

THE LEGION OF MARY IN OUR PARISHES



Legion of Mary

Maria Igoe writes: 'It was in November 1979 that Fr Hugh Gordon gave permission for the Legion of Mary to set up a group (Praesidium) in St John's. Several parishioners came forward to get it started. As happens it is not always the ones who start who remain the longest, but we are very grateful for their efforts to get it established.

I joined in July 1980 because I had experience of evangelising with the Legion and I loved it. We did have some success bringing people back to church and some of our contacts became Catholics. But the main purpose is to increase our own spirituality and bring us closer to Christ and his mother, Mary. We have particular devotion to the Holy Spirit.

The year after I joined, Kathy Gallagher joined and remained a Legionary for the rest of her life. She had been asked to join when she was young, but on enquiring what she had to do, said she would not be able to go out visiting people. Of course, that all changed with a deeper prayer life, and she spent many years visiting parishioners in their homes, in Nursing Homes and in Hospitals.

St Mary Magdalene's provided us with a President in Andrew Banks, who served for 6 years, and requested that we say the Legion Prayers when his body was brought into the church the night before his funeral.

An attempt was made to start a Praesidium in St Mary Magdalene's, where there had been one in the past. 3 elderly ladies came forward. Mention must be made of Mary Pelosi, whom I greatly admired for her goodness and prayerfulness. I think of her often. The other 2 ladies were Mrs O'Hara and Mrs Smith.

Unfortunately, due to ill health the Praesidium had to close. I am pleased to say that the Legion Statue still stands in St Mary Magdalene's church. We would love it if any St MM parishioners would join us.

In St John's we had many excellent members over the years. The biggest number we had at one time was 18. We have had members from many countries, including 2 from Colombia, from Ireland, Poland, Malawi etc. Over the years our numbers have diminished but we are able to carry on. Recently we had only 4 ladies, as men are not coming forward as they did. We thought we would not be joined by any men. However, I believe in answer to prayer, 2 men came to our Meeting on the same day. They have been faithful and have made the Legion Promise. This has been a great happiness for us. As we continue with our weekly Meetings and the work we are able to carry out, we are grateful for the friendship that being members of the Legion of Mary brings.

A lot has happened over these 46 years, and we aim to keep soldiering on for more years to come.'

(If interested in learning more, please contact me, Maria Igoe, on 07981 333219).