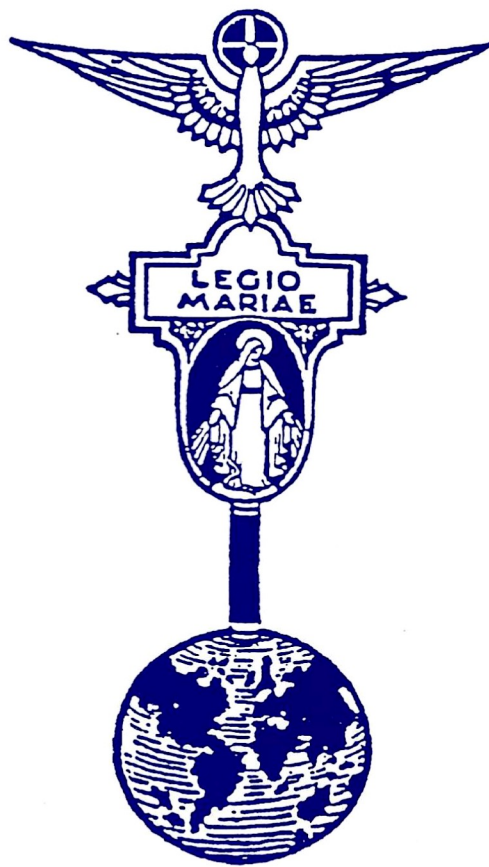


THE BOOKBARROW



BY
WILLIAM M. THOMPSON, JR.

LOS ANGELES SENATUS

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BOOKBARROW

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WILLIAM M. THOMPSON

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BE OBTAINED FROM

LOS ANGELES SENATUS

1026 North Fairfax, Avenue
West Hollywood, California, 90046-9990
U. S. A.

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THE BOOKBARROW

To begin at the beginning, let us recall the three priorities of the Legion of Mary -- namely, CONVERSION, CONSERVATION AND CONSOLATION.

There are various ways to accomplish the first and highest of the priorities -- Conversion -- Evangelization -- bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ and His Church, the Holy Roman Catholic Church to those with whom we come in contact.

Probably, the most familiar and basic of the methods of Evangelization, would be legionaries going in pairs door to door, ringing every doorbell and presenting the truths of Holy Mother Church.

But, there are two other methods also used by legionaries throughout the world, although probably not as well known as door to door work in fostering Evangelization.

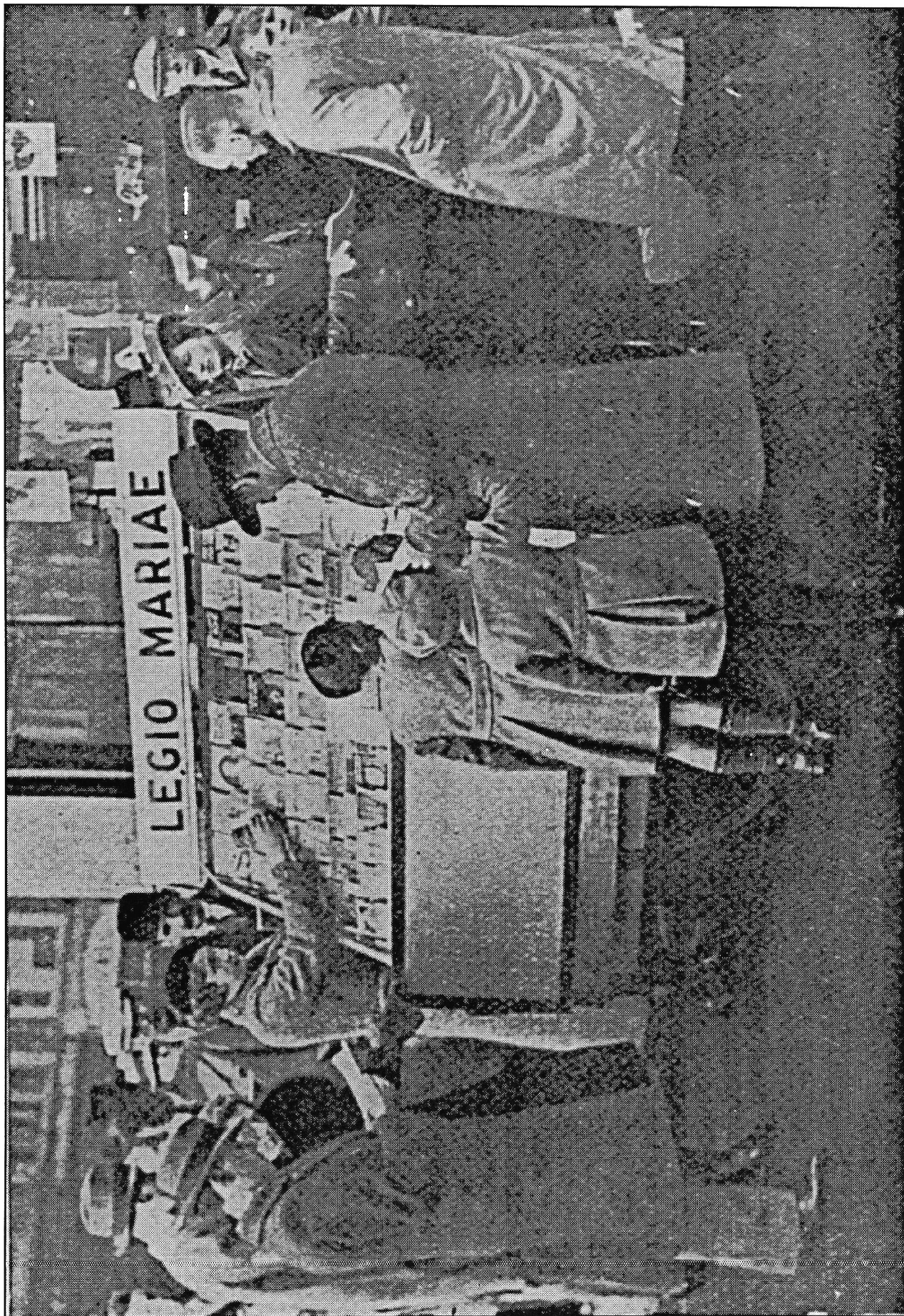
They would be "Apostolate to the Crowd" and "Bookbarrow." We wish to discuss in detail, the later, the Bookbarrow.

