

Teams Newsletter

for the GB Regions
April- June 2020



Equipes Notre Dame - Teams

Contents

Letter from Regional Couple	1
The Second Wind	3
Intercessors in Teams	4
North West Sector Events	6
Fareham Team Celebrate 40 years	7
Remembering Sheila Stevens, Nick Waight, Sr. Catherine	8-9
The Year of the word	8
Friends of Fr Caffarel	10
The Regional Candles	12
Two in One Flesh publications	13
Prayers and reflections for April	14
Prayers and reflections for May	16
Prayers and reflections for June	18
Contact details - Regional and Sector	19

***It has been said that marriage has no guarantees.
If that's what you're looking for, go live with a
CAR BATTERY!***

What's happening in your Team?

Please send all photos & articles for the July – Sept 2020 edition by 1st June to

Teams Literature

Copies of all teams leaflets are available from the Teams GB publicity couple Alan & Gaynor Hakes.

For a change in the number of newsletters please contact your regional couple.

For one-off extra copies please contact your regional distribution couple:

Regional Couple letter

Dear Friends in Teams

As most of you are aware, this letter is written months before it is published; this one was conceived and started around the time of the Feast of the Presentation in the Temple. It is a complicated feast day as it is also the Feast of the Purification and Candlemas Sunday. We would like to share some thoughts on this feast and what we, as married couples and Team members, can learn from them.



The Feast of the Presentation has two characters who appear this one time and have an important message to convey. These are Simeon and Anna who both announce to the world that the baby that Mary and Joseph bring to the Temple is the Messiah, the Christ child.

Simeon is a devout man, getting along in years, possibly a priest; more likely a 'man of good standing' a "viri probati" who, led by the Spirit, went to the Temple that day. Anna is a prophetess; of 84 years and a widow, who is at the Temple every day. Everyone knows a Simeon and Anna in their own church community. The warm, welcoming people who will help all who come to the community and are the keepers of its history. The people who are always at church to help with the little jobs that make the whole of the parish run smoothly, they know what must be done, also when and, most importantly, why it is done. They have a deep love for God and their community and try to help others realise that they too can have this deep relationship with Christ.



Simeon makes us aware of the Christ who is "a light to bring the Gentiles from darkness; and the glory of thy people Israel" *Canticle of Simeon. Nunc Dimittis.*

As for Anna, we imagine her seeing a young couple with their first child coming into the Temple and offering to help. Mary and Joseph would be confused and unsure of how to proceed as the Temple was an overpowering place and this was the first time they had been through the ceremonies of purification and the presentation. The purification ritual might be particularly difficult for a shy young woman after her first child. Anna takes them in hand and explains what to do and leads them through the ceremonies, more importantly she shows

Regional Couple letter



them why the ceremonies exist and how these rituals reveal the love of God for them and the child. She opens out the dull dry ritual in the Temple and makes it part of a personal relationship with a loving God. Anna realises that the small child she is holding is the loving God that she is leading Mary and Joseph to; their child is Christ, the Messiah that had been promised and who she has waited all her life to see.

Within our own time in Teams we have come across many Simeons and Annas. People who, in our community, have a deep commitment to Christ. People whose prayer, devotion and practical action can lead others to be aware of the presence of Christ in their own lives. People who have helped us by the commitment they show in their individual relationship to God and lead by example. The Simeons we have met show us how to listen to the word of God and to talk to him through personal prayer. The Annas walk alongside us and show us how the liturgies and rituals of the Church can lead to a more personal relationship with our Loving God. We are both grateful for all the Simeons and Annas we have met. Simeons and Annas come in all places and in all shapes and sizes. Look at your own lives and see who has helped you, who your Simeons and Annas are, then thank God for them. But also, we should try, as members of Teams, to be Simeons and Annas for all those we meet and lead others to see the loving God that we have come to know.

Sue and Paul Rowney

Regional Couple for Northern Britain.

