



T e a m s o f O u r L a d y

Equipas de Nossa Senhora • Equipos de Nuestra Señora

Information Couple Handbook

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter to Information Couples	5
INTRODUCTION	6
The Role of the Information Couple (IC).....	6
Background Information.....	6
Chronology of the Teams of Our Lady Movement	6/7
CHAPTER ONE	8
PROMOTION OF TEAMS	8
CHAPTER TWO	10
THE INVITATION.....	10
STAGE 1: THE INVITATION.....	10
STAGE 2: SCHEDULING THE INFORMATION MEETING.....	10
REFERENECE MATERIAL FOR THE INFORMATION MEETING	11
CHAPTER THREE.....	12
CONDUCTING THE INFORMATION MEETING	12
OUTLINE FOR THE INFORMATION MEETING.....	13
Opening Scripture or Prayer and Intro.....	13
The Teams of Our Lady (TEAMS) Movement.....	13
The Team as Community	15
Who is involved in TEAMS?.....	15
What happens at a TEAMS Meeting?	15
Responsibility is shared.....	15
The Larger Community of TEAMS	16
Conclusion of Information Meeting	16
CHAPTER FOUR.....	17
COUPLE PLACEMENT IN A TEAM	17
New Team Placement.....	17
CHAPTER FIVE.....	18
ORGANIZATION TIPS.....	18
INTERESTED COUPLES LIST	18
INFORMATION SCHEDULE.....	18
TAILORING THE PROCESS TO YOUR AREA.....	18

CHAPTER SIX.....	19
QUESTIONS COUPLES MIGHT ASK	19
Appendix A	22
Sample Letter to a Pastor.....	22
Correct Forms of Address for Spiritual Counselors.....	23
Appendix B.....	23
Bulletin Ad Ideas.....	23
Appendix C.....	25
SAMPLE PULPIT TALK.....	25
Appendix D	26
Sample Follow Up Letter.....	26
Appendix E.....	27
New Member Questionnaire	27
<i>The Magnificat</i>	28

Letter to Information Couples



Dear Information Couple,

Thank you for serving as Information Couple. It is the first opportunity that many couples have to learn of the Movement, and you will be the face of the Movement to them. We ask that you share your love of TEAMS OF OUR LADY as you cover the facts. Often it is the testimony of the presenting couple that stays with the couples after the Information Meeting.

This handbook has been provided to help you in your task. It contains facts that you will need, as well as suggestions. They are just that – suggestions. We understand that you will have your own method of presenting the material and keeping records. This material is presented to you for study and to prevent you from having to “re-invent the wheel”. The methods suggested have worked for others.

Each area is different. Some of you will be working in existing Sectors with a history of TEAMS OF OUR LADY. People will have heard of the Movement. Others will be working in mission territory, going where there are no teams and blazing paths. Our prayers are with you all as you spread the Movement and the strength it brings to marriage.

Remember to keep your own commitment strong by faithfully following the Endeavors and TEAMS OF OUR LADY responsibilities. God will not be outdone in His generosity as we serve Him.

Please do not water down the commitment needed to be a committed and conscious member of TEAMS. The Endeavors or Rule are the vehicle for couple spirituality and holiness and the Membership Responsibilities are the vehicle for strong teams and strong Movement at every level, especially the annual Contribution and participation in Sector, Regional and National events. Fr. Caffarel wrote: “Your love without demands diminishes me. Your demands without love discourages me. Your demanding love makes me grow.”

*With thankful hearts and prayer,
The US Super Regional Team*

INTRODUCTION

The information process is designed to assist interested couples or priests in making the decision to further explore the Movement. The process begins with a bulletin ad, phone call or invitation by a current Teams of Our Lady (TEAMS) member to a friend, to attend an Information Meeting. The goals of the information process are:

- To provide each couple or priest interested in TEAMS the same accurate information about the Movement in a supportive neutral environment.
- To answer questions and provide details about TEAMS, the endeavors, and life in the team.
- To ensure that each person understands the goals of the Movement and the commitment involved.
- To form new teams and fill vacancies in existing teams.

The Role of the Information Couple (IC)

You serve as the contact and guide for the couple or priest through the inquiry stage until they are placed in a team. The role of the IC is:

- To represent the Movement and be the first contact of inquiring parties.
- To conduct Information Meetings with a spirit of hospitality and respect.
- To ensure that each couple and priest who has been invited to join TEAMS attends an Information Meeting.
- To communicate with the interested parties until placed in a team.

