

Newsletter

for the GB Regions



Teams

Equipes Notre-Dame • Teams of Our Lady • Equipos de Nuestra Señora • Equipas de Nossa Senhora • Ehegruppen E.N.D

September - October - November 2015

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ERI Study Topic - Discerning the Signs of the Times

Newsletter Editors

Please send contributions for the December 2015 to February 2016 edition by 1st October 2015 to Newsletter Editors, Malcolm & Marilyn Studholme

If your team requires permanent change in number of newsletters, contact your Regional Couple. These are listed in the Teams Directory section of the Newsletter.

If you require one off extra copy(ies) of a particular edition, please contact your Regional Distribution Couple. These are:

Southern Region: Harold & Irene Herbonnet
Central Region: Paul & Janet DeBoo
Northern Region: Mark & Dympna Edwards

Teams Diary

If there is an event you would like to attend, please feel free to do so!

Sep 2015 9	Surrey North Sector New R.Cs meeting 7.30pm - 37 Ashley Road, Epsom	Howard & Theresa Park
Sep 2015 21-24	Cheltenham 2 Are organising another retreat at Brownhill near Stroud. It will be led by Fr Ken. All welcome.	David Andrews
Oct 2015 10 9.30 - 17.00	Southern Regional Gathering St Joseph's Church, St Margaret Drive Epsom, Surrey KT18 7JQ	Teddy & Colette Totman
Oct 2015 17 12.00 - 20.00	Northern Regional Gathering Stokesley Methodist Centre High Street, Stokesley North Yorkshire TS8 5AD	Tony & Pat Banks
Dec 2015 5 18.00	Surrey North Sector Birthday Party St Joseph's Church, St Margaret Drive Epsom, Surrey KT18 7JQ	Howard & Theresa Park
Sep/Oct 30 - 2	Swanwick Event 2016	TBA



ERI Study Topic - 2015

Discerning the Signs of the Times

Available on the GB Teams website: www.teamsgb.org.uk



Northern Regional Couple's Letter

Dear Friends in Teams

We are Tony and Pat Banks who, last November, received the baton from Mark and Dympna to carry the responsibility as Regional couple for Northern Britain. It is now just over two years since Dympna first approached us during a Teams walk. Our first, and perhaps second reply, was no, not us, we have not the experience or ability and we are definitely too old. But Dympna said "There is no plan B". So, we thought, worried and prayed and at last said yes.



We have been married for forty eight years and have a son and two daughters, all married. We have six young grandchildren and two adult 'bonus' or step grandchildren.

As you read this letter we are just approaching the season of autumn, of harvest, of mellow fruitfulness. In many churches Harvest Festivals and even Harvest Suppers are held. One old English feast of Lammas Day or 'Loaf Mass' was celebrated on August 1st, the first festival of thanksgiving for the harvest and the bread made from the first corn, or wheat, to be cut and gathered in.

As we gather at our monthly meetings to share both a meal together and the ongoing mystery of our lives, we are sharing a very special harvest. We cannot but remember the meals Jesus ate with his friends and those he met along the way. We remember too his final celebration, the Last Supper, before he went out to offer up his life. Like the early Christians in their meals of agape or 'love feasts', we are remembering him, meditating on his life and, offering love and support to one another.

But in John's gospel, one other sign that Jesus gave during that Passover meal can never be forgotten. He washed the feet of his disciples telling them; "If I then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should wash each-others feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you." So, we are called to serve one another in many different ways and, sometimes, that way is taking on a role in Teams which we have never envisaged or, like his disciples, feel ready to undertake.

And now what is our new role? We are still exploring what this might be. Apart from all of the emails and administration, we feel it is meeting with and getting to know as many couples in our region as we can. We want to understand their lives and keep them in our prayers and to encourage expansion in the region by letting others know the great joy that can be found in belonging to Equipes Notre-Dame.

At the recent formation weekend in London, Mark and Dympna gave a wonderful example of life in Teams through a video of the flight of geese. We saw the geese flying in formation. The lead bird flew strongly until, tiring, it was replaced by another bird from the flock. As in roles in Teams, they only led for a short time then others took their place. But sometimes a bird becomes sick. When it left the gaggle two other birds would always accompany it. If the bird recovered the three would re-join their own group or another. If the bird sadly died, they stayed with it until the end and then resumed their journey.

Northern Regional Couple's Letter

An example of this was illustrated so movingly for us when we visited the North East Sector recently. We met Jim Pratt, a member of Backworth Team in North Tyne, and his team. That month they were celebrating 50 years in Teams. Jim, and his late wife Teresa, were the first Regional Couple in Britain and piloted the first team in Trinidad (by mail) and helped in the formation of Teams in Ireland. Jim has been facing health issues but remains upbeat and strong. Members of Jim's team said to us, "We are here now to support Jim who is not well". Part of Mark and Dympna's video was never so movingly expressed. We would love to see Jim and his team again at the October Gathering if that were possible.

Please remember us in your prayers as we try our best to be worthy successors to Mark and Dympna. We rely on your prayers, the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the prayers of our Blessed Mother, patron of Equipes Notre-Dame.