**ALWAYS STRIVE TO
GIVE YOUR SPOUSE
THE VERY BEST OF
YOURSELF
NOT WHAT'S
LEFT OVER
AFTER YOU GAVE
YOUR BEST
TO EVERYONE ELSE**



The Second Wind

Dear Friends in Teams,

Last year, we distributed copies of the Vocation and Mission Document throughout the Super Region, awakening us all to the role we have in Teams and in society as Christians. This year we wish to continue this theme using the document *The Second Wind*, included with your newsletter. We encourage you all, in your Team and as a couple, to use this document to further deepen the gifts we have received and continue to serve others with love.



Father Caffarel encouraged us all to be a source of renewal for the Church and for Teams. With the current decline in marriages and break up of relationships, we have a responsibility to share on the gift and treasure of true fellowship and marriage, welcoming the richness of diversity in society whilst protecting the unity of the Movement.

As stated in the document: "Today, it is not unreasonable to think that the credibility of the Christian faith rests mainly on concrete examples of love with a great power to shine and bear witness: the love of couples, of families, and of small Christian communities. The mission to which the Church is urgently calling Teams is one of bearing witness through love. Without the love of married lay people, without families who have learned to share, without faith communities of couples, like Teams, it will be difficult for the Church to convince our world that the Gospel is a call to love and that this love is truly possible."

"True wisdom in marriage consists in the desire to live "for you" and not "for me." Communion flows from the reciprocal current of giving and receiving. This is the highest form of unity within a couple, because it flows from their oneness in Jesus. Communion is not only the culmination of conjugal love, it is also the greatest gift a couple can give others. Parenthood, hospitality and friendship, work and commitments are all manifestations of the irresistible tendency of communion to transform itself into giving."

We also encourage you to look at your personal involvement in the Teams' Movement. There is always a need for support from couples in the Sector, Regional and Super Region.

"The life of the Movement depends on the willingness of its members to accept leadership responsibilities in a spirit of service. Those who accept responsibility do so in close collaboration and communion with the priests who accompany Teams as spiritual counsellors.

The union of these two sacraments makes each one appear in the eyes of the world as a specific expression of God's love."

Perhaps you could discuss this in your meeting or Sit down? The *Second Wind* has been adapted as study topic in four parts that you can use in your team over the coming months.

We wish you good deliberation and discussion and look forward to seeing you at the Regional Gatherings later this year.

Wishing you and your families many blessings

Yours in Teams

Piotr & Dzia Chodzko-Zajko, Transatlantic Super Regional Couple

Intercession in Teams

A warm welcome to all you wonderful couples, widows and religious. What a privilege it is to be part of the Eurasia intercessors, which besides the Transatlantic includes India and Australia. We, everyone of us are called as part of the body of Christ to take part in the joy and sufferings of our brothers and sisters. We may be doing this already within our circle of family and friends, but isn't it wonderful that God who loves us all EQUALLY and "makes the sun rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust" Matth 5-45.

This God has called us to expand our circle of prayer to other Team members in our country and in countries we have never visited to people we have never seen. It's not about taking on more stress in our lives and we might say we have enough already! Especially if our health is frail, but we actually bring one another's burdens and lay them at the Masters feet and at the same time Jesus takes our burdens too, it's a win win .

Fr. Caffarel in his great wisdom instigated the call to intercessory pray 60 years ago with such simple and doable options. Commemorating 60 years, there will be special events planned, one being carded for December 8th 2020. Fr Caffarel likened intercessors to be the stretcher- bearers that carry the afflicted ones to Jesus.

The 3 options offered are:

- ⇒ Simply offer your entire day through saying the morning prayer of the church which encompasses your works joys pains and suffering.
- ⇒ Spending an hour of prayer a month
- ⇒ Fasting once a month

We hope that you do sign up for this great adventure that will deepen your marriage....more information will follow.

We would be grateful if you would complete the questionnaire opposite so we know how intercessors are understood. Please send to:-

EIAFATIMA2018@gmail.com

God's richest blessings,

Dwight and Christine Gonsalves
Trinidad and Tobago teams

Your Feedback– Intercessors

Dear Friends,

Would you please be kind enough to fill out this questionnaire, which aims to improve the relationship between Teams of Our Lady and the Intercessors?