Background Information

TEAMS has the following organizational structure in the United States:

Team: 5 to 7 couples and a spiritual counselor. One couple is selected annually to serve as a Responsible couple. The position rotates through the team.

Sector: Groupings of 5-25 teams with a geographic proximity. A Sector Team consisting of the RCs, Information Couples (ICs), Pilot Couples (PCs), Liaison Couples (LCs) and those others selected by the Sector Couple attend meetings 3-4 times per year.

Region: A group of states, or parts of states, consisting of about 50-70 teams. The Regional Team consists of the Sector Couples, a chaplain and others in service to the Region, such as a Newsletter Couple.

Province: A group of approximately 5-7 regions. The Province Team consists Regionals Couples, a Chaplain, a Province Newsletter Couple, and other in service to the Province.

Super Region: consists of teams in the United States. The Super Regional Team meets semi-annually and is composed of the Super Regional Couple, the Super Regional Chaplain, Province Couples, the Secretariat Couple and the Finance Couple.

Chronology of the Teams of Our Lady Movement

The TEAMS Movement is an international Catholic Lay Movement of married couples officially recognized by the Holy See as a lay institute under the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

- It started in France (Equipes Notre Dame) in 1939.
- The Charter adopted and “Equipes Notre Dame” designation was established in 1947.

- The Movement was brought to California by a young French couple in 1958.
- United States became a Region in the early 1970s.
- United States became a Super Region 1981. This designation is made when an area reaches at least 200 teams.
- Portuguese speaking teams on the east and west coasts were incorporated into the US Super Region in 2001.

CHAPTER ONE

PROMOTION OF TEAMS

A steady stream of interested couples is needed to fill TEAMS vacancies and build new teams. Couples need information to help them make a decision about whether TEAMS is what they have been searching for. Many couples will attend an Information Meeting and several months, or even years, after will decide the time is right for them to join. Do not get discouraged if your meeting has only one couple. This chapter is designed to help you review all possible avenues for promotion. Please feel free to invent some of your own, and share them with the TEAMS Office!

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

- There are announcement samples in Appendix B. They can be used to promote TEAMS in existing parishes, or in new parishes that the Sector Couple may be targeting as areas for new growth. Keep a record of all contacts, including the dates, so that when the IC changes they have knowledge of past efforts.
- Make an appointment to see the Pastor of a new parish and tell him of TEAMS. If he seems willing, suggest that bulletin ads might generate some interest and ask for permission to put them in the parish bulletin. Keep a record of all contacts; including the dates, so that when the IC changes the new couple will have knowledge of past efforts. If leadership in the parish changes new contacts should be made. Check with the Sector Couple to see if they would prefer to make this contact.
- Ads may also be used in diocesan publications if there is an announcement section. Check with the Sector or Regional Couple before paying for ads.

FAMILY LIFE COMMITTEES

If your parish or diocese has a Family Life Committee meet with them to explain the Movement and see if they will accept flyers to distribute when inquiries are received. Check with the Sector Couple to see whom they prefer to assign or assume this role.

FLYERS

The TEAMS Office has an attractive tri-fold brochure that can be used at Parish Fairs, in Welcome Packets, RCIA, or sacrament prep classes (marriage, baptism, first communion etc.). Order them as needed from The TEAMS Office, but please do not duplicate them on your own. There is a space for a local contact to be added, and also reference to the national web site and email.

MINISTRY FAIRS

Contact your Sector Couple for assistance. TEAMS has specially made banners to use and can supply sample materials and flyers. TEAMS couples should man the booths so that questions can be answered, and a list of inquiring couples should be made so that they can be invited to the next Information Meeting. Perhaps a card with specific details about the next Information Meeting could be available to pass out to interested couples.

PARISH WEBSITE

Parishes usually have a website and many list parish organizations. Check to see if TEAMS OF OUR LADY is listed, and please ask that the National TEAMS website be a link (www.teamsofourlady.org).

PULPIT TALKS

- Some parishes will promote TEAMS either through comments made by the clergy during Mass, or by a brief talk by a parishioner during announcements.
- See Appendix C for sample talks.
- If possible, schedule a meeting immediately following the Mass.
- Have a sheet for couples to sign if they are interested in further information or have a reminder card ready to hand to the couples if you have already scheduled a time and place for the next scheduled Information Meeting.
- Make sure directions are given to the location and list a phone numbers to call if people have questions or get lost.

