

Equipes Notre-Dame

Newsletter Teams of Our Lady – Irish Region



Issue 92

Spring 2013

From the Regional Couple

Words are important. Every parent remembers the first words uttered by their child; every child remembers the last words uttered by a dying parent. The Gospels offer slightly different variations on the first words uttered by Jesus in his public ministry. In John's Gospel, Jesus, surrounded by curious disciples, asked of them 'What do you want?' When they reverted with the most basic of questions; 'Where do you live', Jesus replied 'Come and see'. These words have a resonance for us too. 'Come and see' is part of our 'witness vocabulary'; an information evening, an invite to a guest couple, to a team meeting. ('Come and follow me'; words inscribed on the tomb of our founder Fr. Caffarel).

The Word of God forms and guides us. Jesus broke the mould by relating to and healing those outside his Jewish heritage. In a transforming meeting with the Samaritan Woman at the Well (John Chap 4) Jesus revealed, that God is offering the 'waters of eternal life', that He, Jesus, is The Messiah, and he forgave the sins of the Woman . The received healing words were the basis for the Woman's witness in her local village and provided the basis for the welcome extended to Jesus by the villagers. Our words, in personal prayer, conjugal prayer, sit down and team meeting reflect the received Word of God. Led by the Spirit we too can heal, witness, and accept, with our words.

Finally we welcome Pope Francis. His emphasis on simplicity and preservation should strike a fitting chord with Team members. We join with Teams in South America in our prayers and with our support.

Wishing all in Teams the blessings of the Risen Christ.

Pat and Carmel Cunneen

Inside this issue:

<i>From the Leading Team</i>	2
<i>From the Spiritual Counsellor</i>	3
<i>Tribute: Denis Johnston</i>	4
<i>Tribute: Helen McCarrick</i>	4
<i>Tribute: Jim Boland</i>	6
<i>News from Around the Region</i>	7
<i>From the Regional Chaplain</i>	10
<i>Belfast Sector Retreat Notice</i>	11
<i>Exploring Our Inner Wilderness</i>	12
<i>To Dare to Live the Gospel (Part 3)</i>	14
<i>2014 Gathering</i>	16
<i>The Rosary for Today</i>	18



Door of Faith

Georges et Mahassen Khoury Centre-Europe Zone

Called to join the International Leading Team (ERI) and very aware of our fragility and our limits, we would like our 'yes' to be like Mary's, an act of faith, obedience and love.

Pope Benedict XVI in his apostolic letter *Porta fidei* announced a Year of Faith on October 11th to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council. He also convened a General Assembly of the Synod of bishops on the subject of **New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Christian Faith**.

As members of the Teams of Our Lady, will we be generous enough to dedicate 'time to an in-depth reflection and a rediscovery of faith,' in order to bear coherent witness to our life? Christ on the cross is the door to faith; He opens our heart to conversion and leads us with Him on the way to the Kingdom.

But how are we to put ourselves at other people's service, without firstly listening to and meditation on the word of God and without tasting the body and blood of Christ? Yes, we believe that prayer and the Eucharist make us available to and for our brothers and sisters, who are marginalized and hurt in their love, so that they can rediscover that they too are the object of our Father's tenderness.

How can we look in to another person's heart with Jesus' eyes if He does not dwell in us already? In our private prayer, which of course drives us to get closer to God, we rediscover the serenity of heart and certain availability so that we can be there for our spouse and for others.

Our faith increases throughout the various hardships we face and each time our '*heart is touched by grace that transforms it*'.

A few years after our wedding, we realised that we would never have children. A priest friend of ours, realising the deep suffering we were going through, advised us not to be fixated on our ordeal, but to open ourselves up to other people's needs, because as he said, 'Biological fertility isn't the only kind of fertility.' Obedient to the inspiration of the Spirit, we became involved in our parish. For us, this commitment opened the '*door of faith that led us to a life in communion with God and permitted entry into his Church*.' Having faith means trusting God.

Today the challenges to conjugal life are great. It is indeed difficult to dare to live out the Gospel at the heart of one's couple and one's town! Our faith, which is a faithful compass, orients us to bear witness to our love when our strength weakens before temptation. Our meeting with Jesus in prayer encourages us to continue rowing in deep waters.

Was it not Jesus Christ who encouraged the '*Small Flock*' of Christians in the Middle East not to be afraid of drowning in the great ocean of non-Christians in that region? In communion with the Father, whose love is all-powerful, we hope to experience a just and everlasting peace that respects human rights and everyone's freedom of conscience in our countries that are so challenged. To believe in God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit means believing that man, as God's image, is called to experience human relationships without discrimination and to respect others with all their differences. Indeed, man is supposed to accept others as an example of one of God's graces.

Before the civil war in Lebanon, we worked in the Muslim sector of Beirut. With the arrival of the war and its dangers, most of the Christians decided to leave the Muslim sector. We prayed first and then decided to stay on, entrusting ourselves to God and to our Muslim colleagues. Over those terrible years, we grew friendly with them and today, a few of our Muslim friends do the 'Sitting down' and Conjugal prayer!

