



Teams of Our Lady

# Magnificat

*A newsletter for married couples published by Teams of Our Lady - USA*

## Love is a raging river and we are small vessels.

Service and the Endeavors (Conjugal Prayer, Sit Down & Rule of Life)

A deep knowledge of Christ leads to the realization that we are loved intimately, deeply and intensely for who and what we are and for what we were created by God to be. This leads to our response to love God in return via worship and adoration as well as love His creation since we see His handprints in everything and everyone, especially our spouse. If we allow ourselves to be filled to overflowing with Christ's love we cannot help but allow love to spill over to our spouses, family, friends, parishes, and communities. This is the nature of service born by love. Mother Theresa says it well "If we pray we will believe; if we believe we will love; if we love, we will serve." Service is a chosen physical response to the inner realization of being blessed by love and gifted with unique talents.

Therefore if we are not feeling called to serve in our own unique way it may mean that we lack something in our intimacy with Christ. For us in Teams, our remedy for this feeling is the Endeavors. The practice of the Endeavors returns our focus to Christ and his gifts and unique calling for us. They help us to find or rediscover Christ's love for us.

The Endeavor, Conjugal Prayer, helps us grow closer to Christ and our spouse simultaneously. It can help us to see a physical gift of Christ in our lives while thanking him personally for the gift. Christ tells us "where two or more are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them". Conjugal Prayer can allow our realization of Christ to become more intense. When we bring our questions, uncertainties or doubts to Christ in this way we can assure that they are heard both from the verbalization of the one sharing and also the echo within our spouse's heart and mind.

The Endeavor, the Sit Down, is another way of increasing our awareness of Christ in our midst and may have a more singular focus. By excluding all else, setting aside time we can focus on what Christ may be saying by using four eyes, four ears, two minds and two hearts. This can be very effective at determining how the flow of love in our lives may have been reduced to a trickle. With some prayer, love and reflection, this flow of love can be restored.

The Endeavor, the Rule of Life, is deeply personal and is a test of our resolve. While scripture tells us "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" the Rule of Life allows us to test this by stepping beyond what may seem possible if we allow Christ to be our source of strength and guidance. Even drips of water can create a hole in solid rock or a form a canyon through a mountain range given enough time. Patience, perseverance and God's grace are key to living the Rule of Life well. It is often best to start small because even small improvements taken consistently result in significant change over time.

We hope the testimonials within this edition of the Magnificat can show new ways to grow closer to Christ and express his love to the world. We send you our love that came first from Christ. Please pass it along.

**Ellen and T.J. Holt**  
**Super Regional Couple**



*Lent 2021*

# Lenten Ideas For Families

## Family Prayer

As our children were growing up, we really tried to make family prayer time meaningful. I have developed various versions of this over the years, but we always started with making a rather large cross out of purple construction paper with the word LENT written across the top and placed it in a prominent place, for us it was on the dining room wall, where, after dinner we would often have our family prayer time. In a bowl on our prayer table under the cross, I would have a variety of different colored torn pieces of construction paper. As a family, we would select one piece of paper a day, tape it to the cross and work on that sacrifice or endeavor. On each piece of paper, I pre-wrote items that we could work on during Lent. Some items were:

*Write a note and mail to a grandparent*

*Spend 15 minutes in quiet family journal time*

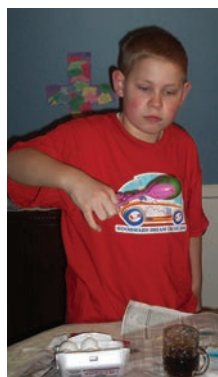
Be creative. When the children got older, I would ask them for input on these. Some I would repeat and we would do them several times throughout the 40 days.

A few times, instead of or in addition to the sacrifices, we would add names to the bowl and select one. We would put the name on gold crosses and that would be the person we would lift up in prayer for the day. This was always a blessed time as we remembered a variety of people in our lives.

