

Allocutio Toronto Senatus Council December 13, 2021 by Fr. Joseph Moncada
Chapter 11 #2 An Intensely Ordered System, Pages 68-69

Why does the Legion of Mary have a system? Why is the Legion system an ordered system? And why is the Legion system an intensely ordered system? The answers to these questions, and in particular the last one, in part reveal the very nature and identity of the Legion Mary, reveal who we are!

We find in nature that all living things possess an organizational structure, a life system allowing them to live move and have their being. The more complex the living being, the more highly structured it is. This is even truer in the spiritual realm in which the Legion of Mary operates as a living being made up of baptized Catholics fit into a highly tailored association animated by the Holy Spirit and led by the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Legion system is organized and its organization is systematized. Ours is not simply an organization but an organization with a system, which, because it is intensely ordered and highly structured, facilitates deliberate and powerful intentionality in its actions. Our purpose is clear; our organization is solid; our targets are known, and our aim is steady. Thus, by a living unity of many wills, we march forth for the cause of Christ's kingdom under Mary's leadership.

The Legion's highly ordered system, described by the word "intensely," is designed to effect its noble object of "personal service acting under the influence of the Holy Spirit, having Divine Grace as its moving principle and support, and the glory of God and the salvation of souls as its final end and purpose". (p.67)

The seasoned legionary has come to understand and esteem the Legion as a high precision and durable machine by his continual and earnest study of the handbook and his experience of its fruits. It is in the praesidium and council meetings in particular that the intensely ordered system is put into practice. There is an agenda with a fixed structure, an opening and a closing, a what comes first and what follows next; all guided by the system invariable acting like a protective outer wall, ensuring consistency, coherency and durability from meeting to meeting, week after week, and year after year.

If anyone were to doubt the apostolic viability and effectiveness of the Legion of Mary, we would reply in the following manner: many lay organizations and associations in the Church's history and the last century have come and gone, some like shooting stars faded into the night, some like trees which ceased to produce fruit were cut down, and some were abandoned like ships taking on water but the Legion of Mary's structural integrity has stood the test of a hundred years. "We have staying power!"

Some outside observers and thankfully only a small number of legionaries think that the Legion system with its rules and prescriptions, which must be adhered to with a spirit of discipline at all costs, stifles creativity, initiative and spontaneity and therefore apostolic effectiveness. We know the contrary is true. Our ingenuity, creative impulses and pioneering spirit are

organized, focused and driven by the Legion system, like a concert pianist who without altering his musical text brings all his creativity and skill to his interpretation of a set musical piece. Try playing a musical instrument without the knowledge of music and the reading of musical notes; nothing but noise and discordant sounds issue forth. So, our intensely ordered system like the notes on Mozart's musical texts is in itself harmonious and symphonic and must be observed as such. Adhered to, it produces exalted apostolic actions, filled with the sweet melodies of Mary's Magnificat and the power of her iron-willed Fiat coursing through all that we do.

Understand that those who are undisciplined in their spiritual life, nominal in their Christian discipleship, and practicing their faith with little zeal and consistency likely will be unattracted to, struggle with or reject an exacting system such as ours, yet this is exactly what would act as the beginning of a remedy for their lukewarm and disordered life. Yet, counter-intuitively, recognize that some are attracted to our intensely ordered system because it provides what they themselves lack and have been searching for, namely a deeply energetic, coherent and ordered spirituality.

We hear in Proverbs 10:17, "Whoever heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray." Sadly, we've all heard of praesidia neglecting even the basic prescriptions of the handbook, slowly leading to dysfunction and putting them on the road to their demise. Sometimes this is due to ignorance of the handbook and other times a praesidium will ignore pleas for correction from one of its members or a higher council. Either way, neglect of the intensely ordered Legion system will lead to the death of a praesidium as terminal cancer kills a patient. But gladly we know of more legionaries who have heeded the call to discipline, that is to say, who work the Legion system in an intensely ordered way and have borne much fruit. Our experience proves this to be true. And we are grateful for these obedient soldiers of Mary.

My fellow legionary, you can depend on this: the discipline required to follow the Legion's intensely ordered system will, in turn, create in us the same discipline required to follow Christ. Without a doubt, the Legion has produced a great number of saints known to God alone.

Let us be proud of the intensity and orderedness of our Legion system, which mirrors God who is a God of order and operates with the fiery intensity of the Holy Spirit.