Daring to believe in God is an adventure and a wonderful experience!

We are truly surprised at the marvels that God works for us!

By concentrating on ourselves and our capabilities, we forget that Jesus Christ is the centre of our life. Let us believe in Him, Master and King of our life! Let us dare to live out his Gospel!



From Father José Jacinto Ferreira de Farias, scj

Spiritual Counsellor, Leading Team (ERI)

Dear Friends,

This is the second time I am writing to you as Spiritual Counsellor of the International Leading Team (ERI). I greet you very cordially and warmly, you, dear couples, who are spread out over the continents and who live in joy, despite the difficulties and ordeals, your condition as Christian couples, united by the ties of the sacrament of marriage, in collaboration with God in this admirable mission of service towards your children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren. This is how you live out the ideal of conjugal and family spirituality, the very ideal that Father Caffarel dreamt of for the Teams of Our Lady, an ideal epitomised in serving God for your whole life in the midst of the world. Father Caffarel's ideal was consecrated by Vatican II, which recalled sanctity as an ideal and vocation of every Christian and referred to Christian marriage and the family as a school of virtues and sanctity.

Throughout this Year of Faith, when we remember the beginning of Vatican II, 11 October 1962—50 years ago—we all have a providential opportunity to return to the sources of the Teams of Our Lady's spirituality, with faith and dynamism in order to live out this ideal of sanctity in the conditions specific to our epoch.

We all know it, but it is useful to be reminded, that the Teams of Our Lady's mission is to announce and bear witness to the world to the truth of life and of love, of that love that is obvious in the availability to 'give life' and even to 'die of love'. This is precisely what I learnt from my parents and especially from my mother, who has just died in the Lord at the grand age of 104 years old. She was always available and gave of her all for her children, especially for me, so that I might continue to follow my own way, to be truly free, to be fully myself. She gave me a passion for life; she made me understand truly what it means to be a son and it is thanks to her that what I love contemplating above all is the maternal face of the Church.

Throughout this year of faith, the Holy Father Benedict XVI invites us to discover the 'joy of believing', a joy that is the corollary to the 'joy of living'. Surely one of the characteristics of the Teams of Our Lady is their joy. At the last Gathering in Brasilia, we were really able to sense and even touch this contagious joy that emanated from all the couples gathered there. I also find this joy in the Letters from the Super-Regions, which I regularly receive.

What is the secret of this joy, which is different from the one found in the world? What is its source? I am sure that its source is to be found in the faithful practice of the Endeavours, according to the Teams of Our Lady method. Above all, I believe it is to be found in conjugal prayer and in the Sit Down. It is necessary that couples and Teams deepen and live as faithfully and as generously as possible their union in the Lord. It is He who brings us together in Teams; it is He who chose you and who united you in marriage, in order that you might live your conjugal life as mirror image of the relationship between Christ and the Church (Eph 5, 32). No one can separate what the Lord has united. That is the testimonial that Christian couples and the Teams of Our Lady must give to the world, in the grace and strength of the Spirit of the Lord. That is your mission as Christian couples. Do not be afraid, because the Lord promised that he would always be with you.

May this year of faith be for all of us a providential time to live and bear witness to the joy in believing that is linked to fidelity, generosity and abnegation of those who are capable of loving up until the very end, like the Lord who opened His Heart so that in Him we may find our repose.

I bid you farewell. May the Lord bless you and be with you in all that you do.

Denis Johnston

We would all know November as a dark and dreary month in these parts, and it was made all the more so for us in Team 6 here in Mullingar, when in that month and with great sadness, we lost our dear friend and Teams colleague, Denis Johnston. Denis, as a long serving and widely esteemed Solicitor who had been active in his profession until recent years, had shown remarkable fortitude in combating a long term and debilitating illness over a considerable period.



From the very time of our formation as a Team it was apparent that he had a deep interest in the Movement, and whenever possible it was important to him and his wife Céline that they should attend scheduled Teams gatherings at locations throughout Ireland, and indeed several abroad where no doubt they became known to the wider membership. At our own Team meetings, Denis added much with his clear insights to Study Topics under discussion, and it was always evident as to how much it meant to him to be part of a Movement whose aim was to promote growth in the Spirituality of Married Couples.

In extending sincere sympathy to Céline - together with the wonderful family that they were blessed with - in their bereavement, we are happy in the knowledge that they have had such support from a wide circle of friends, while Céline knows that she also has the assurance of the abiding affection of her fellow Team members, who will always treasure the memory of Denis's thoughtful consideration and benign influence, at all times.

MAY HE REST IN PEACE

Franz and Katrina Molloy



Helen McCarrick

We are sad to relate that Helen Mc Carrick, dear wife of John, passed away recently after a brave battle with lung cancer.

Both John and herself have always been a wonderful couple and very committed to Teams since they first joined in Dublin in 2002. Only a year later they moved to Galway. They rejoined Teams again there in 2005. Both contributed greatly to our meetings since then and have given us much food for thought. Helen shared wholesomely and delved deep into study topics. She raised many challenging points in an open, caring, mind provoking way and was always cheerful despite her illness in recent years. We, and all fortunate to have known her, will miss her greatly.

