

TEAMS GB NEWSLETTER

October-December 2024



Equipes Notre Dame
TEAMS

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Tell us your Team News

Send us some photos and a few lines for the next newsletter by **29 November**.
email to: editors@teamsgb.org.uk or
what's app to 07722 014530.

Changed address?

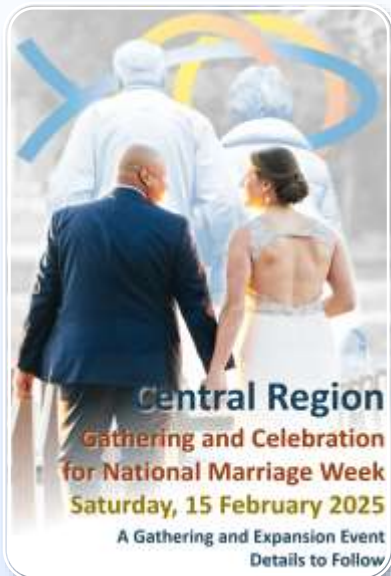
Contact your **regional couple** for any change of postal address or any change in the number of newsletters your Team needs. Contact details in the directory inside back page of the newsletter.

Front cover: The Sit down, International Gathering, Turin.



"You're supposed to say 'I do,'
not 'I'll try.'" 52

Dates for your Diary



- 21 Sept- Southern Region gathering
- 26 Sept- North East & Yorkshire by zoom
- 5 October- North West gathering
- 15 Feb 2025- Central Region gathering

Look out for details from your regional couple

Marriage Advice from 1886

Let your love be stronger than your hate or anger. Learn the wisdom of compromise, for it is better to bend a little than to break. Believe the best rather than the worst. People have a way of living up or down to your opinion of them. Remember that true friendship is the basis for any lasting relationship. The person you choose to marry is deserving of the courtesies and kindnesses you bestow on your friends. Please hand this down to your children and your children's children. The more things change, the more they are the same.

- Jane Wells
(1886)

Letter from Regional Couple

Dear Friends in Teams,

As I sit to write this reflection, David and I have just read today's Gospel, Matthew 23:23-26. This passage offers a timely and profound message, particularly in light of our recent experiences. Jesus reminds us that outward appearances of righteousness aren't enough; what truly matters is the purity and sincerity of our hearts. The Pharisees, whom Jesus rebuked, were meticulous in following religious rituals, but neglected "the weightier matters of the law: justice, mercy, and faith." Jesus emphasised the futility of cleaning the outside of the cup while leaving the inside filthy, urging the need for inner transformation.



This message resonates deeply with the Teams of Our Lady - dedicated to spiritual growth and marital unity. The Teams emphasise building a deep, authentic relationship with God and one's spouse. Just as Jesus urged the Pharisees to focus on inner transformation, Teams encourages couples to look beyond external appearances and cultivate a pure and loving heart. It's a call to ensure that our faith is not merely ritualistic but transformative, impacting every aspect of our lives.

This summer's riots in England further highlight the need for justice and mercy. The unrest underscores the consequences of societal neglect and inequality, much like the Pharisees' neglect of justice. As people of faith, we are called to advocate for a society where mercy, justice, and compassion prevail. It's a time to reflect on how we can contribute to healing and justice in our communities, rather than just maintaining external peace.

On a personal level, the recent task of decluttering our extremely overwhelming garage reminded us of the internal cleansing Jesus calls for. Just as we remove unnecessary items to create a more harmonious space, we're invited to declutter our minds and hearts, removing distractions that hinder our spiritual growth. This process reflects our commitment to a more intentional and focused life, aligned with the principles of faith.

God bless.

David & Joanne Harries, Responsible Couple, Northern GB Region

Notes from the editors



The last few months has brought both joys and sorrows.



We had joy at a family gathering in Ireland in July catching up with loved ones and taking some time out. We had a trip down memory lane visiting Holy Cross Abbey where we were married a 35 years ago. Spot the difference in the two pictures- then and now! We are a good 30 years behind Jim and Maria Mason, though- see page 12. The visit to Ireland meant we couldn't attend the international Gathering In Turin but we have lots of pictures and reflections for you on pages 6-14.

All of us have been touched by the tragic stabbing in Southport and the subsequent unrest and rioting in different parts of the country. It happened just round the corner from a foodbank where Dympna volunteers. Out of tragedy can come hope. When the local Mosque was targeted by violence many in the local community showed their support, turning up to help clear up and donating lots of food. When the foodbank team visited to show support and ask how we could help, the Mosque leader passed most of the donated food to the foodbank and this strengthened links between the Mosque and the Christian foodbank. Signs of hope in a sad world :)

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this newsletter. God bless you all this autumn.