I miss the days when our children were younger. If this can spur some creativity for young Teams families, that is great! Children need to be in prayer with their families...so why not make it creative and meaningful?

God bless you all.

Julie Whitmore  
Detroit 8 Lake Michigan  
Regional Couple



*Lent*

*Pray the Divine Mercy chaplet as a family*

*No television*

*Do a kind deed family member*

*No sweets*

*Do a chore abeing asked*

## Our Family Rule of Life

Like most families, our rhythms and routines have been disrupted during the COVID-19 pandemic. But, while we adapted to teleworking and e-schooling, we also backed into a fruitful family Rule of Life that we intend to keep once life returns to normal. Without the usual after-school activities and evening committee meetings, we find ourselves able to observe a 6pm family dinner every evening. We've established a regular hinge point in the day, where everyone stops and focuses on one another without the pull of outside obligations. And, by keeping dinner at the same time every evening, we ensure there's plenty of time to complete the bedtime baths, stories and prayers that calm the mind and soul for a good night's sleep. While it may seem simple and unremarkable, this Family Dinner Rule keeps the days and nights well-ordered for both the kids and the grown-ups. We realize it may not be as easy to live by this rule in the years to come, but we are going to try!

Martha and Anthony Picarello  
Alexandria, Virginia



# “The decline in marriage is our most ignored national crisis...”

– TIME Magazine, 2014

According to the Pew Research Center, “In 1970, about 70% of US adults were married. By 2018, that figure had fallen to 50%.” Why is this a problem? Pope Francis wrote, “The welfare of the family is decisive for the future of the world and that of the Church” (Amoris Laetitia 31).

Marriage is good for the world. Married adults live longer and are healthier and happier. Children raised with both parents at home do better in school and have less addiction, teen pregnancy and trouble with the law. Poverty is almost non-existent for married couples; single motherhood is the greatest cause of poverty among women and children. According to the National Marriage Project, husbands are happier when they are committed, generous and attentive to their wives, when they are open to children and when they practice a religious faith with their wife. Wives are happier when a spirit of generosity and commitment prevails in their marriage, when they nurture a family mentality and when they nurture friendships with others who take marriage, family and faith seriously.



Father Brian Eilers  
Super Regional Spiritual Counselor

Marriage is good for the Church. At Vatican II, the fathers of the council wrote in *Gaudium et Spes*, Joy and Hope, about how marriage and family make God’s love present. “The Christian family manifests to all men the Savior’s living presence in the world” (48). God’s love is made present for spouses as they give themselves selflessly to each other in love. “Authentic married love is caught up into divine love...so that this love may lead the spouses to God... and in God they find the strength to carry on their role and responsibilities” (48). Parents are an image of God’s love, not just teachers of his love. “They (parents) should realize that they are thereby cooperators with the love of God the Creator, and are so to speak, the interpreters of that love” (50).

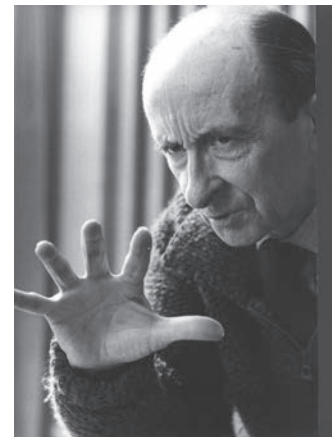
Marriage is good for the world and for the Church. Marriage makes people better and it makes God’s love present in the world. The decline of marriage is a real crisis. Our Movement which promotes Godly marriages is a light shining in the darkness. Thank you for your faithfulness in marriage. You are a sign of God’s love in the world! Thank you. When you see something good in someone’s marriage, tell them so.

## Friends of Father Caffarel

The cause for Father Caffarel to be a Saint is greater now than at any other time in our history. With the Sacrament of Marriage and Institution of a Christian Family under attack in our secular world, the world needs hope and a beacon of light to follow. As stated in Mt 5:15: “Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all those in the house.” We can put Father Caffarel on that lamp stand by furthering the cause of his canonization!

