



Teams of Our Lady

NEWSLETTER



IRISH REGION Winter 2011 (Issue 88)



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Pat and Carmel Cunneen

From the Regional Couple

The priest asked us in the middle of his mass sermon on All Saints Day 'how many saints do you know? He had earlier explained that Ignatius of Loyola and Edith Stein had been influenced to a vocation in the former case and conversion from Judaism, in the latter case, by reading the lives of saints at a pivotal time in their lives.

The priest went on to declare 'I know five saints and four of them are from the Parish'. We all had his full attention by

now.' These four, he declared, display heroic virtues of Faith, Hope or Charity'. It was clear from the sermon that the priest was nourished in his ministry by the witness of these 'saints'. Equally the priest was sharing, in a very personal way, his faith journey and at the same time building up his flock. The message in Teams is the same. We are called to witness to the charism or gift we have received. And yes we as a couple, challenged by the question, believe we know saints among

our flock.

Well done Tony and Breda Preston for their great work on the web site. We are sure that this will be a great source of information for us all. Well done Galway sector for an inspiring RC weekend. We are looking forward to Belfast sector weekend on 7th Oct 2012.

Pat and Carmel Cunneen



Group taken at the RC Weekend Galway October 2011.

Sex, Love and Consensus!

The Tablet was first published in 1840 some 10 years before the restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in England and Wales. It is currently the second oldest weekly periodical in Britain. In the 22nd October edition (2011), I was somewhat surprised to see a report from Equipes Notre-Dame's South of England Annual Conference. At the Annual Conference a vote took place where 88% of those responding expressed strong disagreement, with another 10% expressing disagreement. What could create such a degree of consensus? You have probably guessed it - sex and love. In the previous week's edition of the periodical, Fr Dylan James was reported to have said in an article in the Faith magazine that Marriage is an 'office' of love, and sex is 'a function in [this] office of love', though 'sex is not for love, sex is for children in a state of loving'.

The writers of the letter in response pose a number of questions. What of responsible parenthood? What of love-making between couples who already have children, or between older couples or, indeed, between those who are infertile? They then go on to point out that The mutual self-giving which is the essence of sexual intercourse brings us to a better understanding and sustainment of the other, who is made in the image of God. Later they make the following rebuke: The proposition that the primary purpose of sex in marriage is for having children contains within it the propensity to reduce the status of the human being to that of an animal. One of the suggestions they make is that Father James should read The Song of Songs!

I just have one remaining question, what happened to the other two per cent?

Brendan Bunting

Editors' note:

Independently, we received from Eileen Humphreys a copy of the original report in the Tablet and the reply from the two Teams couples.

From Regional Chaplain - Fr. Gerry Cassidy

January

God the Eternal Life has come to live with us. Life became visible. Do not look for miracles or miraculous powers. Life was revealed as a gift of the Father, the rebirth of a humanity without hope.

John 1:1-4 / John 3:1-3

Where do we look for this Life? In books? Perhaps through communion with those who have seen and experienced it before us, and who became His Church.

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me that I am gentle and humble of heart; and you will find rest.”

One of the marvels of the Christian life is the fact that, as loved sinners made new by God's mercy, we are invited by Jesus to be his disciples. As we turn our attention to Jesus in the gospels, we seek a deeper knowledge and love of him and his ways.

God, in that encounter with Jesus, stirs us with love and transforms our minds, hearts, and choices so that, we become a fuller reflection of Christ for our own time in human history.

February

Luke 2:39-52

How conscious am I in my ordinary daily living when I pray and study the life of Jesus, and the question arises what is God saying to me at this time? Where do I feel he is leading me? Which of my daily activities do I consider ordinary?

March

Philippians 4:4-9

What have I learned about myself in moments of receiving praise, affirmation, congratulations, or a prize. What helps me to be grateful to God at those times? How are they serving to deepen my relationship with God? In my life now, who are the people whose ordinary work enhances the quality of my life?

April

Peter 3: 8-9; 4:8-11

Jesus was born poor and raised in impoverished circumstances. What effect does this reality have on the lifestyle choices I make? How does my awareness of God's presence and action during ordinary activities alter my judgment about their importance?