Tony & Pat Banks

Northern Regional Couple

Stanley 2, North east Sector, have lost two founder members

Frank Cassidy died on 24th April 2015 aged 77 years

Frank and his beloved wife, Pauline who died in 2013, were founder members of the Stanley 2 Team formed in 1969, one of the earliest in County Durham. He was actively involved in Teams life, working on the Sector Team, helping to pilot new teams and taking part in inter-teams activities.

Frank was always prepared to help others and dedicated much of his free time to work in the parish. He was a key volunteer for Derwentside Credit Union, a local bank helping the less well-off to make saving plans and obtain affordable loans for everyday life.

In his professional life, Frank was a skilled carpenter who built his (their) own house where he lived with Pauline for most of his life. He was also an enthusiastic gardener and a lifelong supporter of "The Toon" (Newcastle United). He and Pauline have three children, Stephen, Clare and Kevin and six grandchildren.

Frank will be sadly missed by all who knew him.



Peter Conlin died on 15th June 2015 aged 83 years after a long illness

Peter was partially blind from early on in his adult life but he never let this get him down. He worked as a storekeeper for Ransome & Marles (a major ball bearing manufacturer) until it closed in 1972.

Peter and his wife Mary liked nothing better than to go for a day out on the bus and he knew all the best places in the area where one could get a good meal and a pint.

One of Peter's great joys was to sing, he had a very fine voice, and was a founder member of Annfield Plain Gleemen, a prominent male-voice choir in the north-east of England.

Peter was a fine example of how to get on with life despite its adversities and we will miss him.

Tom & Margaret Stoddart

Stanley 2 Team



2014 Christmas Visit - Giaki Parish

As we planned our stay with our daughter Emilia, who is working in Nairobi Kenya, we visited friends now living in Bournemouth who had been in Teams with us in Banstead. They suggested that we try to visit Fr James Gikunda who had been a guest of the parish a few years earlier and had been looked after by the Bournemouth Team. The team had also supported three young girls in Giaki through school.

We contacted Fr James on arrival and he invited us to stay in his parish in Giaki. It was nearly a whole day's travel north from Nairobi near mount Kenya and the Town of Meru just on the equator where Fr James met us and took us to his parish about 30 km north down a dusty red unmade track. Fr James made us very welcome and we realized that we were the first Europeans to visit his parish. We stayed in the parish for a few days and were able to experience his day to day life.

Apart from the parish church originally built by Consolata Missionaries Fr James has built a presbytery and boarding school behind the church. The school has two hundred and fifty pupils and we discovered that electricity and water had been supplied to the parish with funds after Fr James had returned from his visit to Bournemouth. He has since built dormitories for boys and girls and seven classrooms. We helped with the porridge breakfast supplied to the children which was served outside from a very primitive kitchen with most of the children sitting on the ground. Fr James hopes to next build a dining hall and kitchen.

We were invited on the Sunday to visit three of the twelve out-stations served from Giaki for Sunday Mass. In each prayer house people waited patiently for the Sunday service which was accompanied by enthusiastic singing and a sermon in Kimeru, the local language, the timing determined by the very bad unmade roads. The last mass was in the most distant station about thirty miles away. It seemed like the end of the world. At each place



we were invited to introduce ourselves and tell something about our parish and family life in the UK. This proved to be a rather humbling experience as we found it humiliating to share anything about our comfortable life only a few hours away. We were moved by their welcome and hospitality, they were grateful that we were visiting.

Fr James also took us on his parish visits and we were able to see the very simple homes and the subsistence lives of the very poor people. We were horrified at how people can survive in such circumstances. We realized that the life of

2014 Christmas Visit - Giaki Parish

the parish priest in such a distant place required him to be headmaster, farmer and doctor as well as priest and social worker. As a local African priest he has no access to funds to support his work.

On our second visit after Christmas we spent more time in the school and met the teachers. We participated in the school morning mass and assembly. We saw many very small children who are given free places to protect them from abuse within some toxic family situations especially those who are very poor and affected by HIV and alcohol and other addictions. State help and health care is minimal and the parish support is invaluable.

Our short stay in Giaki parish made us realize the vast gap between our privileged lives in the UK and the desperate poverty of many people in Africa. We want to make a contribution to the project of building a kitchen and dining hall for Giaki parish.

When we shared our experience with our Team they suggested that maybe others may want to make contributions which we will send direct to Fr James. We have the account details for father James and will cover any charges associated with sending help and Fr James will acknowledge your kind donation.

Jan & Marta Kaczmarek

Hastings & Bexhill Team



Surrey South & Sussex party

Our region consists of eight teams in Bexhill, Hastings, Eastbourne, Horsham, Godalming and Guildford.

We held our party in April, instead of December, hoping that Bexhill might be more attractive in the spring!

Teddy and Colette kindly joined us and gave a talk at the Saturday evening Mass and before the party, on the Sunday morning.