Mark and Dympna Edwards, Newsletter Editors

2024 Study Topic

The theme of the International Gathering “Let us go with a burning heart” and our study topic for 2024 “The Road to Emmaus” are linked to the story of the two disciples who met Christ on the road to Emmaus. They teach us that the presence of the Risen Christ remains constant and transforms our lives.



We are delighted to share the link to the study topic for 2024 which was launched after the International Gathering in Turin in July 2024. We hope that many of you will use this wealth of inspiration and formation.

<https://teams.gb.org.uk/study-topic-for-2024-25-on-the-road-to-emmaus/>

We are sure that this study topic will lead to wonderful conversations between couples and between Team members. Each of the eight chapters has questions for couples and questions for the Team. All the pilgrims at Turin were inspired by the homily by Bishop Steve Lowe, of New Zealand; he drew out the difference between ‘hearing’, as the disciples had previously done, and with ‘really listening’ as they did after meeting Jesus on the road. We’re sure that we can understand this way – and we resolve to ‘really listen’ during our conversations and sit down with our spouse.

The text of his homily is on this link <https://torino2024.equipes-notre-dame.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/EN-14a-HOMILY-Bishop-Lowe.pdf>

and to listen yourselves, use this link <https://youtu.be/WInLuF9q8Vo?t=13017>. This link is set to start at the alleluia before the gospel and homily.

The study topic is available as a pdf on the GB website. We will be printing 500 copies for those who wish; a donation would be helpful! They will be available at Regional Gatherings then from the Literature couple.

An integral part of the study topic are the reflections by Marina Marcolini at the beginning of each chapter, reflections on the writings of Fr Caffarel and the Pope and powerful testimonies given by teams couples from around the world on the various themes.

We hope you enjoy the study topic and that it inspires you. We look forward to meeting you at one of our Regional Gatherings. With our love and best wishes for a successful year in Teams.

Annette and Paul O’Beirne, Responsible Couple Transatlantic Superregion

Trinidad on the move

Trinidad has moved to the US Super region!

During the International Gathering there was a formal move of the Trinidad and Tobago region from the Transatlantic Super region to the US Super region.

Trinidad was introduced to Teams in 1983 as a result of an enquiry by Fr Neil Rodriguez from Trinidad. Being English speaking and considering the strong historical links with the UK, the task was taken to Jim and Teresa Pratt from the North East of England who piloted the first team by correspondence. The Trinidad and Tobago teams became a region in August 2001 and the inauguration was attended by Paul and Helena McCloskey who were the Responsible Couple for the UK at the time.



Trinidad pilgrims in Turin

“
Happy marriages
begin when we
marry the ones
we love, and they
blossom when
we love the ones
we marry.”

Tom Mullen

Although there are strong links with the UK the geographical closeness to the US means that many Trinidadians travel to the US for work. There are other growing economic links and so it was felt that it was the right time to make the change. Trinidad and Tobago remain in the same zone as the UK- that is the English-speaking zone of Transoecania so we will remain in contact. We shared wonderful moments in Turin with our Trinidadian friends and we were able to officially mark the change with a photoshoot and speeches with Faye and Kevin Noonan, Zone Couple, and TJ and Ellen Holt, US Super Regional couple, and the new US Super Regional couple Greg and Melanie Gehrt. We know that Trinidad and Tobago Teams will

go from strength to strength.

Annette & Paul O'Beirne, Responsible Couple, Transatlantic Superregion

Making a Team Annual Commitment

Several new Teams, especially in recent years, have sought, with encouragement from their Piloting Couple, to mark the end of their Piloting with a celebration that includes some statement of commitment to each other, to the Teams Movement, and to the Teams practices they have learned along the way and chosen to espouse. This kind of celebration and commitment is also prevalent elsewhere in Teams around the world.

Hand in hand with its review of the Teams GB Piloting process and supporting literature, the Teams GB Province Team now recommends that a milestone celebration of the conclusion of Piloting that incorporates a pledge of commitment by the Team's members should indeed be seen as integral to the entire process. The Province Team has issued a **pro forma text of Team Commitment** now posted in the "Other Documents" section on the **Documents** page of the Teams GB website (<https://teams.gb.org.uk/documents>). See the PDF document "Celebration of Team Commitment" on that page.

The document is considered an approved and recommended pro forma, meaning that for Teams GB it is the first of what eventually could become a collection of such documents adapted in style or tone to suit different contexts for the Team Commitment, but all meeting specific content criteria regarded as essential for the purpose.

What are the essential elements of a Team Commitment? In other words, what are the crucial attitudes and practices that keep us, as a Team, true to the Movement as launched by Father Caffarel and encapsulated in the Teams Charter? They are:

- ⇒ Faithfulness to monthly Team Meetings, and to the format and agenda elements of these meetings, established since the Movement's founding and espoused across its breadth
- ⇒ Hospitality toward each other, and also toward other Teams Members and Couples met through belonging to the Movement
- ⇒ A spirit of Christ-centred and Christ-focused simplicity in the conduct of Team Meetings, especially in relation to preparing and sharing the meal
- ⇒ Confidentiality about what is shared within the Team Meetings
- ⇒ Fidelity to the Endeavours

- ⇒ Fidelity to Spiritual Study to enrich and deepen faith
- ⇒ Readiness to engage with and contribute to the Teams Movement beyond one's own Team, and participate in expansion of the Movement.