We extend our deepest sympathy to John, the family and the extended family on their great loss.

May her good soul rest in peace.

OBITUARY Helen Mc Carrick. 1945 – 2013.

Helen Mc Carrick (nee Regan), was born in Kilmovee, Co. Mayo. She was the youngest of eight children and the sixth daughter of Thomas and Catherine Regan.

During her four years at University College Galway she was a distinguished athlete and camogie player. After college she taught in Ballyhaunis, Naas, Blackrock and Lucan.

Helen married John in 1969 and moved to Lucan which was their home until 2003. Helen was always a woman of strong faith, and apart from being a mother of a busy household, she was involved in a range of other activities, including running a climbing plant nursery and fruit farm. Helen also did various courses to enhance her skills, including Montessori teaching, floristry, remembrance therapy for older people, reflexology and child psychology.

When Helen and John arrived in Galway in 2003 they divided their time between Sligo, Galway and Portugal with regular trips to Africa to follow up on projects they had been involved with since working in Kenya from 1983 to 1984.

Helen was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2010 and despite extensive chemotherapy and occasional surgery she fully enjoyed the following years and particularly the grandchildren that came to her in abundance over that time.

Helen is survived by her husband John, her seven children, their spouses and her eight grandchildren.

May their beloved Helen rest in peace.

The Obituary notes above are an extract of those outlined in Helen's Funeral Mass Leaflet and are used by kind permission of The Mc Carrick family.

Eddie and Emmy Lloyd

James (Jim) Boland - died 27th February 2013



Team 3 Mullingar are sad to announce the passing of Jim Boland to his eternal reward. Jim and Eileen joined our team in 1992. They arrived into our team with vast experience of Teams in the U.K. having attended numerous international gatherings and spent many years as Sector Couple of the Bristol/Weston Super Mare Region. They were a wonderful example to us all in Team 3 and inspirational in their love and care for each other. It was a lucky day for us when they decided to retire to Mullingar 23 years ago.

They met for the first time on the steps of the church. Jim was going into choir practice as Eileen exited from Mass. They were married 63 years ago in 1949. We fondly remember celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary in Mullingar.

We will all miss Jim. His firm faith and steadfast loyalty and dedication to our team were exemplary. He was a gentleman in every sense of the word. We appreciated his dry wit and good humoured approach to life. He loved cricket, golf, his garden and was an ardent Bolton Wanderers supporter.

The Funeral Liturgy was concelebrated by Fr. Paul Crosbie, Team Chaplain to Team 4 and our chaplain Fr. Frank Monks. We were grateful Fr. Frank could be with us so soon after his recent surgery.

We ask Our Lady to comfort and console Eileen who will miss him most, their son Stephen, daughter-in-law Gabrielle, grandchildren Danielle and Luke and their two great grandchildren.

We thank God for the gift of Jim's life and pray that he may be reunited with his son Dominic who died seven years ago.

Thessalonians 4:18 'We shall stay with the Lord for ever'

Andy and Margaret Donohoe.

Prayer Intentions

For the deceased:

Denis Johnston, husband of Céline, Mullingar. John King, brother of Brid Quinn, Galway. Helen McCarrick, wife of John, Galway. Jim Boland, husband of Eileen, Mullingar. Fr. Neil Rodriguez, Trinidad and Tobago.

For those who are ill: Emmy Lloyd, Galway.

News from around the Region

Dublin

8th December Mass: There are a few opportunities in the Teams year for members to meet, socialise and experience the larger Teams movement outside their own team. One event is the 8th December Mass which was held in Marianella, Rathgar. It was a larger than usual gathering this year, perhaps due in part to the Saturday. The Redemptorist Community had again made their Dining Room available to us, which made a huge difference to the relaxed and social atmosphere following the Mass. It is hoped that by now the word has spread about the extra facilities, and that even more members will be part of this important occasion in the future.

The Annual Retreat was held in Avila on 2nd & 3rd March on the theme of 'Growing in Faith'. We got positive feedback with regard to location, quality and depth of spirituality of presentations by Fr. Peter Sexton SJ, his gentle pace and space allocated for reflection and couple sharing. It was felt that a real Teams community was present. We enjoyed a relaxed and enriching weekend. Our grateful thanks to all who made it possible.

Social Outing: The annual social get-together this year is to **Malahide Castle on Saturday 25th May**. Because of the variety of facilities offered - extensive park, children's playground, picnic area, guided tour of house, walled garden & Avoca restaurant - the Sector team feels that this will be a popular venue for all age groups. Check out www.malahidecastle.com Further details will be circulated by your Liaison Couple. For now there are two things you might do: Put the date in your calendar - and pray for a good day.... Our Lady organised lovely weather for us last year. She will not disappoint.

Responsible Couples' Weekend: A most important event in the Team year is the Responsible Couples' Weekend. This year it is Dublin's turn to host it.

