

Associates of the Marian Movement of Priests. (Lay Movements XVIII).

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Author: Kennedy, Leonard A.

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The Marian Movement of Priests was begun in 1972 by Father Stefano Gobbi, of the Diocese of Milan, Italy. While visiting Fatima, he experienced an inspiration to do something special about the spread of dissent in the Church, and especially among the clergy. He experienced interior locutions, that is, urges to write spontaneously. From 1972 to 1998 he wrote over 600 messages to the members of his Movement, and has preached about 2000 retreats. Besides priest members there are associate members from among religious and the laity.

Members begin by making an act of consecration to the Blessed Virgin and committing themselves to work for the unity of the faithful with the Pope and the Church's Magisterium (teaching authority) and to lead others to consecrate themselves to Mary and belong to a cenacle of prayer. Members pray for priests but first of all for the whole world.

A cenacle is a group (large or small) of members who meet regularly. The word "cenacle" comes from a Latin word meaning "a small room." The meeting consists of the invocation of the Holy Spirit, five decades of the Rosary, short prayers for the Pope, the reading of a selection from Father Gobbi's writings with meditation on it, and an Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Hymns and other prayers may be added, and if possible a cenacle may end with Benediction or Mass.

The Movement has spread throughout the world and exists in dozens of countries. Members now include 300 bishops and cardinals, over 100,000 priests, and millions of associates. In Canada there are 1,019 registered cenacles, 504 priest members, and 12,000 associates. The cenacle in which I am presently involved meets every Tuesday evening, and has done so for over 20 years. It has 120 members, about half of whom are present at any one meeting.

It is easy to become a member. One need only sign a membership card. There are no dues. Information about the Movement in Canada, or its cenacles, may be obtained by contacting the head office (preferably on weekdays from 2 to 5 pm) at 1515 Bathurst Street, Toronto, ON, M5P 3H4, Tel: (416) 653-6814. Information about the movement in the United States may be obtained by contacting P.O. Box 8, St. Francis, Maine 04774-00008.

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