



# Newsletter

## Teams of Our Lady

### Irish Region



Equipes Notre-Dame

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### From the Regional Couple



As we enter the summer season, we welcome warmer weather and a change of pace. Our Team meetings adjourn, and the structure of our month is changed.

What does not change, is the ongoing work of God to make Jesus visible in all the spheres of our lives but most especially in our couple relationship.

This is the place where God continually pours out his sacramental grace. Through our consent to love and show mercy towards each other, he becomes flesh and dwells among us, bringing us his power to forgive, to make sacrifices, and to start again when selfishness or absent mindedness cause us to stumble, to “fall from grace”. He makes us eucharist for each other.

This of course is not news to you!

*“The principal insight of the first Team meetings, which was to give birth to what is now called “Conjugal Spirituality”, is that couples united by the sacrament of marriage are called to holiness, not in spite of their marriage, but in it and through it...couples united by the sacrament of marriage do not have to seek any path of sanctification other than their love, taken up and transformed by divine love”* The Charter. Canonical statutes of the Teams of Our Lady.

So, while we may take a break from our Team meetings, we can continue to open our hearts every day, to receive the power and grace which our sacrament bestows. Let us share with our spouse some concrete ways they make Jesus present for us. If your spouse has gone to God, you might recall some of those moments and pray your gratitude for the love you shared.

We wish you an opportunity for rest and refreshment this Summer and look forward to seeing you soon.

Brendan and Rosemarie.

## Summer 2023

Issue 133

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## **New Appointments to Regional Team**

### **Communications Team:**



Congratulations to Laura and Leon Keuck, Team 43 Dublin who have kindly assumed responsibility for the promotion of Teams of Our Lady on Facebook!

Filipa Aguiar generously served the Facebook posting responsibility since last Summer. We are very grateful for her service and her support for Laura and Leon as they begin theirs. Filipa continues to lead the Communications Team composed of Tony and Noreen Lawlor and Marek and Eva Danova. They have been reviewing the Teams Ireland website. We look forward to

bringing you news of this review after the Summer.

### **Membership services (Register)**

Congratulations to PJ and Marie Finn, Team 40 Dublin, who have assumed responsibility for maintaining the register of members!

They relieve Áine and Joe Clayton, Team 32 Dublin, who have diligently managed this vital service to the Regional Team over many years. We are grateful that Áine and Joe continue to hold the responsibility for Insurance and maintenance of the Memorial Book for the Region.

Sincere thanks to all who serve our Movement with such generous hearts. Please remember them in your prayers and get ready to answer the call when your turn comes!!

### ***Reminder to Outgoing Responsible Couples:***

The summer break beckons and the last Teams meeting of the year is on the horizon. We write to remind outgoing Responsible Couple of your final task before you hand over the reins to others for the coming year.

**PJ & Marie Finn** from Navan -Team 40, have graciously offered to take over from us the role of updating the National Register. We are delighted to hand on the task to a very able couple. Our sincere gratitude to them.

Their email address: [mkeeganfinn@gmail.com](mailto:mkeeganfinn@gmail.com)

Please forward to Marie & PJ Finn, by the end of June, the names of the new Responsible Couple for the year 2023/24, and any other changes to mobiles & email addresses, etc.

The National Register is kept up to date to communicate and share information with Teams members throughout the country.

God Bless you all.      Joe and Áine Clayton

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**15-20th July 2024: International Meeting of the Teams of Our Lady Turin, Italy**

**“Let us go with a burning heart”.**



10,000 delegates are expected to travel to Turin from all over the world for this meeting which takes place every 6 years! Paul and Annette O’Beirne (SR couple) for the Transatlantic Teams GB, Ghana, Ireland, Malawi, South Africa, Trinidad & Tobago and Zambia, have advised as follows:

“Ireland will be allocated places for 6 couples and 1 chaplain. The conference will begin at noon on Monday 15th July until 20th July 2024 (5 nights). Hotel, meal, and attendance costs are included in the fee of €695pps. All team members are invited to make firm applications asap and at the latest by 1<sup>st</sup> July. Payment of €70pp deposit is due by 30<sup>th</sup> July.