Date: Saturday & Sunday 12th & 13th October in the Dominican Retreat Centre, Tallaght.

This is a time for renewal and nourishment for Responsible Couples as they begin the period of leading their team, all journeying together 'on the path to holiness'. Importantly, in these difficult times, team members share costs of their R/C attending. If the R/C cannot attend, consult your team and send another couple.

2014 Gathering & Celebrations: Regional Couple Pat & Carmel Cunneen are gradually developing a programme for the 2014 Transatlantic Super Regional Gathering & 50th Celebrations. All Sectors are involved, with people volunteering for different tasks and responsibilities. We need lots of help. There are many tasks to be done. Have you IT skills? Do you like working with children? Could you collect people at the airport? Music – Traditional or other?..... Please contact your Liaison or Sector Couple.

Joe & Áine Clayton

Belfast

Sector Meeting

The first meeting of the new sector team took place on January 15th. It was decided to hold the Annual Retreat on Sunday 28th April at Tobar Mhuire, Crossgar, a Passionist Retreat House which has been beautifully refurbished recently. Fr Ephrem Blake C.P. will lead the retreat and the theme will be on the Year of Faith. Fr Ephrem is chaplain to Belfast 5. The day will start with tea/coffee at 10.00 and will end after 4.00 Mass. We would be delighted to welcome team members from other sectors.

The sector team agreed to organise readers etc for the Friday evening Mass at the 50th Anniversary and Transatlantic Super-Regional Gathering in 2014.

We also discussed various ideas for expansion of Teams in Belfast Sector.

Other team news

Members of Belfast Sector had an enjoyable evening on December 8th with Mass in St Gerard's Church, followed by a buffet meal in Deirdre and Declan Kennedy's house. Many thanks to the Kennedys for their hospitality.

Ben and Philomena Mc Neice's house was flooded last July and they had to move out to rented property. We are glad to hear that they moved back into their own house at the beginning of December. We are also happy to hear that Paddy Scott is keeping well after having a stent put in a couple of weeks ago.

Charlie McMullan is helping to run the Catholicism Course for the Year of Faith in his Bangor parish, as is Margaret Lamb in St Gerard's, Belfast.

Michael and Eithne Clenaghan have a new grandson, Odhran Conor, born in Helsinki and baptised in Cork! And Charlie and Maureen Mc Mullan have a new grandson called Joseph.

Moyra and Brendan Bunting

Mullingar

Our celebration for the 8th December, feast of Our Lady's Immaculate Conception, took place at St. Francis Medical Centre Chapel. Mass was celebrated by Father Daniel who is chaplain to the hospital. We gave Father Daniel some information literature about Teams of Our Lady which we hope he found helpful.

We have had a good report from the newly-formed Team Eleven. John and Elaine Cogavin from Dublin kindly came to Mullingar to offer guidance to our new piloting couple Martin and Antoinette Shaw; please remember them all in your prayers.

We downloaded the new Study Topic from Brasilia "**The Path to Spiritual Life as a Couple**" and are very enthusiastic about it. Great work has been done by those who put it together; it is not to be missed. It will add a refreshing dimension to Teams of Our Lady meetings, assisting understanding of the Gospel and coping with modern challenges.

Our Retreat had been scheduled for March 2nd and 3rd but unfortunately the dates seemed not to suit the majority. Hopefully we shall be able to re-schedule a later date. Father Frank Monks at Killucan was very understanding of the situation and we appreciate that very much.

We are delighted about the plans for Ireland, celebrating fifty years of Teams of Our Lady in Ireland in 2014. The gathering is due to take place from Friday 15th August to Sunday 17th. We are confident Mullingar Sector will help out whenever and wherever we are needed. We are looking forward to this very special occasion.

Frank and Margaret Fagan

Galway

Team 2 Galway Sector lost a valued member Helen McCarrick in February (see obituary this issue). Brid Quinn of Team 3 lost her brother John King unexpectedly in December. We extend our sincere sympathy to Brid and Owen and the extended family.

Galway Sector held their Team Retreat in Croí Nua, Rosary Lane, Taylor's Hill, Galway on Sunday 10th February. It was facilitated by Fr. Michael Screene, M.S.C. and was attended by 15 team members and another couple who were invited. The feedback from the retreat was that it was very much worthwhile and that we were given much food for thought. Some of Fr. Michael's insights were that we were God's address, that we were God's DNA and what God does is resurrection. We were invited to explore these issues and to realise that Faith is a verb and that Faith is seeing things differently - seeing with the eyes of Christ. Fr. Michael also did a session on listening which we found very useful.

We would ask team members to keep Emmy Lloyd, Team 2 in your prayers.

Brendan and Máire Kelly



Poster for the Trans-Atlantic Super Region Gathering in 2014 exhibited at the World Gathering in Brasilia in July 2012. Photo: Pat Cunneen



From the Regional Chaplain, Fr. Gerry Cassidy

MY PERSONAL VOCATION

Taking the opportunity to reverence the unique invitations of God which have given shape and form to my life and decisions

April 2013

Jeremiah 1: 4-8. (Personal call of Jeremiah.)