WORD OF MOUTH

This is still the best way to attract couples to the Movement. A reminder sent to the RCs of local teams several weeks prior to a scheduled Information Meeting is the best help with word of mouth advertising. Encourage couples to invite their friends to the meeting and suggest that they accompany the friends to the meeting. All present will benefit from the testimony of the inviting couples, and their friends will not have to enter a meeting knowing no one.

CHAPTER TWO

THE INVITATION

STAGE 1: THE INVITATION

- The original contact may be informal – through a bulletin ad, welcome package to a new parishioner, flier from a marriage preparation class, baptism class, RCIA, or other means.
- Team members may contact the Information Couple with the names of interested couples. This is the best method of contact and should be encouraged.
- IC contacts potential team members by phone. After introducing yourself clarify the interest of the couple and verify the contact information (mailing address, phone, email).
- Give a brief description of TEAMS and answer any questions. Explain that the next step is to attend an Information Meeting.
- Send a copy of the flier and an information letter.
- Call again with information about upcoming information meetings. Even when a couple is interested in learning more about the Movement remember that they do not understand the importance TEAMS can have in their lives. It may take several calls to bring them to an Information Meeting. It is best if they have friends in the Movement and that a TEAMS couple pick them up and attend the meeting with them.
- If after several calls they do not respond, take them off the active list. Send a note or email that you will not contact them in the future, but would love to hear from them when the timing is better for them.

STAGE 2: SCHEDULING THE INFORMATION MEETING

- Schedule meetings on a regular basis, involving TEAMS couples of all ages. If they are held in homes it clarifies the concept of TEAMS as a lay Movement. If they are held at church for convenience it is important that the couples know that the meetings will be held in homes on rotation.
- Directions to the meeting should be clear and include a phone number in case a couple or spiritual counselor gets lost.
- Call or email the couples to remind them of the upcoming meeting.
- The Information Couple can go to the home of a couple if they are the only couple that will attend the meeting and it is more convenient.
- Check with your Sector Couple to see if a list of waiting couples exists or if couples are needed to backfill teams.

REFERENCE MATERIAL FOR THE INFORMATION MEETING

PRINTED MATERIALS

- Flyers
- Magnificat/Endeavor card
- Back issues of the Magnificat

VIDEO MATERIALS

- Team Meeting Video

MATERIALS FOR DISPLAY

- Piloting book
- Decree of Recognition
- Sharing on the Endeavors
- The Team Meeting
- What is a Team of Our Lady?

CHAPTER THREE

CONDUCTING THE INFORMATION MEETING

The atmosphere should be relaxed and informal, but respectful and organized. Refreshments may be served, but they should be simple and served immediately. Allow a little time for couples to find the house, but do not delay the start of the meeting out of respect for those who arrived on time.

Be open to questions and state whether you prefer they be asked at the end or will welcome interruptions. Explain that most questions will be answered as you present the material. If you do not know the answer offer to find out the correct answer and get back to them. (See sample questions that might be asked in Appendix A).

Follow the Meeting Outline so all basic information is presented. The basics of the Movement should not be down played or altered, but personal testimony is necessary to give the movement a human face. Show the video of the Teams Meeting, but still discuss all information.

Have a display of TEAMS documents for the couples to see.

Listen to and observe the responses of each couple. Try to get to know them as this will help in team placement.

The meeting should last about 45- 60 minutes.

Ask the couples to get back to you with their answer within a set time, normally 1-2 weeks. Or if you do not hear from them, you will be following up with a phone call and an email.

Explain that couples will be placed in an existing team or forming a new team. Determine which way the couples will be placed prior to the Information Meeting.

Explain that their commitment is for twelve meetings and that at the 12th meeting they can decide if they will continue for the next year. Explain that commitments are made a year at a time each year.

Suggest that if one partner is more interested in joining the Movement than the other, the less interested partner can give the twelve months of piloting as a gift to their spouse.

After the twelfth meeting the newly formed Team will be attending a New Teams Welcome Celebration! The purpose of the New Teams Welcome Celebration is to meet other new Teams, review the information given during the piloting process, celebrate entry into and strengthen the unity of the movement.

