

# Teams Newsletter

for the GB Regions.  
April- June 2021



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Front cover: Bodnant Gardens, North Wales May 2019. Photo- Mark Edwards

## *Need more Newsletters?*

For extra copies of this newsletter contact Dympna & Mark at [editors@teams.gb.org.uk](mailto:editors@teams.gb.org.uk). Contact your regional couple for any ongoing change in newsletter distribution.

Please send all photos & articles for the July-Sept 2021 edition to us by **1 June** to: [editors@teams.gb.org.uk](mailto:editors@teams.gb.org.uk)

# Regional Couple letter

*Dear Friends in Teams*

## **Meditations on a Theme**

It's the midpoint of our Teams year that kicked off with our Regional Gatherings last September and October. All this year we remain encouraged to consider, study, and weave into our lives the theme "The Sacrament of Marriage: Graces and Mission". It's a mighty notion to comprehend. Sacramentality points to the immediacy of the great God in our lives, the abiding beneficence that, however things may at any time appear, always nurtures and never deserts us. That presence surfaces, breaks forth, and manifests for us with particular force and certitude each time we encounter any of the Church's great sacramental signs. Were we sufficiently spry-minded, not quite so dull, these moments might even excite us to breathless exclamation, "It is the Lord!" And marriage, we might hazard to say, bears unique privilege among the sacraments, since its legacy in our lives is an enduring flesh and blood accompaniment and companionship of loving kindness that bears solid constant witness to the God who abides quietly but surely.



So how have you been getting on with all that? Second nature now, is it? Here's a confession: we find it perplexingly difficult to keep even half an eye trained on God continually working for us and between us. Somehow, all God's work between us hasn't quite trained us in serenity and charity. Our focus slips, and lo, we are absorbed in all the ways the world and folks about us, and we to each other, fail to pay us our due; suddenly, we are calibrating how we can capture our due (or possibly somewhat better). We could easily spend more years or longer absorbing the lesson of this year's theme.

## **Locked Down, Moving Forward**

In our Movement, it means everything to meet each other in the flesh. But for Coronavirus, we could not have imagined Team Meetings except under one roof with a shared meal. The same value drives how we approach Gatherings; also, our business meetings, for Sector and Regional Teams, and so on up. Coronavirus foisted on us to think differently. But while Zoom can be nothing more than a stopgap for our monthly Team Meetings, lockdown has shown the virtue of remote conferencing and live streaming other settings. Since the last Newsletter, the GB Province Team (comprising the 3 GB Regional Couples—Northern, Southern, Central—and the GB Province Treasurer Couple) has met several times via Zoom, and chased down actions you will find reported in articles elsewhere in this issue:

- Teams GB website—If you haven't visited [www.teamsgb.org.uk](http://www.teamsgb.org.uk) lately, it's time to take a look
- Review and update of the Province's policies, and a new Teams GB Environmental Policy

Meeting in person bonds us in ways irreplaceable for our core purpose; and while helpful for all else we try to achieve together, we can, even working at distance, still make progress.

### Save the Date

Despite our opening remarks about lingering over this year's theme, please note these dates for next autumn's fresh round of Gatherings about our role in the renewal of society.

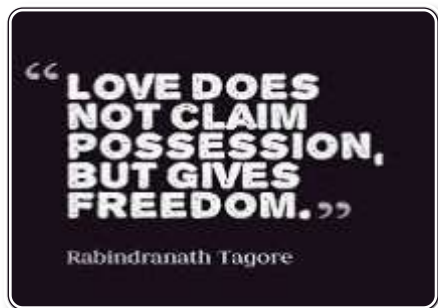
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### “Pay in May”

Finally, it's that time again as our Charter urges us to render our financial support to the Movement. The past year may have drastically altered your situation and capacity to contribute; offer what your means allow. Remember that donations via standing order are the most efficient method of contributing. Review your standing order pledge if you haven't done so for a while, and adjust it in any way that is suitable. Make a Gift Aid declaration if you're eligible to do so; notify the GB Province Treasurers ([treasurers@teams-transatlantic.org](mailto:treasurers@teams-transatlantic.org)) if your previous Gift Aid declaration is no longer valid. Visit the Teams GB website (<http://www.teamsgb.org.uk>) for more information. Last and most important, thank you for your generosity.

We wish peace in safety for all of you, your families, and all those dear to your hearts.

**Janet and Paul DeBoo,**  
Regional Couple,  
Teams GB Central Region





# Teams EXPERIENCE Facebook Page

Dear friends in Teams,

We hope you are all keeping well during these uncertain times.

A gentle reminder that our private Facebook group called Marriage Masterclass with Teams of Our Lady continues its existence... far beyond the 8-day masterclass held in early December.

This Facebook group is currently hosting another amazing initiative called Teams EXPERIENCE, along with some of the wonderful Masterclass videos.



Teams EXPERIENCE is an English-language project, started in early December, which promotes the beauty and diversity of Teams of Our Lady.

Led by a group of moderators from 11 countries and 4 continents, this inspirational initiative consists of testimonial quotes from members of Teams in various Regions and Super-Regions as indicated by the poster in the attachment.

Join our Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2594017577554772>

Please share this great news with people of good faith, whether in Teams or not! Share a light of hope during these challenging times!

Be part of Teams EXPERIENCE!

Many blessings for 2021,

**Ingrid & Padraig**

Regional  
Expansion  
Committee  
Teams of Our  
Lady Ireland



# The Perfect Date?

Did we raise our heads above the parapet?

