

Allocutio Toronto Senatus Council July 9, 2023 by Father Joseph Moncada  
Chapter 18 Order of the Praesidium Meeting, Section 10 The recitation of the Catena Legionis  
pp. 113-114

My allocutio is on some parts of the prayers of the Catena Legionis. I will comment in a more detailed manner on the substance of the Magnificat and other prayers, which form the Catena Legionis, in a future allocutio on chapter 22 of the prayers of the Legion.

Approximately midway between the signing of the minutes and the end of the meeting, all the legionaries stand and recite the Catena Legionis. Our standing posture is more expressive of action than of supplication, which is better indicated by kneeling. But we will not overstate this distinction, because there is supplication in the Catena as expressed in "O Mary, conceived without sin. Pray for us who have recourse to you." and in "O Lord Jesus Christ, our mediator with the Father etc.," which pleads for God's mercy and favours through Mary. While it may not be obvious and explicit, the Magnificat, with its elements of adoration, praise and thanksgiving to God bound together, necessarily and implicitly forms a great canticle of supplication.

The Magnificat and the antiphon which precedes and follows it, borrow from the Church's evening prayer or Vespers of the Divine Office, also known as the Liturgy of the Hours. Even the sign of the cross, which is made at the first verse of the Magnificat perfectly imitates the same in the Church's Vespers.

The Catena Legionis is a Latin expression which means the Legion's chain or the chain of the Legion. The word Catena means chain. The use of the word implies no superficial link between the Legion and the daily life of all its active and auxiliary members, but rather a glue-like bond fastening them one to another and to the Blessed Mother through prayer. Like a series of metal rings passing through one another, each legionary is mystically allied to every other legionary in the world by the Legion's chain of daily prayer. "The name is suggestive, too, of the obligation of daily recitation." (Handbook pp.194-195) A debt we owe to one another.

By praying the Magnificat, we are praying to God with Mary's inspired words, and as such we are praying to him with his own words. Do not think for a moment that Mary prayed the Magnificat once and for all at the Visitation, rather understand that she eternally continues her Canticle in heaven. Moreover, mystically bound to her and our voices in unison with hers, praying the Magnificat we are taken up into the divine liturgy of heaven, that is the worship of God by the angels and the saints. So it is accurate to say that the Catena Legionis binds us the Church on earth, militant and pilgrim, to the saints in heaven, and to our brother and sister legionaries who are enjoying the beatific vision.

Our recitation of the Catena, especially because of the Magnificat, is the most beautiful, the most incomparable moment in the Legion because we are reciting "Mary's prayer par excellence." (see paragraph 4 and italics on the bottom of page 113.) It is sung by her legionary sons and daughters and soldiers daily across time and space. As armies sing songs and anthems as they go off to war, so too, the Catena is our battle song as we continue our military campaign for our Lord and our Lady. She who is "Terrible as an army set in battle array," as we proclaim in the antiphon, has filled the ranks of her army with humble handmaids and menservants, making them terrible to the infernal enemies of the Church but meek and humble for Christ to the world. The Catena Legionis with its Magnificat is for us a call to arms, a battle cry, our battle hymn.