Questions	YES	NO	Remarks
Before today had you heard of the Teams Intercessors?			
Do you receive the Intercessors' Quarterly Letter ?			
Do you know how to leave a prayer intention for the Intercessors?			
Do you know the Intercessors' Correspondent Couple for your Region/Super-Region?			
Are in contact with your Intercessors' Correspondent Couple?			
What do you expect of them?			
When you organise gatherings/Teams' Sector Days in your Region/Super-Region, do you leave time to talk about the Intercessors? Is there a stand for the Intercessors?			
Can Team members leave prayer intentions during the gatherings/Sector days in your Region/Super-Region? Do you then pass them on to the Intercessors?			

Please send responses to: EIAIFATIMA2018@gmail.com

Our heartfelt thanks!

International Animation Team for the Intercessors

North West Celebrations

The North West Sector enjoyed a number of celebrations over the last few months.

Warrington 1 organised the December Teams Birthday Celebrations with a Mass, followed by a shared table and social evening.



Each team took part in the Mixed Teams Meeting on 7th February with a lively discussion topic on the role of Marriage in our modern world, based on a reading from Pope Francis letter on the Joy of Love and some searching questions from Denis and Joan Povey from Warrington 3.

Formby Team organised the Sector retreat at St Joseph's Prayer centre in Formby. Fr. Eamon Mulcahy took us through Jesus journey to prepare us for Lent and Easter. His lively and engaging style made it both entertaining and thought provoking. One thought that will always stay with us is the image of the Holy Spirit as powerful wind and fire. At Jesus baptism in the Jordan that the Holy Spirit came down on Jesus as wind swooping in the way a dove might rather than as a fluffy chick!



Mark & Dymrna Edwards
Formby Team

Editors: Please send us pictures and a couple of lines of any Teams events in your Team or sector.

Fareham 2 celebrate 40 years

Fareham 2 in Hampshire celebrated their 40th anniversary on February 23rd at Sacred Heart Church with a special commitment during Mass with their Chaplain, Fr Michael Peters. Our Team was very lucky 40 years ago to be piloted by Robert and Mary Jones, now living in Prinknash and in Central Region, and Peter (RIP) and Anna Chandler. Our Team has 5 couples and is lucky to also have Sr. Regina McGarry from Harpenden as an honorary member who joins us and leads us spiritually on retreats!

Team members are David and Avril Cockshoot, Chris and Frankie Lane, David and Frances Ryan, Annette and Paul O'Beirne and Pat and Jim Gilhooley. Unfortunately Pat and Jim were unable to be at the Mass as Pat was flying out to support their son and daughter-in-law in America and Jim was unable to get back from the airport in time to join us, but they were with us in spirit. We also remembered all the deceased members of Teams in Fareham. Our Team will be going on a special retreat this year to Worth Abbey with Fr Michael and led by Sr Regina and will be joined by Karen and Adrian Jones who were in our Team when they lived in Fareham. Our Team made their annual commitment during the Mass and read the bidding prayers, Team themed, as a way of witnessing to our 40 years together and also to promote the Teams movement locally. A celebration with cake in the church hall followed the Mass and many members of Teams locally and our families were able to celebrate with us.

We feel very blessed to have shared so many years together growing in faith and learning about our sacrament of marriage.

Annette O'Beirne

Fareham 2



Remembering Sheila Stephens

Sheila was born in Dublin, an only child. Because her father was a diplomat with the British Foreign Office, Sheila spent her childhood in many countries. After boarding school, she trained as an occupational therapist in London.

John and Sheila met on a skiing holiday in 1968 and married a year later. They had five children.

They became involved with Teams over 30 years ago and were initially in a team in Claygate, but when that team disbanded, they subsequently joined Thames Ditton 1.

Sheila had a lively and vivacious personality and lived a very active life. Her Catholicism never clashed with John's Anglicanism and they attended prayer groups and services in both their respective churches.