We are fortunate to have the support of Fr Tom, our Team Chaplain and parish priest at St. Leonards, as well as Fr David and Fr Simon, priests at Bexhill. Fr David presided at the evening and morning Masses, Fr Tom delivered the homily on Sunday morning. All three priests joined us for our party. We had a great time sharing our experiences of Teams.

It was especially good to hear Jan and Martha speak of their recent time in Kenya and Helen and Greg from Horsham, who spoke with great enthusiasm.

We are now hoping that we may be able to form other teams down here on the south coast and also to form a Sector Team in order to get a bit more Teams life into our region. If you are in our region, please contact us if you have ideas of ways in which we can occasionally bring Teams in our sector together. Many thanks to those who came along and a special thank you to Teddy and Colette. We hope that their pulpit talk may eventually bear fruit!

Gill & Dave Meyer

Contact Couple - Surrey South & Sussex Region



Arundel & Brighton Diocese 50th Anniversary Celebration

After three days of sunshine and high temperatures, we were walking through the rain to the Brighton and Hove Albion Stadium. We had only walked from the train station, but others, with Howard Park driving the support van, had walked for 2 days from Arundel along the South Downs Way to the stadium in Brighton. Around 11,000 of us came to the stadium on Sunday 5th July to celebrate 50 years of the Arundel and Brighton diocese. As Timothy Radcliffe reminded us, rain is considered a blessing in South Africa, but by lunchtime the clouds had gone and the sun was out, and the new Bishop, Richard Moth, was able to close the day on a high by celebrating Mass in the sunshine, with triumphant music from orchestra and massed choirs, and over 100 priests climbing the gangways of the terraces to serve communion. In his homily the bishop invited us all to open our hearts and minds to the mercy only Jesus can offer and show mercy to others.

Earlier in the day, we had listened to inspirational words from Timothy Radcliffe, who spoke of Christians throughout the world as our brothers and sisters, Rowan Williams on the joys and challenges of sharing faith with other denominations, and Cardinal Cormac with his personal reminiscences of his time as Bishop of the diocese.

Why were we there? To support the Teams of Our Lady stand – fortunately in the dry, in the main concourse. We, together with Teddy and Colette and many other Teams couples across

the diocese, spoke to many people about Teams, with the casserole poster and cards attracting great interest. We pray that such interest bears fruit. It must be said that the opening line to engage people who stop and look, is, “have you heard of Teams?” and the answer is usually, NO. However, Antony got one response from one French lady, who said, “of course, I was in it in France many years ago, and knew Father Caffarel. Doesn’t everyone know about Teams?” Well, her English companion, who she had known for many years, didn’t know about Teams! So we gave some information, and the French Lady promised to talk to her companion about her time in Teams in France.

So more evidence that we need to continue to spread the word about Teams!

Antony & Janet Denman

Super Regional Couple



Southern Regional Gathering

“Couples Living the Mission with Joy”

Saturday 10th October 2015 9.30 am - 5.00 pm (Mass at 4.00 pm)

Venue: St Joseph's Church, St Margaret Drive, Epsom, Surrey KT18 7JQ

Keynote talk: “Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Contemporary World”

by Father Christopher Jamison, Director of National Office of Vocations, former Abbott of Worth Abbey and former Head of Worth School.

Well known from BBC TV series “The Monastery” and “The Big Silence”



Contact Couple: David & Breeda Walsh

Front Cover Story

During the autumn season the liturgy celebrates the feast of the Archangels, Ss Michael, Gabriel and Raphael on 29th September and also remembers the Holy Guardian Angels on 2nd October. To mark these occasions we have chosen to use an image of Angel Raphael as the cover picture on this edition of the Newsletter. We have also included readings from the Memorial of the Guardian Angels in the prayers for October.

The Cover Picture shows part of a beautiful stained glass window in the Chapel of St. Martha's Convent at Rottingdean, near Brighton. It depicts the boy, Tobias, who in the company of the angel Raphael has caught a large fish. The gall bladder from the fish will be used to restore his father, Tobit's sight.

We stayed at St. Martha's Convent for 2 nights when we attended Festival 50 at the AmEx Stadium in July. Accommodation consists of single ensuite bedrooms in the main building, and a 2-bedroom cottage and a 3-bedroom cottage in the grounds. We consider this would be a fitting venue for a team retreat. It is affordable, the food was good, the sisters were welcoming and it's only about a 10 minute walk to the beach.

Website: www.stmarthasrottingdean.co.uk

Editors

Reflections On Our Time As A Regional Couple

What are you doing now in Teams? Where are you being 'promoted' to next? These are the questions that Teams Couples have been putting to us since we handed over responsibility for the Northern Region to Pat and Tony Banks. The response really surprised us. Taking on a role in Teams is a service to your fellow Teams members and to the Movement, for a time. We all do it as responsible couples within our team and most couples will at some stage, be asked to take on a wider role within Teams whether within the sector or the region. This should never be seen as a 'promotion'. There is no 'career-structure' in Teams. (If there was then we have just been demoted). You don't need to be exceptional to do this but willing to help put something back into the Movement.



We've been asked to write a short reflection on our time as Northern Regional couple.