May every dawn bring you Joy
May every sunset bring you Peace
May all your days be Blessed
And Brightened, By the Love
You've come to Share. (Robert Sexton)

The Bran Tub

In loving memory of my late husband Aodhagan Roddy.

I know what I really want for Christmas. I want my childhood back.

Nobody is going to give me that - I know it doesn't make sense, but since when is Christmas about sense anyway? It is about a child of long ago and far away and it is about the child of now. In you and me.

Waiting at the door of our hearts for something wonderful to happen. (1.)

My Christmas tree survived this year, the first to do so for a long time. Just before Christmas it will be welcomed into the house as a honoured guest. Last year I talked about the decorations as evokers of memory. This year I want each one to be a symbol of the gifts God has bestowed on me. To do that I want to be a child again because only then can I really experience the wonder and excitement at what I have been given.

I am going to travel back to my birthplace, Dylan Thomas' lovely ugly town of Swansea, to sit in the old Mumbles train (alas no longer with us) and rattle along the promenade to the pier. That's where the amusement arcade is and the bran tub. I love that bran tub. It's the only machine that you can rely on to give you a present. The others take your money and usually that's the end of it. They make sure that their games are too difficult to win. But I put sixpence in the slot of the bran tub and up through the bran, clutched by a hook, comes a present in a grey cardboard box. Let us see what's inside.

The first gift is all the people I have known and the relationships I have had. First comes my late husband Aodhagan who died in October. His death sharpens the memory of what we shared together over more than forty years and which I can only unwrap gradually as time passes by. Then there are my wonderful children who are a daily joy, extended family, friends each one precious and different. This gift comes bringing many memories sweet and sad. There are people I've encountered who have made me turn full circle in my attitudes. Included also are all the people who have hurt or disturbed me because what they said or did helped me to grow. I hang the brightly coloured locomotive, symbol of my journey with them all.

I draw the next box and in it I find the nutcracker. How many times has God led me into unexpected territory, like Clara was led into the magic kingdom. My relationship with Ignatius, friend for over fifty years, led me to undertake the Spiritual Exercises, which in turn helped me to see that the stories and myths I had loved as a child could be used to come closer to God. I was also drawn to John's Light and Darkness (John Chapter 1 (2)) which unveiled the world of the shadow, the buried treasure in ourselves of untapped resources. I discovered the Apocalypse, that wonderful drama at the end of the bible with its colourful imagery. This often helps me to shine light on dark places. Then I was led to dreamwork so God could speak to me through my own experience as he has done with many, in the fantasies that the nightworld creates. So the nutcracker is put in place.

Next comes the polar bear from Canada. He reminds me that this gift is dangerous. In Swansea, next door to my grandmother, lived an old man, whose house was always open to us children. For my brother, his workshop was a treasure trove and he maintains to this day that this was where he learned to use tools because the old man taught him. Sometimes I see God in the image of that wise teacher, patiently showing me how to use my gift in His service. It is a gift of power which can be used for good or for evil. Yet it comes with a price. A gift like this does not bring popularity, because it invites the recipient to challenge, to question, to be an uncomfortable presence. It points the way to Calvary.

In contrast the next package consists of small things, like tiny flowers growing in the grass that can easily be overlooked or even trampled on. These are the helps and supports which come like Elijah's gentle breeze (3) in daily life; the sudden window of time when I'm overburdened, the kind word or compliment from a friend, the glass of wine by a roaring fire. I find the institutions of our church can present a very masculine spirituality which at times is rigid and harsh. This is neither helpful to man or woman. I need to become aware of Mother God who holds and caresses me stretching out a helping hand. This is the homey, courteous God of Julian of Norwich. The little white angel finds its place on the tree.

Next comes the snowman. He represents all my creative gifts which I'm inclined to neglect. They take effort and exertion. I make excuses. It's too cold to garden today - I'll do the ironing - I don't want to leave that lovely fire to write and anyway who's going to read it? I neglect these gifts at my peril because in staying snugly in my comfort zone something in me dies. The snowman must be built - he may not be

turning out very well but he's my work and next year who knows I might do a bit better. In the last box I find the star which of course is the best gift of all and without which the other presents have no meaning. Its place is on the top of the tree to shine as the light against all our darkness. Julian of Norwich speaks of Mary's wonder at her child.