In 2013 Sheila had a stroke that was caused by a brain tumour. She lost feeling in the right side of her body. She had to endure surgery and chemotherapy, but remained cheerful and determined to get better and lead life as fully as she could. She and John continued to attend team meetings. She was a great inspiration. However, last summer her health declined and she had to go into hospital. She was allowed to spend her last few months at home, where she died peacefully on 12th November, surrounded by her loving family. In addition to their five children, Sheila and John were also blessed with five grandchildren.

Sheila's funeral took place in Cobham and the church was full to overflowing - a tribute to the love her friends and family and fellow-parishioners felt for Sheila and for a life well-lived.

Sheila is much missed by all of our team (Thames Ditton 1) – Peter & Margaret Aindow, Malcolm & Marilyn Studholme, Fr Bill Muir, and Gordon & Marie Wratten. John is courageously continuing to remain in our team.

Gordon & Marie Wratten, Thames Ditton 1 Team



The Year of the Word

A good book for Lent or the Year of The Word is Edward Sri- "God with us" which is based on St Matthew Gospel. I am enjoying reading it week by week but it could also be used as a study topic.

The painting of St Jerome and St John the Baptist by Cardinal Vincent Nichols is relevant in the Year of the Word as St Jerome rewrote the Bible for us.

More info: www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/the-god-who-speaks/
Annette O'Beirne

Nick Waight & Sr Catherine

If you want to show your support of Teams then maybe one of the best ways is to help start a new team. This is what Nick Waight, along with Ursula his wife, did as a founding couple in 3 teams, Wimbledon 8, Guildford 2 and Godalming 3, and by piloting 3 more teams. They also supported the greater Teams movement outside their own teams. They served for 3 years as Sector Couple for the Surrey and Sussex sector, and for a year on the Regional Support team, in the days when England, Scotland and Wales made up one big region. And Nick and Ursula also supported the International outreach of END. They attended the International Gatherings in Portugal at Fatima, in Spain at Santiago, in France at Lourdes, and the Regional Training Session in held in Trinidad in 1993.



Until Nick's accident, 10 years ago, when he suffered a head injury, his life was one of quiet service to his family and to the Church, not only in the Teams movement but also in his parish. He served as a reader and as a Eucharistic minister in every parish they lived in, as a member of the SVP and as a founding member of the Pax Christi group in Wimbledon. When he retired from his job he did a degree in theology at the seminary at Wonersh.

All of this was done without show. Nick was not demonstrative but he was loyal and hardworking in the service of others, and especially in the service of the Church he loved. Most of all Nick was a man of faith, who went to mass as often as he could, daily if possible. He was a man of prayer and quiet reflection. He died on October 27th 2019 and he will be greatly missed.

Nora Courtney

Sister Catherine was a person of great kindness, love and inspiration working tirelessly for the parish of St John Fisher, Raynes Park, London. She also taught at St Catherine's School (when it was a Middle School). Her spirituality and generosity touched everyone she met.

Sister Catherine was our Teams Chaplain for over ten years. Our Team is the far poorer for her absence. Her deep spirituality, wisdom, humility and sense of humour will be sorely missed. She was ever guiding us through our prayer life as well as sharing her knowledge of Scripture and providing us with valuable texts to explore during our Teams meetings. We always left our meetings with many encouraging and calm thoughts from Sister Catherine



Sister Catherine will always be in our hearts.

Roman Kisiel

Friends of Fr Caffarel

Dear friends,

At the beginning of this New Year, we are reminded by the secretariat for the promotion of the cause of canonisation of Fr Caffarel, of the need to share information of any graces or blessings you have received directly or that you know of indirectly, following intercession to our founding priest. All testimonies are gathered together and will aid the progress of the canonisation of Fr Caffarel.

In the recent newsletter circulated by Les Amis du Père Caffarel, Father Marcovits, the editor to the Cause of Father Caffarel, chose the text from St Mathew 5:15 "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house."

He reminds us that Fr Caffarel was such a light, not to be hidden, a witness to God's love, an apostle to marriage and of prayer.

