

Auxiliary Member Follow-Up

By Father Francis J. Peffley

The handbook has a section on the recruiting and after-care of Auxiliary members, and it emphasizes that not only should Active legionaries recruit new Auxiliaries but they should faithfully follow up and keep in touch with them. There is a great harvest of holiness that can be reaped among Auxiliary members, and every Active legionary is exhorted to try to gain new ones. After starting with relatives and family members, the outreach would be to co-workers, neighbors and of course to the people met on Legion assignments.

The handbook is emphatic about the after-care of Auxiliary members, beginning with the need to visit them regularly – certainly at least once a year – and more often is possible, depending on how many names are on the praesidium roll. The main reason for a regular and frequent contact with the Auxiliaries is that they are official *members* and *are owed the Legion's attention and affection*. The visiting of Auxiliaries is a valid Legion work to be done with the same sense of importance as any other assignment. To merely “check” to see if they are still saying the prayers is not the reason for the work of Auxiliary visitation; a verifying phone call or letter would suffice for that, but would not qualify as the personal visit required by the Legion. They are naturally to be notified about the Acies ceremony and special Legion events, such as an “Evening for Auxiliaries” or an Auxiliary Members Brunch, which are excellent ways to thank them for their prayers and to further acquaint them with a wider vision of legionary life. The personal contact is what makes all the difference.

What to Say

Legionaries visiting their Auxiliaries should go with a grateful heart, since the primary purpose of the visit is to thank them for their prayers, to let them know how appreciated and vital are these prayers, not only to the praesidium they belong to, but to the Legion throughout the world. (By the way, it is very often found that Auxiliaries do not know the name of the praesidium they belong to! It is their Legion home address and they should be reminded on every visit to include that title of Our Lady in the tessera prayer). They should be told how many members are in *their* praesidium, and in general what kind of works are being done, etc.; this can instill a greater sense of *belonging* to the Legion and inspire them to pray specifically for Legion projects. Offering words of encouragement to persevere in their daily Legion rosary and prayers if they have been a bit lax and to start again if they have ceased to say them is a most important duty of the Active legionary whose overall purpose is always to bring people closer to God.

With this principle in mind, they can be asked if they have made the de Montfort True Devotion consecration, and, if not, it can be explained and the thirty-three day preparation book left with them. They could be asked to consider *Adjutorian* membership, which deepens their Catholic life and their appreciation of the Legion by including daily Mass and Holy Communion and some form of approved office of the Church in their Auxiliary membership. And of course, if feasible, they should be asked to consider becoming an Active member; letting them know the Legion's outlook on the desperate need it has for members to reach out to souls with Mary's Legion hands.

What to Offer

The most obvious item to take on Auxiliary visitation is a supply of tessera (including the large-print one) for their possibly worn-out copy. Next would be a copy of *Maria Legionis*, the official Legion magazine, which will inform them on where their Legion prayers go as they read about the Legion throughout the world. (Back date copies and subscription envelopes can be had from the magazine office in Philadelphia). To encourage a personal subscription would be ideal for keeping the Auxiliaries periodically in touch with their organization. Books on the lives of Frank Duff, Alfie Lambe and Edel Quinn, with a supply of prayer leaflets could be given to acquaint them with our three candidates for canonization. To offer the Auxiliary members the ceremony and devotion of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart or the Pilgrim Virgin statue for their home would bring them many blessings and increase the friendship with the members of the praesidium. It's also very beneficial to give a tape or CD to close the visit. Talks on Auxiliary membership, True Devotion to Mary, Apologetics, or talks by Frank Duff or Legion priests like Frs. Aedan McGrath and Father Bradshaw, would fill many hours of their week with the history, ideals and spirit of the Legion and the Catholic Church. As inquiry of what was thought of these would be a perfect opening for the next visit to the important and much appreciated Auxiliary member.