The total cost is €695per person or €1390 per couple. The balance will be due in stages and payment will be completed by 30th March 2024. The cost of travel to Turin is additional.”

We’re delighted to note that some couples from Ireland have already applied to attend. If you would like to travel, please make your application asap. However, if you cannot attend yourself, maybe you can support a couple from your Team or from the wider Movement, at home or abroad, to attend. Please consider how you can offer support in your Teams.

### **Responsible Couples Day 2023**

The RC Day will be held at Avila, Morehampton Road, Dublin 4 on the 7th October 2023.

The new Responsible Couple in each Team should attend, or if unavailable, should designate a replacement couple. In addition, all couples are welcome to attend. Couples who have recently joined Teams are especially welcome!

### **Youth 2000 Festival**

This year's Youth 2000 Festival is planned for Thursday 10th – Sunday 13th August at Clongowes Wood College, Clane, Co Kildare. The Movement will have a stand to help share the spirituality of Teams of Our Lady with the youth, clergy and speakers who attend. Last year, we made some very fruitful links as a result of our presence there. If you would like to join us there, please contact your Sector Couple.

### **“New Wine Fresh Skins” Update from GB Swanick (Derbyshire) Gathering**

The GB Teams re-gathering held at Swanwick, Derbyshire, UK was a great success. We received a warm welcome from airport pick up to drop off. There were workshops, discussions, mixed Teams meetings, delicious food and convivial social evenings with the UK Teams couples. These elements were knit together with the celebration of the Eucharist and the creative prayer moments throughout the weekend. The programme was a fitting celebration of the gift of Teams across the UK and was a great opportunity to encourage and challenge each other to have skins/hearts soft and pliable rather than hardened and rigid, flexible enough to hold the new wine of the Spirit which “drives us down new paths of response”. Thanks for the hospitality!



**Diary of a Regional Couple. April – June 2023**

**Mission within the Movement - Super-Region:**

Attendance at GB Teams weekend Gathering at Swanwick UK.  
Collaboration with SR Couple regarding arrangements for Turin Conference.

**Mission within the Region:**

Regional Team meeting 27<sup>th</sup> May 2023.  
Support for Intercessor Team.  
Regional Team appointments:  
    Couple with responsibility for Facebook posting.  
    Couple with responsibility for the Register.

**Mission within the Sectors:**

Visit to Galway Teams 6<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Mission towards the Church:**

Contact with Archbishop Eamon Martin, Armagh to update on Teams activity in his Archdiocese and to offer further information sessions for clergy and couples in Northern Ireland.  
Maintenance of links with representatives of other Marriage Movements.

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## A Word from the Regional Chaplain Fr. Richard Sheehy

For more senior generations, today's date (6<sup>th</sup> June) always means D-day, the day which commemorates the Normandy landings which marked a turning point in the Second World War, and inspired a number of excellent movies. However, the date also marks the wedding anniversary of friends of mine some thirty years ago. D-day was the reminder I needed to send them a text of congratulations and good wishes, as they mark the day!

Many Equipe members will also be thinking of their children or grandchildren who begin the Junior or Leaving Cert exams tomorrow. I'm sure we'll keep them all in our thoughts and prayers at this stressful time.

Over the coming months many couples (young, and perhaps not so young) will set out together on the journey of life, many of them celebrating their marriage sacramentally. I take heart from the number of couples I met recently, who spoke in glowing terms about the pre-marriage course they participated in and what they gained from that experience. Perhaps the greatest benefit was simply taking the time to spend a full day reflecting on their relationship and what their future married life might look like.

