

# TEAMS Newsletter

For the GB regions  
October- December 2022

*New Wine,  
Fresh Skins!*

*(Mark 2:22)*



Equipes Notre-Dame  
Teams

Teams GB "Re-Gathering"  
Friday, 21 to Sunday, 23 April 2023  
Hayes Christian Conference Centre  
Swanwick DE55 1AU

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## **Tell us about your team**

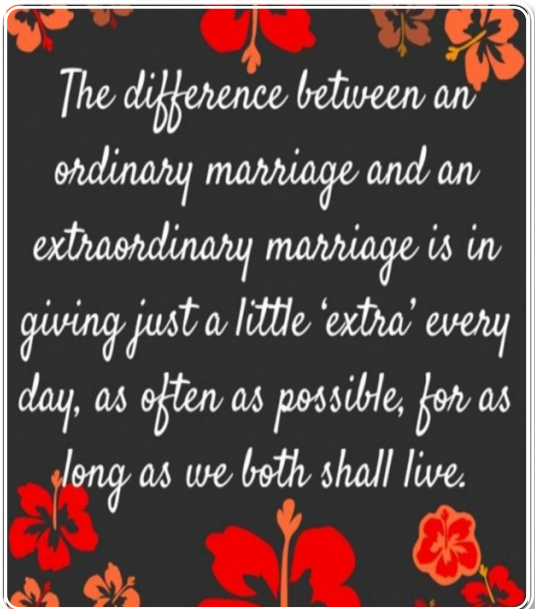
Send us a profile of your team, any news photos or reflections for the January to March 2023 edition to us by 1st December to: [editors@teams.gb.org.uk](mailto:editors@teams.gb.org.uk)

## **Need more copies?**

For extra copies of just this newsletter, contact Dympna & Mark Edwards at: [editors@teams.gb.org.uk](mailto:editors@teams.gb.org.uk).

## **Changed address? More newsletters needed each time?**

Contact your regional couple for any change of postal address or any ongoing change in the number of newsletters your Team needs.



# Regional Couple Letter

**Dear friends in Teams,**

**Renewing Our “Journeying Together”**—This Newsletter’s publication cycle sees us welcoming you to a new Teams Year already begun a few weeks ago. If you’re actually thumbing this issue at its prompt arrival a little before October, perhaps the recent GB-wide Responsible Couple Training sessions linger freshly in mind, essential training that reminds even the well-seasoned among us of the challenge Father Caffarel set us for journeying together in a Team, animated by mutual help upwelling from mutual hunger to know our Lord better.



This “journeying together” evokes conversations earlier this year, within Teams GB and within our parishes, about “synodality”. The original Vatican document that instigated the Synod 2023 consultation described “synodality” essentially as “journeying together”: an ongoing openness, discernment, and renewal by the Holy Spirit that has a prophetic presence in the world.

On 22 June 2022, the Bishops of England and Wales released their National Synthesis Document summing up all the voices captured from the consultation, in which it was quite encouraging and affirming to read Paragraph 82 as follows:

Key to deepening the bonds of belonging to Christ and to each other are small groups prayerfully reflecting on Scripture (*lectio divina*) and other kinds of prayer. Most reports mention basic ecclesial-type communities that include both lay people and clergy as key to fostering a synodal culture of humble listening and honest speaking. They enable participation, especially for those on the margins, and are vital for transcending debilitating divisions between Catholics, allowing the Spirit to reconcile diversity and open new horizons while uniting the body.

Could they have spoken more perfectly to describe our Teams and their role within the Church, or to offer us a mandate for inviting our fellow parishioners to experience Teams? <sup>1</sup>

**Serving in Imitation of Mary**—This year moves on from *Laudato Si’* to a new ERI (International Leading Team) study theme—“**Serving in Imitation of Mary**”—that explores Pope Francis’ 2020 encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* on Fraternity and Social Friendship through the lens of the compassion of Mary, the perfect disciple. The first chapter (for our October meetings) visits the Wedding at Cana and Mary’s

haunting aside to our Lord, “**They have no wine.**” Subsequent chapters treat other episodes in Mary’s life where this same refrain manifests in different deprivations. Ultimately, it speaks to our most profound, afflicting, and universal poverty, our fallenness and propensity to lack faith, the joylessness and wreckage of obscured attunement to God, affecting us all more perniciously than we guess. Of all calamities, Mary’s heart would see us rescued from this! <sup>2</sup>

**New Wine, Fresh Skins!**—The biggest event for Teams GB over this year, and our most important topic here, is the “Re-Gathering” from 21 to 23 April 2023 at the Hayes Christian Conference Centre in Swanwick, Derbyshire DE55 1AU. Its theme “**New Wine, Fresh Skins!**” blends diverse inspirations and aspirations under 4 R’s:

**Re-Gathering**—To convene the first significant in-person Teams conference across any of the 3 GB Regions since the Teams GB 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of November 2019, before Covid lockdown

