



LEGION OF MARY
FOUNDED 7 SEPTEMBER 1921

Conference Program

9th Annual Legion of Mary Conference
September 30, 2023 – Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption

- 8:00 **Holy Sacrifice of the Mass** (at the Main Church) – Fr. Gabriel Wankar, Spiritual Director, San Mateo County Comitium - Celebrant and Homilist
- 9:30 **Come Holy Ghost/As I Kneel Before You** (led by Sis. Carmen Perlas)
Legion of Mary Opening Prayers and Holy Rosary (Council Presidents)
- 10:00 **Coffee and Breakfast** (at the Cathedral Hall)
- 10:35 **Opening Remarks** – Bro. Raymond Frost, President, San Francisco Senatus
- 10:40 **Keynote Address** – The Very Reverend Kevin Kennedy, Pastor and Rector – Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption
- 11:05 **Overview of the Conference Theme and Announcements** – Bro. Ando Perlas (followed by ‘breakout sessions’ – English and Spanish tracks).
- 11:15 **First Conference “Doctrine on Grace, Justification and Virtue”**
San Francisco Senatus (Bro. Ando Perlas in English and Sis. Angela Miller in Spanish)
- 11:45 **Second Conference – “Doctrine on the Mystical Body of Christ”**
Oakland Comitium (Sis. Priscilla Abaya in English/ Sis Gloria Maldonado in Spanish)
- 12:15 **Catena – Lunch and Entertainment** (*Entertainment starts at 12:45 at the Main Hall*)
- 1:15 **Third Conference – “Ecumenism and Outside the Church There is No Salvation”** *Sacramento Comitium (Bro. Eligio Valdez in English/ Sis. Guillermina Vargas in Spanish)*
- 1:45 **Fourth Conference – “Doctrine on Catholic Morality”**
San Mateo County Comitium (Bro Gene Lopez/Sis Lorna Garcia in English and Sis. Dora Cruz/Bro. Rosendo Cardenas in Spanish)
- 2:25 **Afternoon Break**
- 2:30 **Fifth Conference – “Doctrine on Mary (Mariology)”**
Stockton Comitium (Sis. Marylee Calad in English /Sis Elia Ramirez in Spanish)
- 3:00 **Sixth Conference – “Sacraments and Sacramentals”**
Monterey Curia (Bro Mark Powers in English) – Sta. Rosa Spanish Curia (Sis, Vicenta Vega/Bro. Rosendo Cardenas in Spanish)
- 3:30 **Q&A – in the Hall (for English) and in Conference Rooms (for Spanish)**
- 4:00 **Concluding Prayers – followed by: “THE INVESTITURE OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL” – Deacon Christoph Sandoval**

*Message from Rev. Father Lawrence Goode
Spiritual Director, San Francisco Senatus*



Dear Legionaries,

The hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Legion of Mary got me started ‘looking back’. Those ordinary women that made up the first Legion of Mary in Dublin and laughed so heartily when their founder talked about a “worldwide movement”. Yet just barely 10 years later the Legion was in Africa, in China and in the U.S. There’s hardly a place today where the Legion is not. I’ll never forget that day at the YMI building when Fr. Rasmussen asked me to take his place. I was shaking in my boots at my first meeting. I shook in my boots even more when I went to my first Apostolate to the Crowd at Market and Powell in San Francisco. I had been told never to go out at night in San Francisco. It was too dangerous. Yet every month I heard reports of elderly women going out into one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in San Francisco. Who else but Legion members would not be afraid. May Mary our Mother inspire us as she inspired the first Legionaries in Dublin and in San Francisco. We have a log to live up to.

*Message From Bro. Raymond Frost
President - San Francisco Senatus*



We are blessed to have as the topic for our Senatus conference, “The Catechism of the Legion of Mary Handbook”.

