

# Ten Reasons to Join the Legion of Mary

## 1. Joining the Legion of Mary can help grow hair

A true story concerns the late Father Francis Ripley of Liverpool, England.

Father wanted to start the Legion in the hospital and was recruiting members. One German patient had been in an explosion in a tank and had lost all his hair which had never grown back. Fr. Ripley asked him to join the Legion of Mary.

The soldier asked Father whether the Blessed Mother would help his hair grow back if he joined and Fr. Ripley said that he would not be surprised if that happened. Three months later this German Legionary had the most beautiful head of blond hair!

The principle is that Our Lord and Our Lady are never outdone in generosity. If we sacrifice some time, effort or energy doing their work, they always give something in return.

## 2. The Legion of Mary is a School for Saints

Frank Duff, the founder of the Legion of Mary, once said that "the Legion makes saints and makes them by the bushel." When we consider that an organization only 85 years old already has five lay members whose cause for canonization has been introduced, is truly amazing.



If we want to become good at something, we have to practice it every week, such as a sport, a hobby, a musical instrument. If we want to "get good" at holiness, we must practice it every week as well. And the Legion gives us that opportunity; it provides an ideal expression of the Catholic vocation. It is a unique privilege and great blessing to be counted in its membership.

## 3. Join the Legion of Mary and Fulfill Canon Law

Canon Law is the rulebook of the Catholic Church. Canon 225 obliges us to be apostolic: "Since all lay people are assigned to the apostolate by baptism and confirmation, they are bound by the general obligation and they have the right, whether as individuals or organizations or in associations, to strive so that the divine message of salvation may be known and accepted by all people throughout the world."

Legion of Mary membership makes it actually easy to follow the rules and be a good Catholic, but it does more: the Legion offers a proven method and motivation for sanctity, thus fulfilling Canon 210 which states: "All Christian faithful must make an

effort, in accord with their own condition, to live a holy life and to promote the growth of the Church and its sanctification.

#### **4. The Legion of Mary Keeps Its Members Young**

This can't be found in Canon Law but it can be shown nonetheless. For example, Fr. Aedan McGrath, official Legion visitor to the Far East, is 92 years old, still active and looks to be about 75.

Frank Duff, founder of the Legion, was still riding his bicycle at age 91. (In fact, he never drove a car after his first ride, when the engine exploded!) The Legion kept him young in spirit and in body.

There are some little old ladies in Philadelphia who, in their nineties, are still doing their Legion work of going door to door. The Legion continues to keep them young.

#### **5. The Legion of Mary Teaches the Catholic Faith**

During the weekly Legion meeting spiritual formation is found in the rosary, in the Legion prayers, in the spiritual reading and discussion, and in the talk by the spiritual director. Additional help comes from the wisdom and apostolic techniques learned from the reports which are presented and discussed.

Every time legionaries come together for a meeting it is as if they are gathered at the cenacle with Our Lady, as in the days of the first apostles. Every Legion meeting becomes the Upper Room where modern-day apostles gather together in a cenacle of prayer with Mary, asking the Holy Spirit to come upon them so that they can do great things for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

#### **6. Join the Legion of Mary and Make Friends**

The Legion's main purpose is the holiness of the members. It improves our "vertical" relationship we have with God and the Blessed Mother, but it also enriches the "horizontal" relationship of friends we gain as we live the Legion way of life.

The Legion can help develop wonderful life-long friendships with like minded Catholics. It is also a great place to meet a future spouse. One Legion council in Cork, Ireland reported five marriages from one Legion group alone. It soon became the most popular group in all of Ireland. Another, Legion group in Virginia (USA) reported 6 marriages in two years –equal to over half its average membership over those two years.

## **7. Join the Legion of Mary as a Means of Tithing**

In Scripture, tithing generally refers to the gift of ten percent of our finances to God. This principle should be applied to our time and effort as well. The Legion provides a good jump-start on this by requiring that about four hours each week be set aside, which is only two percent of our time. Scripture says that when you tithe, God's blessing to you will be far greater than your generosity to Him.

Therefore, as we give time to our Lord and His Mother, they bless us in many ways and we find even more time and more blessings in life. So we are encouraged to consider the tithing principle not only for finances but also for time. The aim is to spend time serving God through Catholic living and the active apostolate.



## **8. Joining the Legion of Mary Will Help You Face Judgment Day**

What a great blessing it would be to hear Jesus say to us "Come, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for when I was sick in the nursing home, you Legionaries visited Me. When I was in prison, you came to see Me. When I was hungry for the Truth, you brought Me back to the Church. When I was thirsty for love, you came and comforted Me."

The spiritual works of mercy – the Legion of Mary's primary program of works, such as encouraging people to come back to the sacraments, helping to get children baptized, making the Catholic Church known to others – will be even more important than the corporal works of mercy (feeding the hungry, clothing the naked) because the soul, unlike the body, is eternal and will last forever in either heaven or hell.

## **9. Join the Legion of Mary and Save Souls**

This is what life on earth is all about and it has its basis in the Letter of James, chapter 5, verse 19: "Brothers, if anyone among you should stray from the truth and someone bring him back, he should know that whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins."

Therefore, if you help to bring back a fallen away Catholic, or bring a convert into the Catholic religion – if you are God's instrument to do that – the Bible says that you will cover a multitude of sins and save your own soul from death as well. The

Legion, with its program of works which includes the friendly encouraging of the lapsed to live again their Catholic Faith ensures its members of this future blessing.

#### **10. Join the Legion of Mary and Masses will be Said For Your Soul**

At present, throughout the world, there are approximately 600,000 Legion groups and by rule, each group has a Mass said for all deceased Legionaries in the month of November.

So, you as a Legion of Mary member, after your death can be sure of having six hundred thousand Masses celebrated for you. Imagine sitting in Purgatory and along comes November 1st, with six hundred thousand Masses, being said for you. If you are not out of there soon, it's through no fault of the Legion of Mary!