The responsible couple in my team proposed as our study topic this year, a book by Henri Nouwen entitled *Following Jesus*. As any reader of Nouwen's work will appreciate, he has great insights into the mystery of our relationship with God and our relationships with one another. '*We tend to think that love begins and ends with our interpersonal relationships*', he writes. '*This is not true according to Scripture. Love of others begins with our relationship with God*'. What Nouwen refers to 'the first love' or God's unconditional love for us, '*calls us together to build a new home, a new community, a new dwelling place for God in this world. This is what marriage is all about.*' This is an interesting take on the main task of marriage: not two people seeing their love for each other as being the main focus or trying to make each other happy, but rather recognising that they both belong to a greater love to which they can point, particularly when they look beyond their own needs and reach out to others. As Nouwen puts it, '*Marriage is not that two people love each other so much that they can find God in each other, but that God loves them so much that they can discover each other as living reminders of God's presence*'.

Food perhaps for summer reflection... Wishing you and your families every blessing and opportunity this summer to enjoy the great outdoors and each other's company!

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## Annual Contributions

### Message from the Regional Treasurer Couple

*“When Christ unites a man and a woman sacramentally, He sets up a sanctuary. This sanctuary of the Christian couple is where He will be able to celebrate, with the couple and through the couple, the great filial cult of praise, adoration, and intercession that He came to establish on earth.”* By Henri Caffarel – April 1968

Teams of Our Lady is dedicated to supporting the "sanctuary" of the couple and brings together 3 to 5 of these couple sanctuaries, along with a chaplain, into one team in order to build them up and then to send them out. In Teams of Our Lady we are committed to making the great gift, which we have discovered, more accessible to existing and prospective couples, in accordance with God's will.

Generosity is the earthly engine of the movement. In fact, tens of couples serve in different roles, offering their energy and time, and all couples support projects with their generous donations.

As you reflect on what amount you might consider contributing this year, we would like to share a few thoughts. We call it **AID initiative** (i.e., Awareness, Indication, Discernment).

**Awareness.** Expenses exceeded donation by 25% in 2022 and by 40% in 2021. As you can imagine, this was not helped by Covid. However, our rainy-day reserves have been decreasing gradually over recent years. The financial situation remains quite solid but, projecting recent trends, Teams of our Lady Ireland could find ourselves in a challenging situation in about three years. In addition, the current situation may constrain any potential valuable evangelization projects. Acting now would put the movement back on a more solid financial footing, for the long run.

**Indication** (by the Charter). We are fortunate that Father Caffarel thoughtfully gave our movement his precious guidance also in this sensitive matter. He recommended that couples would give each year – by way of contribution – one day's income, *“in order to provide for the material needs and expansion of the movement to which they owe in part their spiritual enrichment.”*

**Discernment.** How can we find the right balance between the earthly dimension (need for funding) and the spiritual essence of the movement? The regional serving team are very grateful for your past, present and future generosity, and invite all couples to read and reflect on the below scripture, as we pray about our contribution and assess the importance of Teams in our lives:

*As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. “Truly I tell you,” He said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.”* Luke 21:1-4

Yours in Christ,

Paola and Paolo

Treasurer Couple on behalf of the Regional Serving Team

### How to donate?

**Electronic transfer or Standing Order** to Teams bank account

Teams of Our Lady (IBAN IE94AIBK93345710241180, BIC AIBKIE2D)

NB: Please, indicate your **Team Number** in the reference section (e.g., Dublin 45)

**By post** (please, contact us at [treasurer.tol.ie@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.tol.ie@gmail.com))

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## **Prayer Intentions**

### **For those who have died:**

**Barra O'Keeffe**, brother of Donal, Team 42

**Gerry Roche**, husband of the late Frances, Team 13

**Jimmy Halligan**, husband of Maura, Mullingar

**Frankie Kelly**, sister of Antionette Shaw, Mullingar

**Michael Quinlan**, brother of Peter, Galway

**Raymond McCarrick**, brother of John, Galway

**Paddy Donaghy**, husband of Martine, Team 24

### **For the living, for whom prayers were requested:**

**Eddie Lloyd**, Galway

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## **Around the Region**

### **Dublin**

The next event being planned by the Sector Team will be the 2023 Annual Outing. This will be held, like last year, in the grounds of Malahide Castle in north County Dublin, on Sunday, September 17th. As before, all are welcome to attend, including non-Teams couples! A reminder will be circulated closer to the date.