For what made her marvel was that he who was her Maker chose to be born of the creature he had made. (4)

Emmanuel, God with us, invites you all to delve into your own bran tubs and discover for yourselves all the buried treasure He has given you.

Grateful thanks are due to Bishop Martin Drennan whose weekly gospel reflections, particularly 27th Sunday in Ordinary time, October 23 Matthew 21 (33-43) inspired this article. I highly recommend these reflections to Team members for the two Endeavours of bible study and prayer. They can be found on the Galway Diocesan website.

References.

- (1) Robert Fulham.
- (2) John 1 (1-6)
- (3) 1 Kings 19(11-14)
- (4) Julian of Norwich. Revelations of Divine Love. Penguin Classics. Short Text.p8.

Elizabeth Roddy, Corcullen, Galway.



Jack and Anne Hutchinson, Galway

The Endeavours in Teams

We reproduce a talk given by Jack and Anne Hutchinson at the Responsible Couples' Weekend in Galway, 2nd October, 2011.

JACK - We are Jack & Anne Hutchinson. We are members of Teams in Galway for the past 18 years. The people who are in Teams of Our Lady are people who are searching. We are seekers. That is our experience. We look for truth, goodness, love and God in our lives. The charism of the Team movement is the endeavours. This is our contribution to the Christian faith. These endeavours are practical ways in our search. They are Personal prayer, Conjugal Prayer, Word of God, The Sit Down, The Rule of Life, Team Retreat. As someone said a long time ago the 10 commandments could be reduced to two Commandments. If He were here today He may say that our 6 endeavours could be reduced to 2 Endeavours . - LOVE OF GOD AND LOVE OF PEOPLE. In fact there is one endeavour that is Love of God through loving people, in particular loving that person who is our spouse. This talk is our reflection on the endeavours of our movement and in particular on the SIT DOWN AND RULE OF LIFE.

ANNE - Our theme today is on Joy. An apt theme for our Team Movement and especially on this a Sunday morning, our day of rest and recollection. When we think of joy in our life together our minds can move back to, as we see it now, an uncomplicated period of early Romance. Meeting for the first time, first date, friendships with each others' families, The Wedding, the coming of our children, holidays. For us now, we are married a while beyond these events. Still joy comes into our lives.

JACK - It was joyful a few weeks ago. We went to Dublin. We met our married daughter in Stephen's Green. She had her own 18 month old child with her. The day was great. The four of us contently walked around the Green appreciating the wonder in the young toddler's face at the people, the ducks in the lake, and the noise of the trees. There were a lot of young students in the Green. There were secondary school girls in uniforms. The lads were close by. One young couple (school-children, a boy and a girl) slipped behind a tree for a hug while her friends giggled nearby. There was no thought of recession just a playful joy as all enjoyed the sunny day.

ANNE - At another time, we were in Salthill in a restaurant recently- on the prom. An older couple, older than us, came in. They looked tired, worn out after the half mile walk on the prom. They looked 'spaced out' from their exertion. You couldn't tell if they were on speaking terms with each other or not. They sat separate from each other. Then she reached out and touched his hand. He responded. It gave me a good feeling that they were contented. They were enjoying their kind of joy. I couldn't help thinking that they, most likely, were like those school children once. They must have had many experiences in their life. Now they can still feel a joy in being together.

These are the lyrical moments in our lives when joy is like a beautiful butterfly in the sunlight.

JACK - At other times the joy comes after a bit of pain and growth. As a couple there are times in our lives when I get caught up in all the important and good activities like work, children, sport, and hobbies. At these times, Anne is still a part of my life but a sense of intimacy ceases. Anne is there but I become a bit closed or distant. . In real life the make up is not that simple. Usually a row at some time ensues. When we make up, clear the air - joy returns.

ANNE - At other times, hurts can arise between us. Hurts for all kinds of reasons. Our temperaments can clash. At these times, I wonder, What kind of couple are we? But we get a grace somewhere. We have the power to make choices. We have the power to choose each other again and to grow in wisdom. Then we again have reconciliation, a making up and joy returns. This is not easily done, of course. But we devise coping skills over time. Each of us can recall these moments of joy. They are happening all the time. The incidents are so different yet somehow they have one thing in common; 'we are taken out of ourselves' and enjoy something beyond our selves. Our faith has promised us 'life and have it to the full'. We want to see how our Teams 'sit-down' and 'Rule of Life' helps us achieve this joy in our life.