1 John 3:1-3,16-18

How comfortable am I with the term “Personal Vocation” and its challenges in my way of life?

Recall the people or events in your life which, in God’s providence, have been a significant influence of your entire life.

May 2013

Philippians: 3:7-14

How does my understanding of the meaning of my life change when I view it in terms of a Personal Vocation?

What place have my gifts of mind, body, personality, and spirit had in my response to God’s call?

June 2013

Isaiah 42:5-9 Luke 10:38-42

How does my personal vocation reveal to me the way in which I am meant to be a disciple?

Jesus celebrated and wept with friends. What have my close friendships revealed to me about the heart of God?

BELFAST SECTOR RETREAT

Belfast Sector Retreat will take place on **Sunday 28th April** at **Tobar Mhuire Passionist Retreat House**, in Crossgar, Co. Down.

The retreat will be led by Fr **Ephrem Blake CP** who is a Team Chaplain.

The theme will be on aspects of the **Year of Faith**.

Start: 10.00 with Tea/Coffee followed by the first talk at 10.30.

Close: After 4.00 Mass.

Price: £25 per person (which includes a 3 course meal and all teas/coffees).

Team members from other sectors and non-team members very welcome!

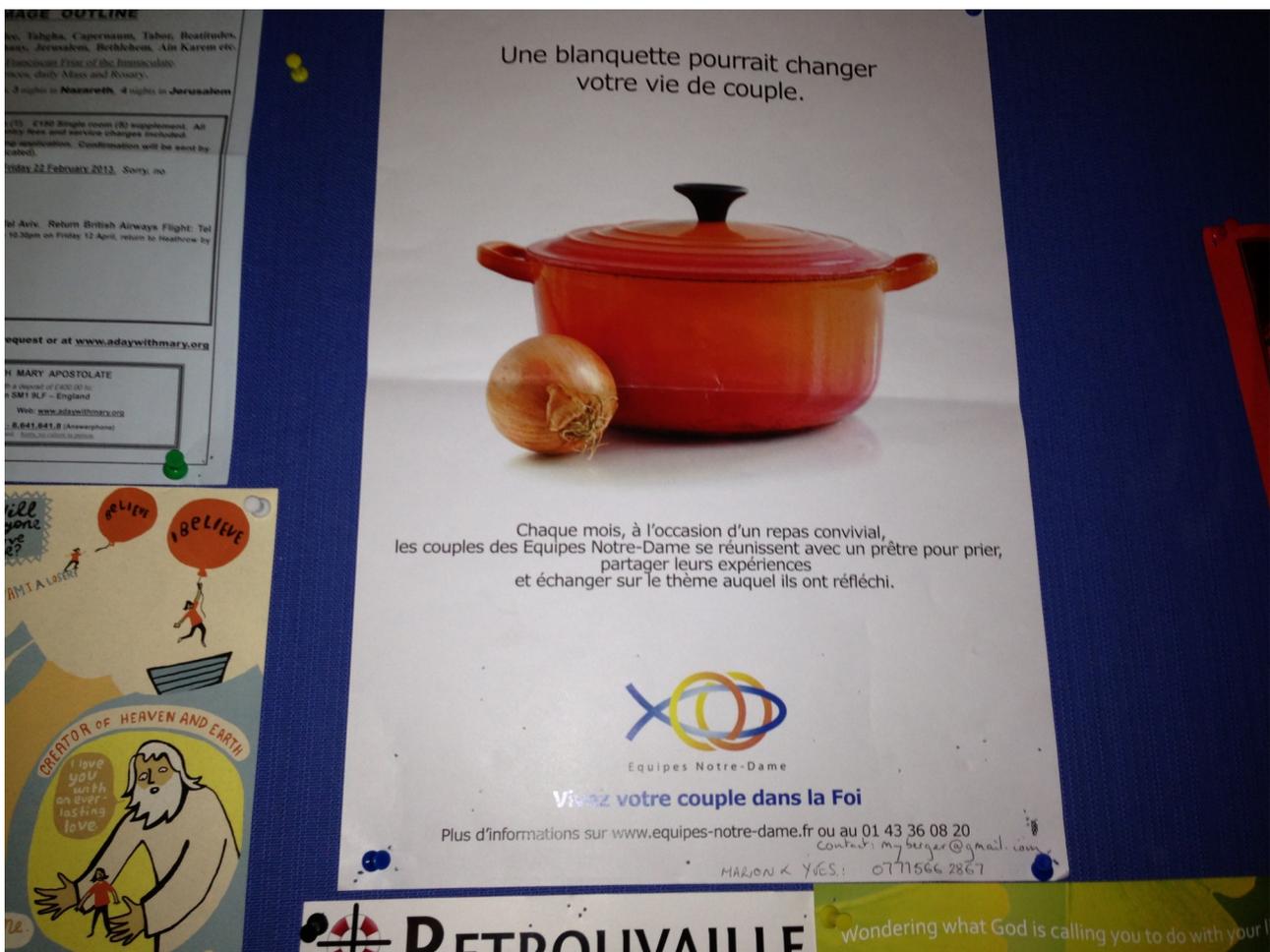


Photo taken by Moyra Bunting at the French Church, Notre Dame de France, in Leicester Square London. Translation:

A stew could change your life as a couple.