In turn, along with the founding couples, the light they created has been entrusted to us: The Teams of Our Lady. Do we hide it under a basket or do we look for opportunities, to seek ways of sharing this light.

What a blessing we have as members of Teams. Did we realise when we were invited to join this movement what a gift we were receiving? Fr Caffarel, in Rome in 1959, reminded us that if we wish to progress in our faith as married couples we are on the right track by truly living out our sacrament.

"There is no need to look elsewhere to progress towards the Lord: Marriage is a sacred way; the Christian family is a living cell of the Church."

We must ask ourselves are we being selfish by covering this light with a barrel by not sharing this gift we have been given.

Father Caffarel reminded members, to do everything they can to share what they get from Teams; how their love is constantly reanimated, how the richness of their sacrament of marriage is revealed and of the joy and strength received from fraternal friendship of other couples.

"How poor, in a way, is the isolated apostle by comparison with the couple-apostle!"

If you wish to **renew or join the Association of Friends of Fr Caffarel** which contributes to the cost associated with the cause for canonisation You can pay (£15.00) directly to:

Friends of Father Caffarel
Sort Code 20-83-73
Account Number 33350339

In thankfulness for all we have received through the Teams of Our Lady and the unstinting work of our founding priest. Please remember to pray for the canonisation of Fr Caffarel.

The **bulletin for Friends of Fr Caffarel** & more information is available on:
www.henri-caffarel.org

Prayer for Fr Caffarel

God, our Father,

*You planted deep in the heart of your servant, Henri Caffarel,
A fountain of love, which bound him totally to your Son
And inspired him with a wonderful capacity to speak of Him.*

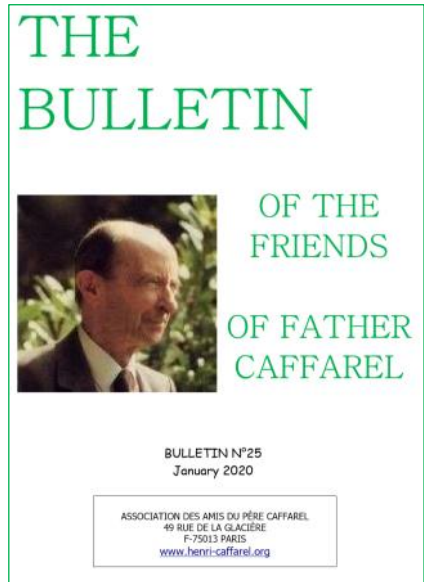
*A prophet for our time,
He revealed the dignity and beauty of the vocation of every person
In the words Jesus addresses to each of us: "Come follow me."*

*He made couples enthusiastic about the greatness of the sacrament of marriage,
The sign of Christ's fruitful love for the Church and of His union with her.
He showed that priests and couples
Are called to live a vocation of love.
He was a guide to widows: love is stronger than death.
Prompted by the Holy Spirit,
He accompanied many Christians on the path of prayer.
Seized by a devouring fire, he was a dwelling place for you, Lord.*

*God, our Father,
Through the intercession of Our Lady,
We ask you to hasten the day
When the Church will proclaim the holiness of his life,
So, that people everywhere will discover the joy of following your Son
In accordance with their particular vocations in the Holy Spirit.*

Tom & Maureen Hoban

P.S. If you are interested in becoming the liaison couple for the Friends of Fr. Caffarel please contact your regional couple.



The Regional Candles



Each of the member regions of the 'Transatlantic Super Region' has a Regional Candle. This short article gives a little background into the origins of the candles.

Up to 1995 the GB Regional candle had no permanent holder and each time it was used for a function, such as a conference, a suitable holder had to be found. For the 1995 annual conference in Southampton I turned a wooden base to become the permanent holder of the candle. The wood used had come from a cherry tree removed from our garden some years earlier. When I turned the wood, instead of the perfectly symmetrical form that was planned, I discovered that the holder had a flaw forming a sort of cleft in one side. My first instinct was to scrap the piece and start again. However, I cleaned up the

material and found that although the shape was imperfect it had its own form of beauty. Certainly, the flaw made the item unique – even if the shape were to be reproduced the appearance could never be truly duplicated.