JACK - We have our Christian faith. We are in Teams of our Lady for 18 years and have had time to think and talk about our faith. Our faith is the context in which we try to live our Christian lives. In which we live our life as a couple and as part of other people. Our faith gives us a language of words, pictures, stories and people which helps us explain our deepest needs and longings to ourselves and to communicate these needs and longings especially to people who share our faith. So from time to time in this talk we will be dipping into our Faith -Language (which is scripture) to help explain what we mean. We have found that our Teams Chaplain and other people of faith have over the years helped us and challenged us on our faith journey. There is a parallel between our FAITH journey and our journey as a couple.

ANNE - Now we come to the Sit -Down. This is where we, as a couple, at least once a month put time aside to talk to each other in an atmosphere of trust. It's an intimate talk. But first there is the Preparation. A conversation in a 'sit down' is not simply about expressing a point of view or of giving FACTS about ourselves, but is about connecting with another human being, in my case with Jack.

JACK - There is a connection or parallel between our experience and scripture.

In Luke's gospel Chapter 4, it is mentioned that Jesus was addressing a group of people in Nazareth his home town where he was brought up. He goes into the synagogue, as usual, according to Luke. He unfolds the scroll and reads. Then in my opinion he does a significant action. To quote the Scripture 'Jesus rolled up the scroll gave it back to the attendant and sat down.' So in my opinion Jesus had a sit down with his people in the same way as we couples have a sit down with each other. All props are put aside. No bible, no written texts no 'rules for a sit down'. Its just Jesus and the people .There is a silence and as the text says 'their eyes were fixed on him'

I love this section in the New Testament. Nothing is said. There is a silence for a moment. There are no words. A silence in preparation for what is to be said. I think the preparation for our sit down is important. No interruptions, if we can manage it. All our props are put aside. Enjoy the presence of each other. Say a silent prayer or verbal prayers . Enjoy the present moment. What better lead in could we have for our 'sit down'. We begin by putting busyness and props aside and our eyes are on each other. As in any life event - for example Dublin versus Kerry all Ireland Final - the two teams didn't just come out and begin to play. There was a long period of preparation on the day of parades, and anthems before the game began. The point is we all need preparation - it's an important part our 'sit down'.

ANNE - But real life intervenes here. For the record; this particular 'sit down' did not work out well for Jesus. The people didn't

The Endeavours in Teams continued

like what he said and tried to harm him. It goes to show our 'sit down' can go wrong. We have had our failures. Our monthly 'sit-down' can stir up negative feelings (as we call them) of anger, blame and resentment just as easily as soft, loving and pleasant feelings. The Teams movement has an excellent leaflet on the 'sit-down' which is a help. So it's as well to have a glance at this leaflet. The Teams' leaflet on the 'sit-down' mentions that there is no perfect sit down.

JACK - If you are an organised person you can set a specific time aside during the month. Sometimes we have put the 'sit down' on the long finger. We realise our monthly meeting is a few hours away. We then have our 'sit -down' just before we leave the house for a team meeting. I feel a bit guilty about this when it happens to us. The Teams movement advice is that this is alright and is a good preparation of the Team meeting. As you can guess it is not the ideal time from a planning point of view.

ANNE - It's often I who suggest having a sit down and sometimes I can get a negative reaction (there could be a match or programme on TV which Jack wants to watch) - and he might say -will this take long? Other times we agree together.

We usually make sure we have as little distractions as possible and light a candle and say a prayer to help us. We then begin our sit down. I thought it might be helpful to list out the direction we have been given from Teams on an approach to the SIT-DOWN

- o One person begins --- talk about where you are at this moment. Consider your relationship with God, your physical health, your material needs, job, career, family, church . all the things that make you unique

- o the other person JUST LISTEN

- o Reverse the roles and follow the same pattern

- o When both of you have finished your individual sharing it is time to look at where you both are as a couple. Discuss things that you are both willing to change, reinforce or continue in your lives. If one wants to go in a certain direction but the other is not ready then consider praying for God's help and insight... Then let it go for now.