Brendan suggests a good caption would be:

'Dish of the day' as seen at the French Church Leicester Square London.

Exploring our inner Wilderness

Elizabeth Roddy, Corcullen, Galway.

Many years ago I attended an early Mass on Christmas Day. A young priest gave a sermon which I've never forgotten. He talked about how he would return to his home in Belmullet later that day and in the cold loneliness of that bleak landscape there would be a space for God to enter. Life today is so full of distractions. We are bombarded with glittering objects that promise an earthly paradise, people constantly want to involve us in agendas that are not our own and even in church there seems to be a discomfort with silence.

There are key moments when we need to discover who we really are. It is so easy to define ourselves by our role at a particular time; what happens if that role is no longer there? When I left Accord I felt adrift and purposeless. Who would want my skills? I felt like a non person. I had seen myself in the glamorous light of a counsellor, supervisor and tutor who helped others. I imagine that is how many people feel when they retire from a satisfying career and are suddenly faced with a wasteland of unfilled hours. Now I am a widow, I must reflect once more in the silence and solitude about who and where I am.

We all have a persona, an acceptable face, which we've gradually cobbled together over the years, to present to the world. However down in the unconscious is the shadow, the rejected, disowned parts of ourselves, which did not meet our own or society's expectation. If this lies unacknowledged it can cause great damage. I once did a course for supervisors. One of the men running it told a story of how he sat with a group of murderers in prison and listening calmly to their stories, which they told very honestly. Peter thought later about the way in which he had received these very graphic accounts and he realised that he had been allowing these men to carry his rage and murderous feelings for him and it was time he did a little bit of excavating on himself! If we do not get in touch with our shadow sooner or later we will be lured into acting in ways that will both shock and shame us. St. Peter with his persona of hero had buried his fear and cowardice, till they suddenly took over and he denied his master. We can and frequently do also project our shadow on to other unfortunate people like the pharisees did with people they regarded as outcasts and sinners or as pious Irish society did with the Magdalene women. Couples can cast shadow on each other. It seems that even Jesus himself had to face His dark side, personified in Satan, so that He would have the strength to confront the many temptations that would beset Him in His public life.

The more I read the gospel accounts, the more I see that what Jesus experienced resonates in my own life. It is easy to claw at instant gratifications, for the lure of an unhealthy power over others which often is subterranean, for ostentatious display which earn admiration and for short cuts which will save pain and effort. In her book "Women who run with Wolves" Clarissa Pinkola Estes re-tells the story of the Red Shoes where a little orphan girl was adopted by a rich old lady, who ensured she had material comforts but in an austere, rigid environment deprived her of nourishment of the soul. As Satan tempted Jesus who was starving to grab at stones and turn them into bread, so the child grasped at bright red shoes in a vain effort to satisfy her spiritual hunger. The red shoes took her over and she became unable to stop dancing. They were like poison to her because she had clutched at something bright which attracted but did not satisfy her inward cravings. We need I think, to weave our life tapestry slowly and carefully. Jesus knew that there was no easy way to accomplish what He set out to do.

I have talked about the desert experience as facing the shadow. William A. Miller talks about the gold lying there. When one has paid attention to the murderous, envious, greedy parts of ourselves and begun to intergrate them, we are better able to cope with difficult people and situations. I once had a dream that my doorbell was ringing and the dog barking loudly.

When I opened the door there was an armed woman sitting in a tank. I shut the door in her face only to have her ring loudly again. It was only when I dialogued with her that I discovered that she was my anger and was demanding to be let in. I invited her in for a cup of tea. Since then I have become much more aware of when I am angry and better able to find out the cause and possible remedies. The temptations in the wilderness were about the misuse of power. Power is a gift and needs to be used. It is a tool which needs fine handling. Jesus found it in the cross.

I like to think that we might inhabit different wildernesses according to our need at the time. I might start in the frozen Russian tundra where I confront head on the chilling parts of my self, I might move to the bright yellow sands of the Sahara desert where there might be just fragments of growth or to the beauty of the painted desert of Arizona where I begin to discover my giftedness in the myriad of hues around me. Then I will visit that wonderful natural wilderness of Yellowstone Park which is itself an illustration of what I have spoken about.

I watched a documentary on that vast territory, which was the first national park in the world. To begin with man treated it as a playground where he could indulge his desire to hunt wild animals. The bison were hunted to extinction. Then it was decided that the park should only have “nice creatures” so the wolves were exterminated and the bison brought back. However without their natural predators they multiplied and damaged the vegetation. Eventually it was decided that the “nasty creatures” should be restored. As the wolves leapt out of the jeep and loped into the thicket of their new home you could almost hear them saying to one another.

“We’ll soon have this sorted out !”