And so it began:

"Could we have a quick word?" This followed a tap on the shoulder from Janet Denman just before the start of the mass at the Swanwick Gathering in 2010. "Would you take on the role of Northern Regional Couple?" We were feeling inspired from the talks, prayer and mixed team meetings at the gathering and said "yes". Our son, Martin who has learning difficulties had just started residential college so we weren't as tied as previously. We were already part of the Regional Team who had been doing the role over the previous two years so had some understanding of what it involved in terms of tasks. But we couldn't have anticipated the joys, frustration and the sorrows of the next four years.

The joys were around meeting and getting to know Teams couples, particularly working with sector couples and the Regional Team in planning gatherings and various events. We enjoyed meeting more Teams couples and spiritual counsellors at the Teams picnics, birthday celebrations, retreats etc. We got to know and formed a close team with these and the other regional couples.

Some of the sorrows included death of longstanding team members and some instances where teams have decided to stop meeting, through illness or death of members, changes in personal circumstances or people moving away.

We soon realised that nothing in Teams happens without people behind the scenes making it happen, from organising a picnic to writing, editing, printing, and posting. It seems obvious but without many people contributing these things simply wouldn't happen. We were impressed to see how sector couples committed time, energy and prayer endeavouring to ensure that all the teams in their sector were supported and growing and to spreading the word of Teams in addition to planning and organising events.

Reflections On Our Time As A Regional Couple

We were privileged to get to know and form a close team with the other GB regional couples and to meet with them, Antony and Janet as Super Regional Couple and the Treasurer and Newsletter Couples twice per year to plan and organise some things behind the scenes, as well as meeting by “skype” in between times. We couldn't have carried out the role without the support and encouragement from this team and our sector couples. We also met with the Super-regional Team about once a year.

Some of the things that we have been involved with over the past four years are:

- Developing the Teams promotional DVD
- Refreshing some of the Teams literature (casserole materials)
- Updating the Teams website
- Trialling a Facebook page for Teams
- Organising the regional gatherings
- Contributing to the Teams formation session.

In the day to day activities of our own team it is easy to forget that Teams is an international movement and the largest lay movement in the church. We found that meeting people from other areas gave us an appreciation of the Movement as a whole and how it is lived out in people's lives throughout the world. Like the young man in Italy whose parents were in Teams. As a teenager he rejected the church and moved to another part of Italy where he met his wife, got married and joined a movement for married couples. He was shocked to find out that it was the same one that his parents had been part of for many years. We have been touched by the accounts of how as a community, the Teams in Malawi have responded to the floods, joining together to repair the houses, starting with those whose houses have been worst affected.

We were also able to attend a gathering of regional couples in Rome and meet Pope Benedict. We met with couples that we had met at previous international gatherings like Belene and Alfonso who had been our host couple in Compostela in Spain at the international gathering many years ago and although we don't have a common language we still keep in touch and exchange Christmas cards. Language can create barriers but also comedy. At this meeting in Rome we were listening to instructions given over headphones tuned in to different language translations (familiar to those of you who have been to any international gatherings). When we were told that at the end of the afternoon our bus would be met by members of the IRA, the English speaking contingent burst out laughing. The other languages having had the correct translation of ERI (International Leading Team) couldn't work out what the joke was.

We have had the opportunity to meet Teams couples from Ireland in the Irish regional gathering in Galway in 2012 and the Super-regional Gathering in Dublin in 2014. At the Dublin Gathering there were several handovers of responsibility. Antony and Janet presented each regional couple with aprons, as signs of service and this says it all. You don't have to be extraordinary to serve in the Movement but ordinary couples who serve and support each other will achieve extraordinary things. We are delighted to have passed this service over to Pat and Tony Banks

Reflections On Our Time As A Regional Couple

who we know will serve with humility, dedication and love.

We would ask that you pray for and support those who are serving the Teams Movement in whatever way, whether as Responsible Couple, Sector Couple, Regional, Super regional or ERI.

Pope Frances said “Each Christian and every community must discern the path the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our comfort zone in order to reach the ‘peripheries’ in need of the light of the Gospel” (The Joy of The Gospel – Evangelii Gaudium)

It can be lonely at times when people don’t respond or when there is more criticism than support. When we first started we realised that we didn’t know all the teams in the region. As well as attending as many events as possible we wrote to each team asking them to send a photo of their team so that we could put names to faces. After six months and several letters and emails we had a response from only one team.

Please be patient with those who serve in Teams. The Movement is served by ordinary, busy people who have family, work and other church commitments and often health issues. So, if the newsletters don’t arrive to the address that you expect, it may be simply that that an updated contact detail hasn’t reached whoever needs it. And if you are tapped on the shoulder and asked to help or serve in whatever way, whether as part of a specific event or in an ongoing role please have the generosity to say yes. Without all of us contributing in some way our movement wouldn’t flourish and grow.

What’s next for us? We have enjoyed our time as Regional Couple and will continue as members of the Formby Team and to serve in different ways, through managing the website, maintaining the database & posting newsletters for the Northern Region and helping to organise the weekend Swanwick Gathering in September 2016 (30th Sept – 2nd October). We hope to meet many of you there. Thank you for the privilege of serving as a regional couple.