- o If the discussion gets heated and you begin to argue then it's time to stop. Decide if this particular topic should be discussed at another time after a period of reflection and prayer.

JACK - I give Anne time to speak of where she is at the present moment. I have to remember that thoughts and feelings are neither right nor wrong they just are, it's good to remember this if negative feelings come to the fore. . Sometimes I want to jump in and defend myself. I remind myself that I can RESPOND to Anne instead of REACTING. Or I can choose to listen. I'm reminded of the old saying which you have heard before - we have one mouth and two ears. So, Listening is twice as important. We all think that we are great listeners. When I had written this about listening, I heard a radio interview with an Alan Pease. He has written a book called

'Why men won't listen and women can't read maps'.

So, it seems that listening is not that easy for males. We need to use our listening aids. When Anne has finished talking, we then reverse roles. I speak and Anne listens.

ANNE - What does the sit down mean to me? I as a woman love to be listened to and not just to get air space - as if what I have to say doesn't matter - for example, for us to go through the ritual of being given time to speak but know that Jack is not listening - or to get the impression that he is just letting me have my say.

We usually talk about ourselves first: How I am feeling myself? About the family,

About things which bother me, How I am feeling about our relationship at the time,

We go back and forth with these issues; one speaks first - then the other: This can take a while. Then we discuss how we can improve and move and help each other. Sometimes this isn't possible and we don't get anywhere - we decide to leave the discussion. The sit down is not for the purpose of solving problems. It is a way to bring us as a couple closer. We aim to create an empathy with each other. At times, we find things work out and we decide to take some action to improve our life together. This discussion and any decisions we make can take place outside the actual 'sit-down'.

JACK - We are asked in the sit down to find God in the other person. How do we do this? I learnt a long time ago that 'to be open to Anne was to be open to God'. By being open to Anne to me means speaking the truth which is in me, allowing Anne to know what's inside me. It means having the confidence in Anne's love that she will accept me as I am. It also means listening to Anne's truth. In this way I believe that God is in the midst somewhere. In the sit down we discover unities which we have. If so enjoy it and 'thank God' for the joy. In an area where we are 'out of kilter' when we disagree about something, it is suggested that we pray for each other. We can change. But I think we will only change if we recognise that we need the wisdom to change, if we want the wisdom to change, and if we seek the wisdom to change.

ANNE - WHAT AREAS DO WE TALK ABOUT IN OUR SIT DOWNS?

There are some areas of our life it has been suggested to us, which are difficult for couples generally. When we are comfortable with handling the 'sit down', it is good to attempt these. For a lot of couples the most difficult areas to talk about can be money, God, sex, death all are part of life and we have strong feelings on these. For example, I see Jack as conservative about money. He's a saver, not a spender. Part of my mentality is we have only one life so enjoy it as much as we can. For example - When I suggest we take a holiday Jack might say - where is the money coming from? I usually ask him not to be so negative - we'll get the money.

Could we talk about it. Sometimes he doesn't want to discuss it. A 'Sit down' can help us to get beyond the issue in a trusting environment to share our thoughts and feelings, hopes and needs.

JACK - In our 'sit down' we have talked about the area of our sex life together. Listening to Anne in our sit down, I have become aware of her need- to be held, to be touched, to be physically close not just when we make love. I have heard recently and agree that intimacy is an opportunity for us couples to explore who we really are. Listening to Anne gives me an awareness of her needs and how I need to step out of my self controlled world, at times, into her world. In this stage of our life - 'It's never too late to learn'. The 'sit-down' is not just an end in itself. Just as Sunday Mass is a way of bringing us to our senses to enable us to live the rest of the week in a life-giving way - so the 'Sit Down' can bring me out of myself and allow me to discover Anne afresh - to look at each other with different eyes. It's about keeping in touch with each other as a couple on a day to day basis.

ANNE - RULE of LIFE.