A Team's transition from Piloting to independent operation is not the only time suitable for members to commit to each other as a Team. Some Teams have revisited and renewed their commitment to each other annually for many years, for example, at their first meeting for the Teams Year each September. A renewal of Team Commitment has at times been celebrated during Teams Sector or Regional events, like kick-off events at the start of the Teams Year, or Teams Birthday celebrations, or Gatherings or Teams formation sessions. Indeed, a renewal of Team Commitment is likely to feature in Regional Gatherings this autumn, and on a regular basis going forward.

The Teams GB Province Team invites and recommends every Team to use the “[Celebration of Team Commitment](#)” document from the Teams GB website to renew its commitment to each other at one of its early meetings this coming autumn, and to adopt this as an annual practice for years ahead.

Janet and Paul DeBoo on behalf of the Teams GB Province Team



Nottingham team make their team commitment at Diocesan family Day- see more on page 18.

13th International gathering, Turin



After much preparation the International Gathering in Turin finally happened in July 2024! We had wonderful times- sharing our lives, prayer, liturgy, presentations, fun, meeting new people, catching up with old friends, experiencing the modern prophets of Turin, Don Bosco, Pier Giorgio Frassati, and many others.

Here are some of the highlights and thoughts that people shared of their time in Turin.



Pat and Tony Banks: *"We feel tired but energised by the people we met- meeting new friends and also recognising those we met 12 years ago in Brasilia, friends we met in Fatima, meeting people from so many countries. Lots of smiles and hugs. The speakers were amazing!!"*

Let our Hearts
burn with love



Tony & Maggie at zonal mass



Paul O'Beirne connecting
with old friends

Maggie and Tony O'Byrne: *"You never know what to expect when you go to International Gatherings but it is always so much more than you can imagine. There was a great atmosphere and we made new friends. Thank you so much to everyone."*



Pilgrims from UK

International gathering, Turin 2024



Matthias Chiwaya, Fr Patrick Kamba, and Esther Chiwaya arrive back safely in Malawi wearing Turin T-shirts



Annette & Paul with friends from Malawi at Gathering

Esther and Matthias Chiwaya: *“A highpoint for us was presenting the flag for Malawi. We received a warm welcome from everyone and spiritually we have gained so much. People have a heart for praising the Lord which was wonderful. This has been a turning point for our life in Teams.”*



Mixed Team meeting

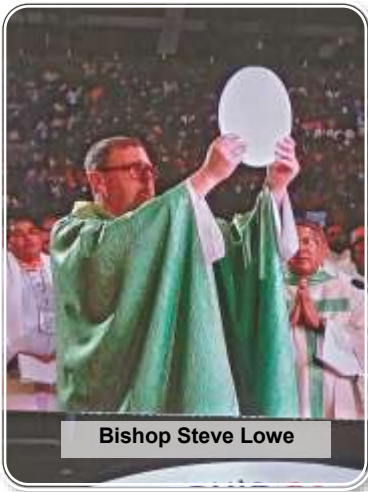
Fr Patrick Kamba: *“This has been a wonderful experience. I especially enjoyed the Mixed Teams meetings. It has touched my life in a different way so much that the couples who were in my Mixed Team group are no longer strangers. I have seen that from the life of the couples who are called by God it is like we are on a journey like the disciples from Emmaus. The love and joy that I have shared I will never forget.”*



Al Fresco sit down



More sit downs



Bishop Steve Lowe

Bishop Steve Lowe from New Zealand:

“When I heard the Our Father being said at Mass by all those pilgrims each in their own language I had a moment where I thought “This is what it must have been like at Pentecost” Unforgettable.”



Annette & Paul O'Beirne



Annette O'Beirne “I will never forget the moment when Bishop Steve held up the huge host at the consecration during Mass and it shone brightly and was reflected in the golden cross which hung above. It was a holy moment. He gave a wonderful sermon at the gathering about the disciples from Emmaus

<https://torino2024.equipes-notre-dame.com/>

<wp-content/uploads/2024/07/EN-14a-HOMILY-Bishop-Lowe.pdf>

Donal & Katriona
from Ireland:

“Togetherness,
friendship and
meeting friends
from 30 years ago
and the fellowship
every day.”



