



Teams of Our Lady

Equipas de Nossa Senhora • Equipos de Nuestra Señora

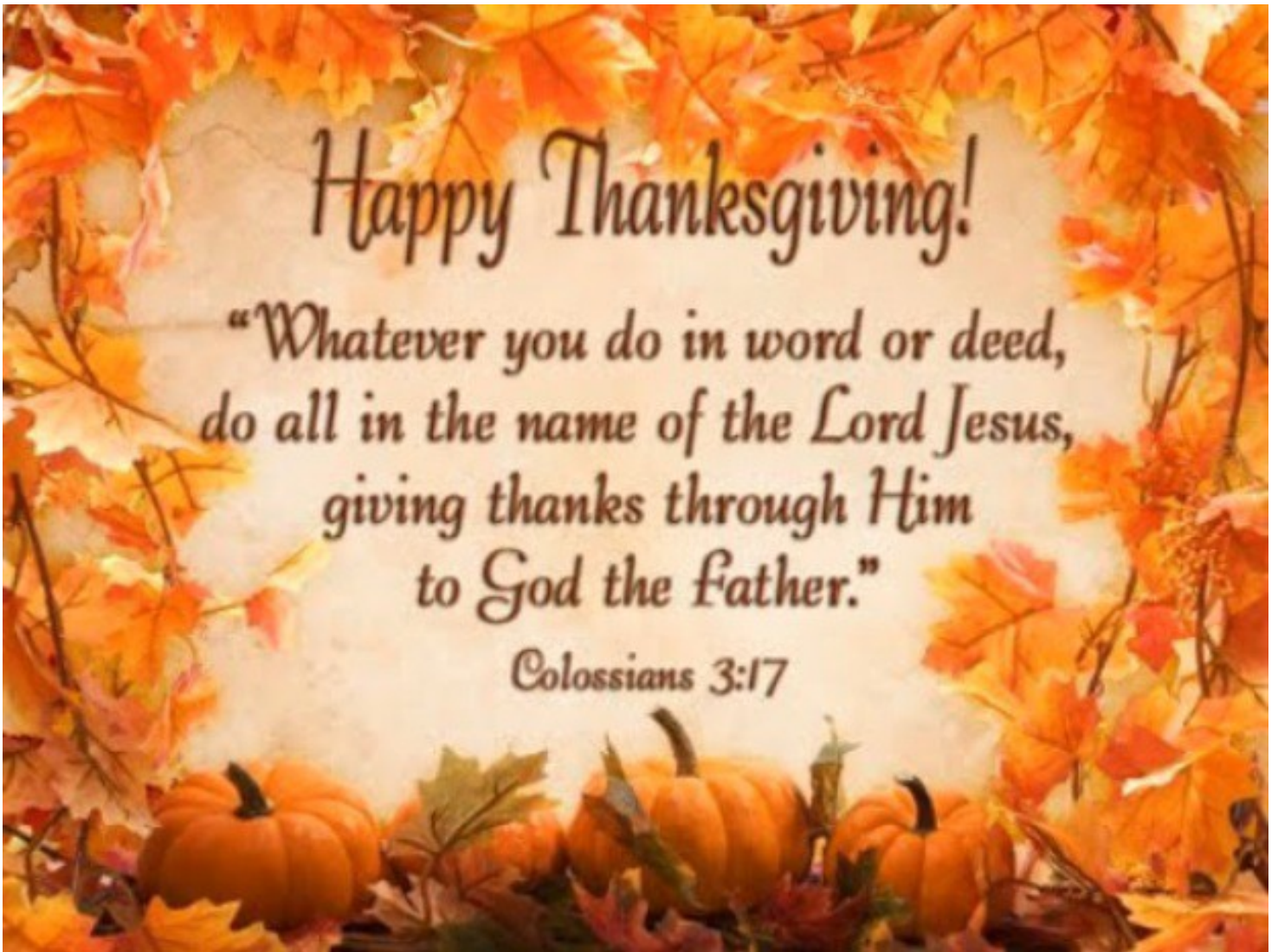


MAGNIFICAT - FALL 2017

Happy Thanksgiving!

*“Whatever you do in word or deed,
do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks through Him
to God the Father.”*

Colossians 3:17





Pope Francis on November 2, 2017 – the Feast of All Souls —visited the American Cemetery of Nettuno and the site of the Ardeatine Massacre.

He celebrated Mass at the site where 7,860 US soldiers are buried, arranged in soft arcs in wide green meadows under rows of Roman pines. The majority of these individuals died in the liberation of Sicily (from July 10 to August 17, 1943); in the landings in the Salerno area (September 9, 1943) and in the intense fighting to the north; in the landings on Anzio beach and the expansion of the beachhead

(January 22, 1944 to May 1944); and in air and naval support in the regions.