**Refreshing**—To relax and reflect in pleasant surroundings amid new friends and family (i.e., our young children who need looking after, whose accommodation and board will be covered by Teams GB)

**Renewing**—To tap into Mary’s spiritual joy that coloured her whole outlook, stirring her to exclaim “My soul magnifies the Lord!” and to feel compassionately about those fraught and overwrought around her “They have no wine”

**Revitalising**—To sketch a way forward from Covid wilderness toward the future of Teams GB, tackling organisational vulnerabilities, and shaping as a vibrant pastoral offering within a synodal Church

We heartily urge as many as possible, representing every Team, to join and help build the future of Teams GB at next April’s “Re-Gathering”! <sup>3</sup>

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

### **Janet and Paul DeBoo, Responsible Couple, Teams GB Central Region**

The Teams GB response to the Synod consultation, compiled by Super-Regional Couple Annette and Paul O’Beirne, can be downloaded from <https://teams-transatlantic.org/latest-news/>. It did not contribute to the CBCEW National Synthesis Document, but fed instead Equipes Notre-Dame International’s direct synod response to the Vatican.

The “Serving in Imitation of Mary” ERI Study Topic document is available on the Teams GB website (<https://teamsqb.org.uk/members/study-topics/>) and the Teams Trans-Atlantic website (<https://teams-transatlantic.org/2021-22-study-topic/>).

The Animating Team aim that online registration will become available via the Teams GB website by early October. This and other details will be advised in Regional update emails circulated by Regional Couples.

# Letter from Editors



As we write this we are being blessed with some rain after the long hot spell that we have experienced over the summer months. Living near the coast has provided many opportunities for walks on the beach and enjoying the fine weather. It has also been a timely reminder of the climate change crisis, and the problems that we have experienced being a small reminder of the impact on communities throughout the world.

Many of you have been in contact asking about our Ukrainian guests and sharing your own stories and experiences. Our guests were delighted to be featured in our newsletter and several copies of the newsletter were sent to friends and family back in Ukraine. We have been truly blessed and enjoyed sharing our lives with them and they have become like family. Mark has become the resident tutor practicing reading with the two girls and helping with their English and Dympna has helped organise drop in centres locally. Our guests have very quickly settled into our parish and community and got to know other Ukrainians locally. The house is always full of children, often from several families as they enjoy getting together and sleepovers. Ivan, the Dad has gone abroad for several months, captaining a ship bringing Ukrainian grain to Africa. As we prayed together on the morning he left he said that he could go with a lighter heart knowing that his family was safe.

We are also aware of families where there have been challenges and difficulties with hosting. Through our work with foodbanks and pantries locally we can see the impact that the cost of living crisis is having on people's finances and mental health. The readings this quarter reflect some of these challenges. The October reading reminds us to be thankful when our prayers are answered and for all the blessings and healing that we receive. The November reading reminds us to be alert and vigilant and the December reading reminds us to be patient and not lose heart.

We would love to hear from you and your team- a photo with a few lines or a profile would be great. We are blessed by our own team who have continued to meet, mostly by zoom over the past couple of years because of the pandemic and other challenges. Our team members continue to inspire and encourage us month on month.

You will notice some information on the Teams weekend regathering planned for April next year. We very much look forward to seeing you there, God willing.

God bless

**Mark and Dympna Edwards**  
Formby Team & Newsletter Editors

Grant me the serenity to  
accept the people I cannot  
change.

The courage to change  
direction when I see them  
coming.

And the wisdom to not try  
to smack some sense into  
them when I can't avoid  
them.



# We invite you to the Teams Regathering 21-23 April 2023, Swanwick

Following covid, as a movement we are now talking about how we go forward as things are opening up again. To start to think about how we develop the movement in the near future, the Regional Team recently met to discuss the state of the movement. We adopted the mechanism of a SWOT analysis, identifying the movement's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. We felt that Teams had significant strengths. Offsetting that, the very local nature of the movement means that in large areas there is no local Team to direct people to. Also, where there are no Teams, the profile of the movement is quite low, so we need to work hard to make ourselves known. The website ([teamsgb.org.uk](http://teamsgb.org.uk)) will be useful but we need to publicise it.



Super Regional Couple make a point during the discussion.



Southern Regional couple chair the meeting and document the discussion

During the pandemic, the Regional Team have continued to meet by Zoom. This is satisfactory for many purposes, and the business of the movement has been conducted quite efficiently. However, meeting in person emphasised that something is lost in the on line meeting. Particularly for a loosely structured discussion, it is valuable to see the nuances of expression and hear slight variations in tone of voice to get a fuller understanding of what we are all saying. And apart from that, getting together in person was a welcome social occasion after three years of only seeing each other on screen.



