Our First 100 Days  
Three Newly Ordained Legionaries Reflect

We asked three Legionaries ordained in May to reflect on their first 100 days as a new priest. Here are their responses.

A Sacrament of Service Fr. Jared Loehr, LC
What a huge gift! It feels like a giant hot potato of grace that I have to pass around or I will get burned. It’s more for others than me. I realize now how similar the priesthood is to marriage in that it’s a sacrament of service for the good of others.

Each day is unique and it seems like my whole life prepared me for sharing this gift. After ordination I got to pray in Medjugorje and concelebrate in Croatian! In France I got to celebrate a Mother’s Day Mass in a cathedral.

My five weeks at boy’s camps were a total blessing. Two weeks at Camp Bocamb in Louisiana where we had inner city street missions serving food to and praying with people living under bridges. One week in Round Rock, Texas where I helped with sacraments and gave talks to the boys about getting fit for eternity. One week in Houston with many confessions. It was amazing to see how spiritually sensitive the boys are regarding their relation to God and others. Finally, in College Station, Texas, I got a glimpse of how God works in our hearts and brings us to himself in confession.

First Masses of thanksgiving were particularly over abundant outpourings of grace. Wonderful people throughout my life who helped me to be who I am and helped me to see how spoiled I am by God’s love. Some of them mentioned to me how God challenged them to come back to the faith.

Now I’m heading back to a new youth team in Houston with newly ordained Deacon Kevin Gillis and two Mission Corps missionaries. Please pray that I will be faithful in passing on this huge grace of the priestly vocation.

A New Perspective Fr. John Studer, LC
I think that the best advice I got before my ordination was from a good Legionary priest friend who was ordained a couple of years ago. He told me to get ready because now I was going to have to learn to see the world from a completely new perspective, that of Christ. Maybe not every new priest sees it this way, but this has been my experience.

It’s true that I am the same person. I am the same John Studer who for 33 years wasn’t a priest and has lots of problems. Ordination does not automatically make you holy or perfect. But now, you have to learn to be different because you have in your hands the power to work miracles.

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After consecrating the Body and Blood of Christ, I feel like I have to be different. I can’t see people in the same way; I need to be more compassionate, more Christ-like, I need to be ready for the cross. And I have realized that requires effort on my part. I need to learn how to act the way I should.

The sacrament of Penance is another moment that overwhelms me. I can’t mention anything specific, but to see how God’s grace works to overcome sin is incredible. To see and hear in a very concrete way how he acts in the souls of so many men and women. That teaches you to see and hear more like Christ.

The first 100 days have been intense and joyful. Part of this beautiful experience was to be the chaplain for a group of high school boys who spent the summer doing apostolate and service. My current assignment is directing ECYD activities in a section of Mexico City.

The Lord does make the cross felt as well. To end this short testimony I want to thank all those who have supported me along the way and I ask for continued prayers. I know that my priesthood is a great and unmerited gift. I pray that I will be faithful until death.

Jesus, Give Me Your Heart  Fr. Jerek Sherber, LC

These first 100 days as a priest have been amazing. Humbling and amazing. Humbling because, on the one hand, people have shown me so much kindness and gratitude for my vocation, and yet, on the other hand, more than ever I feel my littleness. Amazing because, well, God is amazing and he has called me to participate in Christ’s priesthood.

I still get startled sometimes when a priest in my community asks me to hear his confession. Sometimes when I stand before the altar, I catch myself saying, “Wait! Oh, right. I’m supposed to be wearing this. I’m a priest.” It took a while to get here. I hope it takes a while to sink in. I hope I never get used to being a priest.

To tell you the truth, I haven’t really been praying too much about what it means to be a priest. I will, but I haven’t yet. Everything is just so new, so right now I’m more just experiencing what it means to be a priest and looking with wonder on this great thing God has done for me.

One aspect of the priesthood that speaks loudly to me is that, through my priesthood, I am called to make Christ present to those around me. Present through the Sacraments – especially the Eucharist and Confession – but also present in my person. When a priest spends time with someone, it shows that person that they’re worth God’s time. When a priest listens, it shows people that God listens. When a priest blesses or encourages, it can change someone’s whole outlook. I want Christ to be able to listen and speak and love in me.