OUTLINE FOR THE INFORMATION MEETING

Opening Scripture or Prayer and Intro

Suggested Scripture (choose one)

- Luke 1:41-48 (Magnificat)
- Luke 11:9-10 (Ask and receive)
- John 15:1-5 (Vine and branches)
- John 17:20-23 (That all may be one)
- Philippians 2:1-4 (Unity and Humility)
- Philippians 4:4-9 (Rejoice in the Lord)

Suggested Prayer

- The Lord's Prayer

Introductions

- Thank couples for coming
- Information Couple introduces themselves, noting the length of their marriage, number of children, and how long they have been in TEAMS.
- Have couples introduce themselves indicating the length of their marriage, number of children, and how they heard of TEAMS.

Purpose of the Information Meeting

- To share our excitement about TEAMS and what it has done for our marriage and family.
- To tell you about the Movement.
- To explain how the monthly meeting is conducted.
- To explain the meeting preparation.
- To invite them to join. However the commitment and requirements of Teams' life must not be watered down but benefits are immeasurable.

The Teams of Our Lady (TEAMS) Movement

Goals

- Growth in the spiritual life of the couple and family through prayer and study.
- Small group support for couples.
- Growth in the couples' intimacy through deeper communication and prayer.

Chronology of the Movement

- 1939 Started in France by four couples and their parish priest, Father Henri Caffarel.
- 1947 Charter written and signed by couples already in the Movement. The name Equipes Notre Dame is adopted.
- 1958 the first team meets in the USA.
- There are now teams on every continent and in over 90 countries.
- The USA now has over 800 teams and meets in three languages: English, Portuguese and Spanish.

Organization of the Movement

- Team
- Sector
- Region
- Province
- Super Region
- Zone
- International Leading Team (ERI)

All TEAMS leadership is volunteer; there are currently no paid employees.

Spirituality of the Movement

The Blessed Mother is the patroness of TEAMS, but it is not a Marian Movement. We look to Mary as the perfect follower of God's will. We strive to say "yes" as she did, and to live lives in Christ through prayer, scripture and the sacraments.

The Movement's spirituality is basic – it sets out a framework for each couple to pursue their spirituality together on a foundation of prayer and scripture.

The Magnificat, Mary's prayer upon hearing Elizabeth's greeting, is the TEAMS OF OUR LADY prayer. It is recited worldwide by couples for all the other couples in the Movement. It unites us to each other and to Mary's expression of joy in serving God. It emphasizes God's faithfulness to His people.

The Endeavors are the foundation for the couples' growth and are taken on gradually. They are:

- Regular reading or listening to scripture.
- Daily period of meditation (personal prayer).
- Daily conjugal prayer (couple prayer).
- Monthly Sit-Down (in depth talk by couples recognizing God's part in their married lives).
- Rule of Life (private individual efforts for Spiritual and/or self-improvement).
- Annual retreat.

The team members also take on certain responsibilities:

- Praying the Magnificat daily.
- Attending monthly team meetings.
- Prepare the monthly the Study Topic as a couple.
- Annual Contribution to support the Movement. A day's pay is requested.
- Reading National and Regional newsletters.
- Annual team evaluation and recommitment.
- Extend Hospitality to other Team members.
- Attending Sector Events and training sessions. There are also Regional, National and International events.
- Service couples are encouraged to attend an extra Mass each week.

The Team as Community

What is a team?

- It is 5-7 couples that commit to each other annually to meet monthly to pray, study and support each other in spiritual growth.
- Ideally the couples are accompanied by a priest or spiritual counselor who is not a leader, but a fellow team member bringing the gift of spiritual help. (Discuss the difficulties in finding a priest if you like, but do not dwell on this).

Who is involved in TEAMS?

- Married couples whose marriage is recognized as valid by the Catholic Church.
- Non-Catholic spouses are welcomed with the understanding that the Movement is for couples to explore their Sacrament based on the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Couples of all ages and races, with and without children, regardless of education or financial status.
- Widows and widowers are always welcome to stay with their team.

There is an effort to form teams in close geographic areas for convenience. Teams are often of mixed ages. Teams stay together for many years and new members are added as needed.

Teams are not parish based, but often couples will be from the same parish.

What happens at a TEAMS Meeting?

The team meets monthly rotating from home to home. The meeting lasts about 3 hours during which the couples:

- Share a meal and their 'highs' and 'lows' of the month.
- Pray together.
- Support each other in the practice of the Endeavors.
- Listen to those wishing to share personal thoughts.
- Discuss a study topic.

The meetings are confidential and are not shared outside the team meeting. Study topics vary and may include marriage and family, spirituality, faith, church documents. After an initial period of prescribed material, the team can obtain study material from the TEAMS Office.