Just over a year ago, we enquired if there was a reason why we were no longer receiving the Intercessor Bulletins and suddenly we found ourselves the Intercessor Liaison Couple for GB. We hadn't realised at the time, that the Celebration of 60 years of Intercessors was close at hand in a time of Pandemic, to be celebrated on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

When we received this news, with suggestions from France of a Vigil and Mass, we wondered how this could be achieved but decided to 'give it a go'.



**Pat:** *"I thought an overnight Vigil in church, before the Blessed Sacrament from 11pm till 6am, would be wonderful, followed the next morning by a Birthday Mass for Teams and its Intercessors. As a Cradle Catholic, Quarant'ore and Vigils at The Lourdes Grotto were 'normal', but how would Tony feel?"*

**Tony:** "Are you Joking? The Covid Tiers will not allow GB Intercessors to travel and all depends on whether Fr. John will let us use the church in Covid conditions."

Fr John said Yes! And, with a YouTube link, we could stream to others in the country. Fr. Mark, our Assistant Priest, and a former Spiritual Counsellor to Teams in France, was more than happy to say the Mass and have it streamed. All was going well.

**Pat:** *"What could go wrong? Would we fall asleep? Would we spend our time hopefully in prayer throughout the night? Would the technology work? The only way was to call on the Holy Spirit and plan a programme. It would be just a guide to help us direct our thoughts. So, how to start?"*

**Tony:** *"What would it cost to keep the church heated? Pretty sure our friend Mike can supply all the gear we need and the streaming facility. Do we need sustenance through the night?"*

**Pat:** *"With the help of the Holy Spirit, we began to plan. It was Advent, so the Promise of the Saviour came to mind; that promise to our earliest ancestors. First, The Creation, the Promise of a Saviour and a New Eve and the Jesse Tree, the Ancestry of Jesus..."*

And so, it continued. It was as though the Holy Spirit was guiding the plan. At Midnight, The Angelus. At 3am, Chaplet of Divine Mercy and Stations of the Cross and so to the Glory of The Resurrection and our role of Proclaiming The Gospel. In a full circle, we returned to Creation and Brotherhood with Pope

Francis's Laudate Si and Fratelli Tutti. We completed our Vigil with Prayers to Our Lady of Walsingham and a singing of the Magnificat by the late Gilda de Freitas from Teams in South Africa.

Everything would be fine. But No! Just a week before our Vigil, we learned that our church decorating had overrun the contract time and our church would not be available. Thankfully, our neighbouring Parish Priest, Canon Christopher Cunningham came to our rescue, offering St. Alban's church instead.

**Pat:** *"We spent the night in my 'Mother Church', where I had received all my Sacraments. Where Tony and I, my Parents and Grandparents were Married and where I made my 1<sup>st</sup> Communion on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1951.*

**Tony:** *"It was going to be a very cold night in a beautiful, large church with a very high vented ceiling. Plenty of layers required."*

**Pat:** *"Thanks to the Holy Spirit, we did not fall asleep and it was a joyful and deeply moving Night of Prayer, beginning with Compline said by Canon Christopher, after the Monstrance holding The Blessed Sacrament had been placed on the Altar and finishing with Lauds at the Repositioning by the Canon on the following morning."*

Our Mass went as planned, but at St. Alban's and the Intercessory Prayers of our own and those sent to us, were later burned at the Lourdes Grotto at St. Joseph's and the ashes scattered in our Garden of remembrance.

**Tony:** *"As a convert to Catholicism several years after we were married and never experiencing a full night's Vigil, I was not too sure how it would all 'turn out'. Pat's idea of planning the night allowed time for silence and personal prayer. Many times, during the night, between having to check the streaming, playing the music and Hymns and reading passages from different books and the Bible and offering the Intercessions, I found my eyes coming back to the Blessed Sacrament. One constant presence. Spending the night alone together in a church, through a vigil, has brought us even closer together. Another unforgettable memory since joining Teams."*

After Compline, Canon Christopher retired to bed, later claiming to everyone, that he had the best night's sleep for months. We both agree, it was a wonderful, spiritual experience for each of us, with time passing faster than we thought it would. Later we learned that we had been 'virtually joined' online at different times during the night, by Teams members across the UK and even as far away as Australia. Amazing and humbling.

God bless,

**Pat & Tony Banks**, Intercessor Liaison Couple



# Annual Contributions

This is a difficult time for us all and we, along with all our friends in Teams, hope that you are keeping safe and well and that many of you can contact family and friends and fellow Team members online.

As many of our expenses (newsletters, printing, support for Teams in developing countries) are continuing, we still need to collect annual contributions. We invite you to review the contribution that you make in whatever way is appropriate to you.



Much of our income comes into the GB bank account by means of standing orders. This makes our work as Treasurers much easier as cash and cheques are a declining feature of the way we do things and banks are encouraging us to avoid visits.

## **Paying by Standing Order:**

Clearly, things are different at the moment and we need to adapt to circumstances. With this in mind, we are inviting those who do not already do so to think seriously about setting up your annual contribution as a standing order. The form is available on the website

(<http://www.teamsgb.org.uk/financial-cont.html>) but if you cannot find this, call or email us and we will send you a copy by post.

On the form, there is a request to return the form to us. This is because of the Gift Aid Declaration (see below). We also add to the standing order form the reference that we need to see on our bank statements. This goes at the end of the instruction to your bank and is very useful especially when couples choose to pay on a monthly or quarterly basis, so please leave that blank. We will take the Standing Order part of the form to our local branch of your bank. However, this has led to Standing Order forms being lost in the Banking system, so the procedure is not foolproof and requires the attention of both ourselves and yourselves to check that payments have actually happened.