My prayer during my ordination was “Jesus, give me your heart and make me a priest of the Eucharist.” Please join me in asking the Lord for this favor.
During his 28 years as a Legionary priest, Fr. Kevin Meehan, rector of our Novitiate and College of Humanities, has had several assignments involving seminarian formation. He has worked in Rome, Canada, and the USA. In 2017, he returned to the place where he began as a novice, Cheshire, Connecticut. He brings his experience to serve the 90 novices and seminarians in residence there.

A new guide for Legionary formation, *Ratio Institutionis*, was also introduced in 2017. This 390-page guide is the first such comprehensive guide for the Legion. It is organized in two main parts: 1) the goal of formation and the means to achieve it, including the identity and lifestyle of a Legionary, and 2) the stages of formation.

Fr. Kevin describes the task of a seminarian discovering his identity as part of his “human maturity.” Having a clear sense of personal identity is essential for a young man to make a mature vocational decision. Thus, formation aims to be a process of individual awareness rather than simple adherence to a set of disciplines and rules. There should be a natural “fit” between the person and the process of becoming a priest.

The formation guide also defines more clearly the relationship between vocational discernment and the stages of formation. For example, it is recommended that each stage of formation last at least two full years to ensure a thorough discernment. Also, perpetual vows are now postponed until a man has served his apostolic internship, giving him a clearer view of his future life as a Legionary priest.

A copy of *Ratio Institutionis* is given to each Legionary novice so he will have an understanding of how to discern his vocation and the steps that will lead him toward the priesthood. As helpful as this guide has been, it is still a “working document.” As such, it will be presented for approval at the next general chapter in 2020, where improvements may be made based on the experience of the past few years.

The Mother of Sorrows

Living God’s Will with Courage, Dedication, Steadfastness

The Mother of Sorrows stood steadfastly by the foot of the Cross and was Christ’s strongest supporter and collaborator. When the love of his heart is revealed by the soldier’s lance, she is courageously standing by him, not just accepting, but seconding God’s will in the most difficult moment of her life – having to watch her beloved God and innocent Son being tortured to death amid the taunting crowd in spite of his innocence. She is the model of the courage and dedication that a Regnum Christi member should have to live God’s will.

The Regnum Christi Movement is dedicated to the Sacred Heart and the Mother of Sorrows, whose feast day is September 15th.
“Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. - - - So, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.” Matthew 6: 24-34

1. Why Worry? What can be added to Christ’s beautiful images in the Gospel, urging us to trust in the loving providence of our heavenly Father? All that is necessary is to ponder how God feeds the birds of the air and clothes the lilies of the field and to let the reality of his fatherly care for these ephemeral creatures sink deeply into our soul. How much more will he care for us, the crowning work of his hand, his sons and daughters, for whom he sent his only begotten Son to die on the Cross?

2. Stay Focused. Our worries and concerns about the material needs of our daily life make us lose sight of the one thing that is truly necessary: striving for holiness, for the establishment of Christ’s kingdom in our own lives and the lives of those around us. If only we would allow Christ to set our hearts on fire with the consuming passion of zeal for souls, how our lives would change! We would become driven by the mission, constantly urged on by it – and all of our former worries and anxieties would fade into insignificance. Then we, too, could exclaim with Christ, “I have come to light a fire on the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already!” (Luke 12:49)

3. Simplicity of Heart. One virtue that helps us trust God more and grow in apostolic zeal is simplicity of heart. When you grow in simplicity of heart, you will never demand of God that he explain your vocation or your sufferings. Thanks to simplicity of heart, you will always see God’s holy will in everything. Then everything, even pain, becomes wells and rivers of peace and joy. Thanks to simplicity of heart, you will be able to understand people and their misery and give them a helping hand. Thanks to simplicity of heart, you will never harbor hate, an evil wish, a grudge, or an evil thought in your heart. Everything brings you to God.

