



# Teams of Our Lady

## NEWSLETTER



IRISH REGION Summer 2010 (Issue 83)



Pat and Carmel Cunneen

Regional Couple .....	1
Liaison .....	2
From the Regional Chaplain .....	3
A Prayer .....	4
Sector News .....	5
Responsible Couples Weekend .....	6
From the Treasurers .....	7
From the International Leading Team .....	8
From the International Leading Team cont'd .....	9
Sector News cont'd .....	10
Sector News cont'd .....	11
Regional Team Directory .....	12

## From the Regional Couple

Archbishop Martin in a recent reflection on the Church in Ireland has given much food for thought to all Catholics and relevant ideas for Equipes Notre Dame. Particularly striking and relevant for the broad 'church' and 'Equipes' is the idea that 'renewal is never our own creation'. 'Renewal will only come through returning to the Church which we have received from The Lord'. 'Renewal began with individual renewal and witness flourishing into strong and witnessing growth communities'. This witness point is as relevant for Equipes as couples will want to join us if our witness is fruit-

ful and authentic. Scripture, inclusive of the Diocesan initiative in respect of St Luke's gospel was seen as integral to discovering the 'Truth'. Great emphasis was placed on the Parishes which must become real centres of on-going faith formation. Within this, Equipes must have a role to play. The 'truth will make us free' was another thought born out of recent scandals. Can we see the 'truth' without being prayerful and reflective...? Again we think of Declan and Deirdre's lovely reflection at the R/C weekend. 'Where did I give and receive the most love today', is a true exercise in con-

jugal prayer. Archbishop Martin encourages us to be hopeful. 'The Church is a reality of faith...guided by the Lord who is with his Church at all times'. Our team has just read 'Spe Salvi', the recent Encyclical from Pope Benedict XVI. This treatise on Hope gives another great perspective on our relationship with our Redeemer, journeying through the role of 'Suffering', 'Judgement', Communion of Saints. We should always be hopeful.

God Bless  
Pat and Carmel Cunneen

Laughter is  
a tranquillizer  
without any  
side effects.

Anon



### **Liaison is essentially a service linking Teams within the Sector.**

#### **Aim of Liaison:**

To promote communication and ensure that all of the Teams are closely linked firstly to the Movement, but also to each other. This helps to build up community spirit within the sector.

Liaison is a service to be provided to each base Team and equally a service to be provided to the Sector.

It permits a better communication in both directions establishing

- Horizontal links between the base Teams. Horizontal liaison is very important, strengthening the feeling of belonging of the base teams.
- Vertical links with the Sector Couple and the Leaders of the Movement. It enables the Sector to get to know the base Teams, their needs and difficulties, and in the light of them to plan the Sector activities, and any sessions of formation and enrichment.

#### **History:**

The need for a Liaison Couple became apparent very early in the development of teams of Our Lady. It was no longer possible for Father Caffarel, or the leaders of the Movement, and eventually the Sector Couples, to maintain a close link with each Team.

#### **The Charter tells us:**

Although very useful, the Monthly Letter is not sufficient to ensure that the ties between the leaders of the Movement and all the Teams be as close and as fruitful as possible. Each team is cared for by a Liaison Couple. The Liaison Couples are each responsible for about five teams. The frequent contacts of the Liaison couples with the leaders of the Movement enable the leaders to pass on their directives and, at the same time, stay informed of the wishes and needs of the Teams. In this way, the Teams are linked to the leaders of the Movement by bonds of mutual understanding and not purely by administrative functions. (The Charter of Teams 1947 p. 14)

#### **Liaison in Dublin Sector**

In 2006, the then Dublin Sector Couple, Pat & Carmel Cunneen began the task of reviving Liaison in the Sector. This has worked well and it is now an important part of our communication network. Couples in the Dublin Sector Team have taken on the role of liaison. Each couple takes responsibility for 3 or 4 teams, making contact with those Responsible Couples. Following consultation with their own team, Responsible Couples usually extend an invitation to the Liaison Couple to attend a team meeting during the year.

Liaison Couples have been busy during the year establishing contacts with our teams. We have gained much from the experience: we have felt privileged and blessed to be invited, to be present and to share in all aspects of meetings of the teams in our care. We hope that this form of communication adds to the sense of belonging within the Sector, particularly for newer teams. Liaison couples are more than happy to share Sector news on upcoming events, and are delighted to pass on any requests, recommendations or ideas from the team visited the Sector Couple. We have already had useful feedback and suggestions from these visits.