The Bookbarrow first came into existence on June 23, 1935. There was no launching ceremony, no trumpets blown or flags waved; quietly the Book Barrow left the Morning Star and took up its position at the junction of O'Connell Street and Cathedral Street in downtown Dublin. Thus, was born the Book Barrow that would be used in countries all over the world. It enabled legionaries to come in contact with a variety of persons from all walks of life and backgrounds as they passed the "Bookbarrow" or

Stand. Some of the people would be religious, some would be associated with an established religion, others, would be rather on their own as they "made up the rules" as they encountered life. Still others, would be agnostic and some, even atheistic. There would be Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Muslims and a whole host of variations.

What a splendid opportunity to have a vehicle -- the Bookbarrow or literature Stand -- that would attract some of these persons and enable the legionaries to discuss religion in general and Catholicism in particular. What a "golden opportunity" to bring the truths of Catholicism to the attention of such persons -- always remembering that we are simply the vehicle, the instrument being used by the Holy Spirit. We are the hands, the feet, the eyes, the tongue of the Holy Spirit. Oh, what a glorious and God given opportunity to reach out and contact these souls, created in the image of almighty God.

So -- as par for the course -- Frank Duff, Founder and Servant of God, in his genius has once again established an Apostolate within the framework of the Legion of Mary to accomplish a much needed goal and to provide a vehicle to Evangelize.



II B A S I C S:

Now, let us discuss the actual stand or Bookbarrow itself. Frequently, we hear people relate certain measurements or dimensions for the building of the stand as if there were some definite blueprint found on Mount Sinai. No, there is not a set pattern or "standard" Bookbarrow as so many inches high or so many inches wide -- one that must be adhered to and copied to be "official."

I have seen a great variety in my Legion lifetime -- some too large -- some too small and some -- just right. I remember working on a Bookbarrow set up on O'Connell Street in Dublin, Ireland. This was my first contact with such a stand and the one being used was very large with big wheels and reminded one of an enormous fruit stand. The legionaries pushed it into a nearby garage for storage. Years later, while attending the Eucharistic Congress in 1976 in Philadelphia, I worked with legionaries from the Philadelphia Senatus on a similar Bookbarrow stand that was also stored in a nearby garage. It had to be pushed and was used just a short distance from the storage area. I worked on the Bookbarrow displayed weekly by the Bakersfield Curia in a mall. Their stand was smaller than the one used in Philadelphia or Dublin but still needed a van to transport it with a great amount of disassembly required each time.

Some years later, I personally worked on the Los Angeles Senatus Bookbarrow set up on Hollywood Boulevard every Friday night (except Good Friday) for 11 consecutive years. Then, on the Sunset Strip weekly for 2 years. For this work (both on Hollywood Boulevard and the Sunset Strip), I had a wooden Bookbarrow stand built that could be transported in the trunk of my car. Having related to

you at the beginning that there are no set dimensions, let me now give you the actual dimensions of the one I had built and use personally. This is merely to give you some feeling for what type and size you may wish to have built. It is 47 inches high and 22 inches wide, there are two legs attached to the flat board that extend below the board for an additional 4 inches; thus, it is 51 inches high in total. It is like an artist's easel with a wooden pole attached to the rear of the stand that permits it to move and to become an easel. Then there is a 21 inch wide & 10 ½ inch high "sign" that is attached to the top of the stand. The reason for the "sign" being removable is to allow for easier storage in the trunk or inside of the car. The sign reads:

**"FREE CATHOLIC LITERATURE
LEGION OF MARY"**

We provide several pictures within this Manual of the same Bookbarrow stand that I had built. I am now using this stand in my own Praesidium's outreach ministry week nights in West Hollywood to Gay & Lesbian Catholics.