Pilgrims from Ireland

International gathering, Turin 2024



**Trans-Oceanic Couples-
TJ & Ellen Holt Incoming,
Faye & Kevin Noonan Outgoing**

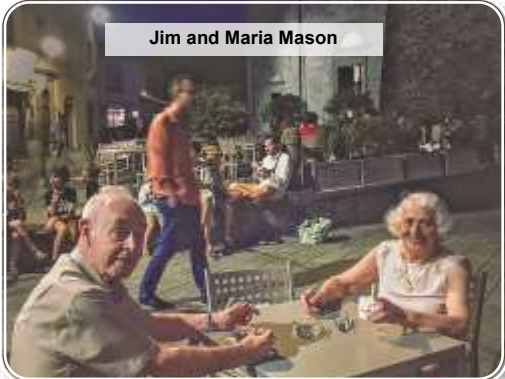


**Trinidad offertory
during zonal mass**

Maria and Jim Mason from Backworth, celebrated 65 years of Marriage in Tuscany in Italy Maria's native land after attending the International Gathering in Turin.

“We thank God that he gave us our faith, Equipes Notre Dame, our family and friends and the ability to attend the Torino Gathering. It was an amazing event: extremely well coordinated in a lovely environment. We found it very inspirational, thought provoking, very friendly and prayerful. The presence of God was felt particularly during Mass. Fraternity and communication were felt and evident. There was also joy, cheerfulness, love, togetherness, rejoicing. It was also educational and on occasions entertaining.

I can feel that so many things can be said about the atmosphere and efficiency of the gathering but the main thing is to say thank you to all the people who worked so hard to make it happen”.



Jim and Maria Mason

Procession for International Mass with 7,000 participants and 500 priests



Formation workshop at Opora centre after gathering



Our thanks to Paul & Annette O'Beirne for compiling photos and comments of the gathering.

Reflection on International gathering

This was our first experience of a Teams International Gathering and we were full of anticipation prior to our arrival.

The theme of the Gathering, “Let us go with a Burning Heart” drawn from The Road to Emmaus, set the tone for a very prayerful and spiritual event. We were absolutely stunned by the sheer numbers of people in the arena, some 7600, all with a common purpose, which created an atmosphere of joy and enthusiasm. Attending an international gathering has given us a deeper understanding of the extent of Teams as a vibrant movement around the world. One of the highlights for us was the privilege of being selected to carry the UK flag, with all the other nations represented, as part of the opening ceremony.



We were heartened by the demonstration of support by the hierarchy; with a



large number of clergy present each day. One of the first presentations was a video of the Pope's meeting with Teams' leadership in May – clearly a wonderful endorsement of the movement. The daily eucharists and liturgy were all celebrated by bishops of various nations and very inspiring. The music and choir were of a very high standard, joyful and really uplifting. Big screens made it possible to see the detail of what was

happening at the altar or on stage. It was obvious that lots of organisation and preparation had surely gone into creating these beautiful celebrations.

The event itself was hosted in the Inalpi Arena, thankfully air conditioned as the temperature reached 34° outside. There were a number of couples from the UK, all wearing red scarves, which identified us as English speakers. We tried to sit together in the arena as a distinctive GB and Ireland group, wearing red shirts on the English language day.

Naturally, there were a few niggles – the wi-fi on mobile phones for simultaneous translations did not work well, and only two small coffee shops

attempting to serve 7,600 people was definitely not enough, but none of this dampened the joy of the event.

There was a great sense of friendliness, camaraderie and unity of purpose amongst all participants. This extended to our hotel, where the evening meals were preceded by an impromptu rendition of the Magnificat, in French, and we all joined in. Even our daily 'commute' on the trams were often accompanied by some Teams, mainly Brazilian, singing hymns – to the probable surprise, and perhaps delight, of the locals!

One very hot afternoon we were taken by coach to the town of Chieri about 10km away. Here local Teams members guided us around the places associated with St. John (Don) Bosco, who devoted his life to the education and advancement of poor children and disadvantage youth, including founding the Salesian movement. Because of the heat we needed frequent stops in air-conditioned cafes!



Another highlight for us were the mixed Team meetings held each evening in our hotel. Naturally we were arranged in language groups, and this gave us the opportunity to mix with people we would not normally meet – in our case couples from New Zealand, Texas, Trinidad, Poland and Australia, with whom we still keep in contact via WhatsApp. Unfortunately we had to leave one day early, due to being unable to book an appropriate flight on the last day.

It's worth mentioning the Torino2024 website <https://torino2024.equipes-notre-dame.com/en/> which is still up and running, showing details of all the daily events, presentations, discussions, videos and photographs. The whole event was an amazing celebration of Teams worldwide and a triumph of organisation on a large scale.

Yvonne & Peter Newman, Responsible Couple, Southern GB Region

Teams Spiritual Counsellors

We sometimes hear about Teams having trouble getting chaplains. In the 1980s when we first joined Teams, the Missionary Institute of London was thriving and many well-known Orders had students there as well as many priests on the teaching staff. Some of these priests accepted the request to be Spiritual Counsellors to various Teams in North London.