When it was decided to look to creating the 'Super Region' and the three GB 'Pre-regions' were launched, it was suggested that each of the pre-regions should have a candle in a similar style, but smaller size, to the original candle. I searched through the stocks of timber and discovered that there were some usable pieces of the cherry tree that could be used to make suitable holders. So, each of the GB pre-regions had a candle and holder presented that was in a similar style and produced from the same tree as the GB regional one. Again, given the nature of the material, each of the holders has some sort of flaw or imperfection making each one unique.

For the launch of the 'Transatlantic Super Region' I decided once again to rummage through my stocks of timber and was able to locate a few more pieces of the original cherry. These were then used to produce two more holders for the candles for Ireland and for Trinidad & Tobago.

In the same way that each of our regions has grown from the Teams first established in England, we have the symbolism of candle holders that have also come from the same stock. Just as our regions share the same 'Teams' spirit and ethos, the candles and holders share the same basic form. However, each of our regions has its own distinct character and this is reflected in the variations and flaws in the turned candle holders.

Isn't this true of each one of us? We may be of a similar physical structure but we each have our own characters that make us unique. No matter what flaws we exhibit, in God's eyes we are each a thing of beauty!

Chris Lane, Fareham 2

Two in One Flesh (TIOF)

We are five couples and a Priest who went on a Catholic Weekend for married couples 40+ years ago and have been involved within the Church in our different diocese in a variety of ways ever since. We met together in 2005 to explore the distinctive aspects of marriage as a Sacrament, hoping there was something in particular we could contribute to the Church in this respect. We spent a few weekends together over the next three years which led us to write a paper to the Bishops of England and Wales sharing the fruit of our reflections. We concluded that marital and family spirituality were two distinct realities: whilst the couple relationship is the cornerstone of the family, primarily their sacred calling is to a unique and unitive life-giving love.

It is in witnessing and experiencing this love that children grow into a fuller understanding of the love of God for all. The Bishops' responses were affirming, so the paper was published as the booklet **Two in One Flesh**. It was well received by priests and couples and continues in circulation. Encouraged by the feedback we went on to write a trilogy of books incorporating couple reflections on the Sunday readings - **I AM WITH YOU** - liturgical Years A,B and C. We followed this with the On-Line publication of the Word.doc book **MARRIAGE MATTERS (MM)**, a collection of 60 word snippets adapted from the Sunday reflections found in the **I AM WITH YOU** series. Downloaded, free of charge, these can be placed in a Newsletter, Bulletin, Website or Blog by simply cutting and pasting and applying the relevant week's reflection to the medium being used.

TIOF's desire throughout is to encourage, inspire, challenge and motivate couples to deepen their relationship with one another and with God. All of these resources aim to help them relate their daily lives to God's Word. We want to support their primary vocation - to love one another as deeply as they can, then to share the fruits of that love with their children, wider family, Church and society as a whole. All of our work has been self funded and is available for use by Organisations, Parishes and Diocese, nationally and internationally. Our sole purpose from the beginning was to heighten the profile of the Sacrament of marriage: its sanctity and fundamental significance within our homes and our Church.

Our time at the WMOF in Dublin last August gave us a great opportunity, as part of The Alliance, to do just that. Whilst there we were asked to create a book of reflections on the Scriptures used for weddings. That is our current project along with **I AM WITH YOU ALL-WAYS**, a Workshop designed to show couples how to work together on discovering what God might be communicating regarding their relationship, through His Word. See our website www.twoinoneflesh.org.uk to see more details on all of the above.

Brian and Maureen Devine, Mark and Liz Dutton, Maurice and Margaret Magee, Peter and Maureen Watson, Bernard and Maureen Jarvis and Fr Frank O'Sullivan.

Publications and More information available on:

<http://www.twoinoneflesh.org.uk/>

Readings and Prayers for April

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens.

Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour.

You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

Psalm

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end.

Let the sons of Israel say:

'His love has no end.'

Let the sons of Aaron say:

'His love has no end.'

Let those who fear the Lord say:

'His love has no end.'

I was thrust down, thrust down and falling,
but the Lord was my helper.

The Lord is my strength and my song;
he was my saviour.

There are shouts of joy and victory
in the tents of the just.

The stone which the builders rejected
has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord,
a marvel in our eyes.

This day was made by the Lord;
we rejoice and are glad.

Concluding Prayer

Dear God, your love is more than enough for us, the source of our joy and hope. Thank you for the gifts of faith and of your love. Amen.

Reflection for April

Sons, Daughters and Rejected Corner-Stones

What strikes you first in these readings? Perhaps many of us will be struck by one of the theological gems which the First Letter of Peter has to offer or the powerful rhythms of the Psalm, with its tone of gratitude and joy. Familiarity with the cadences of the *Jerusalem Bible* and the *Grail* psalter carries us straight to the enduring hope that these texts express.

However, many others will never get that far. Being given new birth as **his [i.e. God's] sons** and invited to rejoice with the **sons** of Israel and the **sons** of Aaron sets up a great obstacle to hearing the Good News for many of those not already at home in Church – and for not a few who do belong.

To some extent, the difficulty is insuperable. It was (we think) only men who wrote the Scriptures – and that in a very patriarchal culture. It was nearly always the son who was the heir in the ancient world; invariably the male who led worship, at least in the Jerusalem Temple. The Bible can't be made gender-neutral. But what we can choose, both in our selection of translations and in our wider liturgical language, is whether to make God's Word more accessible to our contemporaries or less so.

Only once we can all recognise ourselves and our experience in our worship can we get through to the astonishing truth which the psalmist had discovered – and which Christians then took up to express our experience of the Resurrection of the Crucified, the one who died outside the gate, naked, broken and shamed: *"The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone."* That's the nub of the Gospel!

Once we comprehend that, we shall look at ourselves, our families and our communities in a different way, asking: Where are our own rejected or neglected gifts? And which living stones have we cast aside as useless, thwarting Christ's vision – which is that all of us together should build up the living temple of God, with himself as the cornerstone?

Fr. Rob Esdaile is parish priest of Our Lady of Lourdes, Thames Ditton, Surrey

The beauty of Marriage is not always seen at the beginning but as love grows and develops over time.

Readings and Prayers for May

John 14:1-12

Jesus said to his disciples:

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house; if there were not, I should have told you. I am going now to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me; so that where I am you may be too. You know the way to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus said: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you know me, you know my Father too. From this moment you know him and have seen him.'

Psalm

May your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in you.

Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just;
for praise is fitting for loyal hearts.
Give thanks to the Lord upon the harp,
with a ten-stringed lute sing him songs.

For the word of the Lord is faithful
and all his works to be trusted.
The Lord loves justice and right
and fills the earth with his love.

The Lord looks on those who revere him,
on those who hope in his love,
to rescue their souls from death,
to keep them alive in famine.

Concluding Prayer

Dear Lord, in times of difficulty and doubt may we take comfort in your words and promises. May we always trust in you and come to know you more fully day by day. Amen.

Reflection for May

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still and trust in Me". The words at the opening of this week's Gospel give us great consolation and reassurance. In addition we must remember that this is a command: Jesus tells us to do it. Jesus promises the disciples that there is room for all where He was going and that He was going to prepare a place for them and then He would take them there - "I will take you with Me".

He goes on to say, when asked by Thomas, as to the way where Jesus is going. Jesus' reply is one known to us all "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." Do we really know, understand and live out the meaning of these words? I suspect not. If we did our lives would no doubt be a lot different.

Philip then asks about seeing the Father and then being satisfied. At this point it would probably have been very easy for Jesus to lose patience or say to Himself, 'Here we go again!' Instead He teaches us the art of patience. To teach we need to be patient, especially when what we are teaching is difficult.