If you do not wish to set up a standing order, there are two PayPal accounts which you can use, and these are:

[www.teamsGB.org.uk/payment](http://www.teamsGB.org.uk/payment) or

[www.teams-transatlantic.org.uk/payment](http://www.teams-transatlantic.org.uk/payment)



PayPal is not our preferred option for annual contributions because we do not see the details of the payment for Gift Aid, and it also takes longer to get to our account. PayPal also makes a small charge. Alternatively, you can pay your contribution directly to the GB bank account.

### **Paying directly:**

Many thanks to couples who have already paid directly through their bank to the GB account. Could we remind couples who choose this method to make clear in the payment reference who THEY are, not who WE are! An email to us would also be most useful, as some of you have done this past year. We thank you for your thoughtfulness. It would also be very helpful if you could let us know your Sector and Team when you make a payment. These are the basis of your reference and allow us to check the bank statements and link the contribution to your Sector and to our Gift Aid Declaration to HMRC. The account details are:

Account name                Equipes Notre-Dame Great Britain

Account number            28007131

Sort code                    60 - 21 – 05

### **Gift Aid Declaration:**

Thank you to the majority of contributors who have a Gift Aid Declaration. If you do not, and are income or capital gains taxpayers, please think about setting one up. If you are a new Team, this may not have been mentioned to you before, but the income is very helpful to us.

The standing order form also includes a Gift Aid Declaration Form (you can complete either part separately). We are required by law to keep your Gift Aid declarations as proof that we are allowed to claim the tax back from HMRC, and this is why the completed form should be sent to us (as already mentioned above).

Thank you again for your continuing commitment to Equipes Notre-Dame.

***Dominique & Christopher  
Thompson***  
GB Treasurers



# Thoughts during a lockdown walk

Recently we had our “Lockdown Exercise” on one of our regular walks to the Linthorpe Cemetery. The cemetery was first opened in 1869 but the first recorded burial was in 1668. There are different sections in the Cemetery including a Jewish Section complete with what was a small Hebrew prayer house but only ever stones on the graves. There is a Quaker section where the style of the gravestones has not changed from the first burial in the 1860’s to now, always a plain simple gravestone with only a name and date, no inscriptions. There is the section for children who died during childbirth or were still born. These children were originally buried in unmarked graves, but they are now acknowledged, and the monument is festooned with tributes of Teddy Bears and bright flowers. There are war memorials and individual graves to those who died in wars. There are ornate graves to those who were famous and respected their lifetime. There is even one grave decorated with feathers in honour of a popular entertainer/snake oil salesman who was a First Nation American who died in Middlesbrough. Middlesbrough people still honour his memory by putting feathers on his grave.



There is also a Nature Reserve in the cemetery, the reason we walk there. Over the last year we have watched the seasons change and seen this change reflected in the plants and birds we see on our walks around the cemetery. This week we were excited and delighted to see the first signs of Spring. We saw Snowdrops ready to burst into bloom, we saw the bright yellow Aconite flowers, we saw shoots foreshadowing Daffodils and birds in bright plumage calling to each other.

We were reminded of the famous passage “to everything there is season”. In the midst of the cemetery, among all these reminders of those who have died, there are signs of new beginnings, signs of hope. We, along with others, walk there planning for our future together. We see the signs of the world been newly created every day by Christ in the cycles of the seasons. We see families walking together, children playing, running enjoying this brief escape into a wider world. It reminds us that though at the present moment we sometimes feel that we are trapped within a small world created by a virus surrounded by signs of death, God is still there showing us the signs of hope leading us to a fuller life. This season of Covid will pass. There are signs of hope all around us as long as we take the time to allow Christ to show us them.

We can see the signs in our own life that Christ wants to show us through our marriage, through our mutual love, love of family and sharing of our love of Christ and his creation. We can reflect on what those signs mean through our life in Teams. For example, sharing all that we see, do and feel with the members of our Team, with Team members locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Opportunities for this sharing come in various formats; shared prayer, meetings, discussion and just talking and listening to each other. Look out for emails from your regional couple with details of the events in Teams that are coming up regionally, nationally, and internationally.

### **Sue & Paul Rowney, Regional Couple for Northern Britain**



#### **Together**

My beloved draws close,  
A fragrance fills the air.  
My arms grow stronger,  
With her endearing words.

I look into her eyes,  
And see the deepness of her love.  
The gentle touch of her hand,  
Holds both comfort and healing.

In dance we become one,  
Finding each other and another.  
The pair will reach the heart,  
And reveal the company of God.

**John Pearson**, Middlesbrough Team

# Remembering Teams members

## FR MICHAEL GWINNELL RIP (26.9.1924 – 13.12.2020)

In 1980 Wimbledon 4 had just embarked on piloting and was looking for a chaplain. Friends suggested Fr Michael Gwinnell and our pilot couple visited him and asked if he would be our chaplain. He tentatively agreed to give it a try for three months. Forty years later Fr Mike died this December, in St Teresa's Nursing Home, at the age of 96, still nominally our chaplain having attended our meetings for the best part of 39 years.

Fr Mike took a full part in our team life, fitting it in with his busy life as parish priest of St Cecilia's, North Cheam, when we first got to know him. He was always in demand in many places, importantly with the Charismatic Renewal, including their gatherings in Walsingham, and 'Celebrate' in Ilfracombe. He was prayerful, genuine, straightforward and un pompous, and never blew his own trumpet. But we never knew the half of his activities. At various times we heard about his family tree masses, praying for deceased ancestors, the prayers for London offered up circumnavigating the city on the M25 in a coach, or his trusteeship of the Catholic bible study college. And we were enthusiastic fans when he performed in the Life of Christ at Wintershall.