For the last 25 years with Cockfosters 4 we've been blessed with priests from the Consolata Missionary Institute (IMC) which has a house in Finchley. As each of our chaplains left for pastures new, he proposed his replacement as our new chaplain.

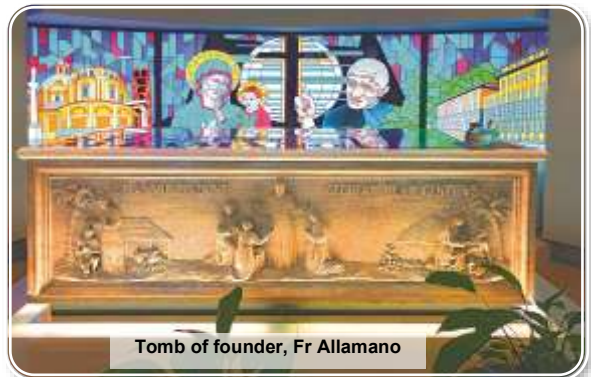
This has given us a much wider experience of missionary activity around the world. As they do not have regular parish responsibilities they are nearly always able to attend our monthly meetings. They really appreciate the contact they get with families living out their lives in the world of today and we appreciate that they can share their highs and lows of community life with us. Our recent Chaplain Fr Luis came to us from Tanzania and recently retired to his hometown Fatima where he continues to pray for us. We were with him for his 85th birthday, his 60th Jubilee - and his triple bypass! We now have Fr Enrique who hails from Spain.

The Consolata Fathers were founded in Turin in 1901 by Fr Giuseppe Allamano when he was rector for 46 years of the Basilica della Madonna Consolata from whence comes the name of the Orders he founded. In May 2024 Pope Francis announced that he is to be canonised - on Mission Sunday 20th October.

After we attended the Teams International Gathering in Turin it seemed only fitting that we spend some days with the community at the Consolata Casa Madre – and we met one of our previous chaplains living there in retirement after many years in Ethiopia. Each day we went to visit the tomb of their founder (soon to be) Saint Joseph Allamano and to remember in prayer all our Team, Teams worldwide and their chaplains.

Fr Allamano's challenge to his priests, brothers and sisters is *"First Saints, then Missionaries"* – what a challenge for us all!

Maggy and Tony O'Byrne
Cockfosters 4 Team



Guildford 3 Retreat, Walsingham

Having done day retreats in the past, we decided to go on a residential retreat this year and we chose to visit Walsingham. Whilst some team members are very familiar with Walsingham, for others it was a first visit. Unfortunately, Covid prevented one couple attending.

Having set off early on Friday morning, it was possible later that day, to take part in the services at the Catholic Shrine – the Pilgrim Mass, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Rosary and Benediction. This made for a prayerful and peaceful start to the weekend. We even managed to hold our monthly meeting that evening.



The next day we prayed the Rosary as we walked the Pilgrim Way to the Catholic Shrine, arriving in time for the Pilgrim Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We were blessed to have visiting school choirs sing during the Mass. After Mass, there was ample time to visit the Slipper Chapel (*Basilica of Our Lady*), have a cup of tea or to enjoy the peaceful atmosphere before returning to the village.

As it happened, that weekend was also a retreat weekend for several hundred Tamil pilgrims who travelled from different parts of the world for their annual pilgrimage to Walsingham. It was uplifting to hear of their long journeys and of their deep devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham.

After Mass on Sunday we made our way home. It was an excellent weekend with lots of opportunities for growth and reflection and we left feeling spiritually refreshed.

We stayed at the Retreat House in Little Walsingham Village and would recommend this as it has several comfortable en-suite rooms. We were well fed and looked after. *Walsingham Abbey* (famous for the remains of the medieval Priory of Our Lady), the *Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham* (inside which is the replica of Our Lady's house in Nazareth), the local farm shop and the village centre are all within walking distance. Next to the Retreat House is the *Catholic Church Of the Annunciation* (convenient for our Morning and Evening prayers).

Also a few steps away is the *Black Lion Pub* which we very much enjoyed visiting! Thanks to Andy for organising the weekend.

Zelma Braganza, Guildford 3 Team

Nottingham Family Day & Team Commitment

The Diocese of Nottingham held its annual Family Day on Saturday, 22 June 2024 at the Trinity Catholic School in Nottingham, with Teams of Our Lady a featured partner. The Diocesan Family Day stems from the Tenth World Meeting of Families at Rome in 2022 which encouraged local events in dioceses around the world coinciding with the central celebration. The Nottingham 1 Team formed in January this year was launched at the Diocesan Family Day.

The event unfolded in three stages from early afternoon through to the early evening, starting with four concurrent prayer workshops, each led by a different organisation and geared for a different age group. We paired with Karen and Adrian Jones to present one of these workshops about our personal experiences of prayer nurtured through Teams of Our Lady, particularly praying as couples.