The other main item of discussion was our planned national Gathering to be held at Swanwick, in Derbyshire, in April 2023. Before covid, we tried to hold a Gathering every two years, with the aim to bring as many Team members as possible together. The organisation involves coordinating accommodation, facilities, speakers and services, along with social activities, for as many as 100 people. We have a team of facilitators, with representation of the Regional Team, who will take responsibility for different aspects of the weekend, but meeting together regularly to ensure that the various aspects of the Gathering blend together.



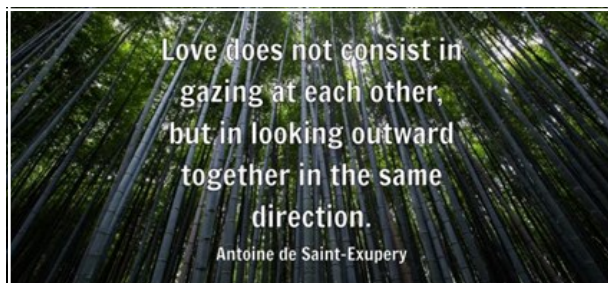
Hayes Christian Conference Centre,  
Swanwick

We will meet on Friday evening for dinner and there will be evening prayer and then the evening will be social. During the day, throughout Saturday on Sunday morning, there will be two speaker sessions with workshops to discuss the speakers' ideas in between. There will also be time for news of the wider movement and time to think about how to develop the movement in the post-covid world. On Saturday evening. There will be a break to relax before dinner then, after evening prayer, there will be another social evening. We intend to have Mass on Sunday afternoon before we all disperse. At the moment the exact timetable is uncertain because it will depend on, amongst other things, the availability of speakers, but we hope to have a more detailed timetable by early autumn.

The aim is twofold: We want Teams members to have an introduction to the ideas and material which will be offered for discussion topics at Teams meetings during the coming year. But just as important, it is an opportunity for long standing Teams couples to renew their acquaintance after covid restrictions, and for new members to become fully au fait with the Teams spirit. We will soon be inviting Teams and Team couples to book their places. We want this to be a great weekend spiritually and socially, so please try to join us. We would be delighted to see you.

### **Chris and Dominique Thompson**

GB Treasurers



# Teams International College Meeting, Assisi July 2022

The International College is an annual meeting of the International Leading Team with the Zone couples and super regional couples from around the world. This year after 2 years of on-line meetings the College was held in person in Assisi and organised by the Italian Regional Couples.

The theme of the meeting this year was from Matthew 25:14 “He entrusted all his wealth to them.”

Each day the prayer and Mass for the day was led by a different International Zone and each day we focused on

an aspect of the parable of the talents. Throughout the week we reflected on what is expected of a good and faithful servant and whether we keep our gifts hidden away in a “musty” box full of past memories or whether we perhaps should be like the person evoked by St John Chrysostom “He who has the gift of speech and doctrine to serve, loses grace if he does not use them, but he who strives attracts greater gifts that demand greater responsibilities.” To those who have more, more will be given -in other words, God allocates according to our qualities!

We reflected on how we have received gifts (Past) and we work on them (Present) in order to give an account of what we have done with them (Future).

At a moment in each day, we reflected on some words or a phrase of Henri Caffarel, our Founder. We also worked in workshops and had group tasks to perform.

We had one afternoon off and we were lucky to have a guided tour of the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi. There was a palpable sense of peace and prayer and we felt this also at the Basilica of Santa Maria del Angeli in the village below Assisi where St Francis lived and ministered to the poor. We were also privileged to be able to go to the church of Santa Maria Maggiore where the body of 15 year Carlo Acutis lies at peace. It was very moving to see him lie there as if asleep looking like a normal teenager with his trainers and joggers. Very moving! And great to see so many young people come to spend time with him.





At the Gathering we also completed the formal AGM of the French Charity - Equipes Notre-Dame and the AGM of the Friends of Father Caffarel (les Amis du Pere Caffarel).



As with any Team Gathering the getting to know new faces and the meeting of familiar faces even those seen only on Zoom was a highlight. Shared meals and shared prayer, a night vigil of Adoration and the chats over coffee built friendships that will last. Language was not a barrier!

The highlight of the last day was finding out that the next Teams International Gathering for all Team members will be July 15-20, 2024 in Turin in Italy. Turin is the birthplace of John Bosco and Pier-Giorgio Frassati, patron of youth.

**Paul & Annette O'Beirne**  
Responsible Couple  
Transatlantic Superregional



### **Save the Date !!**

**Teams International Gathering July 15-20, 2024, Turin, Italy**

For us to judge possible interest, please complete the Google form at [www.tinyurl.com/END-Turin](http://www.tinyurl.com/END-Turin)

# World Meeting of Families, Rome



The 10th World meeting of Families 2022 took place in Rome last June. There were just 2,400 delegates invited from 120 countries across the world. The Irish delegation was led by Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh and Bishop Denis Nulty, the Chair of the Council for Marriage and the Family. The delegation

comprised a family, with their 3 children, lay representatives of marriage movements and associations as well as priests. Brendan and I were honoured to travel as members of Equipes Notre Dame/Teams of Our Lady.