During my years as a member of the Legion of Mary I have heard a number of sincere endorsements of the Legion of Mary handbook. One in particular stands out in my mind. A newly ordained priest assigned to a difficult foreign mission and feeling rather overwhelmed asked his superior what he would be doing there. The superior gave him a copy of the Legion handbook which the new missionary put to good use during his many successful years of priesthood.

This priest’s experience points to the fact that our Legion handbook is totally rooted in the faith of the Catholic Church. The Legion of Mary exists to help the Church fulfill Christ’s mission – to go forth and teach all nations. By faithfully studying the handbook we understand better the teachings of the Church so that we can live our lives as faithful Catholics and share that faith with those around us.

As we are in the period of a Eucharistic Revival in the Church in America, I would like to highlight a quote from the Legion of Mary handbook, Chapter 8, paragraph 4 “The Eucharist our Treasure”. “The Eucharist is the center and source of grace: therefore, it must be the very keystone of the Legionary scheme. The most ardent activity will accomplish nothing of value if it forgets for a moment that its main object is to establish the reign of the Eucharist in all hearts”.

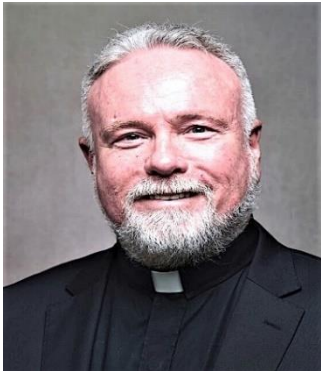
Let us work in union with Mary to accomplish the reign of the Eucharist in all hearts.

Mass Celebrant and Homilist



Father Gabriel Wankar is the Parochial Vicar at the Church of the Epiphany in San Francisco. Prior to this assignment, he served at several parishes in the Archdiocese of San Francisco such as Our Lady of the Pillar (Half Moon Bay) Our Lady Perpetual Help (Daly City), Our Lady of Mercy (Daly City) and at the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Belmont). Reverend Father Wankar is a native of Gboko, a town in Benue, Nigeria. Fr. Wankar was ordained in 2004 and worked in the Diocese of Makurdi before coming to Berkeley for graduate studies in 2011. He has been assigned to the Archdiocese of San Francisco since 2015 where he was recently incardinated. Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone officially appointed him as the Spiritual Director of the Legion of Mary, San Mateo County Comitium and currently serves this position. He studied in the Jesuit School of Theology (Santa Clara University) and holds a doctorate in Systematic Theology, and is completing another doctorate in Sustainable Development.

Key Note Speaker



Very Reverend Father Kevin Kennedy is the Pastor and Rector of Sain Mary's Cathedral where he was installed on the First Sunday of Advent, Nov. 27, at the 11:00 a.m. Mass by San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone. Raised in San Mateo and a graduate of Immaculate Heart of Mary in Belmont and St. Junipero Serra High School, Father Kevin Kennedy was ordained in 1999 and is also the pastor at Our Lady of Fatima Byzantine Church in San Francisco. He attended the University of San Francisco and later graduated from Santa Clara University while he was a seminarian within the Discalced Carmelite Order. Before entering the seminary, Father Kennedy spent a number of years in social service work, including at the St. Anthony Foundation in San Francisco, focusing on issues of hunger, homelessness, mental illness and the rehabilitation of delinquent youth.

Acknowledgements

The Legion of Mary (the San Francisco Senatus and all its attached councils and praesidia) expresses its gratitude to Reverend Father Kevin Kennedy, Reverend Father Jerald Geronimo and Deacon Christoph Sandoval and all the staff members of the Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption for welcoming us at this year's Conference. We appreciate all of you and rest assured that you will be in our prayers. We are, as always grateful to Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone for his continued support of the Legion of Mary. We are also indebted to all our spiritual directors, priests and bishops for their unyielding trust and confidence in the ministry of the Legion of Mary. And to all of you who helped in the preparation of this year's conference, to our altar servers, ushers, speakers, entertainers and volunteers, THANK YOU. Finally, this would not have been possible without your presence, so thank you to all attendees for being here and spending this memorable day together in the spirit of Our Blessed Mother. Hope to see you again next year! To Jesus through Mary!