Responsibility is shared

- Leadership in the team changes annually. The Responsible Couple (RC) meets with the Sector Team and keeps the team informed of the events of the larger Movement.
- Discussion leader changes monthly.
- Food assignments are rotated.
- Houses rotate.

The Larger Community of TEAMS

While each team is a unit, it is part of the whole of the Movement. Couples are encouraged to attend:

- Sector/Regional Events
- Enrichment days
- Training sessions
- National Conferences (held every 3 years)
- International Gatherings (held every 6 years)

Couples are encouraged to take on positions of responsibility as asked.

Conclusion of Information Meeting

- Ask the couple to discuss and pray about their decision about joining the team at home.
- Establish the date by which you would like them to call with a decision, and make sure that they have your phone number. Tell them you will call if you do not hear from them.
- Explain that we hope that they decide to try twelve months of piloting. They need to be patient, as it often takes time to form a new team, but you will keep them informed of the progress are made.
- Ask for questions and encourage the couples to call if a question comes up during them discussions at home.
- Close with Magnificat.

Give out handouts and Placement Questionnaire (Appendix E) if your Sector uses it. And make sure you have their contact information on the sign in sheet.

CHAPTER FOUR

COUPLE PLACEMENT IN A TEAM

The IC works with the Sector Couple to determine whether the couples will start a new team or be used to backfill existing teams.

- Phone or email the couples if they have not responded after the deadline is reached. If the couple says “yes” please check to see that all the contact information is correct. If the couples have expressed an interest in a particular placement please explain that you will do your best, but it might not be possible. If the couple responds “no” do not inquire as to the reason but tell them that should circumstances change they would be welcome to contact you at any time for placement in a team.
- If after several unproductive attempts are made to contact the couple, please either write a note, or email, inviting the couple to contact the IC if they are interested now or in the future.

Existing Team Placement is made by the Sector Couple in communication and cooperation with the existing team. The Sector Couple will determine, with the team, the method to be used in piloting the couple into the team. The couple being added must also be comfortable with the idea of being added to an existing team. It is best if two couples are added at a time so that one couple is not odd man out.

New Team Placement

The Sector Couple, Information Couple and Pilot Couple share the placement duties in a manner that is worked out locally.

- The Piloting material is requested through the Regional Couple, allowing at least three weeks for the order to be filled and the material given to the couples. A pre-piloting meeting may be used to give out the materials and the information is covered in the Pilot Couple Handbook.
- Work with the team to find a spiritual counselor.
- Suggest a team name to the secretariat office using the name of the city, state and the number next in line e.g. Richmond, VA 4. The state is an important part of the name, as many “Richmonds” exist in the USA! The Secretariat will not reuse previous numbers unless one of the couples was a member of the team whose number is being reused.

CHAPTER FIVE

ORGANIZATIONAL TIPS

INTERESTED COUPLES LIST

Maintain a list of couples that are interested in TEAMS and make note of the contacts that have been made. Your spreadsheet should contain the following information:

- Name, address, phone number, email address
- Parish
- Source of contact or referral
- Date of initial contact
- Date of subsequent contacts
- Date information email or letter was sent
- Date invitation is extended for the Information Meeting
- Date information meeting attended
- Response regarding teams
- Date notified Sector Couple of answer
- Placement information

Remember that all personal information must be respected and kept confidential.

INFORMATION SCHEDULE

It is important to be flexible but having a plan in place makes working with details easier. Determine how often you will:

- Telephone interested couples and those waiting placement.
- Update the status list, especially noting the couples who are to be contacted later
- Email invitations and other information.
- Talk with the Sector Couple.
- Present Information Meetings.
- Follow-up with couples who attended meetings.
- Run ads or do general promotion of TEAMS.
- Check the supplies of flyers at churches and other groups.
- Divide duties among husband and wife, and other couples.

TAILORING THE PROCESS TO YOUR AREA

Use your Sector Team as needed for acquiring names of interested couples and recruiting couples to attend Information Meetings. It is good to have a variety of TEAMS couples – varied ages, childless and childbearing, newly married and seasoned marrieds.

If your area is large enough, or growing, consider an Information Team with several couples.

One should act as co-coordinator and the others work to their strengths. If one is talented in advertising, is a natural host/hostess, or has exceptional people skills, use them appropriately!

If you are in a Pre-Sector, meetings can be scheduled on an as-needed basis.

CHAPTER SIX

QUESTIONS COUPLES MIGHT ASK

Q: Will we be in a team with the same people we met at the Information Meeting?