A colourful open-air Mass followed, bathed in warm sunshine, offered by Bishop Patrick McKinney, who has been most forthcoming in support for Teams of Our Lady since appearing as a keynote speaker at the Teams GB Re-Gathering of April 2023. After the Communion Rite, the Nottingham 1 Team, coming to the end of Piloting guided by Karen and Adrian Jones, stepped into focus to dedicate themselves together as a Team and receive Bishop McKinney's blessing. Immediately, and to general delight, the Nottingham African Catholic Community Choir, leading the music throughout the service, broke into Handel's Hallelujah Chorus, the closing ripples of the final "Hallelujah!" cuing a wave of applause that prompted Bishop McKinney, with ready irony, to quip, "That was the first Team in Nottingham. We hope to see many more, but can't promise all the same lavish reception."



Bishop McKinney



Janet Deboo
enjoying the day

A barbecue and ethnic food fair starring Jollof Rice that we had not tasted since West Africa, with ensuing social entertainments, completed the programme. We darted here and there sprinkling Teams literature, and met face-to-face a young couple whose initial Teams enquiry we had received several weeks before, and who had already been good and keen enough to make our acquaintance via Zoom, when hinted to them about the Teams involvement at the Family Day.

The prominent Family Day role for Teams of Our Lady came thanks to Joe and Izzy Hopkins, members of Nottingham 1 Team. Joe, as Marriage and Family Life Co-Ordinator for Nottingham Diocese, was already knee-deep in the event's logistics when the discussion about an opportunity for the Team to celebrate its impending completion of Piloting, possibly in the presence of Bishop McKinney who was instrumental in the Team's formation, was floated. It was quickly agreed on all sides, including with Bishop McKinney, that the Family Day was not just a natural setting, but desirable for spotlighting the Movement.



Some further interest in Teams was received at the Family Day that coming months must seek to follow up. We extend our warmest congratulations and welcome to the members and families of Nottingham 1 Team.

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



Teams GB on Radio Maria



The last week of July gave us a wonderful opportunity to visit the London studio of **Radio Maria England** to lend the voice of Teams of Our Lady to the station's promotional programming for the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly honouring what grandparents and senior citizens contribute to our families and communities.

Pope Francis instigated the day of celebration in 2021, commemorated each year on the Sunday closest to the Feast of Saints Joachim and Anne, and marked this year on Sunday, 28 July with the theme "Do not cast me off in my old age" (Psalm 71:9).

Having kept loosely in touch with him since last August when we first presented specifically about Teams of Our Lady, we really wanted to offer our support and that of Teams when Tim Hutchinson, a programming manager at Radio Maria, reached out to us for content for this occasion.

Our Movement, of course, doesn't specifically spotlight either grandparents or the elderly, but embraces everything that marriage itself embraces, and all the works achieved by marriage in all its stages. According to our circumstances, many among us spend much care and derive much joy as grandparents; and many of us equally feel utmost gratitude for blessings providentially received in our families through grandparents or other senior relatives and friends.

We had nine days, in and amongst other things, from agreeing a timeslot with Tim Hutchinson to prepare and rehearse our fifty minutes of content (~4000 words) and music; indeed, we only completed it the very morning of the broadcast. A last-minute scheduling change brought our broadcast time forward an hour, but we allowed plenty of time to reach Euston and amble to the studio discreetly tucked alongside the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary, pausing for a selfie at Mornington Crescent made legendary by *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*, and negotiating tat and tourists through Camden Town.

Tim Hutchinson is so warm, welcoming, and non-fuss, putting us straight at our ease: headphones on, microphone check, and suddenly we're "On Air", our message travelling out to whomever God has chosen to hear it.



In due course, Tim will create a podcast of the broadcast that can be revisited and shared.

Radio Maria England is a tremendous communication resource, and also constantly appealing for content touching on the Gospel. Teams of Our Lady would do well to have regular recourse to this channel to spread awareness of our ministry,

especially if we can offer carefully prepared, high-quality material. There is room, for example, to seek a series of air slots to explain the various aspects of our Movement, like each of the Endeavours, and particularly the personal enrichment they bring us. We ourselves hope to return to the studio soon.

Radio Maria (<https://radiomariaengland.uk>) deserves the support of Teams of Our Lady in several ways: first, by listening from time to time; second, by promoting it with each other and within our parishes; third, by donating financially as we have capacity—Tim explained certain difficulties the station faced throughout 2023 and continues striving, like so many charities, to overcome to assure the future of its mission; and fourth, by offering appealing content that can delight and extend its audience.