It is understandable that some people may have reservations about the whole idea. We've managed fine without it for years! Why are they checking on us? Will they say we're not doing it right?

Let us put your mind at rest: Confidentiality rules apply, as with all team meetings. We come in a spirit of prayer and friendship. We sincerely hope that liaison will improve the service in the Dublin Sector forging links throughout the network and so build up a vibrant community.

Hospitality is integral to our movement. Guide of the Teams of Our Lady states that

the Spirit of the Organisation is expressed by welcoming and offering hospitality to other members of the Teams of Our Lady when the opportunity presents itself. [Ch.4 p.18]

Supporting liaison is hospitality in action. We look forward to arranging one meeting a year with each of our teams.

Liaison Couples - Dublin Sector

## From Regional Chaplain - Fr. Gerry Cassidy

As our lives speed by, they are filled with opportunities to attend more deliberately to the gift of life and to choose to reorient our lives to God in ways which make them more meaningful. Our longings and desires, though often expressed in very ordinary ways, are signals to us of our deep desire for God. It is through our listening and reflecting on our experience daily that we become more aware of God's presence.

O that today you would listen to his voice! Do not harden your hearts.... (Psalm 95:7-8)

### June

Isaiah 55: 1-13 / Jeremiah 29:11-14

What people, places and events in my life have been special instruments of grace in leading me to desire a more intimate relationship with God?

### July

Oh that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts...P/s 95: 7-8

Luke 8:4-15 / Hebrews 4:12-13

What helps me to see and take notice of the presence and action of God around me? How can I slow down enough to attend to God's presence and action?

As I try to be open to God's word in my life, do I notice anything different in my presence to others?

### August

O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you. P/s. 63:1

John 4:1-30. / Isaiah 55:2-3

What do I notice about myself and my thirst for God when I take time to "be still" and listen?

How do I balance my various roles in a consumer society with my longing for God?

What habits or addictions can undermine my seeking God?

### September

If you continue in my word.... You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free. Jn.8:31-32

Mark 10:17-22 / Luke 9:24-25

In what ways do I tend to control my life and treat it as my possession rather than to embrace it feely as God's gift to me?

What helps me to grow in gratitude for the gifts given me by God?



## A Prayer

From the welcome leaflet of the Cathedral of  
Dresden-Meissen

Dear Lord,

We have lost the means.  
We waiver from one side  
to another  
and find no foothold.

Give us your hand, O Lord,  
and lead us out of the darkness -  
you know the way.

Dear Lord, I thank you,  
that I may come to you -  
with my joy  
and my sorrow,

with my faith  
and my doubt  
with my plans

and my lack of direction.  
I can tell you everything.  
I can ask you for anything.  
You listen to my prayers sometimes differently  
than I would like -  
but always,  
that it may serve me the best.

*Contributed by Barbara McHenry*



**Deepening Weekend - All Hallows, April 2009.**

## Dublin

### Spread of the Movement

Equipes Notre-Dame was founded by Fr. Henry Caffarel more than 70 years ago and since then Teams has spread to more than 70 countries around the world. However, in more recent years, Teams in Ireland have been declining and the Dublin Sector Team supported by the Regional Couple has set the promotion of the Teams Movement at the top of their agenda for their period of responsibility. The Sector Couple will be working collegially with the Sector Team on a number of areas, but their primary focus will be on meeting couples and providing personal witness of the Teams Message. They intend over the coming months to arrange meetings with local priests, marriage and pre-marriage groups and other spiritual bodies and organisations. It is hoped that this will provide opportunities for establishing contacts within these bodies and organisations and facilitate the setting up of information meetings. Interested couples wishing to develop their spirituality will be invited to attend these meetings and will learn first hand of the great experience, benefits and support that the Teams Movement provides to married couples.

### New Team

We are delighted to extend our best wishes and warm welcome to the new Rathmines Team and to their Chaplain Fr Richard Sheehy. Fr. Richard has worked very hard and done a wonderful job in managing and coordinating everything to bring this new Team to the stage where they have now completed their piloting programme and are to join the Sector in June as full members of the Teams Movement. The Piloting programme was undertaken and managed by John and Elaine Cogavin (formerly International Leading Team Liaison Couple) and we extend our congratulations and best wishes to John & Elaine for a job well done.

### Sector Retreat

The Dublin Sector held its annual weekend retreat in the Iona Centre, Knocklyon, on Saturday and Sunday the 6th and 7th of March. In view of the approaching Eucharistic Congress in 2012, the theme chosen and presented by Frances Hogan - We must become Eucharist - was particularly relevant. Upwards of forty people attended over the course of the weekend.