As stated by Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits O.P., “The lights that the Lord lights in such a manner are, amongst others, those people who shine with his love, mercy and peace. Father Henri Caffarel is one of those lights, a witness to God’s love for everyone, an apostle of marriage and of interior prayer. This light has been entrusted to us today.

To donate and become a Friend of Father Caffarel. Please go to [TeamsOfOurLady.org/friends\\_of\\_fr\\_caffarel](https://TeamsOfOurLady.org/friends_of_fr_caffarel), scroll down to: “How do I / We become a member” and make your donation now.



## New Materials Couple

Please join us in welcoming Kevin and Michelle Campisi of Kingwood, TX to the USA Super Regional Team. Kevin and Michelle will be the new Materials Couple. They have been married 30th anniversary and have two children -- Andrew and Sarah. They are looking forward to adding another member to their family as their son Andrew will be getting married to Amy in 2021. Kevin is the President of an oilfield manufacturing company and Michelle is the Director of Elementary CCE at St. Martha Catholic Church, in Kingwood.

They joined Teams of Our Lady in 2010. Kevin and Michelle have previously served as Sector Couple for Kingwood and are excited to serve in this new capacity as the new Material Couple. To order materials, please email [materials@teamsfourlady.org](mailto:materials@teamsfourlady.org).

## Rule of Life - Selfish Ideal or Path to Spirituality?

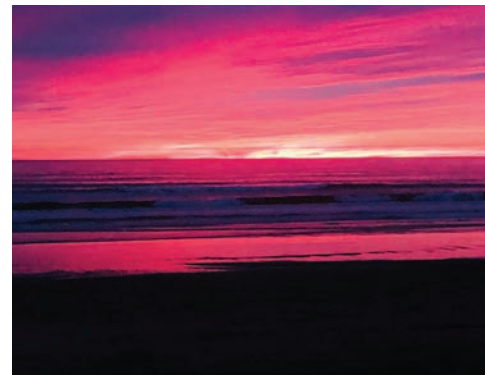
*"The progress of our spiritual life is not along a continuous path: We must constantly start again. That is why it is necessary to review our rule of life regularly to evaluate our progress."*

- Guide to the Teams of Our Lady, 2018, page 40.

We're not sure how many times we have changed our Rule of Life, but sometimes it seems that we are "constantly starting again". It is important to ask ourselves if we aren't "succeeding at it" because we are not trying hard enough, or is it really because it is not a Rule of Life that is progressing us spiritually? Is it a selfish ideal that we want to achieve, or is it something we have decided upon because we put it before God in prayer and discernment?

Although the Rule of Life is something decided upon for our personal spiritual journey, perhaps before deciding on one, the discernment process should not only include God, but include our spouse as well. Who better than our spouse to be honest enough to tell us whether it might be a selfish ideal or a good path to spiritual progress? After all, we are here to help get our spouse into heaven!

*Robin & Colette Quinn  
West Province Couple*



## God's Glorious Retreat Thank You!

Turlock Team 30 recently gathered in Cayucos, CA for a retreat weekend. The topic was "The Five Love Languages" by Dr. Gary Chapman. The weekend was much needed - filled with many spiritual blessings and mutual encouragement.

## Vierras fight COVID-19 with Prayer!

If one were to visit Dan Vierra at his rural home last fall, you would find a strapping strong man, busy at work on his property: Carrying lumber, building his shop, and doing things that strong men do. He is also a registered nurse at the local hospital, tending to surgery patients. Dan lives with his wife Debbie, son Wyatt and wife Aleta, and Debbie's mom Marilyn. Dan and Debbie have been members of Hanford Team 11 for over nine years.