Pope Francis' Homily from All Soul's Day

All of us, today, are gathered here in hope. Each one of us, in his own heart, can repeat Job's words, which we heard in the First Reading: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and at last He will stand upon the earth." The hope of meeting God again, of meeting all of us as brothers: and this hope doesn't disappoint. Paul was strong in that expression of the Second Letter: "Hope does not disappoint." However, hope is often born and puts its roots in so many human wounds, in so many human sorrows and that moment of sorrow, of soreness, of suffering makes us look at Heaven and say: "I believe that my Redeemer is alive, but stop, Lord." And this is, perhaps, the prayer that issues from all of us, when we look at this cemetery. "I'm sure, Lord, that these brothers of ours are with You. "I'm sure," we say this, "but, please, Lord, stop. No more, no more war, no more of this futile slaughter," as Benedict XV said. It's better to hope without this destruction: youths... thousands, upon thousands, upon thousands, upon thousand of broken hopes. "No more, Lord." And we must say this today, who pray for all the deceased, but in this place we pray in a special way for these boys — today when the world is again at war and is preparing to go more strongly to war. "No more, Lord, no more." Everything is lost with war.

There comes to mind that elderly lady that, looking at the ruins of Hiroshima, with wise resignation but much sorrow, with that lamenting resignation that women are able to live, because it's their charism, said: "Men do everything to declare and make war and, in the end, they destroy themselves." This is war: the destruction of ourselves. No doubt that woman, that elderly lady, had lost sons and grandsons there. She only had the soreness in her heart and tears. And if today is a day of hope, today is also a day of tears. Tears like those that women felt and had when the news arrived:

"You, Mrs., have the honor that your husband was a hero of the Homeland; that your sons are heroes of the Homeland." They are tears that today humanity must not forget. This pride of humanity that has not learnt the lesson and seems not to want to learn it!

When so many times in history men think of starting a war, they are convinced they are bringing a new world; they are convinced of bringing a "spring," and it ends in a bad, cruel winter with the reign of terror and death. Today we pray for all the deceased, all, but in a special way for these youths, at a time in which so many die in battles every day in this piecemeal war. We pray also for today's dead, the war dead, also innocent children. This is the fruit of war: death. And may the Lord give us the grace to weep.

FROM THE SOUTH PROVINCE

*“Be Not Afraid...
I am with you
always”*



God is always with us.

The month of September has been a particularly difficult for many of us living in Texas and Florida. At the end of August, Texas was hit hard by Hurricane Harvey. At the end of four days we had received over 45” of rain! Most of Southeast Texas receives about 45” in a year, but we had gotten a year's worth of rain in just four days. Due to excessive rain fall many dams and levies released water to ease the pressure on the system. The excess water release along with the consistent rain fall created flooding in many communities in and around the Houston area. Homes and business suddenly had five, six, seven or even eight feet of water inside! The devastation was unbelievable!

From our personal experience, it was horrifying not knowing if our house might be next to have water come inside. You try to prepare but how do you decide what to save? Every day it rained... more water, what to do? But as scared and nervous as we were, we knew we weren't alone.

As we began to clean up our attention and prayers quickly focused on Florida as Hurricane Irma was barreling through the entire state. This time it was not the water, although the storm surge was high and there were reports of flooding, Irma packed a punch with her high winds. Many Team members shared how through the winds, they thought trees were going to fall on their homes.

But even then, through all of this devastation, we were never alone. Many Team members, from across the world reached out to see if all were okay. We were surrounded by the love of all the Mass intentions, Rosaries, and Team prayer. We saw love displayed in many others ways: calls, e-mails, texts, volunteers to evacuate people, hands to remove debris and damaged items, those offering food and drink and those providing housing to affected families. Please continue to pray for those impacted who have many months of recovery and rebuilding ahead.

It shouldn't take a natural disaster to remind us that we are never alone. Our Team journey is filled with many cases of walking with, supporting one another and sharing our love. It is through this sharing that we grow and increase our married love for one another and our love of this beautiful movement.

TJ and Ellen Holt, South Province Couple



NORTH PROVINCE HAPPENINGS

North Central Region



In the North Central Region, Josh & Sarah Valinski were installed as Sector Couple for Rochester, Minnesota.

They were installed by Mike & Barb Timm, Regional Couple. Rochester Minnesota was the first Sector in Teams west of the Mississippi. Josh & Sarah remind us all of our early beginnings and saying yes to leadership. They are added to the roll of leadership couples who have served in all positions of leadership over the 45 plus years.



