

Allocutio Toronto Senatus August 15, 2022. (Rev.) Joseph Moncada
Chapter 18: Order of the Praesidium meeting, pages 106–107,2

Our Legion system holds punctuality as an indispensable value and necessary function of Legion discipline. Legionaries must be punctual to start the praesidium meeting at the appointed time. He should arrive reasonably early before the start of the meeting to organize himself for it. While the occasional lateness due to unforeseen circumstances is excusable, periodic or chronic lateness is not. The following are reasons for Legion punctuality.

- Punctuality shows that the legionary and his praesidium are organized.
- It reflects a professional attitude and attention to detail.
- It shows that we respect our fellow legionaries' time.
- Being punctual strengthens and reveals your integrity. If you have agreed to meet at a certain time, you have essentially made a promise. And if you say you will be there by 2 pm, and yet arrive at 2:15 pm, you have essentially broken that promise. Being on time shows that you are a legionary of your word.
- Being consistently punctual demonstrates that you are dependable. If a legionary can always be found at his post to carry out his duties, other legionaries know they can rely on such a legionary. If he says he will be there, they know he will be there. But if a legionary is not consistently punctual, others cannot depend on him. Fellow legionaries will begin to think he cannot organize his own time, and these doubts will creep into matters beyond the clock. It naturally raises the question: “If he is careless about time, what else is he careless about?”
- Being punctual for the praesidium meeting helps build and maintain your confidence as a legionary. It teaches that you can depend on yourself. It shows that you can organize your time, and pay attention to details.
- Being punctual assures you are at your best. When you show up a little early, you have a few minutes to collect your thoughts, review your notes, and prepare your materials.
- Fellow legionaries are glad to see you when you arrive at the meeting, but they are gladder still when you come on time.
- Being punctual shows your respect for other legionaries. Being chronically late is a selfish act because it puts one's needs above the praesidium. You may need an extra minute to do what you would like, but in getting that extra minute for yourself, you take it away from others.

- Being late is a form of stealing because when you make others wait for you, you rob minutes from them that they will never get back.
- Being late disturbs the experiences of other people. Think of a student who interrupts a professor in the middle of his lecture; the family which climbs over you to get to their seats in the middle of the row in the movie theatre; people who arrive late for Holy Mass in full view of others.
- Being late strains relationships. When one is late in meeting others, it may make them feel undervalued, that whatever one could not pull oneself away from was more important than the praesidium meeting or that the meeting did not mean enough to warrant sufficient time to arrive on schedule.

Those who are consistently late:

- Those who are consistently late may tend to misperceive the passage of time. They underestimate how much time has passed and then begin running around in a panic, trying to get out the door.
- They typically underestimate the length of time it takes to do things, even when there is plenty of evidence to the contrary.
- Unpunctual people are perennial optimists. They believe they can do a whole bunch of things in a limited amount of time, or that each thing won't take as long as it really will. This kind of magical thinking makes them late.

How to be more punctual.

- Do not procrastinate. People who struggle with being late are often prone to procrastination in all areas of their lives.
- Avoid being easily distracted. Those who are easily distracted have difficulty being punctual because on the way from point A to point B, they get pulled into point C. They are headed out the door and figured it would not hurt to check their email before they go, and then as you check your email, they decide to check Facebook too, and before they know it, 10 minutes have slipped away.
- **Tips for arriving on time:**
- If you are by habit unpunctual, admit the problem to yourself and do not rationalize it. Decide that being punctual is not unreasonable but very important. Legionaries who expect their fellow legionaries to be punctual for the meeting are not unreasonable.
- Punctuality is a matter of personal integrity. As legionaries, we have made a common agreement to be on time for our meetings.
- As part of the Legion, everyone is counting on you to be on time for the meeting.

Punctuality forms part of the machinery of the Legion praesidium meeting. Fidelity to our Legion apostolate motivates us to practice punctuality as an expression of our dedication to Our Lady's wish that we faithfully work the Legion system.

Surely, the Blessed Mother was punctual throughout her life. Out of charity toward her neighbour, she would not keep people waiting for her. She esteemed punctuality as an aspect of orderliness, knowing that God is a God of order and not disorder.

- Aim to arrive 10 to 15 minutes early for the meeting.