



Mary's Notebook

August 2006

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Fr. Francis Peffley Speaking at Tidewater Curia Congress

Object of the Legion of Mary

“The object of the Legion of Mary is the glory of God through the holiness of its members developed by prayer and active co-operation, under ecclesiastical guidance, in Mary’s and the Church’s work of crushing the head of the serpent and advancing the reign of Christ.” This quote from page 11 of the Handbook aptly describes the object of the Legion. (Cont. p.3)

Legion Congress

On July 29 the Tidewater Curia held a Legion of Mary Congress. Fr. Peffley, spiritual director of the Arlington Regia, and about 50 Legion of Mary members in the Tidewater area joined in this congress. The four topics of discussion were: home visitation, work reports, prayer, and perseverance. (Cont. p.2)

Living Vatican II

The Second Vatican Council issued the Degree Orientalium Ecclesiarum, which is says, “*The Holy Catholic Church, which is the Mystical Body of Christ, is made up of the faithful who are organically united in the Holy Spirit by the same faith, the same sacraments and the same government and who, combining together into various groups which are held together by a hierarchy, form separate Churches or Rites. Between these there exists an admirable bond of union, such that the variety within the Church in no way harms its unity; rather it manifests it, for it is the mind of the Catholic Church that each individual Church or Rite should retain its traditions whole and entire and likewise that it should adapt its way of life to the different needs of time and place.*” (cont. p.4)

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Legion Congress

[Cont. p.1]



Several things were learned during the Legion Congress, they include:

- Door-to-door evangelization is the preferred work of the Legion of Mary, and every praesidium should seek to send out 1-3 teams weekly for door-to-door evangelization
- Every member must give an adequate and audible work report, and it is the duty of all praesidium members, especially the president, to not accept failure in this duty
- The legionary must seek Theosis (oneness with God) through continual prayer

- We suffer in this world by not seeing the fruits of our good works. We must not lose hope, but must trust in God in perseverance through tough times. It is through trusting in God and following the Legion of Mary system in these times that we can pass our trials and increase in holiness.

Mary's Notebook Available by E-mail

This month's addition is the first of Mary's Notebook available both on-line, and via e-mail. To sign up to have Mary's Notebook e-mailed to you monthly go to:

www.legionofmarytidewater.com/enews/.
Mary's Notebook may be freely distributed electronically, may be printed and re-distributed, and/or can be otherwise shared.

Legion of Mary Letter Published In Catholic Virginian

The July 3rd issue of the Catholic Virginian includes a letter about the Legion of Mary. The letter praised the Legion of Mary's work of going door-to-door in the Richmond Diocese. Please be sure to read the letter at: <http://www.catholicvirginian.org/>

Handbook Study

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Object of the Legion

(Cont. from p.1)

It is sometimes easy to forget that people join the Legion of Mary for the purpose of giving glory to God, through increasing their own personal holiness. The Legion of Mary seeks to turn average Catholics into normal Catholics. In other words, it seeks to turn every-day, typical Catholics into people who live out their Catholic faith, as they ought to.

The Handbook says, “*Does not St. John Chrysostom say that he had never succeeded in persuading himself that anyone could achieve salvation who had never done anything for the salvation of his neighbor?*”

The Legion of Mary engages in the work of proclaiming the good news to all creation, because doing so is needed for our own personal holiness. We cannot give glory to God by our own holiness, unless we seek to inflame the world with love of Christ Jesus.

According to the Handbook:
Material relief must not be given — even in the smallest ways; and experience shows that it is necessary to mention that old clothing belongs to this category. In ruling thus, the Legion does not slight the act of relief giving in itself. It simply declares that for the Legion it is impracticable. To give to the poor is a good work. Done with a supernatural motive it is a sublime one. The systems of many great societies rest upon this principle; notably that of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to whose example and

spirit the Legion rejoices to proclaim itself deeply indebted — so much, in fact, as to make it possible to say that the roots of the Legion lay in that Society. But to the Legion is assigned a different field of duty. Its system is built upon the principle of bringing spiritual good to every individual in the population. This program and one of relief-giving are not compatible in practice because:

(a) The visits of an organization which gives relief will seldom be welcomed by persons who do not need relief. They will fear lest such a visitation would label them in the eyes of their neighbors as benefiting in some material way. So the praesidium which earns the name of relief-giving will quickly find its field of work narrowed exceedingly. Material relief may be to other societies a key which opens. It is the key with which the Legion locks itself out.