“The Legion of Mary presents the True Face of the Catholic Church”

Saint Pope John XXIII’s statement, “The Legion of Mary presents the true face of the Catholic Church” invokes in every Legionary some mixed thoughts and emotions. One might feel proud and happy of the trust that the great pope has bestowed upon us, ordinary lay Catholic men and women of the Church. But on the other hand, there is a certain sense of tremendous responsibility as we have been charged this herculean task of presenting to the world the true face of the Church.

What does it mean? It means that the Legion of Mary does what the Church does and that is to be a reflection of Christ to others. We are expected to bring forth Christ to the world through the works of apostleship, of “personal service” and a self-sacrificing love. It is a life-long commitment of giving ourselves, our time and talents so that others may live in eternity. The Legionary must have the character and spirit of a missionary, never discouraged by those ‘postponed successes’ in the pursuit of a lost soul. And like our saints and holy priests, a Legionary must be a person of prayer, living a sacramental life - attending the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, receiving the Holy Eucharist, frequenting the Sacrament of Penance and spending time in front of the Blessed Sacrament in countless hours of adoration.

If we are to be a reflection of the Church, we must be ready to be persecuted and ridiculed for our faith. We are called to serve God under the most difficult situations. We must be, as the Handbook says, obsessed with this final command, “Go preach the Gospel to all the ends of the earth” by leading souls to Him through the works of evangelization. We must look to Mary, the Mother of the Church and the Queen of Apostles as our leader. And thus, to present the true face of the Catholic Church, the Legion of Mary, must be the face of a loving mother, full of grace, full of hope as she cries to her children, “Come to my Son, He awaits you.’

Frank Duff knew well in the face of Ireland’s Protestant movement in the 1920’s that to be an effective evangelizer of the Catholic Church, a Legionary must be equipped with ammunitions spiritually and doctrinally. He appealed to every member to be sanctified, making holiness their primary object. He urged everyone to have a real and lively devotion to Mary, as she is the primary shield of our protection. He placed the Holy Spirit as our source of strength and courage invoking Him in the Legion Promise so that we may be endowed with His gifts. Included in our prayers are invocation of our Archangels and the thrones of angels as they are the best allies in this warfare. He also made sure that two of the greatest apostles, Saints Peter and Paul to be our models of courage and strength. He placed the Eucharist as the real measure of the success in our apostolic works. As if our spiritual weaponry was not enough, Frank Duff further encouraged us to attend Mass daily. And then, we have the Rosary at the centerpiece of all Legion meetings, functions and activities.

Finally, we have yet another weapon in the Legion, the Handbook. It is the guide of our operations and contains two most important aspects of our organization - the Legion system of governance and the doctrinal elements of our Catholic religion. The former consists of rules and regulations, of suggestion as to works, of duties of officers and members, etc. And the latter of the teachings of the truths of our Catholic faith – of the Trinity, Incarnation, Sacraments, Grace, Virtue, Morality, Communion of Saints to name a few. We hope that this year’s conference brings to light some of these doctrinal teachings and guide us in our works of evangelization. This is our prophetic duty as Legionaries.

Archbishop McQuaid perfectly expressed the connection of doctrine with apostleship as follows: ***“There cannot be in the Church’s teaching an inner body of doctrine which only the few can grasp”. This has been proved by the fact that countless legionaries, ordinary and even simple people, have completely grasped those ideas and have made them food and fibre for their lives. Neither are those ideas unnecessary. Actually, they must be reasonably comprehended if the apostolate is to be properly fulfilled, for they are only the common principles, that is to say the very life, of apostleship. Without a sufficient understanding of those principles, the apostolate would be deprived of its true meaning - its spiritual roots, and would not have the right to be called Christian at all. The difference between the Christian apostolate and a vague campaign of “doing good” is as the distance between heaven and earth.” (HB p. 200)***