A: Not necessarily. Information Meetings are given on a regular basis and couples attend when they are able to. Teams are formed when enough couples decide to commit for twelve months of piloting. Concepts like geography and stage in life are considered when forming teams.

Q: Do we have to share personal or intimate details about ourselves or our marriage with the team?

A: No. Sharing is always voluntary, whether it be praying spontaneously or sharing at the table. We suggest that sharing be light until such time as the couples know each other and a level of trust is built. Then, like in all friendship models, sharing often becomes deeper, but what is shared is always up to the couple and individual. We are not Oprah!

Q: How serious a commitment is it to be on a team and practice the endeavors?

A: Serious, but not solemn! The commitment is freely undertaken and no one is forced to stay on a team. The commitments are there to help us on our journey of faith and spousal communication and as such should be practiced to the best of our ability. They are a journey and couples will adopt them and practice them at their own pace, but in good faith. It is through the sharing at the meeting that we are encouraged to continue through the tough times.

Q: What happens if we do not get along with the couples in our team?

A: During piloting you will get to know the team members. You will learn to see them through God's eyes and accept their faults and graces as they are doing the same with you. If you feel that you will not have a productive experience with this team you may leave the team after the twelfth meeting. It is often the case that the Holy Spirit is at work in the formation of teams. We are often placed with couples that enrich our lives but would not have been our choice of friends.

Q: What is the position of the TEAMS within the church? Is it liberal or conservative?

A: We have a Decree of Recognition from the Vatican issued by the Pontifical Council for the Laity. The founding documents were submitted to the Vatican to obtain this approval: The Charter, what is a Team of Our Lady? and the study materials. Most of the popes have addressed the Movement since its inception.

Locally the leadership works to maintain contact with the bishops and Family Life Offices within each diocese. We have put ourselves at the service of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The couples in the Movement are alike in their desire to grow in married spirituality, but beyond that they are varied as the people in the Catholic Church! The Movement emphasizes the practice of prayer and study but is itself neither liberal nor conservative.

Q: Why have I never heard of TEAMS before?

A: It is a couple to couple Movement and tends to spread slowly as couples move around the country. The formation requires intense involvement by couples through the holding of information meetings and the pilot process. It takes dedicated, committed couples to form the teams.

Q: Are children permitted at meetings?

A: Teams welcome nursing lap babies, but generally children do not attend monthly meetings. The atmosphere of the meetings should be free from outside distraction, and the emphasis is on the couple and the team. The children benefit from their parent's ability to take time to concentrate on their marriage and partner, and be with other committed adults. Perhaps babysitting can be shared with a couple from another team.

Most teams have social meetings that include the children, and families are encouraged to attend TEAMS Masses.

Q: Is TEAMS the same as Christian Family Movement, CRHP, or Marriage Encounter?

A: Each of these movements has its own charism that enriches the spirituality of those who participate. TEAMS is a Movement for married couples, which meets with the same group (team) each month and pursues a definite study, usually a year in length. It has its own unique method.

Q: Is TEAMS for troubled marriages?

A: No, it is for solid, sacramental, growing marriages. All couples struggle at times, but TEAMS is not for "troubled" marriages. Retrovaille is an excellent program that meets the needs of many troubled marriages.

Q: Does TEAMS participate in outreach or community service?

A: No, TEAMS is a movement of active couples, but not a Movement of action. The couples in the Movement give witness to the community of healthy marriages. It also sponsors days of enrichment for their members, and often areas will welcome members from the community to these events.

Q: The Endeavors sound overwhelming, and the structure sounds so rigid. Is there any flexibility?

A: The Endeavors are embraced slowly over the course of time during piloting and are enhanced through practice. They are challenges, but as Catholic Christians we are challenged to lead lives of holiness. The endeavors provide a foundation that enables us to use the graces God gives us to grow closer to Him. The Movement encourages individuals and couples to explore the diverse methods of prayer and use what is most effective for them. While the meeting structure is prescribed, there is room for individual expression.

Q: Is this an intellectual Movement?

A: The TEAMS materials focus on married spirituality and have a practical approach to be studied and lived. Confirmed Catholic Christians have a duty to study their faith and grow in wisdom and understanding, but the books need not be boring or difficult to understand. The meeting and study material should enrich you but not be too much of a challenge to understand.

Teams are present in all parts of the world, and the couples often have limited education ... no degrees required, just a love of God and your spouse!