Enter COVID-19 to their household on December 14th. First to Debbie, then to Wyatt and Aleta, then to Dan. (Marilyn escaped, immediately quarantining into her room.) As a nurse, Dan naturally tended to his very sick wife Debbie. Also, tending to his son Wyatt whose condition had him taken to the hospital by ambulance. Debbie, Wyatt and Aleta have recovered, but Dan fell ill soon after. By December 24, Dan's breathing became so labored he too was taken to the hospital by ambulance.

Enter Teams of Our Lady. Although Dan was unable to speak, Debbie prayed with him because he was able to hear. This couple prayer was a constant and so was the prayer support that Debbie received. Debbie would post Dan's progress on social media to update her prayer warriors. "We have been so grateful for the Power of Prayer," said Debbie, "So many people offered prayer, I have finally been able to turn Dan's healing completely over to God."

Their Team members came to Debbie's support by visiting her at home. Debbie said, "We prayed together and just being with them lifted my spirits!" She was also very grateful that her Sector provided some financial support when they learned that both Debbie and Dan lost income before assistance became available. Another Team member, a nurse in the same hospital, would give Debbie update calls when she had to be away. (Debbie has since returned to her work.)

Today (1/31/21) it's been 38 days in the hospital for Dan. In ICU for most of the time, he has been fighting for his life. Out of the ICU now, but still in the hospital, Dan is breathing through a tracheotomy ventilator. Dan is determined to continue to heal, and Debbie has been at his side the whole way. It will be a slow process to recovery, but day by day both prayer and support will keep Dan fighting! Please keep both Debbie and Dan, and all COVID-19 patients, in your prayers!



## 4 Teams 5 times in 43 years!

Since the late 1970s, we have been on four Teams (one of them twice), first in Bethesda 1 (Maryland), when John worked at the National Institutes of Health. Professional moves led to Pittsburgh 1 in the '90s, Oklahoma City 1 in the '00s, and grandparent-hood resulted in Drexel Hill 1 (Philadelphia) in the '10s. Each time we were a founding couple. Twice we left for family moves and twice the Team dissolved, as members aged or their toddlers reached boisterous childhoods.

So, why do we keep coming back to Teams? It is because of the people (epitomized by the late Andy and Loretta Favret) and the discipline of holy togetherness. We discovered the spirituality in people whom we might never have engaged with, but for the grace of Teams. Each taught us something, like visualizing Gospel readings in a person and seeing snippets of stress in marriage. Once, when a young groom said, "Sometimes I think she doesn't listen to me," a husband in his 70s echoed the same! We captured memories of wonderful priests, Trinitarians, Diocesans, Mercedarians, and a Nigerian missionary. Teams' endeavors endured, a real blessing, especially the unique sit-down, for bumps in the road. For all the harm COVID-19 has wrought, it made Teams possible for us again. With just one couple in Bethesda, members had been driving over an hour for meetings. When the virus soared, they went virtual, and two original couples invited us back by Zoom. The place they made for us was on a screen, with no table nor meal, sad to say. But still present are other core elements of highs and lows, liturgy, endeavors, and discussions that are, we learned for the fifth time, the heart of a Team. Do you hear how grateful we are? Thanks, Teams of Our Lady.

Charlotte and John Mulvihill



## COUPLE AND FAMILY PRAYER

Gathering in front of our home altar, our family has enjoyed prayer during this pandemic. These challenging times have brought many intercession prayers and opportunities for praise, worship, and thanksgiving. We have many reasons to be grateful, including being a part of Teams of Our Lady. We joined over ten years ago, and what a blessing it has been! We have learned from other couples how to live a life centered in Christ.

This year, our Team chose to study "Praying for and With Your Spouse" by Greg and Lisa Popcak. Paraphrasing the authors' words, prayer is the key to unlocking the spiritual power of marriage. One reason for practicing this endeavor is that prayer allows us to invite the Lord to share the events of each day.