The parable of the wheat and the chaff would suggest to me that eliminating or excluding things or people that we consider bad is not very helpful or creative.

My permanent desert, which I walk everyday with the dog, is the mystical country that is the west of Ireland, whose empty moorlands and marshes framed by distant mountains provide the primaeval wildness which nurtures healing and renewal and there the Holy Spirit, the Lady and Giver of Life can breathe freely. Holy Spirit, Lady and Giver of Life can breathe freely.

Further Reading: Women who run with Wolves. Clarissa Pinkola Este
Your Golden Shadow William A Miller.



To Dare to Live the Gospel (Part Three) *Fr. Brian O'Toole Cssp*

Fr. Timothy Radcliffe OP re Sexual Ethics: Jesus takes bread and gives it to us as his body. This is the sign of a life totally given and completely received. To be a body is to receive one's existence from one's parents and their parents before them, and ultimately from God. For Jesus to give us his body was to give himself totally, without reserve. Bodies are gifts, and gifts are received to be given away again. This is why the Eucharist offers us the foundation of a Christian sexual ethics. As our bodies are given to us so we learn how to give them to another with reverence, fidelity, vulnerability and without reserve. We transmit the gift that we are.

For Jesus to give us his body *as food* is for us to receive it utterly. Jesus' body given as food is a gift completely given and received. Jesus' body has already been sold for 30 pieces of silver. However, Jesus anticipated this betrayal and disarmed it in advance. His generosity was vast enough to transform betrayal into the hands of his enemies into a gift for all. He found a community on that night which can endure any fidelity. As Christians we are called to witness to the deepest of all freedoms, which is to give our lives away, as Christ did: "This is my body given for you". Jesus takes betrayal and makes it a gift. Jesus makes failure a moment of grace.

Sexual Ethics is not about rules. It is about a conversation and a communion where each speaks to the other saying this is my body given for you. It is an act of generosity, vulnerability and fidelity. At the heart of sexual ethics is the end of violence; the righting of desires and the "delight in each other". Marriage is a promise to discover who we are. In love we discover who we are. It is to let go of final self definition and to carry out the voyage of discovery promising to let the other go on 'surprising'.

Mercedes and Alvaro Gomez re "The Endeavours": "The Endeavours" are "encounters" which guide us to the love and presence of God. The endeavours help us to discern the will of God and the presence of God in our lives. The Endeavours are not imposed from outside. They are an inner call for personal effort leading us along the road to conversion and discipleship which has no other limit than holiness. In the life of Teams the Endeavours are the concrete situations where we experience the presence of God in our lives: "encounter with the Lord" (Prayer), "real listening" (Reading of the Word), "true conjugal dialogue" (Sit-Down), "self correction and discipline" (Rule of Life), "to be husband and wife together" (Conjugal Prayer), "to plan your life with the Lord" (Retreat).

Sharing on the Endeavours is about making known, revealing, the hiddenness of God's grace in our lives. Sharing on the Endeavours is not a report card ticking off what you have done and have not done. It is not about what we have done but rather about what God is doing in our lives. It is to share in praise and thanksgiving what we have discovered about God through our participation in the Endeavours.

In our sharing on the Endeavours we should formulate hard questions for ourselves, those that go deep and force us to get to the truth.

Personal Prayer: is a dialogue and encounter. How am I able to establish that dialogue?

Listening to the Word: What have I discovered about Christ when listening to his Word?

Conjugal Prayer: is an encounter between 'husband and wife' with the Lord. Do we realise that the most important is not so much the prayer itself, but rather the togetherness. Have we experienced the prayer that can heal our wounds?

The Rule of Life: is a personal search for the truth that should rebound in benefit to others. What part of my personality have I worked on? Could other team members help me to see clearer within my rule of life?

Annual Retreat: What have we learned about the love of God? With what feelings were we left with at the end of the retreat?

The Sit-Down: is a dialogue. What do we do to include the presence of God?

Have we managed to communicate and to find each other? Have we made each other welcome? Are we able to admit and share of guilt in any areas of conflict? Have we said something good to each other? Have we achieved any steps forward?

A sharing on the Endeavours should indicate if the endeavours have provided them with more truth, or a grace encounter, or an indication of the will of God.

The Mission of Teams to one another and to others: is expressed beautifully in the following aspiration - “Deep within us, shared among us, may there ever be the mind and heart of Jesus Christ” Jesus strives to emphasise the goodness, the potential for divinity, in all people. Our Mission in Teams is to affirm the incredible holiness of each person

- to convince each other of our divine destiny;
- to fire each other up with the goodness of our own ordinary lives;
- to be excited with the possibilities of which we are capable;
- to bring out the best in each other and in others;
- to impress on us that we are all responsible for one another’s salvation.

Last October 11th we began the Year of Faith; Where is our Faith? We must not allow the face of Jesus to remain indistinct and blurred. Trust in him is lived at the level of the heart, at where we make our decisions and in the actions and attitudes that come from them. The presence of the Lord does not just come to us through what happened in the past; he reveals that he is still with us in the lives of those who testify to him today in Teams. He continues to inspire us by the charism of our founder, Henri Caffarel, but he also shows himself through the witness of the Teams members with whom we live and work.