God Bless

Mark & Dympna Edwards



Appreciation From Super Regional Couple

Mark & Dympna Edwards - An Appreciation

Mark and Dympna have done a great job during their time as Regional Couple, and, as members of the Super Regional Team have been a great support to ourselves and to regional couples in other parts of the Super Region, who share the same, and different, challenges as they support Teams within their own regions.

And before their time as Regional Couple, they had a less publicised role, serving on one of the satellite teams that work behind the scenes preparing new Teams literature, study topics, etc, and generally provide background support to the International Leading Team and the whole Movement.

We can only echo their encouragement to us all that this great movement of Teams needs us all to take our part when asked. We are reminded of the brief article which our very first Spiritual Counsellor, Sister Monica, sent us when we were editors of our sector newsletter.

JESUS & THE ANGEL - Everyone's Responsibility

When Jesus Christ had finished His work on earth and gone back to heaven, the angel Gabriel met Him.

"Lord", said Gabriel, "You have done a very wonderful work on earth. Is it permitted to ask what plans You have made for carrying on?"

"I have chosen twelve men", said Jesus, Peter and Andrew, James and John, who are fisherman, and several others; there are some women too - Mary and Martha and their friends. These will pass the message on to neighbours and their friends and those they meet, till it has gone round the whole world."

"But", said the angel, "Just supposing the fishermen become so busy with their fishing, or the women with their housework, that they have not time to pass the message on, or else forget to do it? If these few ordinary people fail You, what other plan have You made?"

Jesus smiled. "I have no other plan", He said "I am counting on them".

Jesus said "You have not chosen me, I have chosen you." (John 15:6)

Contributed by Sister Monica
(former Spiritual Advisor to Northampton 4)



Maybe Mark & Dympna will be tapped on the shoulder again, but it won't be by us, as we too finish our term of service at the end of the year. But we plan to be at Swanwick in September 2016 as ordinary team members, and hope we will see many of you there.

Antony & Janet Denman
Super Regional Couple

Promoting Teams

Following on from Teddy and Colette Totman's excellent article in the June Newsletter about Pope Francis' call to evangelise and how within the context of Teams we are called to spread the word of the Movement, we thought we would share our experiences by way of an incentive to never give up trying to achieve this goal. We moved to Dorset in 2011 and having been members of Teams prior to our move we were keen to join a team locally. Our sector couple David and Lorna Watts had successfully piloted two new teams and we joined a third team that they were piloting. At the end of piloting for a variety of reasons there were only ourselves and another couple keen to carry on but we did so with the aim of finding more couples. In 2012 following a pulpit talk we found another young couple who had recently moved into the parish and they joined us. We have constantly prayed for more team members and a chaplain, as well as "talking Teams" to everyone we meet. In May this year we spoke to a new couple who were having tea and coffee after mass and they were very interested in finding out more and have attended a "taster session". They enjoyed this so much that they have introduced us to another couple in a neighbouring church.

After Easter this year our priest was unfortunately taken ill and it was Bernard's duty as chair of the pastoral council to find priests for our Sunday masses. One of the priests he found delivered an excellent homily on the sacraments. After mass it was a marvellous opportunity to talk about Teams. He had never heard of the Movement and was very keen to learn more so we invited him to our home to discuss it further.

As a newly ordained priest he was amazed he had not heard about Teams in the seminary and was interested to learn more so he could promote it when he was given his own parish. He has now attended one of our Teams meetings which he thoroughly enjoyed and is coming again next month. In the meantime he has now heard from his Bishop that he will be running his first parish in Swanage in September and in his words exciting times to spread Teams westwards!

We know as Catholics that Our Lord answers our prayers in his own way and in his own time. So let our experience be an inspiration for other Teams members to evangelise the Movement however daunting the task may be and to never give up trying to promote and enrich the sacrament of marriage through the Movement. You never know where these new green shoots will spring up unless you try.

Bernard & Susan Kelly

Westbourne 1

Reading Right on to the End - On 1 Cor 12.31-13.13

When we read St. Paul we stop too soon
in his great hymn to love.

We register the triple warning about
a lovelessness that would leave us
empty, booming and all-knowing,
people who had not got the point at all.

We hear the paeon to love's durability,
constancy and comprehension.

Then we applaud: we know its truth
and our desire for such true love.

So at our weddings that is where
we're wont to stop.

What we do not want is what comes next,
the promise that all prowess, power
and our very faculties themselves will fail,
all stripped away till I,
made once again a new-born babe,
am ready fully to be known,
more so than I have ever known myself.

When all is gone, is lost,
then love alone remains
in all its elemental strength,
with its companions, faith and hope,
the lion and unicorn that support
its battle-worn escutcheon.

The cracked mirror shattered at the last into a thousand shards
on which the dazzling daylight from beyond plays endlessly,
only now we see the cost and the eternal worth
of what we can no longer speak, impose, explain.
Yes, then the only knowing left
is knowledge that there is no higher way than this.