It would be impossible to note all the impressions, but we have chosen three highlights to share with you.

Firstly, it was wonderful to share the pilgrimage with many of the couples, individuals & clergy who are dedicated to caring for marriage & the family in Ireland at this time. We ate breakfast & celebrated the Eucharist together, huffed & puffed about the heat & the mosquitoes, shared delicious Italian food as well as the hospitality of the Irish College in Rome. We also learned more about each other's movements & vocations & have built bridges which we are sure will enrich our movements into the future.



**Brendan & Rosemarie  
with Rubens & Tatiana  
communications couple  
in front of Icon by Fr  
Marko Rupnik**



**Fr Darren Brennan,  
Bishop Denis Nulty &  
Fr Timothy Bartlett**

Secondly, we were encouraged by the presentations at the meeting which were inspirational & challenging. The joy and power of God's love shone through the most difficult circumstances. As Pope Francis said in *Amoris Laetitia*, "no family drops down from heaven perfectly formed". This conference was a master class in practical examples of how God causes us to grow and mature in the ability to love in everyday family life. The speakers who were mainly couples and families, were honest and courageous. They shared their stories and showcased many initiatives developed by couples, movements, parishes, and Bishops Councils all over the world. Initiatives which provide invaluable culturally specific, scaffolding to couples and families and provide practical tools for families to live their vocation as 'domestic churches'. The 'domestic church' was described by Lisa and Greg Popcak as "an outpost of grace in a hurting world". There were many witnesses to how experienced married couples can mentor engaged and newly married couples and how this has been structured in parishes and movements.

Prayer punctuated our days. There was a time of prayerful adoration for all the delegates in the conference centre, Masses in St Peter's Basilica and in the beautiful chapels of the Irish College and finally in St Peter's Square presided over by Pope Francis: He charged us " Proclaim the beauty of being family with joy! Proclaim the grace of Christian marriage to children and young people".

Also included in the delegate programme was an evening in a local parish, fittingly called Holy Family Parish. They welcomed a bus load of delegates, Irish, Korean, Kenyan and Congolese. They fed us and prepared a beautiful multi-lingual prayer service which we participated in. During this, several couples and families spoke about their journey of faith as a couple or as a family. (It was all so natural, and we wondered could this happen in an Irish parish?)



**Pope Francis before the closing Mass**



**Brendan & Rosemarie with Korean couple who had piloted Teams in Korea**

We were invited to speak on behalf of the Irish delegation and shared how we came to Teams of Our Lady, how the Team Meeting and endeavours support our journey towards holiness and how we live our mission as a married couple in the church.

Family for inviting us to be part of the 10th World Meeting of Families in Rome. More information including some of the talks are available on the following link <https://ewtn.co.uk/tag/world-meeting-of-families/>

**Brendan and Rosemarie Gavin, Teams, Ireland**

All in all, we had a great experience and thank sincerely Bishop Denis Nulty and the Bishops Council for Marriage and the



**Brendan with members of the ERI representing Teams**

# Synodal Process- Teams Synodal Response

Thank you so much for the support of all the Teams members who were involved in the Synodal process and offered their individual or Team responses, and to those who hosted or took part in one of the four Zoom meetings to discuss various questions. We know that many have also been involved in their Parish synodal responses.



*Pope Francis says “Synodality indicates walking together and listening to one another but above all to the Holy Spirit.”*

In GB, we listened to the many people who joined in the Zoom meetings to look at two or three of the questions at each session, to 6 Teams who gave Team responses and one individual person who gave a written response. The other regions of the Transatlantic Region, Malawi, South Africa, Ireland, Trinidad and Tobago also submitted their responses

All of these responses were recorded, read through carefully several times before being collated and then synthesized. A lot of prayer also went into this whole process of synthesis. We hope that the synthesis reflects your thoughts.

The final document from Transatlantic is available for those who wish to read it on the Teams GB website. <https://teams-transatlantic.org/latest-news/>

All 14 Super Regions will now have sent their synthesis to the ERI (the Leading Team) and they now have the task of drawing together a worldwide “Equipes Notre Dame” submission to send to the Vatican.

Let us remember that this is an ongoing process that has gone from Parish to Diocese to Bishops and will involve a lot more listening and prayer

## **Annette and Paul O’Beirne**

*“In the one People of God, therefore, let us journey together, in order to experience a Church that receives and lives this gift of unity, and is open to the voice of the Spirit,” Pope Francis said, stressing that the Synod is an “ecclesial moment”, not a parliament or an investigation into opinions, but “an ecclesial moment” whose protagonist is the Holy Spirit. “Without the Spirit, there is no Synod,” he stressed.*

*Pope Francis at the opening Mass for the Synod. 9 October 2021*

## **Synod National Synthesis Document**

The CBCEW National Synthesis Document, summing up responses to the Synod consultation from all the Dioceses of England and Wales, in many ways makes uplifting reading, not least for the fact that responses from every one of the 22 Dioceses in the Bishops’ Conference, and various additional organisations, are explicitly quoted. Perhaps this was a minimum that could be done, but it conveys an effort to demonstrate that voices from every Diocese and responding group have been heard.