Tom & Cathy Miller, Sector Couple for St. Paul, Minnesota are representing early beginnings also. In less than five years they have grown to 12 teams, of which 5 are in piloting.



How will you keep your Spiritual boat afloat?

The gospel Luke 5: 1-11 gives us the story of the miraculous draught of fishes. The whole of the spiritual life can be read off of this piece according to Bishop Barron. Jesus simply gets into the fisherman's boat and begins to give orders, asking Simon to put out from the shore and then to go out into the deep. This represents the invasion of grace. The single most important decision that you will ever make is this:

Will you cooperate with Jesus once he decides to get into your boat?

When the Lord Jesus Christ gets into your boat he will always lead you to the depths. The depths we're talking about here are spiritual depth, spiritual transformation.

Recently we met with a man who grows gladiolas as a hobby. He has taken his hobby to a new level, as he donates 40+ free bouquets to the local hospital every day during the flower season with a small prayer card attached. As a faith filled Christian he has let Jesus into his boat and moved on to transform and evangelize the lives of those in medical care.

So, the question is, are we cooperating with Jesus and letting him into our boat?

We have a couple of examples of cooperating with Jesus. Two longtime Teams couples, one with a cancer diagnosis and the other now a widow, have started support groups for cancer and widows in their parishes. These to us are examples of their going into the deep and transforming themselves and others through God's grace.

We are being called to go out two by two and the

share the gift that we have been given, Teams of Our Lady. We are called to be a community, a team of teams. We are also called to be in solidarity with the movement thus the new contribution method. We thank all the RC's and the Sector couples in advance for all their leadership in this matter and in all that you do.

God calls us but we need to answer so what will your answer be?

Steve & Glynis Sturm Northern Province

A WORD FROM THE EAST

A Time to “redd up”

Janie is from Pittsburgh Pennsylvania; they have an expression redd up, meaning to put things in order or to make things look nice (definitions from the urbandictionary.com)

The end of summer reminds us all of our membership responsibility of an annual Team Evaluation and Commitment (#5 on the “blue card”). This process of yearly evaluation and renewal tweaks the memories of our own team’s beginning years (40+ years ago) and the solid foundation we were given in the Teams Movement. It is from this posture of evaluation, and brought to you by the color purple, that we began to meet the teams of the East Province since taking on the role of its responsible couple in late February of this year.

Early on in this role, we received a delightful surprise of a rather large list of teams in the Metro Region (New York City area), who had not been heard from in many a year. Although we are still in the process, we have now contacted most of them. Some teams have not met in ten years; others still meet; but, with what great joy, they all spoke of the Teams Movement and how it has helped shape and challenge them! One delightful woman who we spoke to, casually mentioned that she has three children who (with their spouses) are in teams: one in Philadelphia and the other two in the Metro Region. Talk about an advocate for Teams! We have had many light conversations and others that were more difficult: people still laden with grief over the loss of their spouse. Fr. Caffarel was correct when he said, “Love is stronger than death.” Sometimes we ended our day of “Metro search” very high with the infectious enthusiasm of those who spoke to us. Other days we were deeply sad, knowing what this isolation of a large group of teams had gone through alone, without the support or love of the rest of the Movement. It is our hope that a Service Team for the Metro Region will step forward when this roster is updated and begin to reorganize, so that the information and participation are flowing once again. Since our installation, we have been invited and visited team meetings in Maryland, Massachusetts and Virginia. Each team family welcomed us with a generous open spirit of Hospitality (#7 on blue card). Although every team has its own personality and dynamic, the common structure of the meeting allowed even us visitors to reap the benefits of their journeying together. We especially hold in our hearts the moments of team prayer and deep sharing.



Early on in our new role of service, we were blessed when two wonderful couples said “yes” to be Regional Couples. They are Mike and Patti Bernardi for the New England Region and Mark and Anne Ehrick for the Mid-Atlantic Region. We welcome their insights, stability and enthusiasm.

In early June, we celebrated (along with Jorge and Noelia Sousa, the Super-Regional Couple) the installation of the Bernardis and then celebrated (along with Walt and Susan Madigosky, a former Mid-Atlantic Regional Couple) the installation of the Ehricks.