A number of enquiries from couples about possibly joining Teams have been / are being followed up on – with arrangements being made for each of the couples to visit a Teams’ meeting on a “come and see” basis.

### **Annual Sector Outing – Date For Your Diary**

Annual Sector Outing is being planned for Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2023, from 2pm, in the grounds of Malahide Castle, Co Dublin.

### **Family and Life Conference**

We were asked by Bishop Nulty to represent himself and the Irish Conference of Bishops at a CCEE (Council of European Episcopal Conferences) meeting in Bucharest, from 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> May 2023: *Lord, how can we know the way? The Family in Europe today*. The meeting heard reports from each country’s bishops’ conference on progress and challenges facing family and life today.

There were also a number of presentations made by invited speakers, followed by opportunities to discuss the contents in break-out groups. Of particular interest was the presentation given by the undersecretary of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, Professor Gambino, on the “Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life” – a subject about which we are likely to hear much more.

### **“Geppetto” course – John Paul II Institute**

The last *Zoom* session of the “Geppetto” course took place on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023. We are now preparing for the final (in person) session, which will be taking place in the Holy House of Loreto, in Italy, from 30<sup>th</sup> June – 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2023. This final session will focus on discerning what we are being called to do and who we are being called to reach out to, as couples, as movements and as Church. Please remember it in your prayers.

Anne and Mark O’Leary

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## **Mullingar**

### **Fr Paul Connell:**

In Mullingar we are delighted that Fr Paul Connell has been appointed Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise.

Fr Paul was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Meath in 1982 and was appointed to the staff of St Finian's College where he served as teacher and then President. Fr Paul was appointed as Chancellor of the Diocese of Meath by Bishop Tom Deenihan, Bishop of Meath in 2020.

Fr Paul is Chaplain to Team 11 and we all wish him every blessing in his role as Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise.

### **Jimmy Halligan: An Appreciation**

It was with deep sadness and grief that we in Team 9 received the news of the death of our dear friend and Team member, Jimmy Halligan. Team 9 was formed in 1996. Jimmy and Maura Halligan have been esteemed members of the team from the very beginning. Jimmy always made an interesting and insightful contribution to our meetings. He could be relied upon to enhance our discussions with his valid and thought - provoking comments.

Jimmy was well read, cultured and enjoyed social interaction. He had a love of sport and followed hurling, football and racing in particular. After many of our team meetings, we had lively discussions on the merits of different teams and the results of various matches.

Through his career in social welfare, he was a constant help and support to all who sought his advice. He was generous in giving his time and expertise to his local Community in his beloved Castlepollard.

Above all Jimmy loved his family. He was devoted to Maura and was so proud of his two daughters, Claire and Deirdre. In latter years, he got great pleasure from his adored grandchildren, Lyra, Sasha and Darragh. During his illness Jimmy was cared for by Maura, together with his daughters. He died peacefully at home in the company of his loving family on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

He will be sorely missed by all of us in Team 9. May he rest in peace.

Martin Shaw

We in the sector send our heartfelt condolences to Maura, Claire, Deirdre their sons-in law, grandchildren and to Team 9 on the death of Jimmy.

We are also thinking of Antoinette Shaw (Team 9) whose beloved sister Frankie died on the day of Jimmy's funeral

### **Summer Outing:**

We are planning our summer outing on **Saturday June 10th at 2pm** with Fore Benedictine Abbey Castlepollard as our destination. We are looking forward to seeing Team members friends and family (all are welcome) hopefully we will have a picnic and enjoy the chat, peace and tranquillity of Fore.