As a couple, we like reading the Bible together in English and Spanish. As a family, we often share morning meditations via text, pray the Rosary, prepare for Reconciliation, and make time for "Fifteen Minutes with the Blessed Sacrament." We also keep a notebook with prayer intentions that we write before each rosary. We believe that "the family that prays together stays together." We are far from a perfect family, but as Merton said in his prayer, "... and I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road." Teams and the endeavors help keep our marriage and family on that road.

John and Daisy Warren  
Mount Vernon, Virginia 04,  
Fairfax County South Sector,  
Coastal Region



## To serve To be served To serve each other

Father David Bava has served the people of Holy Redeemer Church in Washington, DC for 26 years. When the pandemic hit, the service increased, with Father Bava calling on parishioners to form a network of volunteers to check weekly

with parishioners unable or too worried to venture out, so that their material and spiritual needs could be met. Father Bava has served as Spiritual Counselor to the Clinton Maryland 01 Team for 35 years, where he has imparted his wisdom at Team meetings, celebrated Sacraments with the Team, and challenged the Team to be holy couples at service to the Lord.

On the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time we celebrated Fr. Bava's 74th birthday. As the congregation sang a rousing Happy Birthday, a badge was presented and secured on his vestment. Ruth and Jim Wagner, from the Clinton 1 Team delivered a home-baked lemon pound-cake. Other members of Clinton 01 (living in Virginia and Delaware) called, sent cards, or joined in the live-streamed Mass. We wanted to make certain that our Spiritual Counselor knew he was appreciated and loved. We all pray in thanksgiving for all he does.

The Clinton Maryland 1 Team; Maryland-South Sector;  
Mid-Atlantic Region; East Province



# North Province

Central | Lake Michigan  
Midwest | North Central

Lent is upon us. It is a time to think deeply about what we are about as Catholics and especially as Catholic married couples. What is our purpose here on earth? It is to get to know God, so we can love and serve God here on earth. Then we can live with God when our time on earth is finished. Teams Endeavors and the Membership Responsibilities are excellent ways to get to know God, act on your love of God, and Serve God during Lent and build a stronger relationship with God so we can truly be "in the world but not of the world". Get to know God more deeply by reading His Word. Fr. Larry Richards from EWTN says, "no Bible no breakfast, no Bible no bed". Pick one and spend fifteen minutes reading and fifteen minutes talking with God about what you read. If you do this with your spouse you have completed up to three of the Endeavors in one sitting and brought both your heart and your marriage closer to God. Make your rule of life during Lent to set aside time for these. When you sit down with your spouse during Lent make it a point to pick only their good points. They may be taken by surprise at this or maybe not, but it will reinforce your love for them. For the Lenten retreat if you are stuck inside find an online spiritual class to attend. If you cannot have an afternoon of reflection at your church go to YouTube and search "The Shrine of Divine Mercy". They have put some wonderful talks out. We love you all.

God bless your Lent,

George and Mary Klosterman  
North Province Couple



## Consecrating our family to St. Joseph

We are really trying to step up our faith-life as a family as we move forward in life and our kids continue to form their faith foundation. In honor of the Year of St. Joseph that Pope Francis declared for 2021, this year for Lent we have decided to work together as a family to consecrate our family to Saint Joseph. At the start of Lent we are going to read each night from The Consecration to St. Joseph by Donald Calloway. We hope to begin to emulate the gentle, under-recognized man that this Saint was as he took on the earthly mission God the Father bestowed upon him. We also plan to pray a rosary together after dinner each Tuesday night to reflect more deeply on the sorrowful mysteries during Christ's Passion. Our hope is to instill an ease and love of the rosary in our girls as they venture through this life and develop their faith.

Jake and Michelle Hurley  
Detroit Team 34

Our daughters are Ella-11,  
Evelyn-8 and Faith-6.



