing our intellects and driving us on to great things.

There is a wonderful difference between merely believing and realizing. Here are some truths we all believe in:

1. Death is inevitable - then judgment.
2. Grace is the greatest possession in the world.
3. Sin even venial - is infinitely the greatest misfortune in the world.

Now to what extent do we realize these truths and act upon them?

And again. We know that the Infinite God became Man for our sake: not a King - He wanted love, not fear- but the shivering babe of poor people; a rough-handed working-man; a homeless wanderer - one might almost say an outcast -- and then He was taken and tortured and put on a cross to die, an object of contempt; all, that He might win our love or even our pity, which is akin to love.

Oh! The horror of it! Saints have cried out in anguish to think that love so great should be so unwanted by the world. For so it is! The Crucifix is only a piece of wood or metal to us. We have tears for any friend but Him! Loyalty for every cause but His! And why? Because we neglected the means which common sense directs us to use. Prayer and meditation would make Him real and vivid to us; but in our indifference, we leave Him a shadow - and who can love a shadow? Thus it

is we miss the greatest force in the world - that personal love for Jesus, which looks for no reward, laughs at death, makes sacrifice delightful, and sanctity easy.

Meditation is so Very Difficult

There are very many who really are unable to meditate in a regular manner. These should not be so discouraged as to avoid meditation altogether. Meditation is very advisable, and some such simple method as the following can be used.

Endeavoring to bring the Master vividly before our minds, we must attentively consider that Divine Model. His slender Form, and serene, lovely Face, His words, His actions - take them one by one, and as best we can reflect upon them with affection. What an incomparable beauty beams forth in all! Such mildness, wisdom, purity, patience, tenderness; and a love, which is true to us in all our waywardness and disloyalty. Look and admire, and seek to draw a breath of their loveliness into ourselves.

We can take consolation from this ... we do not seek fruitlessly. The treasury of perfection in Him is not like the treasures of the world, behind bars or in museums - to be admired but not possessed. Each perfection shining in Jesus is there solely to be communicated to us. With all His Heart, He desires to give them to us. So look on them, and long to have them, and they will become yours.

Of this simple character may be our meditation. No regular system is necessary, though it helps. There need be no effort, resolutions even - only a wish to love Him and to be like Him. Yet our advance will be by leaps and bounds. And why is this? It is because, as theologians put it, Our Lord and

His qualities are not only holy but sanctifying: that is, the mere looking upon them with good intentions will imprint them on our hearts and make them part of us.

And let our gaze be as Mary's must have been. Ask her help in this contemplation. It was her employment from the night she first looked upon her newborn babe's face.

I Am Not Able to Meditate At All

Those to whom even a simple form of meditation is difficult, will find it very profitable to take some spiritual book before the Blessed Sacrament, and then very slowly to read it - more in the manner of prayer than of ordinary reading. Pause frequently - after all, every second word represents an idea - and frequently speak to the Eucharistic Presence. The longer one spends on each sentence, the better. Ability to dwell on the reading for a time means that a very satisfactory form of meditation is being made.

Our Work for Our Neighbor

The fact that God in His Providence has left us in the world, instead of giving us a religious vocation, indicates that He wishes the world to be our vocation. That is, the persons and everyday things around us are to be the means of sanctity to us. It may be taken that the practical service of our neighbor is essential for our all-round development. We should bear in mind that serving our neighbor out of love of God means that what we do to him we do to God.

The Influence We Can Exert

The power each one of us has to influence others to good or evil is so great that it is almost without limit. The explanation of this is that when God finds a willing, a humble, a

dependable worker, He uses him as a channel for His grace to others. And horrible to say, there are many who lend themselves in similar manner to be the instruments of the Devil, and accept the dreadful destiny of aiding him in his work.

A thought on names such as St. Paul, St. Dominic, St. Francis of Assisi, and on the other hand, Luther or Voltaire, will serve to show what it lies in one man to do - to influence a whole world, century after century.

Man is small, but a man who is in earnest about an idea is not small. He is going to influence others, and nobody knows where that is going to end. Let our dominating idea be the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Trials that show Progress

Certain trials may be expected. We shall be sneered at as would-be Saints, milksops, and top braided with narrow mindedness and intolerance.

The latter charge should be welcome to us. It lifts us out of that numerous class who are considered and consider themselves as broadminded, when in reality they are only trimmers. Yet the charge possesses just a grain of truth, which will make it hurtful to us. For, to have definite rules of principle and conduct does mean that we shall appear narrow to those who are not similarly hampered. It is part of the penalty of being right.