Appendix A

SAMPLE LETTER TO A PASTOR

Name of IC
Address
Phone

Date
Pastors name
Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear ...

We have been given your name by (*insert name*) who thought that you might be interested in a small faith group for married couples called Teams of Our Lady (TEAMS). It is an international Movement recognized by the Vatican Council on the Laity. We are the Information Couple for this area and would like to opportunity to meet with you to explain the program and ask permission to promote it in your parish.

Please contact us if you would like to learn more about the program or would like the names of some pastors who have TEAMS OF OUR LADY in their parishes and can attest to its benefits.

May God bless you and your work.

Sincerely yours,

Alternate wording for beginning of the letter

Some of your parishioners have expressed an interest in Teams of Our Lady and we are asking your permission to make information available with a bulletin article

or

There is considerable interest in Teams of Our Lady among your parishioners. Would it be possible for us to use your parish facilities to present an information meeting to them?

or

Would you allow us to make a short announcement at your Sunday Masses to invite your parishioners to an information meeting about Teams of Our Lady?

or

May we place some fliers about the Teams of Our Lady Movement in your literature rack? Our flier is enclosed for your review.

CORRECT FORMS OF ADDRESS FOR SPIRITUAL COUNSELORS

Bishop: Most Rev. (full name)
Chancery Office or Parish
Address

Dear Bishop (last name)
Monsignor: Rev. Msgr. (full name)
Parish Name
Address

Dear Monsignor (last name)
Priest: Rev. (full name)
Parish Name
Address

Dear Father (last name)
Order Priest: Always add the initials of his order after his
name
Rev. (full name), O.P.
Rev. (full name), S.J.
Name of Parish or Institution
Address

Dear Father (last name)
Brother Superior: Brother (full name)
Name of school
etc. Address

Dear Brother
Mother Superior: Mother
Name of school, convent etc.
Address

Dear Mother
Sister: Sister (full name)
Name of school, convent etc.
Address

Dear Sister

Appendix B Bulletin Ad Ideas

These ads can be rotated in church bulletin so that the same ad is not used each week. Electronic versions are available (info@teamsofourlady.org) so you can update them with your info without retyping them. If you write new ads, please email the office with a copy and share new ideas (info@teamsofourlady.org).

What is a Team of Our Lady?

It is a way:

- For married couples to grow in love a little more each day.
- To be aided by the mutual help and support of other couples that gather monthly to share a meal, pray, and study.
- To thus better follow the One who assured us that: " *I am the way, the truth, and the life.*" John 14:6.

For more information about Teams please call (*Insert Name*) at (000-000-0000). We are looking for a few couples to add to an existing Team as well as start a new Team.

TEAMS OF OUR LADY for a Better Marriage

If you are interested in enriching your marriage, come and meet couples that are already involved with an International Movement that is doing just that! They will share with you the joy that they have found meeting with like-minded couples once a month to eat, pray and discuss topics reflecting faith and marriage. Join us on July 24 at 7 PM and hear more about Teams of Our Lady. Call (*Insert Name*) at (000-000-0000) or email (xxxxx@xxx.com) for directions.

"Come follow me." Christ calls each of us as witnesses of His unending love. Teams of Our Lady shows couples that way through prayer, study, and community. Teams promotes:

- A spiritual direction for couples
- Concrete suggestions for a way of life
- Team spirit.

A Team is a small Christian community within the framework of the larger Church. Five to seven couples and a chaplain meet monthly to pray together, support each other, and discuss a study topic. If you are interested in learning more about this international couples movement, please call (*Insert Name*) at (000-000-0000) or email (xxxxx@xxx.com)

Wanted: Couples Interested in Their Marriages

TEAMS OF OUR LADY is a group of 5-7 couples that meet monthly to share their news, a potluck meal, prayer, and study a topic with a family/marriage/spiritual focus. The couples form a unit that is supportive and caring; where ideas are exchanged and thoughts are challenged. In addition to the meetings there are opportunities for a yearly retreat and family prayer. As part of an international movement recognized by the Pope, we strive to live the vocation of marriage in a world that does not support that goal. There are couples of all ages in **TEAMS OF OUR LADY**, with and without children. If you are interested in more information please call ---- and -----, 000.000.0000

Wondered what **TEAMS OF OUR LADY is?**

Come, October 26, at 7PM to a short presentation about this international organization that has been enriching marriage for over 80 years. Questions answered. No obligation. For directions call - at 000.000.0000 or --- and – at 000.000.0000

Appendix C

SAMPLE PULPIT TALK

Hello and good morning,

My name is (*Husband Name*) and this is my wife (*Wife Name*). We are honored to be able to speak to you today about one of the best-kept secrets of our church. It is a ministry that has helped not only us, but also thousands of couples around the world, to seek and encourage each other to grow in the knowledge of Christ and of their spouses.