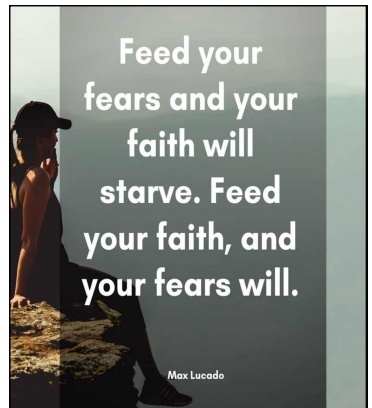
Being one half of the Regional Couple for Teams GB Central Region, and thereby a member of the Teams GB Province Team, I was involved in facilitating online Synod consultation sessions from December through March within Teams GB. This piqued my interest about how the consultation was being conducted across Dioceses, and the variability surprised me, from the phrasing of consultation questions, to the training and additional resources offered, the degree of publicity, and the opportunities to contribute.

During the consultation in my own parish, I struggled to sift my inner feelings and articulate what I thought at first I might contribute. So I didn't say much. But when I browsed the National Synthesis Document, I heard my own thoughts reflected back to me at many points.

Three paragraphs that appear successively toward the end of the document really struck me, especially as I find them applicable to what happens in our Teams:

81. Synodal conversion will be merely or superficially structural without a commitment to facilitate personal conversion, enabling an encounter and relationship with the person of Jesus Christ through prayer, retreats, pilgrimages, eucharistic liturgies, spiritual accompaniment and faith-sharing in groups. Participation in mission flows from a deepening communion: for the faithful to see themselves as missionary disciples, they need to experience the joy of belonging, which is in turn fruit of participation. An ever deepening synodality will both reflect and enable the journey of faith.

82. Key to deepening the bonds of belonging to Christ and to each other are small groups prayerfully reflecting on Scripture (*lectio divina*) and other kinds of prayer. Most reports mention basic ecclesial-type communities that include both lay people and clergy as key to fostering a synodal culture of humble listening and honest speaking. They enable participation, especially for those on the margins, and are vital for transcending debilitating divisions between Catholics, allowing the Spirit to reconcile diversity and open new horizons while uniting the body.



83. The personal journey of a joy-filled faith spills forth in missionary discipleship, which in turn calls for resources to be directed into formation opportunities for both lay people and priests. There is a profound hunger, at least on the part of those who took part in the synod, to deepen their faith through learning and skills in order to offer themselves for mission and service. Synodality "requires us to be open to the voice of the Holy Spirit and making listening a norm of pastoral ministry." You can find the National Synthesis Document at <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/synodal-church/> if you'd like to read it for yourself.

**Paul DeBoo**, Northampton St. Thomas Team

# The Team Meeting

The team is not an end in itself; it supports its couples and spiritual counsellor; it allows them :

- to experience special times of prayer together and of sharing;
- to help one another effectively in journeying to the Lord and bearing witness to Him.



In the life of every Christian community there are three phases :

- Turning, with Christ, to the Father to welcome His love ;
- Sharing this love in Christ: *"The whole group of believers were of one heart and one soul ;(Acts 4:32)*
- Moved by the Spirit of Christ, they go out to reveal this love to the World.

No couple joins a team under pressure and none is forced to remain. But those who do stay are asked to be loyal: to the other couples, to the practise of mutual support and to the formative ways of the Movement, as well being active in the Movement and remaining faithful to the Spirit.

## The team meeting

The team meeting is a special time of sharing between the team members in an atmosphere of fraternal love. True mutual love is demanding and cannot result from a passive attitude. Sharing requires a climate of mutual trust and discretion from each member of the team.

The team meets once a month at the home of one of the couples. It is very important for all the members of the team to be present in order to promote harmony and preserve the unity of the team.

There are five parts to the meeting and sufficient time must be allotted to each:

- **the meal,**
- **general sharing,**
- **communal prayer,**
- **sharing on the endeavours,**
- **exchange of views on the study topic.**

This sequence may change according to the needs of the team.



More information on aspects of Teams can be found on the following link  
<https://equipés-notre-dame.com/en/team-life/>

# Team discussion topic: Images for Reflection

We know that we learn, pray and seek to grow in our love of God in many ways- and that people have used images as well as words to do this for millennia. Recently, the Middlesbrough Team used images to explore something of what we understand about Mary and how she leads us to Christ.



We each chose one or two from a selection that had been collected over many years, and shared responses and thoughts that arose. We agreed we have a variety of ideas regarding Mary's gifts and character, some of which are overtly of a particular place, time or culture. Sometimes these ideas can be personal to us.