© Rob Esdaile 2011. From the collection, **Renew, Refresh, Rejoice**.

Copies are available for £6, including postage, from The Parish Office, Our Lady of Lourdes,
Hampton Court Way, Thames Ditton KT7 0LP, with all profits going to the parish's Golden
Jubilee Buildings Fund.

Fr José's Letter

My dear Team members

In my previous letters to you, the background theme over the years has been concentrated on two Endeavours touching on the spirituality of our Movement; namely, the Sit-Down and Married Prayer. I hope that all of you have managed to internalise these two points and that you have put them into practice, because in truth, they are terribly important for your growth as couples as well as for your growth within a Team, since the Team is a community whose spiritual and human life develops in direct proportion to each couple's commitment to be faithful to the methodology of holiness that is characteristic of our Movement. In the current conditions of our society and the Church and in the context of the celebration of the Extraordinary Synod on the Family and New Evangelisation, our Movement's contribution is essential and the Church expects much of us, so that it may be the catalyst and the efficient sign of hope for the world, a hope that is truly concrete and alive.

Today, I would like to draw your attention to the importance of personal or individual prayer. Personal prayer is truly the breath of the soul. Father Caffarel set the example, since he himself devoted a large amount of his day to prayer and he was in the habit of saving three months of the year for meditation and prayer, because he knew that if his life was not well anchored in prayer, his spiritual and apostolic life would be seriously compromised. Jesus told us that we ought to pray ceaselessly and the liturgy also invites us to raise our hearts to God: the opening dialogue to the Preface of the Eucharistic prayer, *sursum corda! Habemus ad Dominum!* Lift up your hearts! We lift them up to the Lord!

According to Tertullian (160-220), a Christian ought to recite the Lord's Prayer at least three times a day: morning, noon and night. St Thérèse of the Child Jesus was so moved by the prayer that she was not able to go beyond the opening words of the Our Father! Have we ever managed to fathom the depths of what it means to have the possibility of addressing God as a father, in the same manner as Jesus does, he who introduced us to this Trinitarian intimacy?

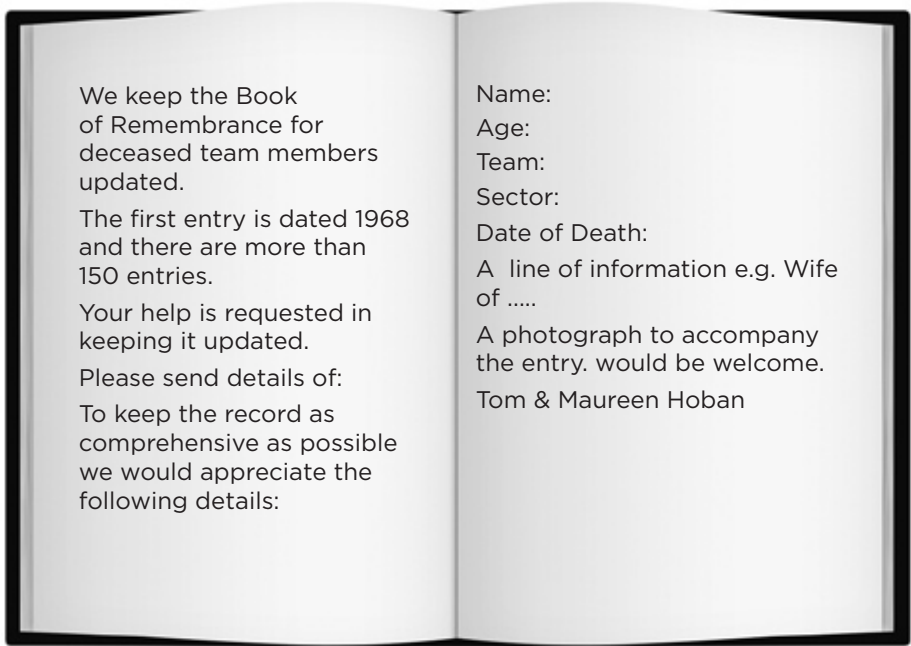
That is why in this letter, I urge each of you to cultivate the spirit of prayer, by setting aside a moment in your daily life when you can speak to God in the intimacy of your soul.... Following in Jesus' footsteps, let us restrain ourselves and only ask that we not be led into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (Mt 6:13) In the end, we ought to ask the Lord to deliver us from sin, the single bad thing that can happen to us! Ultimately, let us ask the Lord that his will always be done, because we do not know whether health or sickness, life or death is better for us. Let the Lord make the decision and let us ask for the grace to see a sign of his visit to our house in everything!

I beseech the abundance of God's blessings upon you during this time of grace, given over to the Synod on the Family, the catalyst of hope and peace. My very personal greetings to each and every one of you!

Father José Jacinto Ferreira de Farias, SCJ

Spiritual Counsellor to the International Leading Team

Book of Remembrance



We keep the Book of Remembrance for deceased team members updated.

The first entry is dated 1968 and there are more than 150 entries.

Your help is requested in keeping it updated.

