



Allocutio for September 2025
by Rev. Fr. Joseph Moncada, Toronto Senatus Spiritual Director

*Based on the Handbook, Chapter 20 Legion System Invariable,
Section 2, page 127*

We learned in the first paragraph of chapter 20 that legionaries are not free to change the rules and practises of the Legion as they choose. The second paragraph begins by noting a general experience and, indeed, a warning that for some people, the name of an organization has no fixed meaning. Implicitly contained in the name of any organization is its mission, ideals, rules, practices, and its very spirit. But for some members, while keeping the literal name of their organization, they keep it in name only as they attempt to empty it of its substance. For them, it is changeable and malleable according to their own false understanding, whims, ignorance, and opinions. In this category of persons, we find both those of goodwill yet ignorant of the Legion system, and those of bad will—usually very few—who, while knowing the system will be mischievous, will bend it to their own thinking and attempt to persuade others to do so.

What heresy is to the Church and her doctrines, invariability is to Legion and its system. As the Church has had and has its heretics, which it must always guard against and root out, so too the Legion has had and likely always will have its own formal and material heretics, so to speak. According to the Church, a formal heretic is a person who knowingly and wilfully denies or doubts divinely revealed truth. A material heretic is someone who, through blameless ignorance or in good faith, holds a belief that is objectively contrary to the teachings of the Church, but is not aware that his belief is heretical. Analogously, in the Legion, it is possible to have formal and material heretics regarding the understanding and practises of the Legion system. You may have never heard it explained this way, but the analogy is appropriate.

Those who would empty the Legion of Mary of its meaning consider it, as the Handbook says, “a virtual tyranny” if they’re not permitted to fill the Legion with their false interpretations and the faulty practices that follow from them. Tyranny is a system of government in which the ruler has unlimited power, exercised oppressively, unjustly, severely and even cruelly. The “modernisers,” as the Handbook calls them, sometimes harbour a secret belief that their leaders, the Legion's leadership structure, and the very Handbook itself are tyrannical. While they may never use the words tyranny or tyrannical, they will imagine or express it as unfairly inflexible and impractically rigid.

While some people give their house a fresh coat of paint or renovate a room or two or the whole house, Modernizers like the idea of providing the Legion of Mary a different coat of paint altogether and renovating this or that part of the Legion system. Their intended renovations are indeed innovations that lead to deformities and the eventual collapse of a praesidium. For our part, to maintain the integrity of the Legion, we will guard against “modernisers” and any modernizing ideas that may creep into our minds.