The Rule of life is one of the endeavours of the Team movement. The other five are;

Listening to the word of God, Daily prayer, Conjugal prayer, Sit Down, Annual retreat. The purpose of our movement is to pro-

The Endeavours in Teams continued

vide spiritual formation that is structured and practical in a Team with other couples. The Rule of Life is different to the other endeavours. The Rule of Life is personal to each individual. Why do we have a Rule of Life? The most recent handout from the Teams movement says:

If we are to move forward in our spiritual life; if there is to be any real spiritual growth, we have to be aware of any obstacles that might hinder our progress. This is the point of the Rule of Life: to take an honest and reflective look at our self, our relationships and our attitudes and decide if there is some point that we could improve on. The Rule of Life need not be restricted to spiritual matters, it can be something in our everyday life; it's often in personal relationships where the most benefit can be found. It is mentioned that the Rule of Life is like a map but as Jack mentioned earlier Alan Peas said - women can't read maps. I certainly think that a Rule of Life is a help to both men and women.

JACK - HOW DO WE CONSIDER WHAT OUR RULE OF LIFE SHOULD BE?

The Team movement suggests that some of the following thoughts may be a useful guide.

- o Am I so preoccupied by work or my hobbies that I don't give the time I should to my husband, wife or family?
- o Do I give my full attention when my family talk to me - could I be a better listener?
- o Can I be more co-operative, at home, at work, with others?
- o Is there a point of concern that has come from the 'sit-down' that needs to be addressed?

ANNE - On our journey of life we sometimes find the road is smooth, straight and easy to travel with our destination clearly in sight. At other times it twists and turns with so many hills and valleys that we find it difficult to see where we are going. The Rule of Life gives us the opportunity to pause on our journey, to look back at where we have been, where we are now, and where we want to be. The best bit of advice from the Teams leaflet on the Rule of Life is 'keep it simple' to take small steps - I also think it's a good idea to -

WRITE IT OUT. a brief sentence may be sufficient.

JACK - It is mentioned in the Teams Leaflet that the Rule of Life could be reviewed from time to time and ideally each month. My own experience of the review of the Rule of Life is based on something which I learned a long time ago - that is that God in my life is an awareness which beckons me forward but forever remains out of sight. I find with a rule of life that the specific short statement which has a meaning to me personally begins to have a life of its own and beckons me forward and helps me to change something in my life. The rule of life once decided upon is never static. That's why I think, we are encouraged to review often/or from time to time as the spirit moves us.

ANNE - Where do we start with the rule of life? We would like to bring you back to the reading we referred to earlier of Jesus just before what we called his 'Sit Down'. Jesus read from the Book of Isaiah where reference was made to: 'Good news for the Poor', 'Liberty for captives', 'Sight for the blind'. I think we begin our Rule of Life in an area where we are helpless, weak and hurting. We look into our own lives where we are poor, captives and blind for wisdom, advice or brokenness, brought on by my temperament. We look to where there is misunderstanding, hurt, and pain particularly in relationships. We may experience alienation in some part of our life. It might be something small in our married life which I don't want to talk about or alienation in a personal relationship. This is 'starting small'. The rule of life could begin there.

Jack - For me I began my rule of life in an area of a broken relationship. An alienation in a very close relationship occurred - I decided that I should do something - approaches failed, so this is where I was - Poor, captive and blind. A Rule of life for me was to resolve to pray for that person every day at a certain time. I say one decade of the rosary for the person and I pray for acceptance of the situation for myself and softening of heart in both myself and in the other person. I shared the fact that I had a 'Rule of Life' at a Team Meeting. I was asked - Did you write it down? I hadn't, but I did later. I wrote it into a note book. I have updated my Rule of Life from time to time according as I accept the situation and see things more clearly. We don't have an obligation to share our Rule of Life. It is personal. If we have a Rule of Life for that month, we could share at our team meeting, the fact that we have one and how we got on with it. (Do we need to update it or are we going to continue with the same one for next month?).

ANNE - What we have been talking about for the past while is our SPIRITUALITY - which is simply living in love: As a person, As a Couple.

- 1 Spirituality has something to do with SILENCE and being aware that God is present in the here and now. I think that our endeavour of Personal prayer recognises this.
- 2 Spirituality has something to do with forgetting myself and having the Joy of being other centred.
- 3 Spirituality has something to do with the CHOICES and decision I make minute to minute - hour to hour (choices which I hardly notice at the time.) And, of course, there are the bigger decisions. The choices are made with a conscience formed in the context of our faith.