Whatever they are, it is how they guide us towards God that matters.

Here are some of the images we used for you to reflect upon.

**Paul and Sue Rowney, Middlesbrough Team**





# Team discussion topic: Images for Reflection



Images of Mary

## North West Sector - Crazy Golf Event

After 2 years of Zoom meetings, Zoom retreats, Zoom mixed teams events and streamed Masses, the north west region were finally able to get back to some normality with an actual, in person event! It was decided that what would really bond the group would be a lovely competitive game of crazy golf!







The day didn't start in the most promising way with torrential rain on the New Brighton coast but the Lord looked kindly on us and the sun came out just in time.

The clubs and balls were hired and the all important score cards given out (though it wasn't really meant to be competitive).

The balls certainly had a life of their own as they invariably ended up anywhere but the intended hole.



It was a great opportunity for the North West Region Teams to get together, share news and just enjoy each others real life company after so many months of virtual communication. We ended the morning with lunch at New Brighton's premier restaurant, Morrison's supermarket!



**Mark and Carol Traynor,**  
Responsible Couple NW Sector

# Reflection when Under Pressure

Me: Hello God

God: Hello....

Me: I'm falling apart. Can't you put me back together?

God: I would rather not.

Me: Why?

God: Because you aren't a puzzle.

Me: What about all the pieces of my life that are falling down onto the ground?

God: Let them stay there for a while. They fell off for a reason. Take some time and decide if you need any of those pieces back.

Me: You don't understand! I'm breaking down!

God: No- you don't understand. You are breaking through. What you are feeling are just growing pains. You are shedding the things and the people in your life that are holding you back. You aren't falling apart. You are falling into place. Relax. Take some deep breaths and allow those things you don't need anymore to fall off of you. Stop holding onto the pieces that don't fit you anymore. Let them fall off. Let them go.

Me: Once I start doing that, that will be left of me?

God: Only the very best pieces of you.

Me: I'm scared of changing.

God: I keep telling you- you aren't changing, you are becoming!

Me: Becoming who?

God: Becoming who I created you to be! A person of light and love and charity and hope and courage and joy and mercy and grace and compassion. I made you for more than the shallow pieces you have decided to adorn yourself with that you cling to with such greed and fear. Let those things fall off of you. I love you! Don't change!... Become! Become! Become who I made you to be. I'm going to keep telling you this until you remember it.

Me: There goes another piece

God: Yes, let it be.

Me: So... I'm not broken?

God: Of course not- but you are breaking like the dawn. It's a new day. Become!

Author Unknown



# Reflection for Middle age

*Lord, you know better than I know myself that I am growing older, and will some day be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking that I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful, but not moody, helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all, but you know Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.*

*Keep me free from the recital of endless details, give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on aches and pains. They are increasing and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the aches of others' pains, but help me to endure them with patience.*

*I dare not ask for improved memory but for growing humility and a lessening coxsureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.*

*Keep me reasonably sweet; I want to be a saint- but not one who is hard to live with- for a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil. Give me the ability so see good things in unexpected places and talents in unexpected people and please give me the grace to tell them so.*

Submitted by **Tom & Maureen Hoban**, Durham Teams

From the GB Teams Archives

*You know that you're middle aged when you find yourself walking round muttering things like...*

*"What was I going to say?"*

*"What did I come in here for?"*

*"Did I already take my tablets?"*

*"How did I get this bruise?"*

*"Where did I leave my phone?"*

*"Who moved my water glass?"*

*"It costs that much? You must be joking!"*

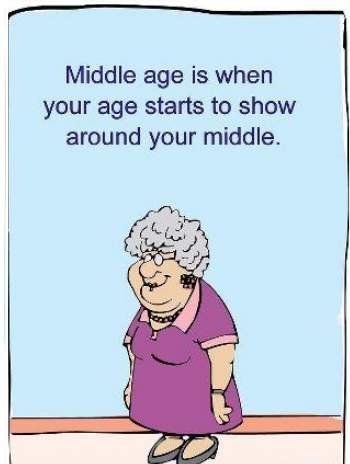
*"I could have sworn that was my password!"*

*"Who in the world is calling me at 9 p.m.?"*

*"In my day..."*

*The scary thing about middle age... is the knowledge that you'll grow out of it!*

Middle age is when your age starts to show around your middle.



# October Team Meeting

## Reflection: Luke 17:11-19

### No-one has come back to praise God, only this foreigner

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered one of the villages, ten lepers came to meet him. They stood some way off and called to him, 'Jesus! Master! Take pity on us.' When he saw them he said, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' Now as they were going away they were cleansed. Finding himself cured, one of them turned back praising God at the top of his voice and threw himself at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. The man was a Samaritan. This made Jesus say, 'Were not all ten made clean? The other nine, where are they? It seems that no one has come back to give praise to God, except this foreigner.' And he said to the man, 'Stand up and go on your way. Your faith has saved you.'

