

Legion of Mary Aids Parish Priests, Reports of Elmira Curia Units Reveal

By FATHER BARTHOLOMEW J. O'BRIEN

"One of the six children is not baptized," states a member of the Legion of Mary in a typical report during the weekly meeting in Elmira. "But I assured the mother that we would not only make arrangements with the parish priest for the baptism, but would also provide for the child's education."

"The mother was very grateful. Having just moved into the parish, she knew very few Catholics — if any. In brief, I wish to report that we welcomed the family to the parish in the name of the pastor, we obtained the parish census at his request, and finally, we made arrangements for the baptism this Sunday afternoon."

"Our mission was to solicit the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the homes of the seminarians of our parish," reports another member. "The parents of each seminarian warmly welcomed us, congratulated us on the fine work of the Legion of Mary here in the parish, and most graciously expressed their desire to have the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in their home."

"I returned again this week to give simple instructions to our little cerebral palsy victim," a third member states after being called by the president to give his weekly report. "Unfortunately, he is steadily growing worse. It is agreeable to our pastor, I wish to suggest that the boy make his First Holy Communion as soon as possible."

THESE ARE typical reports reasons why the Legion of Mary has been found to be so valuable recently to many busy parish priests. Today when most churches have not room for all the people and most schools have not desks for all the students, in like manner most priests have

not time for all the problems, activities, and parish works which these same crowds of people and mobs of students bring about.

To help the priest is the work of a special group of people, carefully trained and wisely directed, known as the active members of the Legion of Mary.

"What is most necessary at the present time," stressed St. Pius X, "is to have in each parish a group of laymen at the same time virtuous, enlightened, determined, and really apostolic." This could clearly be the definition of the Legion of Mary.

A PRIEST once said that the secret of the rapid world-wide growth of the Legion of Mary is this: It has never failed Our Lady. Every meeting is like a service in honor of God's Mother. The members always gather around a table in the center of which is a special shrine to Our Lady of Grace with fresh flowers and burning candles.

They open every meeting with Mary's Rosary. They interrupt the meeting and stand at attention for the recitation of the Magnificat of the Virgin Mother. "The Legion's trust in Mary is limitless," states the Legion Handbook, "knowing that by the ordinance of God, her power is without limit."

With this limitless trust in Our Lady and with a supernatural obedience to the priest, the Legionaries go forth, two by two, week after week, to carry out the

Legion Lists 7 Area Groups

Units of the Praesidia of Elmira Curia, Legion of Mary follows:

Our Lady of Mercy Praesidium
Saint Ann's Parish
Hornell, New York

Seat of Wisdom Praesidium
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

Maria Assumpta Praesidium
Saint Mary of the Lake Parish
Watkins Glen, New York

Motherhood of Our Lady Praesidium
Saint Peter and Paul's Parish
Elmira, New York

Spiritual Vessel Praesidium
Saint Cecilia's Parish
Elmira, New York

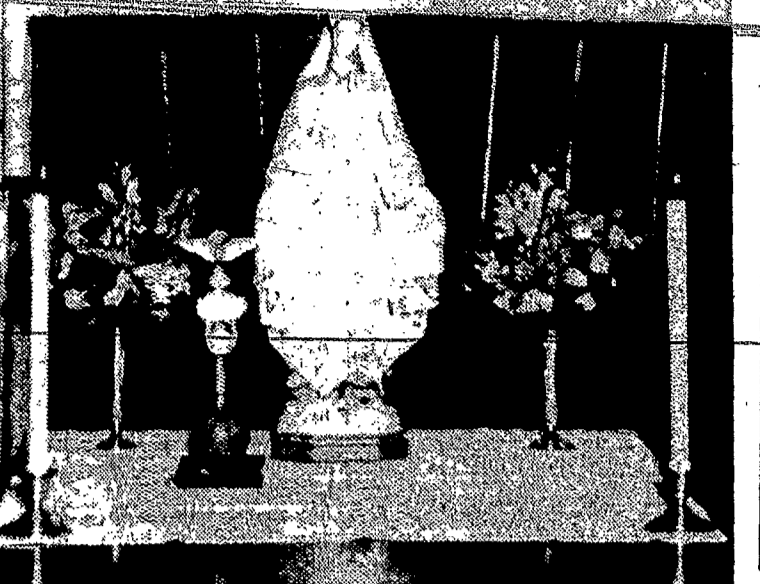
Our Lady of Knock Praesidium
Saint Patrick's Parish
Elmira, New York

Virgin Most Merciful Praesidium
Saint Mary's Parish
Corning, New York

spiritual works of mercy in the parish.

THE LEGION differs from other organizations directed to social work in that it may not carry out the corporal works of mercy. "Material relief must not be given," the Handbook insists, "even in the smallest ways . . . Material relief may be to other societies a key which opens. It is the key with which the Legion locks itself out."