Frances brought the full depth of her acknowledged expertise in Biblical matters to her presentation, which was very well received, and there was ample time set aside for questions. The ideas presented were very challenging and stimulating, and provoked some lively participation, discussion and useful questioning.

As befitted the theme, each day concluded with a deep and meaningful celebration of the Eucharist. The Mass on Saturday evening was celebrated by Fr. Ngussa, while the retreat was brought to a celebratory conclusion on Sunday by Fr. John O'Keeffe, Chaplain of Team 32.

**Kevin Wade.**

*Breda & Tony Preston*

**Continued Page 10**

## RESPONSIBLE COUPLES' WEEKEND

Theme: Passing on the Faith

Dates: September 25th and 26th

Where: Heavey Institute Mullingar

The Team Meetings will be held in the Heavey Institute followed by a social evening.

Dermot and Florian Leavy

Sector Couple, Mullingar



Group at Mullingar Sector Retreat

## From the Treasurers

### ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

It is that time of year again when we need to raise the issue of contributions. We know the financial situation in the country is affecting everybody but would plead with you to be as generous as possible to help Teams at this time.

At present with depleted funds we are struggling to fund the Irish Region and the Transatlantic Super-Region, which is doing very good work.

As you know we are encouraged to give, where possible, one day's pay or whatever you can afford. We know you will make a special effort to help the Movement this year.

Contributions are normally collected at the June assessment meeting and can be forwarded to your sector couple or directly to ourselves at:

No. 46A Leopardstown Grove  
Blackrock  
Dublin 18

Tel No. 01 2884405

We hope and trust you are all well.

God bless

**Sheila and Michael Foley**  
Treasurers.

## *Prayer Intentions*

For Barbara McHenry's sister, Edwina, recently deceased

## From the International Leading Team (ERI)

### More Details about the Satellite Teams

1. To talk about helping and rendering service in the Satellite Teams is an interesting task. It is the reason why we placed our selves in God's presence and asked Him to help us share what we think and have in our hearts.  
Couples who make up the different Satellite Teams try to get together and to listen to each other in order to discover a way to serve. Their guiding principle is the charisma of the Teams of Our Lady Movement and they make full use of the training that the Movement provides.  
Couples who belong to the Satellite Teams certainly give thanks to God for the marvels that are accomplished in their lives, via the listening, the discovery and their very own evolution and progression in the service, and thanks to their exchange of ideas and experiences.  
This discovery is not a fugitive impulse that is over in an instant. It is a strength that accompanies them, and cultivates the spirit of service in these couples and incites them to serve graciously.
2. Once they have listened, discovered and distinguished, they must exchange ideas and experiences with each Satellite Team couple so that their work is consensual and collegial. This process means that the international dimension of the ideas and cultures is incorporated together with the needs of the Movement and the realities of the world.  
Throughout the year, each member of the Satellite Team communicates with the others via Internet, Skype or Messenger. At the end of the year, all the couples from each Satellite Team gather together. An assessment of the work accomplished and the aims of future work are discussed at this a meeting. The organisation of this meeting is similar to a basic Team of Our Lady meeting with the Meal, the Communal prayer, the Sharing of Endeavours and the General Sharing. The final part given over to the study topic concerns the document the Satellite Teams have put together over the year.
3. Last year, in 2009, two major events should be highlighted:  
-The translation of 'Father Caffarel, the prophet of marriage' into 5 languages. It was edited and distributed to all those responsible in most of the Super Regions and Regions. Thus, team members, even those in teams only starting out, now have access to the thoughts of the founder of our Movement on various different subjects, like the sacrament of marriage, married spirituality, silent personal prayer  
It is important to know about the life of Father Caffarel in order to better understand and evaluate the impact he had on the development and formation of the Movement.  
  
-The International Leading Team (ERI) decided to set up a new Satellite Team to deal with the subject of spirituality according to the stages of life. This team began its work in Paris in April 2009. This is an important subject for the Movement and it was felt necessary to put together a detailed study.  
The work of the 4 other Satellite Teams (Pedagogy, Training, Older Teams, Young Couples) progresses and will be sent to those responsible in the Super Regions and Regions for correction as soon as they are finished.
4. We ask the Lord to give confidence and joy to those couples that are committed to the work of the Satellite Teams. We are sure that Father Caffarel will intercede for us by asking our Father in heaven to renew us every day through his Spirit, by giving us the wonderment and enthusiasm to serve the Lord as on the first day.  
It is the Lord who invited us and chose us as individuals and as a couple by calling us incessantly to this wonderful service.