There are six plastic shields 4 inches high that provide storage for literature and are attached with one inch dowels. The shields are clear plastic so as to be able to read the literature, although this would not be essential. Small pamphlets fit ideally in the rack but larger sheets (8½x11) will "fold over." To correct this situation, we have used a large paper clip & "clipped" the folders to the plastic shield above. This will hold them securely.

To summarize, there is not an exact or set size for a Bookbarrow. But in most instances, the stand must be transported to a distance location; thus, the need to build it with ease of transportation in mind.



On Hollywood Boulevard



III PURPOSE:

What is the purpose of the Bookbarrow? Aside from the fact that it is a vehicle of Evangelization -- just what is the purpose or function of the Bookbarrow?

If your answer is similar to the vast majority of legionary responses, you will reply that the main purpose is the distribution of Catholic literature and often, legionaries working a Bookbarrow for the first time -- attempt to compete with each other to see who can give away the most literature -- and the legionary with the greatest tally for the evening, is the winner.

NO! NO! NO! --- the purpose of a Bookbarrow is NOT TO DISTRIBUTE AS MANY PIECES OF LITERATURE AS POSSIBLE; RATHER, the purpose of the Bookbarrow is to engage those passing by in a discussion of religion in general and Catholicism, in particular. The literature and the stand is simply a subterfuge -- a magnet -- to attract their attention, perhaps, interest them to stop and then permit you as a legionary to engage them in discussion.

The discussion is the goal -- the purpose -- of the Bookbarrow and NOT the dissemination of literature.

Yes, we do provide a variety of short explanations on Catholic doctrine with "catchy titles" and offer the literature to read at their leisure when they return home. But, the "give and take," the friendly explanation, the humility of the response, the "words of the Holy Spirit" at the opportune moment -- these all make up the workings and miracle of the Bookbarrow. It is the face to face -- person to person -- contact that is the Bookbarrow. If we simply wanted to distribute literature -- we would stock the stand

and go home, leaving one person to guard it against vandalism, then pick it up several hours later.

IV THE TECHNIQUE OF THE BOOKBARROW:

I hesitate to offer any technique as it depends greatly on the personality of the individual legionary and the particular situation. We stand on the side of the Bookbarrow -- never in front blocking the view and I have found that by looking at those passing by, smiling and saying "free Catholic literature," that this "breaks the ice" and will sometimes cause someone to stop and pause at the stand, looking at the literature on display.

Then, I will comment, "What denomination are you?" and pause (I never ask at the beginning are you Catholic). Now, the ball is thrown to them. They may respond, "Baptist, Presbyterian, I was Catholic or simply, I'm Christian." If they say, "Christian," then I ask, "When you were baptized, was it in any particular church?" They may say, "well, it was a Lutheran church, but now I don't follow any institutional religion."

Your response could be, "We have several pamphlets on the Catholic Faith, would you like to take one home and read it at your leisure. Do you have any questions on the Catholic Church that I might answer for you?"

Or, if they say, "Well, I was a Catholic," -- then, I calmly respond with a smile, "my goodness, what ever made you leave? What happened?" And the conversation goes on from this point, in many directions.

If the response is that the person is an FAC -- we try to

obtain their name and address with the comment that we will send some literature -- we forward the card to the nearest Praesidium or Council having responsibility for that address for follow up.

Sometimes, the person stopping is simply lax in their practice and we try to provide the closest Catholic parish to their home where they may attend. Sometimes, the person encountered is interested in Active or Auxiliary membership and we send the name and address to the closest Praesidium for follow-up. We try to have bulletins available from the Parish area where we are working the Bookbarrow. We have pencil and paper available. We offer Miraculous Medals and they are usually very well received.

If someone is interested in learning more about Catholicism, we definitely obtain their name and address for follow up.

I brought Father Robert Bradshaw, of PPC to Russia fame, to Los Angeles -- once for an Archdiocesan Congress-Symposium with 1,700 in attendance at the Police Academy and another time, again for a Senatus Council Officers Synod. Each trip, Father was with us at the Bookbarrow on Hollywood Boulevard. Father Bradshaw had an approach that he used in speaking to passerbys. I include it for your consideration. Father related to us that you only have contact with these individuals for just a few minutes and may never see them again; therefore, Father said you need to be direct -- probably much more direct than if you were speaking to someone as you go door to door with the possibility of returning at a later date.