Lord, help us to grow in simplicity of heart, to recognize everything in my life as coming from your loving hand.
In March of 2018, Pierre Ferragu, began an initiative to invite homeless persons living around Penn Station in New York City for lunch. Pierre is a member of Lumen Institute, an organization founded by New York businessmen, along with a few Regnum Christi members and Legionary priests, to provide personalized formation for leaders. Members make a commitment to engage in projects that help exercise their influence and re-shape culture.

Every month, between three and eight business people gather around 11:30 and ask an equal number of homeless persons to share lunch at a fast food restaurant. The homeless cherish the time spent together even more than the meal. They appreciate having friends. And this is why these encounters are known as “fraternity lunches”. The dictionary defines fraternity as “a feeling of friendship and mutual support within a group.” Pierre says, “We are here with them only because we enjoy being with them, the way you enjoy being with a good friend.”

There is no hidden agenda. Conversations might begin with simple questions such as “Where are you from?” “How was your night?” or “How do you like the food?”. They want “to look at the poor straight in the eyes and meet Jesus where He is. We want to overcome our natural repulsion of them and discover the profound joy of meeting them. It is an opportunity to change our attitude toward poverty.”

Pierre says, “I am regularly stunned by their humanity, which you can experience in the depth of their faith, or their kindness, or their wisdom.” One hope for the future is for others to organize lunch meetings of their own, experiencing the joy of meeting Christ in the poor.

Fr. Mark Haydu, LC, is the chaplain for Lumen Institute. For more information visit: www.lumeninstitute.org

Left to Right: Jean-Pascal Porcherot, Isabel Torres, Charles, Rick Martinez, Pierre Ferragu, Anthony, Joseph, and Ron.

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For the past 10 years, Steve Auth has engaged in sidewalk evangelism in front of Old St. Patrick’s Church in the heart of lower Manhattan. His story and the lessons learned from this experience were recently published in the book The Missionary of Wall Street: From Managing Money to Saving Souls on the Streets of New York.

In his role as a street evangelist, you may find Steve with a rosary, wearing a Regnum Christi mission shirt with an image of Christ on the cross and the words “Be Not Afraid.” You would never guess he’s an Executive Vice-President and Chief Investment Officer for Federated Investment Management Corp with $484.9 billion in assets under management.

“Our ultimate goal is to get people to the sacrament of confession,” Auth says, “to have a converting experience to help their souls for eternity.” However, a missionary may need to approach between 20 and 40 people before finding someone who will speak to them.

“Are you Catholic?” – “Would you like a rosary?” – “Would you like to go to confession?” are some typical conversation starters. Missionaries have to expect a lot of verbal abuse, but with patience they will eventually meet someone who God has prepared for this moment – someone who wants to change their life.

Steve is a member of Regnum Christi and sits on the national board of the Lumen Institute which he helped to found in New York City. His fascinating book, filled with dozens of riveting and funny stories, can be ordered online from Amazon or through Sophia Press (800) 888-9344.
**Spiral Direction Certification Program**

**Meeting a Pressing Need**

Even if you enjoy an active parish life and Catholic friends, it can often seem that making progress in one’s relationship with Christ is a solitary effort. It’s not easy to find a person with the necessary skills and qualities to accompany you through the ups, downs, and wrong-turns of your spiritual life. Finding someone to help you keep moving forward can make a tremendous difference in fulfilling your vocation. That’s part of the role of a spiritual director.

Divine Mercy University has developed an online certification program to prepare students to become spiritual directors. The Spiritual Direction Certification Program, which began in January 2019, includes six online courses offered in eight week modules, two onsite residences, and practicum. The courses are offered three times a year, in January, May, and August.

Pope Francis gives a good example of what you might discuss with your spiritual director: “...in spiritual direction, I must examine what is happening in my heart, where the Spirit is moving, if I felt desolation or consolation, if I am tired, why I am sad. These are things to talk about with the man or woman who is my spiritual director.”