Some Responsibilities of Holiness

To become associated in people's minds with religion, as you undoubtedly will if you work for it, involves a responsibility. It may be unreasonable of them, but nevertheless people will judge religion in general from you. If you

play a manly part, you are doing religion a benefit in making it attractive to others. If you make yourself a Universal Good Samaritan, whose tongue like St. Alphonsus Liguori's does not know how to say harsh or sarcastic things, and whose deeds are in keeping - you will draw men to you, and better still, you will make them love God, because in your goodness they will catch a glimpse of Him. On the other hand, if you are careless at your work, dirty in your dress, mean in your conduct, you have done your religion an injury. It sinks into the gutter with yourself.

It is a big thing that Christ should thus have placed His honor in your keeping. If you are but half a man, it will stimulate you. Furthermore, it means that even the more worldly side of your life, your work in the factory or in your home, in the technical school or university or trade union, your athletics, your music, your painting, so on, can all be made to tell for Him in a very practical way.

Attacks Against the Church

Wherever you go, at your work or in clubs or societies, you will hear difficulties raised and questions asked which, perhaps, strike at the foundations of the Church or of Faith itself and in aiding others, do not forget the danger to yourself.

Many of these objections you will be able to meet effectively from your own knowledge. Others may appear so strong as to frighten you. It is useful then to reason thus to oneself: "Whatever the objection is, there is an answer to it. All these difficulties have been raised and answered before. Great men have in all ages endeavored to pick holes in the doctrine of the Church, and they and their philosophies have gone, while the Church lives on."

Always remember that the truth of Catholic doctrines does not depend on your ability to prove them true. Ten lifetimes would not be long enough to satisfy oneself on every point. The real proof of them lies in the declaration of the Church, which is the pillar and the ground of truth.

So do not let what someone in the works has said unsettle you. Let his objection - even if it raises a difficulty in your mind - only give you the opportunity for an Act of Faith: "I don't understand, Dear Lord, but I believe because the Church teaches it, and the Church is infallible."

Read the promise of Our Lord: "Upon this Rock I will build My Church . . . and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it."

Then hear the words of Lord Macaulay, who was no friend of the Church, and see how that promise stands after nineteen centuries: When we reflect on the tremendous assaults which the Catholic Church has survived, we find it difficult to conceive in what way she is to perish."

The Call to Good Works

In times of retreat, or at your prayers, or by the invitation of a friend, a call to some good work will come. It may be from on high, so do not lightly refuse. You may miss your life's vocation. St. Augustine speaks solemn words: "Fear Jesus passing by . . . He may not again pass your way."

How we can do Big Things

With industry, self-sacrifice, and some knowledge of human nature, we can all produce results: (a) by organizing - by making things ready for people who will not make

them ready for themselves; (b) by bringing to people, who would never get them for themselves, things which will benefit them; (c) by appealing individually to people who would never respond to a general appeal.

In other words, we are to be the bridge that covers the chasm between what people will do of themselves and what God wants them to do. For example:

- a) A Pilgrimage is organized. Everything is cut-and-dried. All that one has to do is to buy the ticket and take one's place. One thousand persons go. Would any have gone had the Pilgrimage and its details never been arranged?
- b) An appeal is made from a pulpit to support a certain religious publication. Only a handful of people respond. A house-to-house canvass later on, bringing the paper directly under the people's notice, produces hundreds of fresh readers.
- c) Everybody in a town knows the needs of a local charity. Yet few subscribe, until a door-to-door call is organized. Then all give.

"Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbor As Thyself"

The foregoing are only indications of what might be done. Your own tastes, surroundings, conscience, will suggest many powerful means of benefiting your own soul by benefiting the souls of other people. "Love thy neighbor as thyself" is a hard saying. But keep in mind Who said it, and neglect no way of helping others on towards good. Ask St. Vincent de Paul, who is the Patron of all such works, to inspire you with knowledge of what will suit you best. Perhaps you might make a beginning by joining the Society, which bears his name.