This ministry is called TEAMS OF OUR LADY. It is a Teams of Our Lady to better our marriages. It has been approved and encouraged by the Vatican and is designed to strengthen marriages.

TEAMS OF OUR LADY consists of groups of five to seven couples that meet monthly to help each other pursue their spirituality on a foundation of **mutual support**, prayer and scripture. The group gathers monthly, rotating from home to home. A simple meal is shared, scripture is read, and quiet spiritual prayer time is given.

There is also sharing of life's experiences, and a lively, stimulating study topic is discussed.

(*Witnessor*) would like to now share how TEAMS OF OUR LADY has blessed our marriage.

TEAMS OF OUR LADY is not a scripture study group, but it is simply a Movement that seeks to help its members advance in their spirituality, by growing closer to God, not only as individuals, but more importantly, as a couple.

There is an insert in today's bulletin that will give you more information on the TEAMS OF OUR LADY Movement. Please look it over and pray about taking the time to find out more.

Monthly information meetings are held to give more details and answer questions. If this is something you feel might benefit your marriage, please call the contacts on the insert.

All of us that are involved in TEAMS OF OUR LADY hope you will invest in your marriage and see how TEAMS OF OUR LADY can bless your relationship.

Thank you, and God Bless.

Appendix D

SAMPLE FOLLOW UP LETTER

YourName

Your Address

City, State Zip

Date

Dear Jane and John,

Several months ago, you expressed an interest in TEAMS OF OUR LADY. Would you like to join a Team this fall?

We are contacting the couples on our waiting list to see if this would be a good time for you to join a group that is being formed. We hope to start in November, and have the following dates available; November 12, November 14, November 19, November 20, or November 21.

Please let us know your plans. If that includes needing more information, we will arrange for you to get the answers you need to help make the decision.

Twenty-three years ago, we had three children ages 6, 9, and 11. We were busy with work, Boy Scouts, soccer, ballet lessons, violin lessons (all three), piano lessons, Antiques Club, the Arts Council, professional organizations and church activities. Then we were asked to join a group for married couples that was just forming in our parish, called Teams of Our Lady. We said, politely, we are really busy —maybe later. But we were asked to rethink our decision and to pray about our answer, and we did. We are eternally grateful that we said, "YES".

We had been very busy doing things separately, in one direction, in another: all good things —but separately. We still do many things separately, but now we also pray together, study our current discussion topic together, and attend our monthly Team meeting together. During our TEAMS OF OUR LADY years we have discovered a deeper love than we thought possible.

As fall is passing quickly we would like to hear from you soon. Let us know what you are thinking! If you would prefer to wait until January, we need to know that too! Please email (address.com), or phone (contact number), the dates you are available ASAP. If we are to start in November we need to establish the date and mail your book to you so that you can prepare.

In Peace and love,

Appendix E



Teams of Our Lady
NEW MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE

Last Names

First Names _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Wedding or Ordination Date _____

Parish _____ If Priest Order/Diocesan _____

Name of Child _____ age _____ Name of child _____ age _____

Name of Child _____ age _____ Name of child _____ age _____

How did you hear of TEAMS OF OUR LADY?

Comments: _____

Thank you for saying “yes” to becoming part of a team. In order to better place you please _____

Indicate any special needs that you have in the comment section. Please return the completed

Form to:

ADD ADDRESS

The Magnificat

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord
and my spirit exults in God my Savior;
because He has looked upon His
lowly handmaid.*

*Yes, from this day forward
all generations will call me blessed,
for the Almighty has done great things for me,
Holy is His name,
and His mercy reaches from age to age
for those who fear Him.*

*He has shown the power of His arm,
He has routed the proud of heart.*

*He has pulled down princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly.
The hungry He has filled with good things,
the rich sent empty away.*

*He has come to the help of Israel His servant,
mindful of His mercy — according
to the promise He made to our
ancestors — of His mercy to Abraham
and to His descendants forever.*

Our Lady, Queen of Teams, pray for us

Teams of Our Lady

www.teamsofourlady.org

info@teamsofourlady.org