He was very much a part of our Team community, valuing a private place where he could share his highs and lows as a member of the Team, just as we did, and joining in Advent celebrations and seders, saying house Masses, and celebrating births and important marriage landmarks with us. Fr

Mike made every effort to join us for our annual two-day residential retreats, for many years at Micklepage in Sussex, sometimes giving us the main presentations, at other times sharing with us so we could each play our part in preparing our input. He said Mass for us and joined in our social activities.

He helped to create the culture of our Team, and in spite of his busy life he rarely missed a meeting. By his commitment he contributed to our longevity – we will all miss him very much.

**Mary & Peter Hayes**  
Wimbledon 4





## **CANON FRANK O'SULLIVAN**

We were honoured to meet Canon Frank O'Sullivan in the mixed Team meeting for the Southern Region Gathering in October 2020. He was a lively participant in our group and shared a wealth of wisdom. We will always remember his conclusion that, having moved into a nursing home at the age of 99, he had a new mission there. He said his approach to those in the home was "the end is nigh, repent" - he winked -



perhaps his line was a joke, but we are sure that he ministered with love and sensitivity to all in the home. Unfortunately he did not live to celebrate his real "birth" day however he comment at the gathering that he had already reached 100 as he counted the day his mother found out she was pregnant as being his birthday!

Canon Frank was the Chaplain of Purley 1. His contribution to Teams, Marriage Encounter and Two in One Flesh over all the years has been tremendous. He was an active leader in both Marriage Encounter and Two in One Flesh. He will be taking his place in heaven - and, we are sure, will continue his intercessions for the prayers of couples and families especially those he had accompanied here on earth.

### **Annette & Paul O'Beirne, Superregional Couple**

Dear Canon Frank, despite being 99 years young, was still in active ministry right up to his departure to claim his heavenly reward.

It was a great blessing when Canon Frank agreed to become our Team chaplain in the summer of 2019 and we enjoyed his input for 18 precious months. Prior to this he had been a Team chaplain for many decades in New Malden 3.

Canon Frank always had a smile, never complained and had a kind encouraging word for everyone. His homilies were always meticulously prepared as were any talks or retreats, tailored for his audience. Toni particularly remembers his warm reassuring hand on his shoulder whenever we were in Church.

He will always live on in our memories and may he now enjoy his eternal rest with our heavenly Father.'

**Toni & Anna Kowal, Purley Team**

## **FR PAUL SANDERS**

Fr Paul Sanders died on Friday 29th January, after having been admitted to St Helier hospital on Thursday 21 January with Covid 19. He had the comfort of receiving the Sacrament of the Sick before his passing and is without doubt now with our heavenly Father. Please pray for the repose of his soul and the comfort of his family, his brother clergy and his many friends. He was a former Chaplain to our Team, Purley 1, and continued to support us the Teams of Our Lady in organising and providing an opportunity for all married couples to Renew their Marriage Vows at a Mass during National Marriage week.

**Valerie & Robert Mann, Purley 1**

## ROD OSTLER

We were sad to learn of the passing away of Rod Ostler from the Banbury 2 Team. Rod had a fall at home on New Year's eve and as a result was hospitalised the next day. Whilst being treated he tested positive for Covid and this seems to have played a role in his deterioration. A Funeral Mass for the repose of his Soul was celebrated on 9th February at St. John's Church Banbury.



We have been given permission to share with you the following memories from Rod's Best Man, which formed the bulk of a eulogy read at the conclusion of the Mass by Rod's son-in-law.

### Memories of my greatest friend Rod

Meeting Rod in September 1963 was one of the best things that ever happened to me. That was when we started living in what were called "digs" then, in Greenford, West London, as we began studying at Brunel College. Meals were provided but there was no choice of food. It didn't seem to matter, especially to Rod who would eat anything and everything. We ate, slept and worked in the same room, with just a radio for entertainment, and so getting on well was vitally important. I was anxious, having just left home, but Rod's attitude to the situation was relaxed from the start.

Our first challenge was how to get to the college, later to become Brunel University. Rod seemed to know which buses we needed to get to Acton. All I can remember about the first journey was a mad dash in Ealing to change buses, with Rod only just clinging on to the open platform of the packed Routemaster bus. Health and safety was not a priority in those days.

We never missed lectures and worked every night in our little room. Rod was studying Production Technology and it was Maths for me. I remember him explaining that his studies would eventually lead to him being able to plan the production of anything, from pork pies to helicopters. He made social contacts quickly and his fellow students were more sociable than mine. Rod always invited me to join their events, which generally involved some drinking. I remember Rod falling into a hedge on our way home once, possibly due to that final pint.

The landlady didn't wash and iron our clothes, and we solved that problem by sending them home to our mothers. In those days we were able to post a shirt box full on Monday, for half a crown (12½p), and have it back on Thursday. In year two we bought a secondhand tandem for £15. Rod's heavier build meant he had to be the 'driver'. On one occasion we were speeding downhill and went over a pedestrian crossing without due care and attention. In those days, policemen patrolled the streets and it was our bad luck that one saw the incident and we were pulled over. Rod got a ticking off but nothing more.

Rod was elected treasurer of the student union at Brunel. In his usual kindly way he decided that I should be his honorary assistant. One duty was to pay the bands at monthly gigs held in the refectory. These included Kenny Ball and Acker Bilk. Cheaper groups were always trying to persuade Rod to pay them in cash before their performance, but they never succeeded. I admired Rod not only because he took things on without any experience, but most of all because he took me on too.