## Psalm 97(98):1-4

*The Lord has shown his salvation to the nations.*

Sing a new song to the Lord  
for he has worked wonders.  
His right hand and his holy arm  
have brought salvation.

The Lord has made known his salvation;  
has shown his justice to the nations.  
He has remembered his truth and love  
for the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen  
the salvation of our God.  
Shout to the Lord, all the earth,  
ring out your joy.

*"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not just to utter words, but to live by them."*

John F. Kennedy

## Concluding Prayer

Lord, you are faithful in your love and care for us. How often do we not thank you or notice your grace and healing in our lives. Help us to be thankful and give praise for your presence in our world and our lives. Amen



# October Reflection

*This is a strange story. Jesus cures ten lepers as they go away having previously recognised him but says to the one who turns towards him and praises God that “his faith has saved him”*

*So, were the nine others cured? Yes indeed.*

*This cryptic story is part of Luke’s illustration of Jesus mission on the road from Galilee to Jerusalem, starting in Lk9: 51 and ending with the story of how the king’s servants had dealt with the money given to them.*

*This whole section lays out- as in the Canterbury Tales, Pilgrims Progress, the Decameron- the whole gamut of human experiences – joy anger, deviousness, generosity poverty, riches, and healing by Jesus. Ailments are cured. The remarkable string funning through the series of exquisitely drawn word pictures is the theme early on – eternal life (Lk 10:25-27) – “you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.”*

*God’s utter mercy knows no bounds of which healing is one aspect. What Jesus wants for us is to recognise God in our total existence, our total wholeness, our total oneness. Only in recognising our total oneness bound in love with our father are we really saved as the leper. Faith allows us to jump back to the destiny of being created in the Father’s image (Gen 1: 27).*

*That completeness was achieved by the one who returned to praise God.*

*God’s mercy and power can heal our ailments but only our own faith - the faith to love God - will bring us into full communion with one who wishes this from the earliest age.*

*Luke’s narrative describes our human travels along the byways of life’s detours, until we see the light of faith that our Father continues to place before us, and who waits, until healed of our imperfections, we turn back from the detour and place ourselves in his embrace.*

*The physical healing of the leper becomes the real eternal healing of the one whose faith makes him come to recognise God’s eternal wish that His creation comes in love to Him.*

**Deacon John Traynor**  
Warrington Teams

# November Team Meeting

## Matthew 24:37-44

### The Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect

Jesus said to his disciples: 'As it was in Noah's day, so will it be when the Son of Man comes. For in those days before the Flood people were eating, drinking, taking wives, taking husbands, right up to the day Noah went into the ark, and they suspected nothing till the Flood came and swept all away. It will be like this when the Son of Man comes. Then of two men in the fields one is taken, one left; of two women at the millstone grinding, one is taken, one left.

'So stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming. You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what time of the night the burglar would come, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed anyone to break through the wall of his house. Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.'



The best  
preparation for  
tomorrow is doing  
your best today.

## Psalm 121

*I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house.'*

I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house.'  
And now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.

It is there that the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord.  
For Israel's law it is, there to praise the Lord's name.  
There were set the thrones of judgement of the house of David.

For the peace of Jerusalem pray: 'Peace be to your homes!  
May peace reign in your walls, in your palaces, peace!'

For love of my brethren and friends I say: 'Peace upon you!'  
For love of the house of the Lord I will ask for your good.

## Concluding Prayer

Lord, we live in a changing and uncertain world. You alone are the constant and we can rely on your promises and love. Let us be ready to meet you in one another and to recognise your grace and love in our world and our lives. Amen.

## November reflection

*With the start of the Advent Season we have a sense of expectation about the future. That sense of expectation is a continuation of the theme of the last weeks of Ordinary Time. Matthew's gospel was written, scholars believe, after the fall of Jerusalem and was addressed to Jewish converts, who had to answer questions about their belief in the Second Coming and when it was going to happen. The Christians of Matthew's community will have been aware of the prophecies in the book of Daniel and that sense of randomness is present in the scenario depicted by Jesus.*

*Because they had just lived through a time of almost unprecedented turmoil with the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple many will have been persuaded that the Second Coming was imminent. They will have felt powerless and vulnerable – even more so because the future could not be predicted. The Flood, as Jesus portrays it, came as a surprise and there is an apparent randomness about who survived and who did not.*

*The point of the Gospel is that the randomness is only in the eyes of humans – not in the eyes of God. The virtuous will survive but our virtues and vices are not necessarily known to other humans but they are all known to God himself. The command to be awake, therefore, is about being prepared, through ensuring that we continue to lead a virtuous life in accordance with the values of the Gospel.*

*Today's world has something of the turbulence of that of Matthew's community: war in Europe, economic and cost-of-living crises as well as climate change. How do we ensure that our young people do not lose hope given that they seem to have been disproportionately affected by the current cluster of crises?*