Yet the member or Legionary

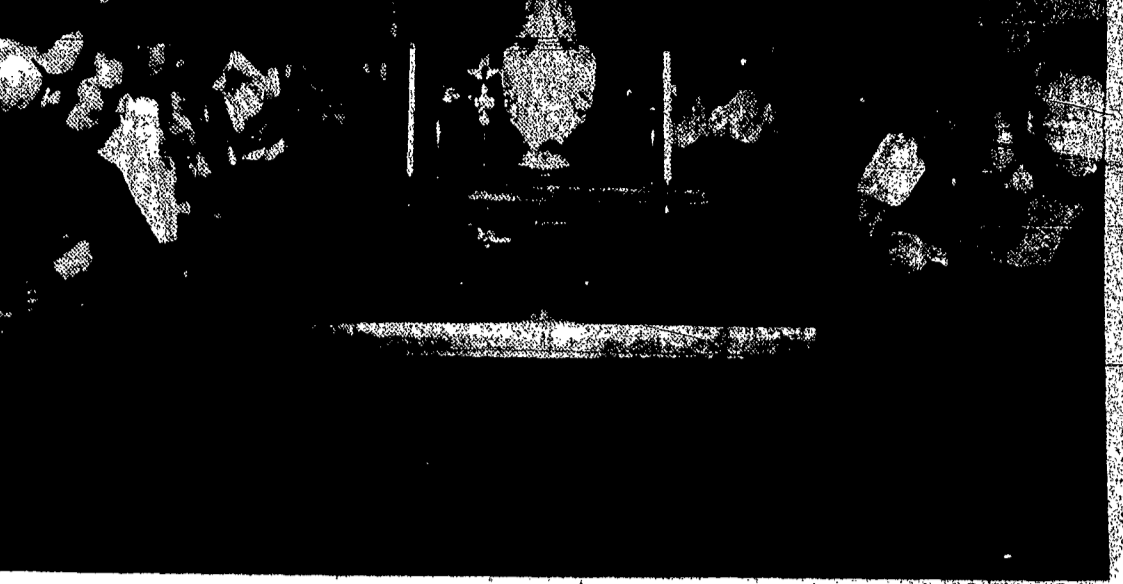


IN LEGION OF MARY setting of every meeting is uniform. Statue represents the Queen-present among her soldiers. Final love towards the Heavenly Mother dictates that equipment should definitely be the best, the flowers should be always fresh. The Vexillum or standard of the Legion is ever close to our Lady.

must work. "An army which refuses to engage in battle: what a misnomer!" Every week at every meeting, the president (after receiving the assistance and advice of the spiritual director) gives to each set of two Legionnaires an assignment or mission on which they will report the following week.

For at least two hours during the week, the Legionaries will work together as a team in the spirit of brotherhood and charity on the work assigned. For example:

1. Brother White and Brother Green will visit Mr. and Mrs. John Brown, 215 Western Street, and encourage them to attend the Carra Conference.
 2. Brother Red and Brother Black will visit the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Blue and invite them to the first session of the new Inquiry Class. It has been reported that they have expressed a desire to become Catholics.
 3. Sister Elm and Sister Pine will visit the Eastside Nursing Home and make arrangements with all Catholics to receive Holy Communion Thursday morning at eight o'clock.
 4. Brother Maple and Brother Oak will visit the Beechwood Home and encourage the parents to send their children to the release time classes in the Catholic Religion, held each Monday at three o'clock.
- To carry out such spiritual works or missions, formerly assigned only to a priest, demands a strong faith, a sound training, perfect obedience and direction, a heart full of charity, and a military adherence to the rules and regulations of "The Official Handbook of the Legion of Mary." Because of this last quality, the whole Legion system is built around a military terminology; the meeting is called a praesidium; the instruction of the spiritual director is called an allocutio.
- In this military spirit, the Handbook states that at the first meeting of each month, as a constant reminder of the Legionary discipline, the following Standing Instruction is to be read by the president, whose duty it is not only to conduct the meeting but also to maintain the discipline of the system. It contains a summary or an epitome of the Legion military system and Marian spirituality.
- "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;
- "Second, the daily recitation of the Catenag (Magnificat);
- "Third, the performance of a substantial active Legionary work, in the spirit of faith, and in union with Mary, in such fashion that in those worked for and in one's fellow-members, the Person of Our Lord is once again seen and served by Mary, His Mother.
- "Fourth, the preservation of an absolute secrecy in regard to any matter discussed at or learned in connection with the Legionary work."
- This Standing Instruction, dinned into the ears of the members month after month, should bring home to them the all-important place of SECRECY in the Legion's discipline. Inviolable confidence and great charity must be preserved by the Legionaries in regard to what they hear at their meetings or in the course of their visitations. This knowledge comes to them because they are Legionaries, and it would be



FIRST ACT of Mary's Legionaries at their weekly meeting is to kneel and recite the Rosary of Our Lady.

an intolerable treachery to the Legion and to the virtue of charity for them to divulge it.

Reports must, of course, be made at the Praesidium meeting; these reports are to be regarded as being in the same category as a family's discussion of its secrets. But even in these reports there must be circumspection and great charity. The record of secrecy in the members of the Legion of Mary is one of the noble monuments to its system.

Since the origin of the Legion of Mary in Ireland, Sept. 7, 1921, the object of the Legion has been primarily to bring each member closer to the Heart of Jesus through the Heart of Mary.