During the time we lived together, cramped in our small room or the freezing cold bedsitter for our final year, we never once had an argument. What we both remembered of the bedsitter

were the icicles on our windows, the need for hot chocolate, wearing woolly hats, gloves and socks in bed, and having overcoats spread on top. Even under those conditions we could laugh about them and just got on with it.

Both of us were Christians and in our first year we started looking for local Anglican churches where evensong could be enjoyed. We visited a few before settling on one in Ealing, but in our second year things were to change. I met Ellen then and she was a Catholic, also studying maths. In our third year Rod went to a young Conservatives meeting and met a young lady called Pat. After a few weeks, Pat told Rod she was a Catholic and this caused great merriment when he told me. We both received instruction and at different times were received into the Church at Ealing Abbey. We agreed to be best man at each other's weddings and we both married our life-long partners within a year of graduation. Pat and Ellen were always good friends and made sure we stayed in contact. On a weekend visit to Bloxham, we had the moving experience of receiving Holy Communion from Eucharistic Ministers Rod and Pat.

We didn't meet often after graduation but when we did, it was as if we had only said goodbye the day before. I was pleased that Nikki and Tracey were able to meet our children when the family visited us after Christmas one year. Rod's name was well known in our house, as I would often recount amusing events of Brunel days. On hearing the news of his passing, all our children immediately expressed their sympathy because they knew how much Rod meant to me. Ellen has been a great support, especially since we heard Rod had become ill.

Thank you Rod and may you rest in peace. Roger

**Gerhild & John Osborn**, Banbury 2 team



## **FR McDONALD**

We were sad to hear the news of the death of Father McDonald, who we met on our visit to Malawi 2013, when we served as your predecessors as Super-Regional Couple. If we remember correctly, he had recently arrived as Parish Priest at the Charles Luangwa Church in Zomba, and had just started as Teams Chaplain as well. A smart well-dressed, well-spoken young priest just setting out on his journey of service, who was a pleasure to meet.

The photo is of the church altar, where we experienced a very lively mass. The offertory procession at the Mass included presentation of eggs, bread, grain and live chickens donated to the priests, with the surplus distributed to the poor in the Parish.

We will pray for Father McDonald, and for Teams couples in Zomba.

**Janet & Antony Denman**,  
Northampton Team



# New Teams Policies



*"Our gifts differ according to the grace given us. If your gift is .... administration, then use it for administration ... Let the officials be diligent, and those who do works of mercy do them cheerfully."*  
Romans 12:6-8.

## Introduction.

In common with all organisations Teams needs a set of policies which underpin and support the effective governance of the organisation. Policies help us in many ways, e.g. as a guide to decision making, an aid to compliance with legislation and regulations, a way of clarifying responsibilities and generally facilitating the smooth running of the organisation.

Teams GB Province has recently undertaken a review of and development of a number of policies. Those which have been agreed by the trustees are now on the new GB website and are easily accessible. <https://teams.gb.org.uk/documents/>. They will be kept under review.

Policies work only if members are aware of them and understand them. Couples at every level who are engaged in Teams' activities need to be familiar with the policies that pertain to their activities. This is especially relevant in the cases of data handling and planning events. We would like to encourage you to have a look at them and become familiar with them. Formation/training for Responsibility will include awareness of and discussion of policies.

## What policies?

The policies that have been reviewed to date include the following:

**Data Protection and Privacy.** This policy provides for good management of personal data in Teams and compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.

Data Protection applies to all membership information held by anyone with responsibility whether at Team, Sector, Region or other level. It applies to information gathered from the website but not to incidental naming of people in, for example, minutes of meetings. It applies to information gathered for all events organised by regions or sectors.



## **Safeguarding.**

This policy sets out the requirements for safeguarding in Teams. The purpose of Teams is to support the spiritual development of Christian married couples; it is not a children's charity nor an organisation to support vulnerable adults, although some members may be vulnerable in certain ways. A Safeguarding Policy is needed when Teams arranges childcare for a specific event. When provision for childcare or a children's programme is made by Teams, the Safeguarding policy applies. Please look at this policy before planning an event.

## **Health and Safety.**

This policy applies mainly to the planning of events and hospitality in Teams. It sets out how Health & Safety requirements will be met, as well as the various risk assessments that must be undertaken for every gathering, e.g. food hygiene, and how safety risks can be mitigated.

## **Environment.**

This policy challenges Teams to support Pope Francis' call in Laudato Si - to care for our common home by following sustainable practice in the conservation and use of resources. It sets out many practical suggestions for Teams, in planning events and in the home and to practice a more sustainable lifestyle.

## **Reserves.**

The main purpose of this policy is to ensure Teams always has sufficient funds to make payments as they become due.

## **Risk management.**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for identification and management of risks to Teams' objectives, to protect the well-being those taking part in activities, our reputation and our assets and to ensure financial sustainability. It is a legal requirement that charity trustees consider risks to the charity.

## **Trustee training.**

Charity regulation requires trustees to be appropriately trained in their role. This policy sets out how this is done.

**Yvonne & Peter Newman**  
Southern Regional Couple



# The Rule of life and Laudato Si

When Pope Francis issued the encyclical **Laudato si**; on care for our common home, he emphasised the connection between loving our planet and loving our neighbour. He calls upon our world community to value and take care of our precious planet and it's limited resources. He calls on us all to re-configure our mindsets and change our lifestyles in the light of global warming and the damage it is causing to the earth and especially to the most vulnerable people on it.