Please send details of:

To keep the record as comprehensive as possible we would appreciate the following details:

Name:

Age:

Team:

Sector:

Date of Death:

A line of information e.g. Wife of

A photograph to accompany the entry. would be welcome.

Tom & Maureen Hoban

Prayers & Reflection for September

Text for Meditation Matthew 9: 9-13

As Jesus was walking on he saw a man named Matthew sitting by the customs house, and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he got up and followed him. While he was at dinner in the house it happened that a number of tax collectors and sinners came to sit at the table with Jesus and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, 'Why does your master eat with tax collectors and sinners?' When he heard this he replied, 'It is not the healthy who need the doctor, but the sick. Go and learn the meaning of the words: What I want is mercy, not sacrifice. And indeed I did not come to call the virtuous, but sinners.'

Responsorial Psalm 30 (31)

Response "Forgive Lord, the guilt of my sin"

1. Happy those whose offence is forgiven,
whose sin is remitted.
O happy those to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,
in whose spirit is no guile. **(R)**
2. But now I have acknowledged my sins;
my guilt I did not hide.
I said: 'I will confess my offence to the Lord.'
And you, Lord, have forgiven the guilt of my sin. **(R)**
3. You are my hiding place, O Lord;
you save me from distress,
you surround me with cries of deliverance. **(R)**
4. Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord,
exult, you just!
O come, ring out your joy,
all you upright of heart. **(R)**

Concluding Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are no respecter of persons. We are grateful that you offer God's mercy and healing according to need and not worthiness. During the Year of Mercy help us to take up the challenge to be more open and caring towards people who differ from ourselves. May we have the humility to receive fresh insights into Truth, even from unexpected sources. **Amen**

Reflection

As I was preparing to write for this reflection, we received a guest into our house to stay for the summer, a young woman from abroad, working locally. We have done this kind of thing before and have always felt that connecting in this way with someone we might not otherwise meet is a way of enriching our lives. It certainly motivates me to keep the house tidier!

She has turned out to be a very devout person, making me in particular wonder about my own spiritual efforts. We will have great conversations over the next few weeks and I am convinced this visitor is part of God's providence and I should make good use of the opportunity.

In this gospel, the traditional view meets the Messianic. In Jesus' time, there were people you mixed with and people you didn't. The poor and disabled were being punished for their, or someone else's failure and those who abided loyally to the Law of Moses were rewarded and became successful.

Jesus' calling of Matthew, a publican and tax collector (who may have been one of the few literate disciples) caused consternation among observers. Jesus' action turned their perceptions upside down and caused jealous outrage among the Pharisees but he told them of his mission of mercy to those who needed God's love and forgiveness.

Soon we shall begin the Year of Mercy and we might remember this message and how to act positively. It challenges us to be open to the good example of others in our family life and not to be fearful or defensive to new experiences or fresh insights into revelation. We need mercy and we must show mercy. When we do, there will be love and where love is, God is.

As the psalm says, 'Rejoice in the Lord . . . come ring out your joy!

Deacon Nick Johnson

Prayers & Reflection for October

Text for Meditation Matthew 18: 1-5. 10

The disciples came to Jesus and said, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' So he called a little child to him and set the child in front of them. Then he said, 'I tell you solemnly, unless you change and become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. And so, the one who makes himself as little as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

'Anyone who welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.

'See that you never despise any of these little ones, for I tell you that their angels in heaven are continually in the presence of my Father in heaven.'

Responsorial Psalm 90 (91)

Response "The Lord has commanded his angels to keep you in all your ways"

1. He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
and abides in the shade of the Almighty
says to the Lord; 'My refuge,
my stronghold, my God in whom I trust!' **(R)**
2. It is he who will free you from the snare
of the fowler who seeks to destroy you;
he will conceal you with his pinions
and under his wings you will find refuge. **(R)**
3. You will not fear the terror of the night
nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the plague that prowls in the darkness
nor the scourge that lays waste at noon. **(R)**
4. Upon you no evil shall fall,
no plague approach where you dwell.
For you has he commanded his angels,
to keep you in all your ways. **(R)**

Concluding Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, by the mystery of your Incarnation you took on our humanity and became one with us in all things but sin, so that we may learn to become divine. Give us something of your childlike total trust, freedom, openness and docility to the will of the Father, so that we may always be fully teachable and malleable and flexible to God's will in our life, family and community as we strive to build God's kingdom of justice, love, forgiveness, reconciliation and peace, **Amen.**
(Fr Ignatius Edet)

Reflection

Unless You Change And Become Like Little Children

In setting a child before his disciples as a symbol of the Kingdom, Jesus apparently highlights, among others, the counter-cultural character of the Reign of God vis-à-vis earthly kingdoms. As he would say to Pilate during his passion, “my Kingdom is not of this world.” Perhaps nothing best captures this reality as the image of the child. Innocence, trust, freedom from prejudice, transparency and docility – these are some of the qualities which make children not only special and awesome but also adorable, God-like, nay, Kingdom-oriented.