We will meet at the car park beside the Abbey at 2pm

We remember in our prayers:

James Halligan Team 9

Frankie Kelly (sister of Antoinette Shaw Team 9)

Gerry Roche Dublin 13

Paddy Donaghy Dublin 24

May they rest in peace

Mullingar Sector

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## Galway

In Galway we had a unique introduction to the Easter celebrations. We recognise that our faith is a Judeo-Christian faith and we owe much to Jewish history and traditions. Representatives of the Galway teams met in Anne and Billy Hyland's house for a "Seder Meal" This was a meal which commemorates the events of the Jewish Exodus and is called the "Seder". The primary aim of the Seder is to transmit to future generations the story of the Exodus. This Exodus is the central event in Jewish history. The symbol of the Seder meal is a celebration of the Passover. The Passover is the Jewish feast of redemption and liberation. The memorial of the Israelites' deliverance from their bondage in Egypt. In the Christian tradition the Passover meal is believed to be what we Christians call "The Last Supper" when Jesus instituted the Eucharist. We are reminded that Jesus was a Jew. He was steeped in Jewish scripture which he fully internalised and eventually fulfilled. Also, we recognise the deep connection between Christianity of today and our Jewish heritage. It is a leisurely meal. Participants can be relaxed and enjoy the event. The whole purpose of this event (The Seder Meal) is to give us a fuller appreciation of the historical background to our Christianity and to give a fuller dimension to our Christian Faith.

The Galway Teams hosted our Regional Couple Brendan and Rosemarie in Galway in May. We are thankful to Anne and Billy Hyland once again for their generosity in opening their hearts and home to a wonderful meeting. The Galway Teams had a fruitful sharing of food and a sharing of ourselves. The weather was kind to us and we enjoyed some lovely chats in the spring sunshine in the garden afterwards. It is always a special occasion when our Teams can come together and this time, we are thankful to Brendan and Rosemarie for their visit.

Our sympathy goes to Betty and Peter Quinlan on the death of Peter's brother Michael recently.

Our sympathy also goes to John McCarrick on the sad passing of his brother Raymond. May both their souls Rest in Peace.

Please continue to pray for Eddie Lloyd who is in a Nursing home.

Anne and Jack Hutchinson

## Choosing a Study Topic

Paul and Annette O'Beirne, Super -Regional Couple, offer some thoughts on choosing a Study Topic for the next year.

Fr Caffarel, from the earliest days of Teams, encouraged couples to develop an aspect of their faith through study. Commitment to study and sharing reflections in the Team meeting is included in the Teams Charter. Fr Caffarel and the first couples were clear that couples should continue to develop their understanding of their faith throughout their lives. Using a study topic gives the opportunity to make this development.

The format for the sharing on the study topic in the Team meeting is also clear. The couple prepare the study themselves during the month then, in the Team meeting share their reflections on their study of the topic. What's the outcome from this? We leave this with the Holy Spirit! We open ourselves to the Spirit, then in our Sit Down we open ourselves to our spouse and decide on a personal and or conjugal Rule of Life. Perhaps we might consider that we join a group or involve ourselves in some aspect of our parish or local community.

The Leading Team of Equipes Notre-Dame, the ERI, is providing the topic for 2023-24 called Eucharist, source of mission. This will be available on the Teams-Transatlantic and TeamsGB websites. As we go to print, translation into English is not yet complete, so it is not yet on the websites.

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During this last year. Our own Team has used the “The Third Age”. It has allowed us to review our perspectives on becoming retired and generally getting older, and even busier!! Link: [www.tinyurl.com/The-Third-Age](http://www.tinyurl.com/The-Third-Age)

Joy of the Gospel (Evangelii Gaudium) In this encyclical Pope Francis urges the Church to overcome complacency to be on mission in our modern world. A strong theme in The Joy of the Gospel is about accompaniment of people where they are. Huebsch has written a short study guide on “The Art of Accompaniment”.

In The Joy of Love (Amoris Laetitia) Pope Francis asks that we meet people where they are, consider the complexities of life today and to respect people's consciences in their decisions.

Care for our Common Home (Laudato Si') considers the huge importance of looking after our world as it is the common home of all humanity and earthly creation.

In On Fraternity and Social Friendship (Fratelli Tutti) the Pope draws us to consider how to build a better, more just and peaceful world, being inclusive and considering people and organisations but working to get over indifference.

The full encyclicals are available from Veritas, or free on the Vatican website [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

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We would like to receive contributions for the Autumn Newsletter by Sunday, 3rd September.,

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