JACK - Spirituality has something to do with each of us getting our life together so that there is wholeness. Maybe this is where the word Holy comes from. This may entail embracing the areas of alienation as part of the whole of our life

4 Spirituality has something to do with breaking our attitudes, and fixed ideas so that we come out of ourselves and into joy.

ANNE - So we come back to our theme of our meeting

'With joy you will draw water at the Fountain of Salvation'

We set goals for our spiritual life. Goals are important, we need a map. We know that the arriving is not all important. The journey is the aim.

The ENDEAVOURS of our movement do help us on this journey.



Guests at RC Weekend - Antony and Janet Denman and Mark and Dympna Edwards

Prayer Intentions

For the deceased:

John O'Donoghue, Mary O'Brien's father. Noreen Kilmartin, Fr. Michael Kilmartin's mother. Aodhagan Roddy. Ite Ryder, Michael Clenaghan's sister. Noel Carpenter, Kitty Murrin's brother.

For those who are ill:

**Gerry and Margaret Mulhern's son, Brian.
Margaret Mulhern's sister.**

News from around the Region

Dublin

Good News

We have good news from John & Helen McCarrick formerly of Lucan Team and now living in Galway and part of Team 1 there. Helen was diagnosed with advanced lung cancer in the summer of 2010. The prognosis was not good. But following treatment and a tsunami of prayers and goodwill from around the world involving Team members, family and friends we are glad to report that at the moment Helen is in excellent form, symptom free and very thankful to God and to all who offered their prayers and support.

Deo Gratias.

8th December Mass

Our annual Mass will be celebrated on Thursday 8th December, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Our Celebrant will be Fr. Brian O'Toole from Team 25. The venue is Marianella, Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6. Mass will start at 8.00pm. We have arranged for the community dining room to be available to and we will have plenty of space to meet together for a cup of tea after Mass. We are praying that the weather will be better this year and we look forward to seeing everybody there.

Teams Retreat

The retreat will be held on 3rd and 4th March 2012. This is one of our most important Teams events each year and our appeal is for as many as possible to support it by joining us there. The Theme and venue for the Retreat will be posted on the website shortly. It will be an uplifting and inspiring weekend.

Teams Social Evening

The Social Evening was held on 16th September. As last year, the venue was St. Patrick's Boys National School Hall, Holly Park. Everybody thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The sing-song, recitations and music were great with no shortage of talent in Teams from the youngest to the oldest. Robert Jordan from Team 11 was our M.C. and led the entertainment again this year. Robert did a wonderful job and it was a great opportunity to meet and enjoy a relaxing evening.

Responsible Couples Weekend

The Responsible Couples Weekend was hosted by Galway at the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, Croi Nua Retreat Centre, Rosary lane, Taylor's Hill, Galway, on Saturday and Sunday 1st and 2nd October 2011. The Theme for the Weekend was 'With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation'. The Retreat began on Saturday at 9.45 a.m. with Fr. Paddy Greene's Talk on Lectio Divina during which he introduced an imaginative exploration of scripture. Fr. Paddy also gave a most interesting talk on Dreams as a means of encounter with oneself and God. After lunch, Brian Grogan and Helen Luke led a plenary session on Aging in the Team Movement.

As is customary at the Teams R/C Weekend, the local Teams couples had invited the visiting Responsible Couples to a Teams Meeting in their homes on Saturday evening. This offered a great opportunity to meet couples from other sectors and to share our charisms.

Sunday began with a Talk by Jack and Anne Hutchinson on the Endeavours in the Teams Movement concluding with an open discussion. Vera Coughlin spoke about Julian of Norwich and courteous love. The Super-Regional Couple, Antony & Janet Denman, spoke at length on a number of Teams topics and in particular, on the great progress being made by Teams in Ireland. The Regional couple, Pat & Carmel Cunneen, spoke on a wide range of subjects and concluded by complimenting the Galway Sector Couple, Billy & Ann Hyland, on their excellent planning and management of this very important Teams Event. The Weekend concluded with the Celebration of the Eucharistic by Fr. Michael Screene MSC.