Here are some additional suggestions:

- a) You know an excellent Sodality. Work hard for it. Be prefect of a guild. Train the sub-prefect to do the work, and then when you are sure you can be done without form another guild for yourself. Thus you will increase the Sodality membership and keep yourself keen.
- b) You know a night school, which sends many of its pupils into the Priesthood or the Convent. Tell anybody who might be interested. Many will join, and their settling down to work will be just the first step which will turn into solid resolutions what otherwise would never be anything but hazy desires.
- c) There is some organization, which you know has produced great spiritual improvement in its members. Bring your friends into it.
- d) There is a religious magazine or paper, which you think good. Extend its circulation.
- e) You know someone who has the gift of making those he meets enlist themselves in social work. Introduce people to him.
- f) You have read a book, which did you great good. Buy a copy or two and lend it round.

Promoting the Week-End Retreats

You might work for the Enclosed Retreats, those drilling-grounds of Christian perfection - as the latest Pontiff has termed them - producing wherever they exist, hosts of tireless workers in the cause of religion, sanctifying the good, uplifting the degraded.

If you would wish to see far-reaching good accomplished, here is your means to hand, speedy and certain.

So where these Retreats are, organize for them, spread abroad the idea of them, and where they are not yet established, aim to have this done.

Breaking New Ground

Perhaps you could band together others in association to do good, and give the first impulse to what St. Vincent calls the sacred contagion of charity.

Start a little organization. Gather a few around you for some good work. Hold a regular meeting weekly, if possible - and discuss your little efforts under the auspices of prayer. You have it on His own word that He, Who can make your efforts fruitful, is there in the midst of you.

Do not soar too high. Do not be over-anxious. Look above all to the routine duties and the small details of the meeting. A punctual start, carefully-written minutes attendance-roll regularly marked up, discussion of business and business only, affection among the members, these - far more than organizing ability or exceptional workers - will ensure a lasting success.

It cannot be over-emphasized that the progress and the permanence of the organization depend upon the meetings, and that the meetings in turn depend upon the system, the prayerfulness, and the fraternity, which are found in them. Act mindfully of this: face calmly the inevitable lumps and downs and your work may be multiplied exceedingly. All the great movements have had just such simple origins.

Some Homely Ways of Doing Great Work

The following are some of the many ways in which a multitude of men and women are

spending their free time serving God. Judgment Day alone will show the joy they have given Him, and the good they have effected.

The few examples given will make it clear that such work is within the capacity of anyone with perseverance.

a) The Catechism Teacher

The saintly Pius X was once asked by a lady who was desirous of doing some really good work for God, what he would suggest to her. He surprised her by answering: "Teach children the Catechism."

Take a class and put your heart into it. Acquire a large stock of anecdotes by which you can both train and interest these little ones who are, as has been beautifully said, wax to receive, marble to retain. Many of them will some day do great things for God. And it will be through you.

b) The Holy Childhood

Organize and run, with the sanction of your Parish Priest, a branch of the Holy Childhood. Keep a double object in view: first, the spreading of devotion to the Foreign Missions together with the aiding of them financially; and secondly, to get into touch with the children, who by the rules have to pay their little subscriptions once a month. Let them pay in person. Get to know them well. Tell them stories, and teach them little devotions and the art of making sacrifices. Tell them to collect used postage stamps; the practice itself is a prayer, and the stamps are valued on the Foreign Missions.

Such a work can be made the mould of Saints. Not that you will see a wonderful advance

suddenly made by the children. That is not their way. But do you keep on without slacking and the years to come will see a rich harvest of holiness from amongst them.

c) Visiting the Sick

The first concern of St. Ignatius of Loyola and his companions on coming to each new town was to visit the sick in the hospitals, knowing that in doing this, they did it to Christ Himself.

Pick some hospital, by preference a workhouse hospital, and find one or more of the very many patients who are without friends or visitors. Be you both friend and visitor to them. Visit them regularly. Your smiling face and cheerful words will make your visits longed for. And what wonderful prayers will ring up to high Heaven for you from these poor suffering ones of Christ, whom you have succored.

d) Spreading Good Literature

There are many who act as promoters for a certain valuable little religious periodical, packed full of instructions in simple and interesting form. These promoters have worked up a list of people, who are willing to subscribe to the paper, and month-by-month each home is visited - and it is delivered. Father, mother and children will read it and be influenced by it. It is the setting up in the home of a regular lighthouse of grace.

A poor widow had a large family and had to work hard during the day to keep them. Yet the day began with Mass and Holy Communion. She had almost a hundred subscribers who took this periodical. She delivered it herself to their widely scattered homes in the evenings when she must have craved for rest. She knew all their families well and used this intimacy to

interest them in those things that were dearest to her own heart: Daily Mass and Communion, the Apostleship of Prayer, the Maynooth Mission to China.