At this time of the **Year of Faith** I would invite all Team Members to set aside ‘a desert time’ during the first weeks of the Faith Year – at least half of one day – to look at his or her life in the presence of God, to give thanks, to ask pardon, to renew confidence, to ask for needs and look to the future. I suggest that afterwards Teams could come together **to exchange reflections of faith with each other.**

The **Year of Faith** is a time to “*Be ready to give reasons for your hope*” (1P 3.15). Just as beliefs without experiential roots will remain conceptual and unreal, so too experiences without understanding and reflection will fade. By sharing our faith we move to become more and more Team Communities of explicit faith. By **faith sharing** is meant more than saying prayers together. It refers to sharing those graced moments of experiencing God in a special way and those times of pain when God seems to be absent. For instance, relating the times when we have found God in each other or among the people with whom we are working, or those experiences when we are most aware of God’s presence or God’s absence. **To share faith with another means revealing who God is for me, and how God’s presence is affecting me.** It is to discuss on a value level and to share issues of the heart. It is by so doing that our common call to Teams mission is fostered and nurtured – our Teams dream is kept alive.

In the Church calendar when in what is called ‘ordinary time’ we wear GREEN vestments. Green is the colour for HOPE. Green symbolizes life, nature, fertility, well being. A sign of the hope that the Holy Spirit gives us is grass – grass even when it disappears for many months in a desert place it always comes back with the first shower of rain – the Holy Spirit tells us that we have to be as resilient as the grass, looking out for those showers of grace in our lives, in our Church, in our Teams and in our country **during this Ordinary Time in extraordinary times.**

The Brasilia Teams XI International Gathering sends us out to “**Go and do likewise**” (Luke 10.37). We are urged to seek out especially those wounded by conjugal love. We are invited to allow ourselves to be moved by compassion, by love that asks us to take a risk responding to what we see around us.

A Very Special Gathering: Fri 15th- Sun 17th August 2014



Equipes Notre-Dame



Equipes Notre-Dame

and



Trans Atlantic

IRELAND

**Celebrating 50 Years
of Teams in Ireland**

**The Transatlantic Super Region
is holding its Gathering in 2014
in Dublin, to coincide with the
Irish 50th Celebrations**

**THEME: 'Heart Speaks To Heart' –
Blessed John H. Newman**

DATES: 15th – 17th August
evening of Friday 15th to afternoon of Sunday 17th
(Children's Programme included)

LOCATION: King's Hospital School, Palmerstown, Dublin 20
See Website: www.kingshospital.ie

ACCOMMODATION

FULL BOARD:	pps	Fri to Sun 2xB&B, 2 lunch , 2 dinner	€130
SAT & SUN:	pps	Sat Lunch + dinner +1 B&B + lunch Sun:	€100
SAT&SUN:	pp	excl B&B 2 lunch 1 dinner	€ 80
ONE DAY:	pp	Sat or Sun, incl. meals:	€40

FAMILY ROOMS AVAILABLE
DISCOUNT FOR CHILDREN UNDER 3 YEARS

DEPOSIT: €25 pp on Booking

**NB. Accommodation also available before and after the dates above.
 (RATES from King's Hospital School.)**

SCHOOL FACILITIES include EXTENSIVE GROUNDS, PITCHES, SWIMMING POOL.

BOOKINGS:

Irish Teams Website: www.equipes-notre-dame.ie

UK/Trinidad & Tobago, Africa, Rest of World: ardenman@hotmail.co.uk

Ireland: cogavins@hotmail.com

On Booking; Send cheque or request bank details for money transfer

TRANSPORT from airport to the venue in Palmerstown will be arranged. Please provide your FLIGHT DETAILS and the NUMBER of passengers.

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FURTHER DETAILS:

LITURGY, MUSIC (all Regions): CHORAL, INSTRUMENTAL.

Contact: jacintapaddy@eircom.net

ENTERTAINMENT: MUSIC, SONG, DRAMA, DANCE etc.

Contact: cunneenpk@eircom.net

TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSIC, DANCE

Contact: proinnsiaso@gmail.com

OTHER INFORMATION:

Contact: cunneenpk@eircom.net

The Rosary for Today

Kenneth Payne

Fr. Ken Payne, who was the previous Chaplain to the Trans-Atlantic Super Region, and is known to many Teams members in Ireland, has published a book with the above title. Each of the 20 mysteries is explored using scripture, commentary, a reflection on God's presence in our lives and concludes with an intercessory prayer. Fr. Ken emphasises that in all things God reveals to us the depth of His love for each of us.

The acknowledgements at the front note that Father Ken is grateful to the Cheltenham Team who asked him to lead a retreat on the "Mysteries of Light" which enthused him to write the book.

See <http://www.mccrimmons.com/product/272/2097>.



Fr. Ken pictured with Jan Ralton (Leading Team) and Jacinta and Paddy Quigley

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