This summer brought two wonderful opportunities to meet Team couples at sector picnics (#8 on the “blue cards”). One picnic had young energetic couples with happy children running all over the place. The other picnic was a bit more laid back. (We fit well!) Although both picnics were social gatherings, there were short conversations of God's action in their lives and the sharing of “little miracles of hope,” for example, involving a difficult pregnancy and delivery (at the first picnic) and coping with ailments (the second picnic). The journey towards an ever-deepening meeting with Christ is for all ages



In August, the Super Region Team met in Fredericksburg Texas. It was followed by the College Meeting (adding the Regional Couples from each Province). From the East Province, the Bernardis and Ehricks were joined by our two “seasoned” Regional Couples, Mike and Emily Hoffman (Lake Erie Region) and Ed and Gilda Cadieux (Coastal Region). The final portion of our stay involved a training session for new Sector Couples (made possible by your annual contribution: #4 on the “blue cards”). The East Province was blessed with three new Sector Couples able to attend: Dave and Carol McCaffrey (Mixing Bowl Virginia Sector), Alvaro and

Olga Barbosa (Simpsonville South Carolina Spanish-speaking Sector) and Hawk and Aurora Carmichael (Maryland-South Sector). Every couple, including us, learned more about the Teams Movement and how to better serve you. We remind you that, when praying the Magnificat daily (#1 on the “blue card”), please lift up in prayer all those in Teams service roles. Remember that your East Province color is purple! By the way, we want to encourage Hawk and Aurora to write an article for the Mid- Atlantic Region newsletter entitled “Westward Ho!” since they traveled with their four children from Fort Washington Maryland (south of Washington DC) to Fredericksburg Texas via a large family camper. They, indeed, made the biggest arrival impact! Finally, all of us in the East Province send a hearty howdy and a sincere thank you to the Texas team members, who hosted us, and we will continue to pray for your recovery from the recent catastrophic storms.

In efforts to “spread the word” about Teams of Our Lady, we have met with a bishop, priests and representatives of diocesan Family Life Offices in Baltimore Maryland, Trenton New Jersey, and Washington DC, and even gave a Teams Information Session at the Ocean City Maryland Brewing Company.

Continuing Teams outreach, Mike and Emily Hoffman, the Responsible Couple for the Lake Erie Region, recently visited the Pittsburgh Sector to share a day with team couples and their families. They found a wonderful Teams of Our Lady spirit in Pittsburgh! Mike and Emily encouraged the couples to form a Sector Service Team to respond to the needs of existing teams and couples seeking information about the Movement.

We look forward to the International Gathering in Fatima in July 2018, along with other couples from the East Province. To prepare our hearts for this wonderful event, we will be studying Mission of Love, this year's recommended study topic. Two Regional events, celebrating the 100th anniversary of Fatima, are currently planned: on September 23, the Lake Erie Region will gather at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Lewiston New York; and on October 21, the Mid-Atlantic Region will meet at the parish of our Province Spiritual Counselor, Father John Dillon, in Derwood Maryland. Whether we are here or travel abroad, each Team couple can ask themselves “In what way will we be in communion with the 2018 International Gathering in Fatima?”

Seven months into this new service role, we are only beginning to feel as though we are “redding up” the East Province, but we never feel alone. Thank you, Province Service Team, Spiritual Counselors, Sector Couples, Team members, and all who pray for us. You have graciously received us and helped us. We have met Christ (#10 on the “blue card”).

Bob and Janie Mericsko Responsible Couple for the East Province

NEWS FROM THE WEST

The West Province includes the states of California, Arizona, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, Alaska and Hawaii. Sharla and I live in Redmond, Oregon, which is in central Oregon.

We have been reading through booklets on the Endeavors. We are piloting teams in Redmond, Oregon and the Harris' and the Porzig's are piloting teams in Boise, Idaho and we feel these booklets are extremely good in enabling the new teams to process the Endeavors into their lives. The information in these booklets are a great supplement to what is given to us in the Piloting I and Piloting II books. The Endeavors are the heart and soul and form the framework of the Teams of Our Lady. If a couple isn't practicing the endeavors and a team isn't sharing on them in their meetings, then they really shouldn't consider themselves as part of the Teams of Our Lady Movement. Fr. Caffarel, our Founder, initiated them and they are a time proven method of bringing holiness to our marriages. As a part of piloting, it is recommended that for the first two or three meetings the new team should be studying the Charter, which was written and sent to Rome in 1947. It is our founding "rule". We also hope to make Fr. Caffarel's works and writings more available to Teams couples.

When the Endeavor booklets are fully revised and ready for distribution, there will be a mass email sent out to all members and an announcement on the website. Speaking of the website, if you have not logged on recently, please check it out....its new and looks wonderful. www.teamsofourlady.org

Testimony from Idaho

One year ago, my husband and I had been talking about craving more support for Catholic couples during various stages of life (particularly the married-with-young-children phase we were in that often felt fairly isolating!) Shortly after offering up prayers about this void, we got an answer in the form of a Facebook invitation from Jake Ineck, a youth ministry friend I hadn't seen in over a decade. The invitation was for a no-pressure meeting to talk about joining a monthly small faith community for Catholic couples. Although we felt like we'd be the awkward newbies who hardly knew anyone, and definitely knew we didn't have room for one more thing in our schedule — we were unquestionably moved to attend.

