

Allocutio Toronto Senatus by (Rev) Joseph Moncada

November 13, 2022 Ch 17: the Souls of our Departed Legionaries, Pages 103–105

To serve this section of the Handbook and my Allocutio on it, I will read excerpts from the Catechism of the Catholic Church to remind you of the Church's doctrine on the reality of purgatory:

THE FINAL PURIFICATION, OR PURGATORY

1030 All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death, they undergo purification, to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven.

1031 The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned.⁶⁰⁶...

As for certain lesser faults, we must believe that, before the Final Judgment, there is a purifying fire. He who is truth says that whoever utters blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will be pardoned neither in this age nor in the age to come. From this sentence, we understand that certain offences can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come.⁶⁰⁸

1032 ...From the beginning, the Church has honoured the memory of the dead and offered prayers in suffrage for them, above all the Eucharistic sacrifice, so that, thus purified, they may attain the beatific vision of God. The Church also commends almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance undertaken on behalf of the dead:

...If Job's sons were purified by their father's sacrifice, why would we doubt that our offerings for the dead bring them some consolation? Let us not hesitate to help those who have died and to offer our prayers for them.

Brothers and sisters, be encouraged and consoled with the sure hope that when we come to the end of our life, we will die as noble legionary soldiers, having persevered in our Legionary Promise, confirmed forever in our legionary service. To be legionaries for all eternity will be our reward— legionaries forever--secure in the knowledge that our call and election to the Legion of Mary can never and will never be revoked. This is our ardent desire!

The Legion of Mary has shaped and formed us for our eternity, our happiness and our status in heaven. We will take our position among the ranks of the angels and the saints interceding for the pilgrim faithful on earth and those being purified in purgatory. Our place in heaven will correspond to the race and task that we had completed here on earth. For each legionary, a good portion of his heavenly task will correspond to his legionary status in heaven enabling him to intercede for his brother and sister legionaries being purified in purgatory and those living and battling in the apostolate here on earth.

As Queen of the Communion of the saints, Mary is Queen of all legionaries in heaven, purgatory and on earth. In the Book of Revelation, she is depicted wearing a crown of twelve stars symbolically representing the twelve apostles. But I don't think we do violence to the biblical text by claiming that it indicates something broader, that by extension all her children will be stars in her heavenly crown. So, I don't think we need to limit the text to twelve stars. Remember that in the Book of the prophet Daniel, "...those who are our wise shall shine like the brightness in the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever." (Daniel 12:3) We hope to be a star in her crown.

Every day in our Legion prayers we utter the petition that "the Legion should reassemble without loss of anyone." To this end, though the force of Our Lady's intercession, the Lord assists us through dangers and difficulties encountered in our Legion apostolate as he had previously assisted our deceased legionaries in theirs. They continue to count on and benefit from our prayers for them, and in turn, they act as our intercessory benefactors.

We experience sorrow over the death of an active or auxiliary legionary, especially one closest to us, who was in our praesidium or council. His death lays claim to our charity. There is a debt of love that we owe him which compels us to offer our prayers and sufferings to God for his quick and complete deliverance from purgatory. Some of the debt of this love is paid daily in the portion of our prayers for the Legionary faithful departed. Above all, when an active member of a praesidium dies, the praesidium should offer as soon as possible a Mass for the repose of his soul. Furthermore, each member of his praesidium should recite all the Legion prayers, including the rosary, at least once for the repose of his soul. Our Handbook encourages as many legionaries as possible, including those of other praesidia to attend his funeral Mass and accompany his remains to the burial site. To pray for the repose of his soul, especially by assisting at his funeral Mass is a spiritual work of mercy, and assisting at his burial is a corporal work of mercy pleasing to God.

The handbook encourages us to accompany our deceased comrade with the recitation of the Rosary and other Legion prayers right to the very end, that is to say, while the interment is taking place. The Legion prayers could be recited immediately after the official prayers of the Church. Not only is this a benefit to the deceased, but what a source of deep consolation to the sorrowing relatives, to the legionaries themselves, and all the friends present! (Legion handbook page 104) Our graveside prayers witness to our love for our faithful departed legionary.

In November, the month traditionally dedicated to praying for the holy souls in purgatory, the Handbook prescribes that each praesidium should have a Mass celebrated for the souls of the legionary departed, both active and auxiliary, not of that praesidium alone but of the whole world. I recommend that if the Mass is to be an announced Mass then book it well in advance, perhaps months in advance, because in many parishes publicly announced Mass bookings usually quickly fill up, leaving few or no availabilities.

Lastly, let us remember that Mary is the Queen and Mother of the souls in purgatory. So in our prayers, let us commend the poor soul legionaries to her and trust that in their purification she will comfort and prepare and then present them to her Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ their eternal rest and reward.

Yours in Jesus and Mary,

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