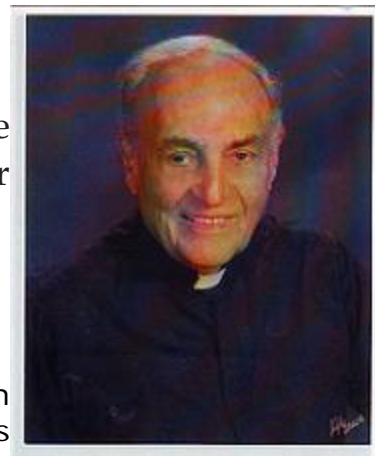


Acies 2008

Annual Acies Ceremony 2008

Fr. Soulliere
Spritual Director



Homily by Fr. Richard Soulliere

We would like to welcome all Active and Auxiliary Legion members to the Acies for the year 2008, especially the Auxiliaries because without their prayers, the Active member would not be as effective as the are.

The Word "Acies" comes to us from the times of the Caesars and the Roman Armies. It is defined as "an army ranged in battle array" and that is why we are here this morning, seated in the pews, in front of our leader, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and in our right hands we have our major weapon, our "big gun," namely, our Rosary. The Rosary can stop any army tank that is coming to destroy us or any battleship that is coming to sink us.

We are here to renew our fidelity, our consecration to Mary, and to receive from her, the strength and her blessing to combat Satan and the forces of evil for another year. The Acies is the great central annual function of the Legion of Mary - it is the solemn expression of our union with and of our dependency on her. The Handbook states that a legionary, who is able to attend the Acies, must attend. If they do not, "they do not have the spirit of the Legion in them" and "their membership is not an asset to the Legion."

It has often been said that we find ourselves in the Legion because Mary has chosen us, and not that we have chosen her. If this is true, then take a moment to look around and see whom Mary has brought into her Legion.

Most of us come in the Legion with our "rough edges", our imperfections. I don't think that any of us here have come into the Legion perfect. Some of us come in too proud - other too shy; some too scrupulous - others too unscrupulous; some talk too much - others don't talk enough; some us are too timid - we are afraid to go house-to-house to talk to strangers, especially about the Catholic faith and conversion, to go on a Columban drive or to become an officer in a praesidium or council.

But Mary knows this. She knows us better that we know ourselves. She is going to take each one of us individually by the hand and she is going to change and transform us. She is going to make us a "whole person". She is going to make us effective workers and salespeople for her Son and herself in spreading the Kingdom of God.

How is she going to do this? Simply by our embracing the discipline of attending a weekly praesidium meeting, by our working two hours of assigned apostolic work and by the other experiences we encounter in the Legion of Mary. For example, we may be asked to become an officer in a praesidium or council, to go house-to-house or to go on a Columban drive. And, unfortunately, sometimes our response is "No, I'm too busy, I don't have time" or "No, let Mary Jones do it, she is better qualified than I." What we don't realize is that the thing we are saying "no" to, is the exact experience we need to overcome our "rough edges", our imperfections.

We forget that (1) God's Providence governs everything that happens to us. He either sends it to us or allows it to happen to us; and (2) That for those in the "state of grace", everything that happens to them, happens to them for their greater good.

I would like to read to you a little poem. It is directed to God the Father and is taken from the first sentence of almost every Preface of every Mass that is celebrated. The title of the poem, taken from the first sentence, is "**We Do Well Always And Everywhere To Give You Thanks**". In other words, always and everywhere we should give God thanks.

Teach me Lord to live this prayer,
That I may thank you everyday for everything!
Oh, I do at times give you thanks, for what seems good:
For my health, for my success, for love, and for all that
benefits me,
And yet how thoughtless I am, how blind I am, not to thank
You for what is truly good.
For the pain, the unkindness, the criticism, the blame,
For every Legion invitation to become an officer of a
praesidium or council, to go house-to-house, to go on
a Columban drive,
In a word, for every hurt, and for every invitation that
comes from a person place or from my Legion work.
By these keen instruments would You, Divine Physician,
Remove from me the harmful growths of self, to give new
life
Your own true life - and peace abundantly.
But I am blind and I do not see your loving hand in every
invitation that comes from person, place or Legion
work.
And so, in saying, "No, I'm too busy, I don't have time" or
"No, let Mary Jones do it, she's better qualified than
I," in resisting, I suffer more and I spoil your work.
Had I accepted all with gratitude, I might long since have
been a saint
And happy - for a grateful heart cannot be otherwise.
Forgive me, then, O my God, my blindness and my
squandered life
And give me the grace, this day, to see
Your chastening hand in every Legion invitation that comes
to me, and in all of my hurts,
And not to blame your instruments.

But give me the grace to take each Legion invitation, each
purifying cross,
And then, to give THANKS TO YOU, with all of my heart.

If you see a problem while you are in the Legion, do not drop out, maybe it is your expertise that is needed. Be part of the solution! If you drop out, you will increase the problem for others and you will always look back on it as part of your squandered life.

Mary has given us the example we must follow: In the [Annunciation](#), without warning, out of the blue, totally unexpected, the Angel Gabriel stood before her and asked her if she would become the mother of the Son of God. Fortunately, she said "Yes, be it done to me according to your word!" And look where God took her. She is now fourth in command, after the Father, Son and Holy Spirit - and far above the rest of us! But, supposing she had said, "No, not me, I'm too busy" or "No, let Mary Jones do it, she's better qualified than I." Then, for the rest of her life, she would have looked back on her squandered life. So, stay in there - say "yes" and see where God takes you!

How blessed we are to be members of the Legion of Mary! The Legion is constantly striving to make us saints! So always remember,

"Never never, never, leave the Legion of Mary"