Father Bradshaw would say to the person standing at the Bookbarrow, "You know -- it would make a tremendous difference in your life if you were a Catholic." Then pause and smile. The shock of such a direct statement had a tendency to throw the person off guard and they would usually -- smile back -- and sometimes respond, "Well, my grandfather was Catholic or my best friend is Catholic but we've never spoken about religion, etc." It certainly "breaks the ice." It is an interesting approach and I include it merely for your thoughts and reflection.

V THE ARGUMENT

Naturally, as in all Legion work, we are not to allow ourselves to be drawn into arguing as this will accomplish nothing. Rather, we must be willing to offer the truths and facts of Catholicism in a friendly and non challenging manner. There may be occasions, as I experienced during my 11 years on Hollywood Boulevard, where "hostile and arguing fundamentalist" will attempt to "brow beat" and confuse you by jumping from scripture passage to scripture passage without ever permitting a calm response or friendly dialogue. When such occasions arise, as both Father Aedan McGrath and Father Robert Bradshaw advised when with me on the Hollywood Boulevard Bookbarrow, simply say you will pray for each other and "move on" to the next passerby. To continue such a one sided discussion accomplishes nothing and prevents you from speaking with someone who really is sincere in attempting to obtain knowledge and information.

VI WHERE SHOULD THE BOOKBARROW STAND BE SET UP?

It could be used in parking lots of malls, beach areas, parks, public streets or where ever we find an ample amount of foot traffic. Naturally, we must respect the decision of those in charge at malls etc., and the persons passing by are never hindered or blocked in their passage way. Whenever we are asked to leave a privately owned facility, we do so graciously and quickly. We never argue.

If we set up the stand on a public sidewalk, we use common sense and never block a store entrance, window displays or block normal public use of the sidewalk. It is not necessary to apply for a city permit but to avoid any possibility of confusion, we never charge for literature, thus, we are not considered "selling something."

Should it be necessary to tell legionaries that setting up a Bookbarrow in the church vestibule or church parking lot is the same as "saving the saved." This is not the correct use or purpose of the Bookbarrow.



VII HOW MANY TO ASSIGN TO A BARROW

Two legionaries can adequately handle the Book Barrow but more than five or six becomes a "crowd" and intimidates would be passer bys. When we have had too many legionaries present themselves at the Book Barrow, we have sent the "surplus" down the street to engage in "Apostolate to the Crowd" contact work. Then at a prearranged time, return to the barrow where we change crews and send those who were working the barrow out to do Apostolate to the Crowd.

VIII LITERATURE:

This is probably the most difficult aspect of the Bookbarrow. Finding suitable, small, inexpensive items requires a little thinking and discussion among yourselves. Years ago, various religious orders, the Redemptorists, Claretians, Benedictines, Franciscans, etc., all sold small pamphlets for 15 to 25¢, thus, there was not a financial hardship to stock the barrow. The covers were extremely well done and quite attractive. The titles were: "The Bible - where did it come from?; Who is Mary?; When is the Pope infallible?; Prayer & Meditation; Drugs; Teen age sex; Suicide; Alcoholism; Value of human life; Homosexuality; Is God Dead?; Does life have purpose? etc."

The current inexpensive "tracts" are usually rather large in size and do not easily accommodate the barrow rack nor do they have much eye appeal. So, it will take some inventiveness on your part to achieve the goal of adequate literature. Naturally, we want items of an inexpensive

nature and it may be necessary to have a "limit" on the number of pieces taken by an individual. Some good souls will decide "I'll take one of everything -- their free."

IX HOW TO START:

Although the Bookbarrow project is usually conducted by the individual Praesidium, one method to "get it off the ground," would be for a Council to have a stand built, then offer it on a monthly basis to each attached Praesidium. At each Council meeting, the Praesidium having it for the month will tell of their experiences, questions are asked and answered on the floor of the meeting, then it is loaned to the next Praesidium on the list to take back and try their hand at the work during the following month. This is merely a suggestion but it has proven effective in establishing the use of the Bookbarrow. It enables each interested Praesidium to have "a taste" of the work and who knows, perhaps, they will have one of their own built and use it regularly. In any event, it is a suggestion for you to consider at your monthly Board Meetings.

X TO SUMMARIZE

The Bookbarrow is truly a marvelous instrument or vehicle to conduct Evangelization. It has been "tried and proven" by legionaries throughout the world. We invite you to investigate this method. At first, as with all new methods or works, there may be a little hesitation and intimidation on the part of members. What will I say -- what if someone I know sees me -- what if -- will the police stop us, etc. But, as in all Legion work, we take a deep breath, say an ejaculation to the Holy Spirit, put our trust in the Blessed Mother, and forge forward as her loyal and devoted legionaries. With such an approach -- I assure you only success can prevail!