At our first formal Teams of Our Lady meeting, we were welcomed wholeheartedly for dinner at the Ineck's home. Our Team of six couples was a random blend of strangers and old friends, but we blended together from the very first night like a tribe that was meant to connect. We laughed about the roller coaster of raising young children and prayed for the special intentions that filled each other's lives. There's something special about praying as a group that interlaces your hearts — and that's exactly what we've found. Over the past year, we've been continually reminded of how blessed we are to have found this community, and our faith has been renewed and challenged in all the ways we prayed that it would. We've welcomed and showered three new babies within our Team with plenty of love, helped each other move, offered prayer during challenging events, and continued to meet and build our faith over a simple meal each month. For our annual retreat endeavor, we enjoyed a weekend in the mountains this summer where we were able to dive deeper into our relationships with each other, and with God. Our prayer for Catholic marital support was answered in the form of this incredibly unique group, The Teams of Our Lady, and we plan to continue our journey for years to come.

Anna & Nate Gamel, Teams of Our Lady, Boise Team #1

Teaming Up with Our Lady

a Testimony by Jen Bradley

Seven years ago, my husband, Chris, and I joined Teams of Our Lady. We really didn't know what we were getting into at the time. It's easy for us to look back now and see how the Holy Spirit was guiding us. We didn't know we needed Teams of Our Lady in our life, but the Lord did!

Joining Teams

A dear friend, whom I met through a Catholic moms group, had been involved with Teams of Our Lady when she lived in Texas. Her and her husband started our team when they moved to Arizona. At the time we were not involved in any kind of church group or ministry, though I was feeling a personal nudge to get involved. The idea of joining a group with other Catholic couples appealed to me, however, I wasn't sure how Chris would feel about it, as he was not Catholic at the time. Non-Catholic spouses are allowed if your marriage is recognized by the Church. We were married in the Church. Thankfully Chris agreed to try Teams of Our Lady. We are both so thankful he did!

Our marriage is different because of Teams. Being part of Teams is a commitment. We have four children ages 3-10, three of whom were born since joining Teams. Certainly, the commitment was a concern when joining. Do we have time for something like Teams? The Lord has provided the time we need. Sometimes our monthly Team meeting is our one and only date night for the month. Is it worth it? We think so. Our children understand that Teams is part of our lives and we believe they benefit from us taking time to focus on our marriage. We often think, "What else would we be doing for our marriage if we weren't involved with Teams?"

Friendship, Fellowship, & Conversion

When we first joined Teams we immediately enjoyed the friendships and fellowship that ensued. Our team provides a small community within our large Catholic church. We can call on them when in need---anything from watching our children to urgent prayer requests. Our children don't attend our meetings (with the exception of nursing/bottle fed infants) but they have gotten to know each other, as we get together for family events when possible.

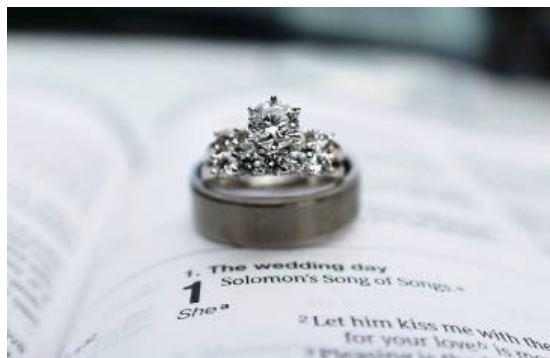
When the Lord presented me with a husband who was not Catholic I often wondered how I could truly share my faith with Chris. Teams were the answer! Chris has gone to mass with me since the start of our relationship. For him, Teams brought to life all those men in the pews.

These faithful Catholic men were everyday guys. He could relate to them. He became friends with them. After several years in Teams, Chris announced at a meeting that he was ready to join RCIA. A teammate served as his sponsor. Our team was present at the Easter Vigil when Chris joined the church. To have our team's prayerful support through that journey was invaluable! Without a doubt, being in Teams played a role in Chris's conversion. Not only did it bring all those men in the pews to life, it brought the Catholic faith to life for him.

The Heart of the Movement

The fellowship and friendship we experience through Teams are awesome, but we've realized over the years that the heart of the Teams of Our Lady movement is the endeavors (daily personal and couple prayer, regular reading of the word of God, a monthly "sit down," a personal "rule of life," an annual retreat). The endeavors have truly transformed us and our marriage. We are far from perfect on any of the endeavors. But, when we think back to where we started and where we are today in our prayer life and faith, I'm certain we would not have made that progress without Teams in our lives. Praying together was not something we did before joining Teams, now we pray together daily. Another endeavor, the monthly "sit-down," is simply a period of time set aside for discussion between the couple in the presence of God. Some of the conversations we've had as a result of a sit-down have been pretty amazing.