And again. Some years ago in New York an African-American washerwoman, who had spent her life in just this same way, received a semi-public funeral and was laid to rest amid the mourning of thousands to whom her face had constantly been a needed reminder of their duty to God.

Loving Jesus and making Him loved. .. There it is in practice! Who can assess the true value of such lives?

e) The Duly Authorized Outdoor Collector

His or her little book in hand showing the sanction and approval of the Parish Priest, the outdoor collector may be seen, usually on a Sunday, toiling up long flights of tenement stairs, diving into alleys and back lanes where the most charitable of all people the poor - live. Here he gets week by week his pennies and twopences for some Church Building Fund, or other charitable work sanctioned by the Parish Priest.

Always a holy work, his round may be made a genuine apostolate. He need not take up a preaching tone. A quiet word here and there can do all the work. And he can add to his words weapons more powerful - the Scapulars, Medals, Badges, approved by the Church. In spreading devotion to these he is setting up channels along which grace will certainly flow.

He finds time for a short chat in each home, and he is keenly interested in each member of the family. How are the Children's Communion? Are Paddy and Molly

enrolled in the Brown Scapular? Here is a miraculous medal for one and a little picture for another. He has an eye to see that the elders are in some Sodality. He probably has the father in his own guild.

He does not talk about what is in the papers. They know enough about that without him. Besides, he may differ in opinion from some, which often results in hot words, bitterness left behind and his influence gone. There is more than enough to talk of in the shape of Church and Parish matters, the private concerns of the family, and occasionally a suggestion about the First Fridays Devotion, the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart, etc. Many are the Stories he relates of the blessing of the Family Rosary, and the way in which it saved the Faith in the Black Times.

His reference to the approaching Missions will be more powerful than poster-covered walls.

Moreover, people will talk about their neighbors. So he will gain a good knowledge of his district, and his report on anything amiss is always useful to the Priest.

And it will come to this, that his very step, his face, will be like a breath of religion to all, and a special reminder to those that are negligent. People will go to Mass or the Sacraments simply because they saw him and it reminded them of their neglect.

If you liked this excerpt of Can We Be Saints by Frank Duff, please ask your Curia to purchase 100 copies or so of the full publication from the Arlington Regia at www.arlingtonregia.com

Legion Spirit

THE PRAESIDIUM MEETING

From Some Handbook Reflections

"In an atmosphere made supernatural by its wealth of prayer, by its devotional usages, and by its sweet spirit of fraternity, the praesidium holds a weekly meeting ... "
(Handbook 11:5)

The handbook devotes many pages to the praesidium meeting-It may be worthwhile reflecting on some-aspects of this fundamental and vital part of the Legion system, mindful of the words of the handbook: "So it can be expected that a praesidium which is true to its ideals will bestow around itself life and renewal and healing and solutions." (19:23)

SETTING OF THE MEETING:

The members should sit around a table at one end of which the Legion altar is placed. Traditionally, the President sits at the other end facing the altar. The altar must not be separated from the meeting-table or so placed as to remove the statue outside the circle of the members.

THE LEGION ALTAR:

"It should be regarded as an honorable on the part of some legionary to keep the vexillum and the vases and candlesticks clean and bright, and duly provided with flowers and candles at

the expense of the praesidium."
(Handbook 18:1) It should not be necessary to add that the statue and altar cloth also should be kept in good condition.



PUNCTUALITY

"... a punctual start (so necessary for the proficiency of the praesidium) will not be possible unless the officers are in attendance some time in advance in order to make the requisite preparations." (Handbook 18:2)

THE PRAYERS:

Regarding the manner of saying the prayers " ... pray as if Our Blessed Lady herself, instead of her statue, were visibly present." (Handbook 19:13)

The prayers are to be one with the meeting: "What the breathing is to the human body, the Rosary is to the Legion meetings" (Handbook 19:14).

In regard to special prayers at the meeting: If it is a question of supplementing the Legion prayers by some other prayers for special intentions, the ruling is that the existing prayers are already long enough, and should not ordinarily be added to." (Handbook 19:16) At a fixed time, usually about an hour after the opening of the meeting, the Catena Legionis is recited, all standing.

SPIRITUAL READING:

"Its duration should be limited to about 5 minutes. (Handbook 18:5)

THE ALLOCCTIO:

"In the event of the absence of the Spiritual Director, the commentary (on the handbook) should be made by the President or by any member designated by the President. It is stressed that a mere reading from the handbook or any other document does not suffice for the allocutio. The allocutio should not occupy more than five or six minutes." (Handbook 18:11)

WORK SHEET, ETC.