As Teams GB we are proud that we have written an **Environmental Policy** to challenge and encourage us to care for our common home, the earth, by following sustainable practice and taking into account global and local environmental considerations for present and future generations. You will soon find it at [www.teamsgb.org.uk](http://www.teamsgb.org.uk)



What does this mean and how might we do this? This may be a question for a Study Topic or a Sit-down and might inspire a Rule of Life or monthly challenge.

Here are some ideas that might help:

- ⇒ Include environmental issues in our prayer
- ⇒ Think about how we can live the '3Rs better': Reduce, Re-use, Recycle
- ⇒ Mend instead of replacing stuff!
- ⇒ Use food that is locally grown/ organic/Fairtrade/ethically sourced where possible
- ⇒ Have a few meat-free days a week to reduce greenhouse gases



- ⇒ Use environmentally-friendly products, for example, for printing and cleaning
- ⇒ Take a little more time to walk or cycle rather than using the car for short trips- if we are able
- ⇒ Use a renewable energy supplier
- ⇒ Grow bee-friendly flowers
- ⇒ Use alternatives to single-use plastic. For example, wash plastic bags for re-use, or use waxed paper or storage boxes instead of cling-film.



You might think of many more, and there are plenty of ideas online.

### **Sue and Paul Rowney**

Northern Regional Couple



*All powerful God, you are present in the whole universe  
and in the smallest of your creatures.*

*You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.*

*Pour upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and  
beauty.*

*Fill us with your peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters,  
harming no one.*

*Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and  
contemplation,*

*to recognise that we are profoundly united with every creature  
as we journey towards your infinite light.*

*We thank you for being with us each day.*

*Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.*

Pope Francis: Laudato si'

# New TeamsGB Website launched

We are delighted to direct you to the new website for Teams of Our Lady in Great Britain. It has the same address as before [www.TeamsGB.org.uk](http://www.TeamsGB.org.uk)

The biggest difference is that it is “responsive”; that means that it is suitable for viewing on mobiles, tablets, iPads as well as on desktop and laptop computers. The server responds appropriately to the device accessing the site.... just like we all respond appropriately to people who address us ! 😊

The website will also be continually updated – there is a News page with items added several times a week; we are keen to have offers from Sectors for their own couple to write items for the News posts. You will be able to ‘follow’ so that you get a message when a new item is placed in the News page.

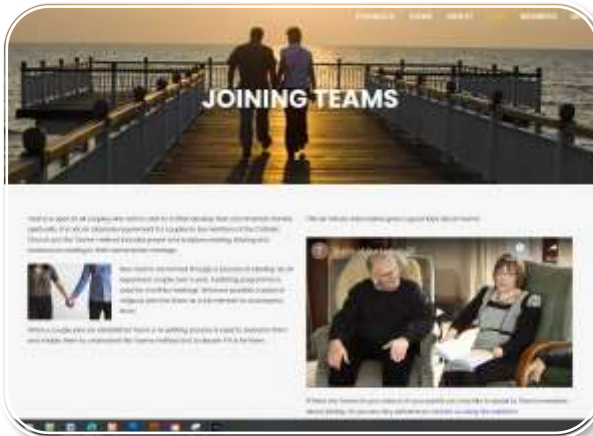
A little task for everyone is to decide what style of testimonial about being in Teams they would like to contribute! It can be just one sentence, or a paragraph, or a long article on the impact of Teams in their lives or a video (of any length!) –





# New TeamsGB Website launched

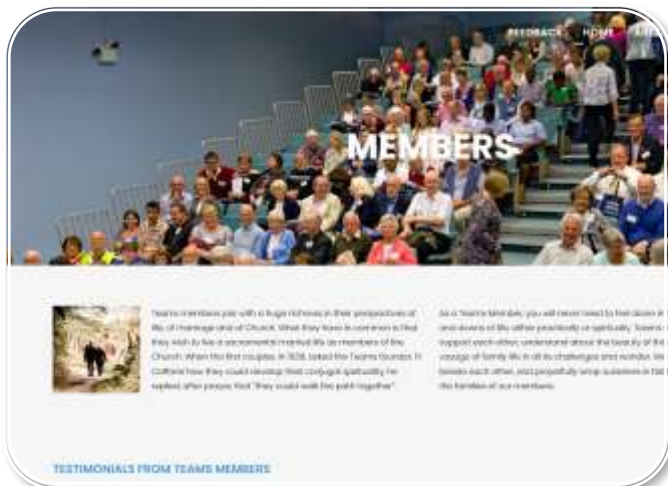
These will be able to be alternated so that visitors who are not in Teams yet, can understand from you how Teams has benefited your relationship with your spouse and God.



The website has a feedback form- please do have a look and give feedback; applause or developmental. Please include suggestions for additional information or focus that could be added. Please also let us know if any part of the site does not work on your device.

Our great thanks to Katie McRae and Peter Wordsworth of the Middlesbrough Team who will be our editors for the website. Please do send them items of interest to [webeditors@TeamsGB.org.uk](mailto:webeditors@TeamsGB.org.uk)

**Paul O'Beirne**





Dear Friends

I hope this Marriage Week update finds you and your families well as we continue to navigate these strange times that we are living in. I'm hopeful that receipt of this newsletter will bring a bit of positivity to your day because this is the first Marriage Week campaign update of 2021!