These conversations regarding deep spiritual matters likely would have never taken place without the discipline of Teams in our lives.



My own prayer life has changed since becoming involved with Teams. The Magnificat, Mary's prayer upon hearing Elizabeth's greeting, is the Teams of Our Lady prayer. We recite it at the end of every meeting, as well as daily. Saying this prayer daily---Mary's expression of joy in serving God---has really opened my heart to God's will for my life and our family.

The endeavors and other responsibilities in Teams of Our Lady are things any Christian couple can and should do. But with Teams we have our monthly meeting to hold us accountable, and to simply serve as a reminder of all the things we should be doing for our marriage. If

we didn't read scripture or have a sit down we make it a point to do better this month. The meetings give us opportunities to share struggles and successes and to offer and receive support. We turn to our teammates for support and inspiration. Often couples don't realize that sharing something simple that they do in their marriage can inspire other couples to make positive changes in their own marriages and spiritual lives.

Living Out the Marriage Sacrament

Being in Teams makes us more mindful of the sacrament of marriage. We are not just married, we are living out the beautiful sacrament of marriage. It reminds us constantly that Christ is at the center of our marriage. It gives us structure to truly live out the sacrament. It "keeps us on track." And while actually getting to our monthly meeting or getting through our study materials may cause us some temporary stress, we've never walked away from a meeting feeling like it was a waste of time. On the contrary! The Holy Spirit is with us at those meetings. And we've experienced many fruits because of our efforts in Teams. We feel very strongly that He called us to this movement.

A Worldwide Movement

Similar to how we enjoy practicing our Catholic faith like millions of Catholics worldwide, we enjoy being part of this worldwide movement. It is comforting knowing couples throughout the world meet monthly with their teams just as we do, using the same format that has been used for years since a parish priest in France, Fr. Henri Caffarel, started the first teams in the 1930s. The movement has grown to 10,000 teams worldwide. There are nearly 800 teams in the United States. The movement is very young here in Arizona, with only 3 teams. We truly feel called to grow Teams in Arizona so that other couples may experience the spirituality and fellowship we enjoy through Teams.



The Bradley Family
Chris and Jen with their four sons; Jack, Charlie, Mick and Jimmy

FATHER CAFFAREL NEWS



Henri Caffarel
A PROPHET FOR OUR TIMES
AN APOSTLE OF MARRIAGE AND A MASTER OF PRAYER

Under the impetus of his cause for canonisation, 35 speakers from all horizons will explore the universal influence of this man of God' thinking.

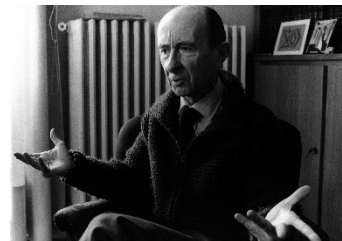
INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM
COLLÈGE DES BERNARDINS - PARIS
DECEMBER 8TH AND 9TH, 2017

EUCCHARISTIC CELEBRATION AND FESTIVE MOMENT FOR THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHARTER OF THE TEAMS OF OUR LADY, DECEMBER 8TH, AT 7:30PM AT THE CHURCH OF ST AUGUSTIN, PARIS.

INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION FOR THE COLLOQUIUM IS POSSIBLE FROM SEPTEMBER 1ST ONWARDS ON THE SITE OF « THE FRIENDS OF FATHER CAFFAREL » WWW.HENRI-CAFFAREL.ORG

Henri Caffarel; A Man Seized by God By Jean Allemand

Henri Caffarel (1903-1996) was, according to Cardinal Lustiger of Paris, "a prophet for our time." He was, from his youth, a man seized by God, who always said yes to the "invitations" of the Lord provided by "encounters."



From his personal encounter with the Lord in March 1923, entering the seminary and becoming a priest, he lets Jesus guide his steps.

An encounter with a young married couple leads to the beginning of what is to become Teams of Our Lady. He publishes the magazine "L'Anneau d'Or" (The Golden Ring) to help couples deepen their spiritual life and journey toward holiness through marriage and "conjugal spirituality." He also begins a group for widows since "love is stronger than death."



At Troussures, he leads prayer retreats and teaches numerous couples and individuals to deepen their prayers life and writes newsletters/books on prayers called "Cahiers sur l'Oraison."