Janet and Paul DeBoo, Responsible Couple, Central GB Region



Tim Hutchinson with Janet & Paul Deboo

October Team meeting

Mark 10:46-52 **Go; your faith has saved you**

As Jesus left Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus (that is, the son of Timaeus), a blind beggar, was sitting at the side of the road. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout and to say, 'Son of David, Jesus, have pity on me.' And many of them scolded him and told him to keep quiet, but he only shouted all the louder, 'Son of David, have pity on me.' Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him here.' So they called the blind man. 'Courage,' they said 'get up; he is calling you.' So throwing off his cloak, he jumped up and went to Jesus. Then Jesus spoke, 'What do you want me to do for you?' 'Rabbuni,' the blind man said to him 'Master, let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has saved you.' And immediately his sight returned and he followed him along the road.

Psalm 125(126)

What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad.

When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage,
it seemed like a dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
on our lips there were songs.

The heathens themselves said:
'What marvels the Lord worked for them!'
What marvels the Lord worked for us!
Indeed we were glad.

Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage
as streams in dry land.
Those who are sowing in tears
will sing when they reap.

They go out, they go out, full of tears,
carrying seed for the sowing;
they come back, they come back, full of song,
carrying their sheaves.

Concluding prayer

Lord, we believe in you. Help our unbelief. May we have courage to reach out to you each day and the gift of hope for the future. Amen.

HOPE is wishing
something would happen.

FAITH is believing
something will happen.

COURAGE is making
something happen.

October Reflection

Having worked in sensory impairment services for a chunk of my career, I learned quickly that blind people often interrupt conversations in a way that looks clumsy at best and rude at worst. Until one of them explained to me, how we use our sight to know when is a good time to intervene in a conversation, a facility they did not have. So, I absolutely get Bartimaeus and his persistence and I love his burgeoning desire for what Jesus has to offer. Would that evangelisation were so easy with everyone curious about Jesus!

Everyone will have thought he was blind for a reason and if his Dad, Timaeus was a good man, they would know the fault was there, just somewhere else in the family. Either way, he somehow deserved the situation he was in and should be more accepting of his lot in the minds of the crowds, hence their shushing him to be quiet.

The act of faith that is implied by throwing off his cloak and going towards the voice of Jesus, is powerful. If he remains blind at the end of this exchange, how on earth will he find his cloak, the only thing to keep him warm in the night?

His faith (and our faith) is justified when Jesus helps him (and us) to see again. Jesus asks a question. Its is a great lesson to ask, when a sure statement or clear and wise answer is the first thing pressing out of our lips.

This literal miracle has a figurative meaning too. Jesus often suggests to those who can see perfectly well, through good eyes, that they are blind. They have a confidence in their position and status that makes them insensitive to people and situations that may help them to understand what Jesus was doing, better. Consequently, they don't see it.

And we don't see things too. The reading challenges us all to put ourselves in the 'other's' shoes and experience, so that our response to them is nurturing and kind. If that doesn't help, we must ask questions to learn more of the person. I guess so that we treat them as we would wish to be treated. So the next time someone blunders into the Teams supper with their pressing tale, think of Bartimaeus!

Deacon Nick Johnson, Poole 2 Team

**We walk by faith,
and not by sight.**

2 Corinthians 5:7.

November Team Meeting

Mark 12:28-34 'You are not far from the kingdom of God'

One of the scribes came up to Jesus and put a question to him, 'Which is the first of all the commandments?' Jesus replied, 'This is the first: Listen, Israel, the Lord our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.'

The scribe said to him, 'Well spoken, Master; what you have said is true: that he is one and there is no other. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself, this is far more important than any holocaust or sacrifice.' Jesus, seeing how wisely he had spoken, said, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' And after that no one dared to question him any more.

Psalm 17(18)

I love you, Lord, my strength.

I love you, Lord, my strength,
my rock, my fortress, my saviour.
My God is the rock where I take refuge;
my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold.
The Lord is worthy of all praise,
when I call I am saved from my foes.

Long life to the Lord, my rock!
Praised be the God who saves me,
He has given great victories to his king
and shown his love for his anointed.

Concluding prayer.

Lord, thank you for the love which you have given us. We remember this month the our loved ones both in heaven and earth and thank you for them. Strengthen our capacity to love you and each other day by day. Amen.



Learn to love without
condition. Talk without
bad intention. Give
without any reason.
And most of all, care
for people without
any expectation.