***This year's campaign is all about the essential, pared-back, unmasked, 'reduced-packaging' marriage and wedding.***

The last 12 months have been dominated by the pandemic, lockdown and government restrictions and so this year, we are focussing on simple, stripped back marriage **and** weddings to reflect this. As such, we have dubbed this campaign 'Naked Marriage'

***'Naked Marriage' is the 'Essential Marriage': Focussing on the essential elements of marriage.***

***'Naked Marriage' is the 'Naked Wedding': The cost of a wedding should not be a barrier to marriage.***

Marriage Week 2021, we're encouraging couples to uncover what their relationship is all about – 'essential marriage' and for couples who aren't married to consider marriage and to become the trail blazers of a new era of the intimate, 'naked wedding'!

As always, we'll be providing resources for couples to join in and invest in their relationship throughout Marriage Week and beyond. Our website is currently being updated and so we'll write again when there's more for you to see!

We're asking faith and community groups to play their part by offering affordable wedding packages. The pandemic has shown us that small, intimate weddings are a beautiful choice for couples who are serious about getting married. So, in this climate of change, with pressure from society to deliver the most lavish wedding ever, lifted, it's time to rethink what a wedding day should be like and for the promises made by the couple to be what the day is all about.

# Naked Marriage

#Marriageweek 2021

10th – 16th May

St. John's in Hartford have been offering affordable wedding packages since 2019 and this is what their vicar has to say:



*"In the Bible, marriage is perfectly designed and freely offered by the Creator as his continuing gift to all. When a man and woman are joined by God, love is sealed, a new family begins and Christ's unending love for his church is pictured. Why would we Christians not freely offer this gift to all who will receive it, and do everything in our power to commend and nurture marriage? Freely you have received, freely give!"*

*Rev Mike Smith, Vicar of Hartford*

## Get in touch...

Please do get in touch and tell me if you've begun making plans for Marriage Week and don't forget to keep an eye on social media. As the campaign week approaches, we'll be posting and sharing content across our platforms. Please do join in the conversation using #marriageweek #nakedmarriage.

Thanks for your support and please do share this newsletter with your friends, family and within your communities!

Love

**Michaela**

UK National Marriage Week coordinator

**Visit:** <https://marriage-week.org.uk/>

***What plans do you have to celebrate National Marriage Week in your Team or parish ? - let us know for the next newsletter.***

*Do let us know for the next newsletter*

# Readings and Prayers for April

## Mark 16:9-15

Having risen in the morning on the first day of the week, Jesus appeared first to Mary of Magdala from whom he had cast out seven devils. She then went to those who had been his companions, and who were mourning and in tears, and told them. But they did not believe her when they heard her say that he was alive and that she had seen him.

After this, he showed himself under another form to two of them as they were on their way into the country. These went back and told the others, who did not believe them either.

Lastly, he showed himself to the Eleven themselves while they were at table. He reproached them for their incredulity and obstinacy, because they had refused to believe those who had seen him after he had risen. And he said to them, 'Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation.'

## Psalm 117(118):1,14-21

*I will thank you, Lord, for you have answered me..*

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

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 Lord's right hand has triumphed; his right hand raised me up.

I shall not die, I shall live and recount his deeds.

I was punished, I was punished by the Lord, but not doomed to die.

Open to me the gates of holiness: I will enter and give thanks.

This is the Lord's own gate where the just may enter.

I will thank you for you have answered and you are my saviour.

## Concluding prayer

Lord, thank you for the new life you offer to us through your death and resurrection. When it is difficult to believe, strengthen our faith and help us to show your love to the world. Amen.



# Reflection for April

## **Happy Easter!**

*I heard a story of a man who visited the GP 'on behalf of' his wife. He discretely suggested she might be losing her hearing and wanted to know how he could tell. The doctor advised him to go home and as he went through door to call and see if she answered and try a bit closer and closer until she responds. Pleased with this, he went home and did as the Doctor advised. As he closed the front door, he called, 'Darling, I am home. What's for supper?' Nothing. So he moved along the hall and called again, Still nothing. Close to the kitchen door now, he called again and opened the door and his wife said, 'For the third time, casserole!' Our perception of what is happening may not always be accurate!*

*This gospel story has me imagining Jesus similarly berating this incredulous rabble of disciples who were hiding in a locked room; First not believing Mary who, after all, was a woman and may have had an hallucination! Then, they disbelieved the two men who had met Jesus on the road to Emmaus. Until he came in person. And elsewhere, in John 20:24, we know the story of Thomas' doubting the story, additionally to what is here. How did he get the name 'doubting', when they had all fallen short? Despite this, they became the founding 'fathers' of our faith. Scared, unsuitable, under educated, yet God turned them into the stones to support the foundation stone, his son, on which he built his church.*

*The reading ends with the commission to 'go out to the whole world, proclaim the gospel to all creation'. And in Mark's gospel, Jesus then ascends to heaven. Of all the things Jesus ever said, this should be the one that speaks to us. We were baptised into this commission and must at all times be alert to the duty to proclaim the kingdom - in how we behave, in what we do and in what we say.*

**Deacon Nick Johnson**  
Poole 2



# Readings and Prayers for May

## **1 John 3:18-24**

My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active; only by this can we be certain that we are children of the truth and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence, whatever accusations it may raise against us, because God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything.

My dear people, if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience, we need not be afraid in God's presence, and whatever we ask him, we shall receive, because we keep his commandments and live the kind of life that he wants.

His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another as he told us to. Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in him. We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us.

## **Psalms 21(22):26-28,30-32**

*Alleluia!*

My vows I will pay before those who fear him.  
The poor shall eat and shall have their fill.  
They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him.  
May their hearts live for ever and ever!

All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord,  
all families of the nations worship before him;  
They shall worship him, all the mighty of the earth;  
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust.

And my soul shall live for him, my children serve him.  
They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come,  
declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn:  
'These things the Lord has done.'