It was a wonderful weekend and everybody was delighted that, despite their busy schedule, the Super-Regional Couple were able to attend. The new Teams Banners provided by Dublin were located on each side of the podium and were very impressive.

Irish Website

The new Irish Region Website <http://www.equipes-notre-dame.ie/> was launched in time for the R/C Weekend. The response was very good and several complimentary emails have been received.

Sad News

Liz Roddy's husband Aogan from Team 3 in Galway died suddenly shortly after the R/C Weekend R.I.P. Liz and Aogan played a very important role in the planning and management of the weekend and we are all indebted to them for their great vision and discernment. On behalf of everyone in Teams, we extend our deepest sympathy to Liz and the family.

Breda & Tony Preston

News from around the Region continued

Belfast

Responsible Couples' Weekend 6th - 7th October 2012

Our Sector Team have agreed that Belfast Sector will host the next RC Weekend. It will be held on the 6th-7th October in Dromantine Conference Centre Newry, Co.Down. We will give more details later.

December 7th Mass

The Mass and Social evening will take place on the vigil, December 7th.

The venue will be in the Passionist Retreat Centre, Tobar Mhuire Crossgar at 7.30 pm. Fr Ephrem Blake C.P. will celebrate the Mass, which will be followed by a social evening as usual.

News from our three teams

Congratulations to Jim and Lynn Jordan on their 50th Wedding Anniversary! We hope and pray that Lynn and Jim's health will improve. Paddy and Anne Scott wish to thank team members for the prayers for their daughter Cliodhna, and their grand-daughter Caoimhe, who are both doing well.

Prayers are asked for Gerry and Margaret Mulhern's son Brian who recently had an operation, and who is to have an MRI scan soon; and for Margaret's sister who is ill and has recently broken her ankle in two places.

Michael Clenaghan's sister Ita Ryder died recently, and prayers are asked for the repose of her soul.

Brendan and Moyra Bunting

Galway

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all those who attended the R.C. Weekend in Galway on October 1st and 2nd. Preparation for the weekend was shared by all three teams in Galway and the generosity of everyone who helped in the preparation and organisation was very much appreciated. We were saddened in teams in Galway by the sudden passing of Aodhag n Roddy. We extend our sincere sympathy to Liz and to their children, Iggy, Gareth and Miriam. Aodhagan was an inspiration to us in Galway Teams. We were encouraged by his enthusiasm and commitment. He was a valued member of the R.C. Weekend Preparation Team

and his sudden passing has left a void here in our Galway Teams.

Sadly too a brother of Kitty Murrin and a near neighbour in Galway passed away recently. We offer our sincere sympathy to Kitty, her family and the family of her brother Noel. Ar dheis De go raibh a n-anam dhilis.

We are planning our Mass for December 8th. The celebrant will be Fr John Humphreys S.J. We look forward to meeting Team members again and to enjoying some pre-Christmas treats. We are keeping Emmie and Eddie in our prayers. We are delighted to hear that Helen had good news recently in regard to her health. We look forward to meeting them again on December 8th.

Rath De oraibh go leir.

Billy and Ann Hyland

Mullingar

We have sad news from our Sector. The death took place recently of Mrs. Noreen Kilmartin, mother of our Sector Chaplain Father Michael Kilmartin. Please remember her in your prayers. Please remember also Noel Carpenter, who also died recently, brother of Kitty Murrin. We send our sincere sympathy to Elizabeth Roddy (Galway) on the death of her husband Aogain.R.I.P.

The R.C. weekend in Galway was a very good experience. We enjoyed it very much. Congratulations and thanks to all the Teams. We were glad to get the revised Handbooks for each of our Teams, thanks to Liam McKinney (Belfast). The web site is fantastic; we just printed out 39 pages on the Sector Couple, all good.

Mass for the feast day of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady will be celebrated by Father Michael Kilmartin on December 8th. at 7:30 pm. in the Cathedral Mullingar. A little reception afterwards has been arranged at the Annebrook House Hotel, Mullingar, to which you will all be most welcome. Family members and friends will be very welcome to join us for the evening.

We send you our best wishes for a happy and holy Christmas with your families and friends.

Frank and Margaret Fagan

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