Wings of Encouragement
http://www.wingsofencouragement.com

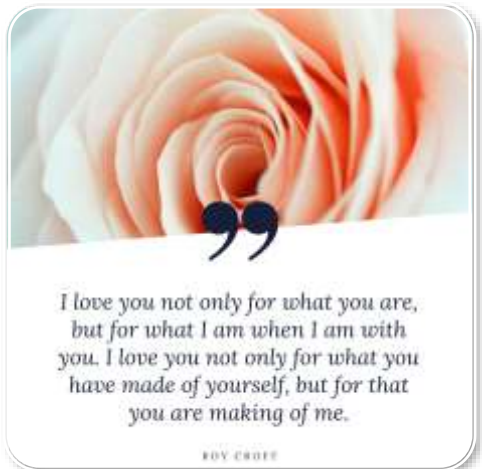
November Reflection

How beautiful to read these lines through the lens of your married love! 'Neighbour' means one who is 'nigh' or 'near.' So our nearest and dearest is where we most immediately put into practice our love of neighbour. But 'loving your neighbour as your self' is actually what marriage is meant to be. Because my spouse is given as 'another self', as St Aelred once wrote about true friendship. Married love is where we learn, over a lifetime, the significance of that little word 'as'. And that this love isn't something we summon up but something we open ourselves up to, something that is breathed into us.

Also that first commandment finds a poignant meaning when considered from the perspective of a marriage. If the earliest Christian community was described as 'of one heart and soul' (Acts 4.32) how true is that of the fundamental Christian community which is the family. In marriage we are called and graced to love the Lord with all our heart and soul as a couple. And how the Lord loves to be love that way! By your united heart and soul. Likewise, if St Paul invited the Christian community to be 'of one mind' (Philippians 2.2) how true that can be in a marriage. How the Lord loves to be loved by your common mind! Moreover, St Paul once prayed that the Christian community 'be strengthened with power through his Spirit' (Ephesians 3.16). In marriage husband and wife experience the Holy Spirit as the one who strengthens the bond between them. And how the Lord loves to be loved by that strength which is one of the sacramental effects of Holy Matrimony!

So rejoice in being chosen to love your chief neighbour in your spouse. Rejoice in how that relationship is where you are learning to love your neighbour as your self. Moreover, be gratefully aware of the way you love the Lord jointly with all your heart, soul, mind and strength as a couple. And in that glorious way are giving back the love he first gave to you.

Fr John Udris



December Team Meeting

Philippians 4:4-7

The Lord is very near

I want you to be happy, always happy in the Lord; I repeat, what I want is your happiness. Let your tolerance be evident to everyone: the Lord is very near. There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus.

Psalm Isaiah 12

Sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Truly, God is my salvation,
I trust, I shall not fear.
For the Lord is my strength, my song,
he became my saviour.
With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.

Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his name!
Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples!
Declare the greatness of his name.

Sing a psalm to the Lord
for he has done glorious deeds;
make them known to all the earth!
People of Zion, sing and shout for joy,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.



Concluding prayer.

As we look forward to celebrating your coming at Christmas let us be filled with joy. When we encounter challenges remind us to praise you and focus on the hope and peace that you offer rather than trying to rely on our own resources. Amen.

December Reflection

Jesus promised the Disciples that the Holy Spirit would guide them as they, and subsequent generations, sought to establish and maintain the Church. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Liturgy has developed and is still developing during these 2000 and some years. At this time of year when the days are shortest and the darkness envelops us, the Church is inspired to lead us again to contemplate the light of Jesus coming into the world as our Saviour.

Advent will lead us towards the joy and wonder of celebrating our Lord's birth, treasured within the Holy Family and among the privileged persons who witnessed these events. St Paul calls us to 'be happy', or better still, 'rejoice in the Lord always'. This kind of happiness is not only an emotion, but a decision to praise God for the wonders he has done and will do amongst us. Paul knows that the child born in Bethlehem grew up to be the greatest gift God will ever give us: the Messiah, Jesus Christ, the one who takes away the sins of the world and opens the gates to eternal life. With confidence in this most gracious and everlasting gift of God, St Paul can tell us to leave all worrying behind and turn to God 'with prayer and thanksgiving', because God desires only to continue to prove his infinite love for each and every one of us, in all the needs of our lives. The words of the Psalm also call us to rejoice and to trust as we say 'Sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.'

Every family and every couple who seek to live their married lives in communion with God and these sublime mysteries, can find new reasons at this time to turn away from fear and worry and to turn with renewed faith and hope to the grace and mercy that come to us through our Saviour. Fears and worries tend to isolate and divide us, but light and love unite us with God and with each other. The Holy Family, with Our Lady and St Joseph, help us to see this truth as the foundation for the gift of a loving home; a Domestic Church. Inspired and encouraged by these mysteries, may each home seek to become a place of love and joyful thanksgiving in this holy season, rejoicing in all God has done, is doing and will do. Alleluia!



Rev Martin Plunkett

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Equipes Notre Dame
TEAMS

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.

*Two young children
were at a wedding.
One asked the other
"how many wives
can a man have?"*

*His friend answered
"Sixteen- four bet-
ter, four worse, four
richer, four poorer!"*

LOCAL GATHERINGS

21 Sept- Southern region

**25 Sept- North East &
Yorkshire- by zoom**

5 October- North West

15 Feb 2025 Central Region

**Look out for details from your
regional couple**

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