Because God’s Reign is completely different from any earthly types, its logic, orientation and values are also radically different from, if not completely opposed to the latter’s. The symbolic action and message of Jesus invite us to a critical soul-searching. ‘Greatness’ in the Kingdom of God (or in the Christian community) is not a matter of status, fame or power. It is attained through fostering childlike dispositions – meekness, unalterable faith and trust, simplicity, openness, freedom from prejudices, transparency, docility, holiness, etc. These are essential prerequisites for God’s Kingdom.

Unfortunately, adulthood is normally characterised among others by the loss of this childlikeness. And so, we are constantly faced with the gospel challenge to strive to recover it through repentance and conversion, through a radical change of heart and attitude. As Jesus told Nicodemus, we have to ‘born again’ if we want to enter God’s Reign (see John 3:3,5). Becoming childlike comes with its peculiar risks, fragility and vulnerabilities, the awareness of which we mustn’t allow to deter us since, in the words of the psalmist, “the Lord has commanded his angels to keep you in all your ways.”

Father Ignatius Edet

Assistant Priest, St John Fisher (Merton)

Prayers & Reflection for November

Text for Meditation Ezekiel 47: 1-2. 8-9. 12

The angel brought me to the entrance of the Temple, where a stream came out from under the Temple threshold and flowed eastwards, since the Temple faced east. The water flowed from under the right side of the Temple, south of the altar. He took me out by the north gate and led me right round outside as far as the outer east gate where the water flowed out on the right-hand side. He said, 'This water flows east down to the Arabah and to the sea; and flowing into the sea it makes its waters wholesome. Wherever the river flows, all living creatures teeming in it will live. Fish will be very plentiful, for wherever the water goes it brings health, and life teems wherever the river flows. Along the river, on either bank, will grow every kind of fruit tree with leaves that never wither and fruit that never fails; they will bear new fruit every month, because this water comes from the sanctuary. And their fruit will be good to eat and the leaves medicinal.'

Responsorial Psalm 45 (446)

Response "The waters of a river give joy to God's city,
the holy place where the Most High dwells."

1. God is for us a refuge and strength,
a helper close at hand, in time of distress:
so we shall not fear though the earth should rock,
though the mountains fall into the depths of the sea. **(R)**
2. The waters of a river give joy to God's city,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
God is within, it cannot be shaken;
God will help it at the dawning of the day. **(R)**
3. The Lord of hosts is with us:
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.
Come, consider the works of the Lord,
the redoubtable deeds he has done on the earth. **(R)**

Concluding Prayer

God our Father, your gift of water brings life and freshness to the earth; it washes away our sins and brings us eternal life. Lord, in your mercy give us living water, always springing up as a fountain of salvation: free us, body and soul, from every danger, and admit us to your presence in purity of heart. **Amen**
(from Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling Holy Water. ICEL)

Reflection

The feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica is celebrated to draw attention to the fact that the Lateran Basilica is the Mother Church of the Roman Rite. It emphasises the unity and the universality of the Catholic Church. It is not surprising therefore that the first reading on this feast is taken from Ezekiel, who focused on the priestly strand of the tradition in which worship in the Temple was the important way of giving honour to God. It is important to realise that during the Exile there were no temple sacrifices and the Israelites were consequently deprived of one of the main pillars of their self-understanding. Hence possibly there is a sense of yearning for the Restoration of the Temple that was an important issue after the return of the exiles to Jerusalem. In a similar way a fundamental sense of Catholic identity focuses on the altar during the Sacrifice of the Mass.

For this reason the Temple is seen as a source of life. Ezekiel describes a river of fresh water flowing out of the Temple through the Kidron Valley to the Dead Sea. It is a source of life and abundance symbolising the life giving presence of God in the Temple.

It might be worth reflecting on the words of the institution narrative: “. . . this is the chalice of my blood . . . which will be poured out for you . . . for the forgiveness of sins”. The life of these words comes from Jesus being other centred. The church and the temple are buildings but it is the people in them who are the People of God and it is they who are given new life. For that reason we can rejoice with the psalmist

“The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our stronghold”.

Fr Bill Muir CJ



Notice Board

Northern Regional Gathering

“Couples Living the Mission with Joy”

Saturday 17th October 2015 12.00 - 20.00 pm (latest)

Venue: Stokesley Methodist Centre,
High Street, Stokesley, North Yorkshire TS8 5AD

Keynote talk: Deacon Peter & Pauline Lavery
Co-ordinator for Marriage & Family Life
Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle



Contact Couple: Tony & Pat Banks

Team Prayer • The Magnificat

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord
and my spirit exults in God my saviour;
because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid.
Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed,
for the Almighty has done great things for me.
Holy is His name, and His mercy reaches from age to age
for those who fear Him.
He has shown the power of His arm,
He has routed the proud of heart.
He has pulled down princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly.
The hungry He has filled with good things, the rich He sent empty away.
He has come to the help of Israel His servant, mindful of His mercy
- according to the promise He made to our ancestors,
of His mercy to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.
Our Lady of the Home, pray for us.

Prayer Cascade: www.teamsgb.org.uk/prayercascade

final thought . . .
Never be afraid to trust an unknown
future . . . to a known God