Jesus reassures the disciples that the Father and Himself are one and that to have seen Jesus is to have seen the Father. More importantly the words Jesus speaks are those of His Father. When WE speak are our words those of the Father, or those of Jesus? How do we speak to our loved ones? Perhaps we speak to 'outsiders' more politely and lovingly than we do to those closest to us. No doubt we would like to think that ALL our words are those of the Father but realistically that will not be the case. Nevertheless it is something that we can each strive for and also help others to achieve.

Following this passage Jesus tells the disciples that whoever believes in Him will do great works, in fact, will do even greater works because Jesus is returning to His Father. Did the disciples believe that? Do WE believe it for ourselves? When we did we last admit that we do great things? This Gospel challenges us to believe not only in Jesus, His words and all his deeds but also to believe in ourselves.

I wonder what we could all achieve if we DID live like that!

Sr Margaret Mattison

Warrington 1 Team



Readings and Prayers for June

Matthew 10:26-33

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'Do not be afraid. For everything that is now covered will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the housetops.

'Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell. Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows.

'So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of men, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven. But the one who disowns me in the presence of men, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.'

Psalm

In your great love, answer me, O Lord.

It is for you that I suffer taunts,
that shame covers my face,
that I have become a stranger to my brothers,
an alien to my own mother's sons.
I burn with zeal for your house
and taunts against you fall on me.

This is my prayer to you,
my prayer for your favour.
In your great love, answer me, O God,
with your help that never fails:
Lord, answer, for your love is kind;
in your compassion, turn towards me.

The poor when they see it will be glad
and God-seeking hearts will revive;
for the Lord listens to the needy
and does not spurn his servants in their chains.
Let the heavens and the earth give him praise,
the sea and all its living creatures.

Concluding Prayer

Dear God, thank you that we are precious in your eyes. Help us to see with your eyes, to value what is important and to witness to your truth. Amen

Reflection for June

It has been made very clear in recent events how peoples self-image can be under mined or shattered by anonymous and hostile comments on social media, especially the young but not exclusively, how easy it is to hurt people.

Jesus challenges his disciples to be brave in their willingness to be witnesses to him and his message even in the face of persecution, and so implicitly criticises their timidity and misplaced fear. However, having done so he builds them up by reassuring them how precious they are and how much he values them. He makes sure he does not undermine their confidence and self-image, by his earlier challenge.

I received this message on face book today Morgan Freeman said: Some of the best advice I've been given: "Don't take criticism from people you would never go to for advice." Sound advice indeed. It is to easy for us to be undermined by unfair criticism often from people who hardly know us

It is for that reason we can say the words of the response to the psalm today 'In your great love, answer me, O Lord' with confidence.

For we know whatever the answer we receive from the Lord will be for our good because he loves us. If we are loved by the Lord, we should be able to face the world with confidence

We should stand proud of who we are not because of what we have achieved but because of what we are children of God, loved by God and precious in his eyes. If this is true of ourselves, we should help those around us to see that it is true for them as well

We should shout from the roof tops and declare openly that all people are precious and deserve to be respected because all are made in the image of God and that is the self-image that matters and no one in this world can take that away from us..

Fr Graeme Dunne

**Be devoted to one another
in love. Honor one another
above yourselves.**

Romans 12:10



Last notes...

The Magnificat (Lk 1: 46-56)

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 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 forever.

Our Lady of the Home, pray for us.

Regional Gatherings 2020

The sacrament of Marriage, Graces & Mission

Central Regional Gathering- 26 September, - Our Lady of the Visitation Church, 358 Greenford Road, Greenford UB6 9AN

Southern Regional Gathering- 3 October, St John's Catholic Seminary, Guildford GU5 0QX

Northern Regional Gathering- 10 October, venue TBC

[Booking details coming soon](#)

Last word....

***If you're wrong and
you keep quiet,
you're wise.***

***If you're right and
you keep quiet,
you're happily
married!***



TEAMS - Great Britain

Equipes Notre Dame, Teams, is an international Christian movement for married couples of all ages.