Father Caffarel wrote numerous books and articles some of which have been translated into English. These include "Being Present to God: Letters on Prayers (most of which are available on the Teams of Our Lady website and hopefully soon to be published in book form), "Love and Grace in Marriage" and "Marriage is Holy" in which he was editor and contributor).

The ultimate biography on Fr. Caffarel was written by Jean Allemand, who worked in Teams and with Fr. Caffarel from 1968 to 1994. He and his wife Annick, were also part of ERI from 1973 to 1985. We have asked Patrice and Fabienne Dubois, Team members and former Regional Couple from the New England Region to translate this great work into English. Patrice and Fabienne Dubois, both born and raised in France, have been part of Teams of Our Lady in the US for more than twenty years. Patrice, as the second-generation Team member, learned about Father Caffarel from his parents, who joined Teams when he was born. His parents met several

times with Father Caffarel personally and during retreats and formation.



According to Fabienne and Patrice, “neither of us had the privilege or the honor to meet or to hear Father Caffarel. However, his vocation, his gifts, his charism and his writings come alive in this biography, “Henri Caffarel, a man seized by God”, by Jean Allemand, his assistant for many years. We have taken the audacious task to translate this book with humility and also with the firm conviction that, in spite of all the errors and misinterpretations, this work will contribute to help all readers to know better Father Caffarel, to understand better the special charism of the Teams of Our Lady in the Church today and to be energized by the will of God for married couples, which transpires in the life of Father Caffarel.”

The homily by Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, the Introduction and the First Chapter of the book have already been translated and will be available on the Teams of Our Lady

website: www.teamsofourlady.org

A Message from Father Manuel



Father Manuel Sousa pictured center

Dear Couples, Spiritual Counselors and Advisors of Teams of Our Lady

I was so blessed to participate with the International Leading Team (ERI) in the College that took place in Florianopolis, southern Brazil, from this past July 23 to 28. I was deeply moved by the exuberant welcoming that the Brazilian Teams of Our Lady couples extended to us all. I pray that when the ERI or other couples visit us that we would extend this kind of divine warmth. In the past, I also have experienced similar hospitality from Teams in this country.

I wish to express my amazement at the faith and the energy of the leadership of the ERI and of super-regions from throughout the world. Teams truly are a way of holiness in and through the Sacrament of Marriage. We are not just couples and spiritual counselors who meet regularly. We claim the charism of the Movement through the words of Father Henri Caffarel to the first couples: “You have the Sacrament of Marriage,” and “Let us seek together.” The College (ERI and Super-Regional/Attached Regions together) introduced us to a new document of the Movement that was published in March of 2017. It is titled *The Spiritual Counselor and Spiritual Advisor in Teams of Our Lady*. It is in the sequence of the Movement's reflection on the original charism that Teams are founded on the marriage of two Sacraments, namely, Sacrament of Marriage and of the Priesthood. The priest's presence is that of Christ in the midst of His people.

The challenge of lack of priests was there also in the early years of the Movement, but we kept growing because “Christ is present in the fraternal communion relationship of his disciples: For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them (Matthew 18:20). But in the team, the communion of priests and couples becomes fully the Church, a sacrament of love and unity, a place of welcome and evangelization.” (p. 17 of the document mentioned above.)

Where a priest is not to be found, the team “can consider two situations: either the team is made up of couples who have enough formation to go on alone or the Team needs “Spiritual Assistance.” (page 40) “The idea of a ‘Spiritual Advisor’ who is not a priest is relatively new for Teams...” (page 41) “The mission of the ‘Spiritual Advisor’ is to allow the creation of new teams and to support the balanced functioning of existing teams in cases where it is not possible to provide a priest” (page 41). “...

The spiritual guide [Spiritual Advisor] must meet the following conditions: it is always only one person, never a couple; s/he should have theological formation and some pastoral experience; s/he should have good access to the Church hierarchy; depending on their state of life, they could be: a seminarian with advanced formation, a deacon, a consecrated person, male or female, a lay man or woman.”

In addition, “Deep commitment to the Movement's fundamental ideas will be also required: a life of prayer and spiritual discernment; a positive outlook on marriage; knowledge of the Movement's Charism and Pedagogy [and] acceptance of a link with the priestly ministry – with a priest - in a manner determined by the Sector or Regional Spiritual Counselor.

In the United States we are struggling with a lack of Spiritual Counselors. We must really pray that more priests will answer our invitations. We need to convey to them that we are a powerful support in their mission and the mission of the Church. We endeavor to show them appreciation and love. We are required to make sure that they understand and cherish our spirituality, and not just join as an honorary figure. Where we cannot have a Spiritual Counselor and there is a pressing necessity, we may invite a Spiritual Advisor, working in union with a Sector or a Region. For lack of space, more about this in the future. May God bless the Movement of Teams of Our Lady. May She lead us all to Christ.

