

Allocutio Toronto Senatus Council, January 9, 2022 (Rev.) Joseph Moncada
Chapter 11 #4 The Primary Obligation Pages 70-71

If a non-legionary were to ask a legionary, what is the primary obligation of membership in the Legion? The legionary should be able to answer easily, cryptically and precisely, that it is consistent attendance at legion meetings. Furthermore, the praesidium should furnish the reasons for this, especially during the legionary's probationary instruction and formation. Every legionary and praesidium stand to gain from the review of the primacy of the first standing order, namely the punctual and regular attendance at the weekly meetings of the praesidium accompanied by the furnishing of an adequate and audible report on the work done.

"It is the meeting that makes Legion," as the handbook states. It is like a burning lens catching, focusing and concentrating the rays of the sun in such a way that it fires up and kindles and energizes everything and everyone who participates in the meeting, causing it to succeed. It is the indispensable focal point of our organization. If the meeting makes the Legion, then the converse is also true: meeting irregularly or with low attendance or with an unofficial format unmakes the Legion, unmakes a praesidium, and similarly unmakes a council. Officers should be vigilant that even the slightest willful lapse in the duty of attendance beginning as a small malignant tumour does not metastasize throughout the praesidium or council.

Attendance at the legion meeting is the primary obligation, and, therefore, all other obligations follow from it. A temptation may be to think that the performance of works is our primary obligation, but it is not so. While they are valuable, there are no works to perform unless they are appointed at, and reported to the meeting.

The performance of works is always *the before* and *the after* of the meeting. In the meeting, we plan the works and in the following meeting, we assess them. Works should never be assigned without adequate planning nor reported without thoughtful assessment. The performance of the apostolic works naturally and necessarily flows from the meeting and flow back to it through reporting. The effects of the neglect and outright abandonment of attendance even temporarily at the meeting or in any way undervaluing it, inevitably lead members to drop away and apostolic works collapse. The abandonment or diminishment of the legion meeting is equivalent to the abandonment and diminishment of the Legion. Conversely, in a measure, as the meeting is respected so is the power of our organization intensified. (p.70) The fulfillment of one's duty of attendance is the respect a member has for his praesidium meeting. Conversely, the absence without a good reason disrespects the meeting and one's fellow praesidium members. The same can be applied to council meetings.

When one does a diagnosis of a struggling and or failing praesidium or a postmortem on a failed or closed praesidium, one should not be surprised to often find the willful neglect of the praesidium meeting as part of its pathology. When councils do their visitations, they must view a high rate of regular attendance as a sign of health to be commended and a low rate of attendance as a sign of illness to be remedied. There is no way to overvalue high-level regular attendance, nor disregard low-level irregular attendance. Members should encourage one

another in regular attendance and the president should tactfully correct any attendance deficiencies among the members.

In the human-machine, in the supernatural entity which is the Legion, each member is glad to *play the part of a cog*. We are in no way demeaned by considering ourselves as a cog in the Legion machinery. While a cog is useless on its own, it is of great value when joined to other cogs as part of a great machine, helping to organize the efforts and magnifying the effects of others.

With this humble attitude, we do not value ourselves above others, but rather consider our very legionary existence and well-being dependent upon others. While cogs are replaceable and positions are refillable, no legionary in his uniqueness is replaceable by another and no position uniquely filled by a legionary is refillable in the same way by another. With this in mind, we should consider each other as unique and irreplaceable family members. Like the birth of a child, the profession of a new legionary brings us gladness, the timely retirement of a lifelong member leads us to thanksgiving, and the abrupt departure or death of a legionary should evoke in us some sadness.

So dear legionaries continue to hold in high esteem and put into faithful practice the duty of attendance at our meetings.