(b) Those who expect to receive, and are disappointed, become aggrieved and hence impervious to legionary influence.

(c) Even among those who are subjects for relief, the Legion will not accomplish spiritual good by giving. Let the Legion leave this to those other agencies whose special work it is, and which have a special grace for it. Certainly, legionaries will have no grace for it, because thereby they break their rule. The praesidium which errs in this way will find itself involved in grievous complications, and will never bring anything but sorrow to the Legion.

Faith Focus

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Living Vatican II

(Cont. from p.1)

The Tidewater, Virginia area is blessed to have two Eastern-Rite parishes in its mist. [Ascension of Our Lord](#), located at 114 Palace Lane, Williamsburg, VA 23185; and [Our Lady of Perpetual Help](#), located in at 216 South Parliament Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23462.



All Roman Catholics are strongly encouraged to live out the calling of Vatican II, and visit one of these Catholic parishes. Likewise, Catholics should take efforts to educate their

children about the Eastern Rites. According to the Second Vatican Council, *“The laity... should be taught as part of its catechetical education about rites and their rules.”*

Members of the Legion of Mary have a particular duty to learn of the Eastern Rites. The Legion of Mary Handbook, quotes Pope John Paul II's encyclical *“Orientale Lumen,”* saying *“Since in fact, we believe that the venerable and ancient tradition of the Eastern Churches is an integral part of the heritage of Christ's Church, the first need for Catholics is to be familiar with that tradition.”*

Eastern-Rite Catholic should not be confused with Orthodox Christians. While we rightly call Orthodox Christians our

brothers and sisters, and while they maintain valid sacraments, we are still praying for full unity with the Orthodox.

The Legion of Mary Handbook says of the Orthodox, *“These Orthodox Churches are truly our Sister Churches, we must promote in every way possible reconciliation and unity between us according to the mind of Christ and in keeping with the guidelines of the document “Unitatis Redintegratio” of the Second Vatican Council.”*

Further, we are to note that in the 1940s The Vatican gave the Legion of Mary special permission to recruit Orthodox Christians into its ranks. Thus, the Tidewater Curia openly welcomes and invites Orthodox Christians to join our praesidia, and seeks to form praesida at Orthodox Churches. All that is said in the Legion of Mary Handbook about protestants, does not apply to the Orthodox, as they possess valid holy orders, true sacraments, and are not protestants.

Although we cannot invite protestants into the Legion of Mary, and although protestants do not have valid holy orders and do not celebrate the Eucharist, we should still pray for their conversion. Protestants, and other non-Catholics, who are willing to say the Legion of Mary prayers, may be given copies of the prayers and encouraged to say them. They should be visited regularly, and encouraged to convert to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. It is the Legion of Mary's desire that all become one in Christ, through Mary.

Growing in Love

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About This Section

Sometimes in life it is easy to look track of the big-picture. We get bogged down sometimes in the details of day-to-day life, and forget what life is all about, and about what really matters. This section seeks to talk about those things that – when it comes down to it – really matter.

The Heart of the Legion of Mary Meeting

If a devotion to Our Lady is absent, there is no Legion of Mary. There is no part of the meeting more important than the setting up of the Legion altar, on which Mary stands to preside at the meeting.



The altar consists of a white cloth. In the center, towards the back of the altar is a statue of Our Lady of Grace, flanked by two vases with flowers. At the front corners of the altar are two candlesticks with lighted candles.

About six inches forward from and six inches to the right of the statue stands the Vexillum Legionis, the standard of the Legion of Mary.

The task of setting up the altar for the meeting is so important that the Handbook reserves this duty to none other than the praesidium president.

The question is rightly asked: if a praesidium does not love Mary enough to make for her a proper altar, how can the praesidium claim to love its members or those it meets on its works? If it is true that the greatest commandment is love, of what value is any praesidium if it fails to love?

Let us honor our Mother and our Father, and always seek to set-up a proper altar for Mary and her spouse.

Go and Make Disciples of the Nations

Extension and recruiting is at the heart of the legion call to love. Jesus's prayer that all be one is only fulfilled though the inviting of souls to come together in service of Christ. Let us seek to invite everyone we meet to the joy of serving Christ and His Mother; for Christians will be asked to render an account, not just of themselves, but also of the whole world.