Fr. Manuel F. Sousa, Super Regional Spiritual Counselor

US Super Region Orientations for 2017-18



Dear Team family,

First and foremost, we want to say that our thoughts and prayers have been

those Teams members who have experienced the fear, uncertainty and losses in the devastation of the hurricanes in the US and those who have agonized for family in the Caribbean or for those affected by the earthquake in Mexico. It reminds us of how fragile life is.

As we begin a new meeting year we would like to share our orientations or goals and plans for this coming year and some will be longer than our service term which ends in the summer of 2020.

The scripture reading, we have chosen points to the fact that we, in Teams, are not alone, as individuals, as couples and as Movement: “I will not leave you orphans.” (John 14:18) As Teams' leadership, at all the levels, whether Sector, Regional, Province or National we must be present to all the members in the Movement as we participate in Sector and Regional Days, National events, trainings, NTWC, Summit Days, etc. In the Old Testament we are often told that “The Lord spoke...face to face...” (Dt 5:4) and often the Psalmist pleads for the Lord “not to hide your face.” Way too often we hear from members that they do not know who their Sector Couple is, what Region they belong to, and much less know that now the US Teams Movement is divided into four Provinces.

Our Movement is a movement of RELATIONSHIP. Our Charism or gift is “Married Spirituality” with a focus on the couple's relationship, but we are meant to be in relationship with our team members, in relationship with other teams in our Sector, Region, Province and National levels.

Scripture tells us that the Lord “summoned...[the disciples] ...and began to send them out two by two...” (Mk 6:7) so that He would have an intimate relationship with all human beings.

We have been “summoned” to Teams to grow in holiness individually and as a couple but also to support others in their growth in holiness. For that reason “they have decided to form themselves into Teams.” (Charter) We must go much beyond our base team and participate in

the Movement as a whole and we are also sent “two by two” to spread the good news of Teams and what it offers to make strong marriages. If we find a pearl of great value we must go out and tell!!

Our goals and plans will focus on:

Fidelity to the Movement (Unity):

- Uphold the founding Charism of conjugal spirituality
- The Charter shall be our guide and become well known to all Teams members
- Structure: especially at the Sector level: development of Sector Team to support the Sector Couple and that all teams be connected to the Movement by a Liaison Couple.
- Publications: We cannot be faithful to the Movement if we do not know what it asks of us and what insights and tolls we have available. We must make all Teams documents available. These include:
 1. Fr. Caffarel writings
 2. Translations of important works by the
 3. Movement and books about Fr. Caffarel
 4. all the books on the Endeavors
 5. Study Topic available in book form
 6. Provide Formation at all levels so that the Movement has couple ready to take on Leadership roles, such as Summit Days

Accompaniment/Presence/Face of Team

- That Sector Couples make themselves present during Piloting
- That New Teams Weekend Celebration (NTWC) be implemented in every Region
- That the Sector Team structure be implemented in every Region which will include:
 1. Liaison Couples
 2. Regional and Sector Newsletters
 3. Formation/Training (Regional and Sector level)

Expansion/Mission

- Social Media: presence on Facebook, new website, etc.
- Increased participation in events within the Movement to include Sector Days, Regional Days, National Conference and International Gatherings

-Participation in the wider Church events such as recently done with presence on EWTN, USCCB Convocation of Catholic Leaders, in Orlando, FL and local television Catholic television or radio shows as recently done in Houston by Regional Couple, Paul and Chris Sanchez on the program “Catholicism Live” with Fr. Edward Hauf, OMI. We are sure there are others!!

-Increase in Contributions without which Expansion/Mission cannot be done whether at the local, National or International level. Imagine what can be done if 100% of members of Team of Our Lady in the US Super Region participated with “a day's pay”.

Please join us in making the Teams of Our Lady Movement in the United States a vibrant, faithful, strong and expanding Movement full of committed “missionary disciples” ready to take “Marriage Spirituality” to every corner of the US and the world.

God bless,

Noélia and Jorge Sousa

US Super Region Responsible Couple



Have you checked out the new website?? You can now download documents, studies, etc. Most importantly, you can now update your information (name, address, email, etc.) and you can DONATE online and even check on your donations.

ALSO, the website can be viewed in various languages.

PLEASE CHECK IT OUT TODAY!



DO YOU HAVE A MESSAGE OR ARTICLE YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

If you have an inspiring article or message you'd like to share with fellow Teams of Our Lady members, please email us at: magnificat@teamsfourlady.org

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