Let us be joyful for He is with us!

T and Z Moura Soares  
Members of the International Leading Team (ERI)  
Responsible for the Satellite Teams

### QUO VADIS? (Where are you going?)

This question 'Quo vadis?' is taken from an apocryphal text about the martyrdom of St. Peter. As Peter was getting ready to leave Rome to avoid persecution, Christ, heading towards the town, appeared to him on the Via Appia. In response to Peter's question, 'Where are you going, Lord?' Christ replied that he was going to be crucified a second time. Then Peter understood that he ought not to flee this time and he returned to Rome where he asked explicitly to be crucified, according to tradition, upside-down, so that he would not imitate with his master. (Taken from Wikipedia)

Jesus is searching for you and calls you:

The Lord God called man and said to him, 'Where are you?' (Gn 3, 9)

'Come and follow me!' (Mt, 19,21) (Mc 10, 21), (Lk 18, 22)

'Will you give me a drink?' (Jn 4, 7)

He said to Peter, 'Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?' (Mt 26, 40)

## From the International Leading Team (ERI) Cont d

'I am thirsty' (Jn 19, 28)

There are many examples in the Bible where God begs for our love. Since creation, God is in search of man's love. We do not seek God; rather it is He who seeks us! God wants to respect our freedom and we are at liberty to follow him or to refuse to follow him.

If you knew the gift of God

Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.' (Jn 4, 10)

Jesus asks the Samaritan woman for a drink by the well, that is a sign of the depth of our being, because he cannot draw water himself. He needs the Samaritan woman's help, just as he needs our help. But if he asks, it is in order to give a hundredfold. He promised her and he promises us a hundredfold if we accept and decide to follow him.

When we joined the Teams of Our Lady movement, we did so of our own accord. Did we realise that we were answering the Lord's call? He promised us 'living water'. Are we going to refuse that 'living water', the source of which is never-ending?

The Endeavours and Sharing on the Endeavours: Constraint or Wealth?

It is not easy to deal with a subject as important as the Endeavours in such a short article. It would really need a whole session! We bear in mind Father Jean-Marie Riou's phrase uttered at a session in Col du Rousset (France), 'What is asked for by the Teams of Our Lady is the bare minimum for a Christian!'

'The bare minimum' means that we cannot live without it! And this reminds us of one of Gandhi's phrases 'You can live without eating, but you cannot live without praying.'

Father Riou added 'for a Christian', but this does not mean it is limited to the Teams of Our Lady! All Christians are called to holiness and therefore that ought to be the goal of all Christians. Thus Teams of Our Lady members are not called to be 'super Christians' but just Christians in all simplicity. A Christian is someone who puts Christ at the centre of his or her life and who allows Christ to live and work through him/her.

The Endeavours are a means suggested by the Movement to progress in the wake of Jesus Christ. They are not goals in themselves. These means were already put into use by the very first Teams and Father Caffarel who used to say to them, 'let us search together.' 'Together' they distinguished the means that were accessible to all couples, no matter what their commitments, and especially if they had commitments!

Sharing on the Endeavours, a way towards holiness with the community

We cannot be half in and half out and only choose that which interests us. The route we are following is something we are doing with others, starting with our spouse and then with our Team, and even with our parish community. This route that we are following is for our own good, but equally for the good of the others. Therefore we are responsible for those around us as well as for those who walk along and progress with us!

The moment of 'Sharing on the Endeavours' at a Team of Our Lady meeting is a special moment that sets us back on the route, when we have strayed. It is the moment when we remind ourselves of the choices we have made. It is the moment when everyone, through their efforts and their progress, helps the other person to progress. It is the moment of solidarity between 'brothers and sisters'. It helps us fix goals and encourages each person to modestly continue on their route

As Father Epis remarked, 'Sharing on the Endeavours' is a fantastic thing. It is a bit like pouring disinfectant on a wound. Of course it stings, but it also heals! Would we really refuse to be healed?

The moment of 'Sharing on the Endeavours' is essential purpose of the Teams!

### Conclusion

The Lord 'begs' our support when he asks 'where are you going?' He needs us to reply to his call of love. By partaking in the Teams, we are responsible for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are with us. So, let us reply to Jesus' call.

Finally, in all things, keep your heart filled with love! As St Paul proclaimed 'My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ' (Col 2, 2)

### **Belfast**

All four teams in the North are functioning well and looking forward to the Summer months. In Belfast 1, Declan and I hosted Fr Ignatio Bokosi from Malawi from May 14th - 18th. Also in our Team our young couple are preparing to welcome another son into the family - Christianne who is from Trinidad and living in Belfast, with her Irish husband Stephen and son Seamus. It is very refreshing having a young couple in the team - they challenge us and we need that.