## **Concluding prayer**

Lord, may your love in our lives bear fruit and be visible in what we do and say, giving glory to you and hope to others. Amen.

# Reflection for May

## The Commandment of Faith & Love

*How would you characterise your love as a couple? Is it an emotion or a decision; an act of will or an irresistible magnetism? I would hope that you wouldn't feel the need to choose between these categories – though, by repute, there are stages of a relationship when the beloved is almost an obsession, filling up your days and nights, an electric presence even in their absence ... and there are times when it feels as though you hang on by your finger-tips to what was promised once and what you hope might one day return.*

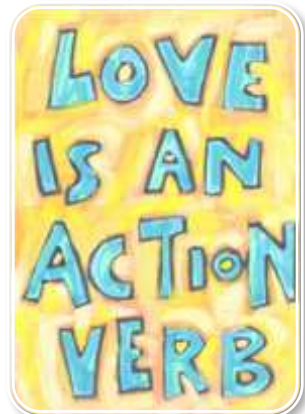
*Our society gives plenty of evidence of favouring passion over promise and 'living in the moment' over the work of a lifetime. However, no couple can live solely by emotion (even if Pope Francis has commented wryly on those times in a marriage when the pots and pans go flying ...). Nor can a marriage thrive without some element of emotional connection. Indeed, if we take seriously the biblical teaching that in marriage "the two become one flesh" (Gen 2.24; Mk 10.7), then the language used by John to speak of the 'mutual indwelling' of God and the loving believer (1 Jn 3.24) also applies to the life of the couple: God dwells in your love, because that love itself dwells in God ... which is a claim worth contemplating.*

*But the call to unity isn't simply for the benefit of the couple or even of their offspring. The spouses' mutual trust and reliance form the basis on which a family can dare to look outwards to the needs of a neighbourhood and the building up of society. The First Letter of John again puts it well: "our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active ..." (1 Jn 3.18) It is a creativity that wants to make a difference. Christian married love (and, indeed, all authentic human love) seeks the Kingdom of God – reaches out beyond what is towards what could be.*

*Psalms 22 (21) also speaks about the effect on others of true fidelity. How shall any of us know when we have been true to our vows? When "the poor shall eat and shall have their fill."*

**Fr Rob Esdaile**

Our Lady of Lourdes, Thames Ditton



# Readings and Prayers for June

## **Mark 4:35-41**

With the coming of evening, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let us cross over to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind they took him, just as he was, in the boat; and there were other boats with him. Then it began to blow a gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped. But he was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep. They woke him and said to him, 'Master, do you not care? We are going down!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Quiet now! Be calm!' And the wind dropped, and all was calm again. Then he said to them, 'Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith?' They were filled with awe and said to one another, 'Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him.'

## **Psalm 106(107):23-26,28-32**

*O give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures for ever.*

Some sailed to the sea in ships  
to trade on the mighty waters.  
These men have seen the Lord's deeds,  
the wonders he does in the deep.

For he spoke; he summoned the gale,  
tossing the waves of the sea  
up to heaven and back into the deep;  
their souls melted away in their distress.

Then they cried to the Lord in their need  
and he rescued them from their distress.  
He stilled the storm to a whisper:  
all the waves of the sea were hushed.

They rejoiced because of the calm  
and he led them to the haven they desired.  
Let them thank the Lord for his love,  
for the wonders he does for men.

## **Concluding Prayer**

Lord, when times are challenging, help us to place our trust in you rather relying on ourselves. May your strength and love guide us through troubled waters and may we show compassion and support to others who are suffering. Amen.

# Reflection for June

*There are two sides to this story – perhaps as with all stories – that of Jesus and that of the apostles. Jesus was tired and He went to sleep – notice the details Mark puts in – in the stern, asleep with His head on a cushion. He was woken up by the apostles and He rebuked the wind and told the sea to calm down. The He turned to them – perhaps out of frustration, not only because He'd been woken up from a sleep He obviously needed, but also because they didn't seem to understand, to get what He was about. Why were they frightened? Where was their faith?*

*From the apostles' point of view it was evening and they took Him over to the other side. Some of them were fishermen and knew the waters well. They knew sudden storms could come down from the hills and that means they also knew how bad things could get too and so they were frightened. Perhaps seeing them like that made the non-fishermen even worse!*

*The words of the apostles – 'Master, do you not care? We are going down!' – may well be the words of each of us. When disaster strikes, when there are difficulties in our lives we feel, perhaps, that Jesus doesn't care and maybe, like the apostles, we even accuse Him of not caring!*

*Jesus, here near the beginning of Mark's Gospel, is already causing a stir by what He says but also by what He does. When the apostles here see Jesus' actions they then question who He is. So who is Jesus for each one of us? What role/ part does He play in our lives? Do we believe He is there through the storms of our lives, along with the day-to-day? When you are a follower of Jesus there's no going round the storms, there's only going through them! How has Jesus played a part in our lives during the pandemic? What kept and what keeps us going through those ups and downs is our strong belief that we are not alone – Jesus is making the journey with us. The storms of our life can, and will, be made to 'be quiet' because Jesus is the one to make all things still again. Perhaps, though, we need to remember to wake him up – we need to ask Him for help, instead of trying to do it all ourselves!*

**Sr Margaret Mattison**

Warrington 1 Team





# 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 2021**

**Northern- Saturday 25 September**

**Southern- Saturday 2nd October**

**Central- Saturday 9th October**

**More details soon from your regional couple.**



Equipes Notre Dame, Teams, is  
an international Christian move-  
ment  
for married couples  
of all ages.  
Charity Reg No: 1044902