AMONG SPIRITUAL ACTS of mercy performed by Legion of Mary members is visiting the sick. Here Floyd Nodine, Elmira Curia president and Carl Webb, Praesidium of St. Peter and Paul Church president, make arrangements for the priest to bring Holy Communion to an invalid.

Curia office is located at 168 High Street . . . 2-2132.

Once the pastor has manifested interest and the Curia has been notified, a representative from the headquarters will contact the pastor of his assistant, talk things over with him, explain the Handbook, answer questions, and willingly undertake to set up the entire organization. If the pastor wishes, in other words, he is at the disposal of the pastor or his assistant matters pertaining to the Legion.

If the Legion of Mary receives the approval of the pastor, then the Curia will send to the parish two capable officers who will act as temporary leaders of the Legion of Mary during a six-week formation period. These two officers will conduct the meetings, set up the organization, and train the new members under the direction of the spiritual director.

By the end of the six week period, the new Legion will have its own officers, and the Curia representatives will retire from the scene and a new praesidium will have been added to the thousands that now help to renew the face of the earth for the glory of God and the honor of Our Lady, Mother of the Legion of Mary.



EACH MEETING of the Legion is conducted by the president aided by officers. Here Carl Webb, president, is going over agenda with Miss Frances Battersby, vice president; Miss Florence Hughes, secretary and Mrs. Floyd Nodine, treasurer of Elmira Curia. Spiritual reading and the allocutio (instruction) are given by the Rev. Bartholomew O'Brien, spiritual director.

Buffalo Rites For Mrs. Chimera

Corning—The funeral of Mrs. Rose O. Chimera, wife of Dr. M. J. Chimera of 131 E. First St., was held last Saturday morning at Buffalo. Following prayers at the Amalgone funeral home there, Requiem High Mass was offered in St. Aloysius Gonzaga Church. Burial was in Mount Calvary Cemetery in Buffalo.

Mrs. Chimera died at her home Tuesday, July 30, 1957. The following day, members of the Alumni Association of Scout Troop 60 and members of Court St. Joseph's Catholic Daughters of America, met at the A. W. Belfry and son funeral home in this city for recitation of the Rosary.

Mrs. Chimera was a native of Buffalo, born January 16, 1906, the daughter of the late Angelo and Carrie Barone Leone.

She became the wife of Dr. Marion J. Chimera in Buffalo on July 6, 1933. For the past 24 years she had resided in Corning where she was active in community and country club affairs.

Her affiliations included membership in the Woman's Club of Corning, Hospital Chapter D of the Steuben County Women's Medical Auxiliary, Court of St. Joseph's Catholic Daughters of America, the American Women's Bowling League and Corning Country Club.

Surviving besides her husband are: two sisters, Mrs. Anthony J. Russo, and Mrs. Samuel C. Battaglia, both of Buffalo, and two brothers, Leonard H. Leone and Edmund A. Leone also of Buffalo.

Alhambra To Mark First Catholic Church In Buffalo

Rochester's Musa Caravan, Order of the Alhambra will send a delegation to the 27th biennial international convention slated in Buffalo, August 11 to 14 according to Grand Commander James E. Marcille.

The local Alhambra members will be represented in the business sessions by Supreme Advocate Norman A. O'Brien.

DEDICATION of a memorial marking the first Catholic church in Buffalo will highlight the convention's opening day, Sunday, August 11 at 3 p.m.

This Church, a log cabin, was built on the site of the present St. Louis Church at Main and Edward Streets. A parade at 2:30 p.m. of convention delegates will precede the ceremony. Bishop Joseph A. Burke of Buffalo will conduct the dedication ceremony.

A Solemn Mass in St. Louis Church, Buffalo, is scheduled to follow the ceremony with the Rev. James V. Ennis of North Evans, supreme chaplain as celebrant.

At the Sheraton Hotel, convention headquarters, Rochester's Sir Nobel will have open house in charge of Master of the Oasis Leo V. Davis.

A bus trip to the Basilica of Our Lady of Victory, Lackawanna, the convention ball, dinner at Glen Casino and other activities for both members and the ladies are planned.

Philippine President Prays After Conclave

Manila (NC)—President Carlos J. Garcia, his family and friends attended a special Mass of Thanksgiving after he won the Nationalist party nomination for re-election in the coming elections.

The Mass was said in Malacanang Palace, residence of the Philippine presidents, at midnight following the convention session. Presidential elections will be held next November 12.

Mr. Garcia took over reins of the Philippine republic when President Ramon Magsaysay was killed in a plane crash on March 17.

President Garcia was the overwhelming choice of the convention delegates. He won 800 of a possible 1,000 votes on the first ballot.

Lithuania Knights Slate Convention

Los Angeles — (NC) — Five hundred members are expected to attend when the Knights of Lithuania hold their national convention here from August 8 to 11.

Cardinal McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles, will preside at Solemn Mass in St. Casimir's Church on the final day of the convention. The preacher will be edified Auxiliary Bishop Vincent Fitzgys of Kaunas, Lithuania, who now lives in Chicago.

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