*The answer can only lie in the psalm. In this context there is a certain irony that psalm 121 has been paired with this gospel, extract since it is about the overarching importance of the Temple and of Jerusalem as God's City. Peace came from prayer and worship in the Temple in the time before Jesus but Jesus' death and Resurrection has transformed things. But prayer alone will not bring peace. As the opening prayer for this Sunday makes clear we are called to run out to meet Christ armed with "righteous deeds." It is these that will preserve us from the fate of those who did not survive the flood and it is these that will be a sign of our readiness. It is these that will can bring the peace that we crave and the sense of wellbeing that we all need and the resilience to face the challenges ahead.*

**Fr Bill Muir**

# December Team meeting

## Reflection: James 5:7-10

### Do not lose heart; the Lord's coming will be soon

Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. Think of a farmer: how patiently he waits for the precious fruit of the ground until it has had the autumn rains and the spring rains! You too have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, brothers and sisters, so as not to be brought to judgement yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates. For your example, brothers and sisters, in submitting with patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

## Psalm 145(146):6-10

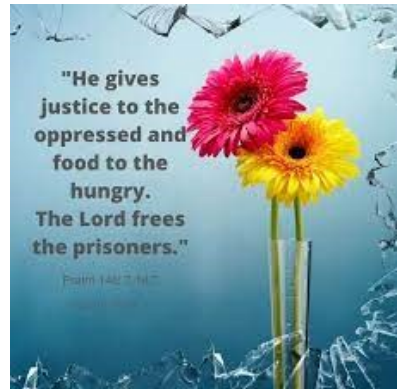
*Come, Lord, and save us.*

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,  
who gives justice to those who are oppressed.  
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,  
the Lord, who sets prisoners free,

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,  
who raises up those who are bowed down,  
the Lord, who protects the stranger  
and upholds the widow and orphan.

It is the Lord who loves the just  
but thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The Lord will reign for ever,  
Zion's God, from age to age.

*Come, Lord, and save us.*



## Concluding Prayer

Lord, in our age of instant access to so much give us wisdom and patience to wait in hope for your promises. May we remember that you are always with us and more readily accessible than anything in our modern world. Amen.



# December Reflection

*Waiting – patiently – not a thing I did easily as a child. But St James says in the reading we are to be patient until the Lord’s coming... and not lose heart...because the Lord’s coming will be soon! That was 2000 years ago and we’re still waiting!*

*Our Office of Readings on 20 December has St Bernard talking about an earlier waiting at the Annunciation of the Lord to Mary:*

*‘You have heard, O Virgin, that you will conceive and bear a son; you have heard that it will not be by man but by the Holy Spirit. The angel awaits an answer; it is time for him to return to God who sent him. We too are waiting, O Lady, for your word of compassion; the sentence of condemnation weighs heavily upon us....Answer quickly, O Virgin. Reply in haste to the angel, or rather through the angel to the Lord. Answer with a word, receive the Word of God. Speak your own word, conceive the divine Word. Breathe a passing word, embrace the eternal Word. Why do you delay, why are you afraid?... Open your heart to faith, O blessed Virgin, Arise in faith, hasten in devotion, open in praise and thanksgiving. Behold the handmaid of the Lord, she says, be it done to me according to your word!’*

*Mary said ‘yes’ in history and at Christmas we celebrate the fulfilment of this ‘fiat’ with the birth of her Son. But we also celebrate two other comings for which we await. In the first half of Advent we look forward to Christ’s Coming at the end of time, talked of by St James and we wait patiently. The third Coming is as important – we pray that Jesus will come anew into our hearts this Christmas and for this I have to be patient and yet, I can’t wait! Happy threefold Christmas!*

**Fr Chris Dobson**

*“Patience is not the ability to wait, but the ability to keep a good attitude while waiting.”*

*Anonymous*

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## Teams Websites

**GB Website:** [www.TeamsGB.org.uk](http://www.TeamsGB.org.uk)

**Superregional:** [www.Teams-transatlantic.org](http://www.Teams-transatlantic.org)

**International:** [www.Equipes-Notre-Dame.com](http://www.Equipes-Notre-Dame.com)

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

# 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.

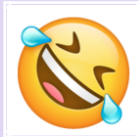
Yes, from this day forward  
all generations will call me blessed,  
for the almighty has done great things for me.  
Holy is His name,  
and His mercy reaches from age to age for those who fear Him.

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.

*A couple drove  
down a country  
road for several  
miles not saying  
a word.*



*An earlier discussion had  
led to an argument and  
neither of them wanted  
to concede their position.*

*As they passed a farm-  
yard of mules, goats and  
pigs, the husband asked  
sarcastically, "relatives of  
yours?"*

*"Yes", the wife replied  
calmly, "in-laws!"*

*Bookings will soon be avail-  
able for Teams regathering  
21-23 April 2023*

*On [https://teams.gb.org.uk/  
about/events-2/](https://teams.gb.org.uk/about/events-2/)*