"No praesidium meeting is ever to begin without its written program, termed the "Work Sheet". This should be drawn up in advance of each meeting and from it the President will call the business." (Handbook 18:2) The Minute book, Attendance roll, Treasurer's book and secret bag will be required also at the meeting. The praesidium should have also roll book for praetorians, auxiliaries, and adjutorians.

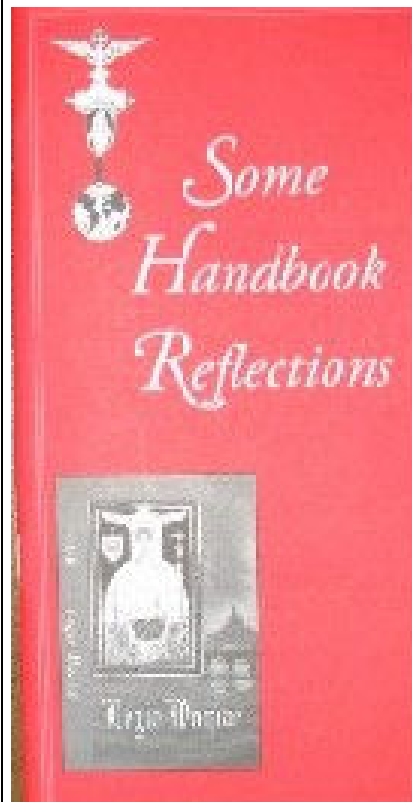
THE MINUTES:

"... the minutes should be written in ink or typed, and in a book of good quality." (Handbook 34:3)

MEMBERS' REPORTS:

"In its own way the report is as important to the meeting as the prayers." (Handbook 18:9) "Every member should have a notebook ... without its aid a suitable report will not be made." (Handbook 33:5) "A particular application of the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ may be made to the Legion meeting, especially to the praesidium meeting which forms the heart of the Legion system." (Handbook 21)

Taken from Some Handbook Reflections



Amendment to the Legion Handbook

This amendment is being included in the next printing of the Handbook in the US, both the English and Spanish versions

The Concilium has noted that misunderstandings can arise, sometimes, regarding the role of the Comitium, as shown in the Handbook (Chap.28:2:2). For example, it is incorrect for a Comitium to regard itself as a Comitium only when officers of related Curiae are present. Another misunderstanding may result in thinking that there cannot be more than one Comitium in a diocese. The Concilium, therefore, considers that some further clarification of the role of the Comitium should be included in the Handbook. The following amendment to the Handbook, which does not involve any change of rule, showing the original wording of the Handbook with the additional words of clarification, was approved by the Concilium at its meeting on 19th October 2008.

Amendments to Chap.28:2 in the Handbook on *The Curia and the Comitium*

2. THE CURIA AND THE COMITIUM

1. When two or more praesidia have been established in any city, town, or district, a governing body termed the Curia should be set up. The Curia shall be composed of all the officers (Spiritual Directors included) of the praesidia in its area.

2. Where it is found necessary to confer on a Curia, in addition to its own proper functions, certain powers of superintendence, over one or several Curiae, such higher Curia shall be styled more particularly a Comitium and *each of its meetings is considered to be a Comitium meeting whether or not representatives of the related Curiae are present.*

The Comitium is not a new council. It continues to act as a Curia in respect of its own area and to govern directly its own praesidia. In addition it supervises one or more Curiae. *Elections of officers of these Curiae are subject to ratification by the Comitium, as the next-highest council.*

Each Curia and praesidium directly related to a Comitium shall be entitled to full representation on the latter *and, therefore, their officers have the right to vote at elections of officers of the Comitium.*

In order to relieve the representatives of a Curia from attendance at all the meetings of the Comitium (which, added to the meetings of their own Curia, might form an undue burden), it would be permissible to deal with the business of that Curia and to require the attendance of its representatives only at every second or third meeting of the Comitium. *It is not required that representatives of all related Curiae attend on the same month.*

A Comitium shall not ordinarily cover an area larger than a Diocese, *but may cover a smaller area. If a diocese has many Curiae or where the Curiae are widely separated, more than one Comitium, perhaps several, may be necessary and desirable. There may be circumstances where, for the purposes of good administration, and with ecclesiastical sanction, a Comitium could be asked to supervise one or more Curiae in another diocese or dioceses.*

Note: Amendments are shown in *Italics*