In Bangor Charlie Mc Mullan celebrated his 70th birthday recently - Declan and I were at the party in Crawfordsburn Inn and enjoyed a beautiful meal with lots of Community singing afterwards. We were privileged to be there at a table with the members of Charlie/Maureen's Team. Congratulations to a very beautiful man! Thank You Charlie.

Our own team Belfast 1 are now together over thirty years - to celebrate this momentous achievement we planned a team trip to Paris with Fr Gerry on April 15th. All arrangements were made, lifts organised to the airport and cases at the ready, when a big black cloud settled over Ireland. Something about this reminds me of Life. Ultimately God is in control of our lives. We now plan to travel DV in September and are already looking forward to getting to know each other a little bit better en route.

By the way Declan and I left the cases in the car, grabbed our heavy coats and headed for Bundoran where we had a really wonderful and truly romantic weekend - it was actually sunny! The others caught up with work which needed doing in house and garden. We were lucky in that we should not lose any money.

Let us remember in our prayers all those at home and abroad who have been very hurt in all this air chaos - those who have lost savings, endured disappointment, missed vital appointments or spent many lonely hours in a foreign airport.

We wish our Team members throughout Ireland a very restful and peaceful Summer, and we promise to remember you all in our Masses and prayers. If you hear of anyone who would like to take over the Sector please ring us!

*Declan and Deirdre*

### **Mullingar**

We had a wonderful annual retreat in St Camillus' House Killucan during Lent. The theme was Hope in Troubled Times. Fr. Frank Monks, sector chaplain, led the retreat with the introduction "God's heart tugs where there is vulnerability - God of compassion. There are no endings - only new beginnings". We have been given all that we need for what we are to do. We have all we need in order to do what is required of us as Christians. "Hope is not a gift we can sustain simply by our own will. Hope is something we need to hear from outside ourselves sometimes. Like the fire needs the help of a branch to grow its warmth, we sometimes need a voice, a sight, or visitor to fan the flicker of our hearts when faith grows dim." (Susan McElroy). "Happiness is praising of God because it lets a person be human. Laughter is a sign of love. God gives us laughter - we should admit this and laugh" (Rahner) The weekend was deeply spiritual and refreshing. Special thanks to Fr. Frank and all the staff at St. Camillus for their great hospitality.

### **Summer Outing**

Our sector summer outing took place in the Franciscan Friary, Multyfarnham on Sunday May 9th. It consisted of a talk given by Fr Joe Walsh, Guardian of friary, on the history and development of the Abbey. He spoke on the life of St Francis of Assisi and the arrival of the Franciscan Friars in the Multyfarnham district in the middle of the thirteenth century and their long association in the area since then. A tour of the college and grounds and the stations of the cross took place. Thanks to Fr Joe for making our summer outing such an interesting and pleasant event. All who attended had a lovely meal in a local restaurant afterwards.

### **Responsible Couples' Weekend**

The Mullingar Sector is hosting this year's Responsible Couple's weekend which will be held in the Heavey Institute Mullingar on the 25th and 26th September. The theme "Passing on the Faith" will be provided by the Mullingar Teams. The Team Meetings will be held in the Heavey Institute on the Saturday followed by a social evening. We look forward to all of the responsible couples coming to Mullingar and other team members will be welcome.

### ***Dermot & Florian Leavy***

### **Galway**

On May 15th Galway teams had their annual retreat in Esker, Athenry. Helen Sheehan was facilitator for the day. In the morning we read and shared on the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. In the afternoon we considered the gifts we had received from the Holy Spirit and the fruits that resulted. Helen guided the discussion and led us in prayer. Mass was celebrated at the conclusion.

We plan to have our annual outing on Sunday, 4th July at Coole Park, Gort, Co. Galway. Hopefully Fr. Colin Garvey will be back to celebrate the Eucharist at 12.00 noon.

After Mass we usually have a picnic followed by a walk in the park. If the good weather continues it should be a good day.

We were delighted to welcome Fr. Ignatio (Malawi) to Galway early in May. He enjoyed his stay and looks forward to returning in the future. He was happy to learn that some priests from the city did missionary work in Malawi.

Eddie and Emmie Lloyd returned from Trinidad having had a very enjoyable time there.

We wish everyone a very happy summer.

### ***Billy and Ann Hyland***