A spiritual director can be compared to a life coach. A good life coach may suggest possibilities but they are not counselors or dictators. Decisions are always freely made by the “client.” That being said, it is not unusual to suggest ideas that are outside a person’s comfort zone. The director/coach wants to help a person tap into their full potential and define/achieve their goals for who they want to be and what they want to do. In the case of spiritual direction, the aim is to discover and accomplish your mission in life, the thing that will bring you the greatest fulfillment as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

The practice of spiritual direction to deepen one’s spiritual life is a time-honored tradition in the Church that needs to be more widely available. If you, or someone you know, is interested in learning how to assist others on their spiritual path, information on the Spiritual Direction Certification Program can be found at [www.sdc-divinemercy.org](http://www.sdc-divinemercy.org).

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**Fr. Robert Presutti, LC** is the Director of the Spiritual Direction Certification Program at Divine Mercy University.

Divine Mercy University is a Catholic graduate school of psychology and counseling, founded in 1999. The University is dedicated to the scientific study of psychology with a Catholic understanding of the person, marriage and the family.
Do You Have A Will?
Are You Taking IRA Distributions?

These Handy Tools Can Help You Manage Your Long-term Finances More Easily

Making estate plans and managing your long-term finances can be challenging...heck, even thinking about what will happen when you’re gone can cause stress. Writing a will is time-consuming, expensive, and sometimes you just don’t want to think about the future.

Planning ahead is actually one of the most important steps you can take for your loved ones to ensure they are taken care of.

The Legion of Christ is pleased to introduce to you, two brand new websites that will make the process of creating a will or managing distributions from your retirement accounts much easier and less stressful.

Simply visit either one of the following websites to find out for yourself how easy it is to create a legacy for your loved ones and peace of mind for yourself.

Visit:
www.freewill.com/legionofchrist – create your will at no cost!
www.freewill.com/qcd/legionofchrist – manage distributions from an IRA

We hope these new websites will be helpful in your long term planning. Even if you don’t plan on making a gift to the Legion, these websites can help simplify your planning process.

Office of Planned Giving
Andrew Bamber
Planned Giving Director
(800) 532-7478

“Like the Apostles, they too have left everything behind in order to be with Christ...”

Saint John Paul II on religious
Our Mission
We work as Jesus did. We reveal his love, form apostles and send them out to help build the Kingdom of Christ. We help awaken the individual and the family to their mission in life and in the Church.

Who We Are
We are an apostolic movement of evangelization composed of four vocations – Legionaries of Christ, Consecrated Women, Lay Consecrated Men and Lay Members – called to help people discover Christ’s love and build His Kingdom.

What We Do
Regnum Christi has a Christ-centered spirituality that is lived together in communion with all members, in union with the whole Church and through a mission to build the kingdom of Christ.

Missionaries in Action
Witnesses In a Secular World

Doing Good
Helping Not Only the Needy, But Anyone in Need

Having grown up in Mexico, I’m used to drastic economic differences in society. I was raised to treat all equally and befriended everyone: the snob, the homeless, and the gangster. Some were appalled at it, but these people always protected me and gave me advice from their street wisdom. I related to the essential person, not a stereotype.

Then, as a Regnum Christi member in college, I would go on many missions. My heart was on fire to live like Christ, “who went about doing good” (Acts 10:38). But doing good wasn’t enough; I wanted to bring many others with me along the way. Now as a consecrated woman at the Mission Youth office, I have a great opportunity to accomplish this by bringing missionaries to different countries.

My last trip was near Cancun, Mexico, where we helped in the construction of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. Some of the 12 youth missionaries were first timers. Others had done several mission trips before and some even organize monthly missions to evangelize their own cities. The fact that we all wanted to follow Christ united us instantly.

I was surprised by the construction workers who guided our work there. They have worked with Regnum Christi missions for 10 years. They are very poor but, even though we fundraise for their salaries, they see their work as a means to evangelize.

It is unimaginable how far our actions go. We cannot quench every need in the world, but we can go about doing the good we can, not just helping the needy, but helping anyone in need. A mission trip can seem a small thing, but the construction men in Cancun showed me how our small actions can bear much fruit in God’s hands.

To contribute to the work of Mission Youth, visit www.missionnetwork.com/donations

Carolina Dorantes is a Consecrated Woman working in our Mission Youth office.