# South Province

West TX/New Mexico  
North TX/Oklahoma | East TX  
Louisiana/Arkansas | Southeast

Dear Couples,

Trusting that everyone had a blessed Christmas and a pleasant New Year, we stand ready with faith and confidence to begin a new year. The dreaded pandemic has cast its' ugly shadow on all of us and the entire world in many, different ways. So much remains uncertain. But we Catholic Christians are a stubborn people in the sense that our faith and hope cannot be stifled. Ever since the God - Man born in the holy poverty of a manger released upon our earth the blessed contagion of his His Divine Love, we have a light amid the darkness; we have an undying cause for goodness, justice and peace.

Whatever the New Year, 2021 may bring us, let us walk together and seek unity and reconciliation in our families, in our Church and in our country. This was the prayer of Our Lord Jesus when he prayed from the heart: "That they all may be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you ..." (Jn. 17:21). Let us ponder the words of St. Maximilian Kolbe who offered his life in exchange for a condemned prisoner.

"Hatred destroys, only love creates."

May this year bring you Mary's tender love and God's choicest blessings.

Msgr. Adam S. McClosky



## New Regional Couple for West Texas/New Mexico Area

Please welcome Dan & Natalie Calvet as the next Regional Couple for the West TX/NM Region. They will be installed in March 2021.

We would like to thank retiring Regional Couple Paul and Chris Sanchez who have been instrumental in strengthening, supporting and growing the Region. We are forever grateful to Paul and Chris for their service and leadership these past 4 years. Thank You to both couples for their YES to Teams.

Dan and Natalie Calvet have been married for 35 years. They have two adult daughters. Active in various Catholic ministries, they joined Teams in 2002 as members of Team 8 in San Antonio, Texas. They have piloted several teams in San Antonio and Fredericksburg, and have served as a Sector Couple. Dan and Natalie look forward to building relationships and serving each Team member in the region.



## Southeast Region Update

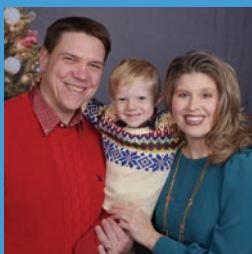
With many of our Sectors, due to Covid and other health reasons, losing couples and/or Teams, Hillsborough and Miami are busy growing!!! We are thankful to all our couples and continue to encourage you to pray for each other, stay strong together in the challenging days ahead, reach out to your leadership couples if you have any needs, and may our loving God always be your strength and guide.

Our Lady, Queen of Teams, pray for us.

Larry and Mary Kay Kuchta - Southeast Regional Couple

## New Sector Couple for Dripping Springs, Texas

Dripping Springs, Texas welcomes Tish Moczygamba and Travis Hobbs as the new Sector Couple! Tish and Travis have been married 16 years and have a 4-year-old son, Ashton. They have been in Teams of Our Lady for 10 years. They hope to increase opportunities for teams within the sector to interact with couples from other teams. The pandemic has decreased the ability of teams to meet for sector-wide events, so in the near future, they plan to explore interest in holding virtual events. They hope to resume in-person retreats and socials when it is safe to do so.



## New Sector Couple for Los Alamos, New Mexico

Congratulations to Greg and Heather Erpenbeck for becoming the new Sector Couple for the Los Alamos, New Mexico Sector. Greg and Heather have been married for 12 years, and they have a son named Eli. They hope to witness more about the benefits of Teams to their parish community at the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) Community.



4582 Kingwood Drive  
Ste E-276  
Kingwood, TX. 77345

Non Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Houston, TX  
Permit #542

Husband and Wife Name  
Address  
Address 2

# Did You Know?

1. Teams of Our Lady spread to the United States in 1958.
2. The first Team meeting was 82 years ago in Paris, France on February 25, 1939.
3. There have been 12 International Gatherings held every 6 years since the beginning of the Teams movement. The latest one was held in Fatima, Portugal in 2018. The next one will be in 2024.
4. There are five Teams languages. The official language of Teams is French, where the movement began. Additionally: Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and English.
5. Teams has a National Facebook page at [Facebook.com/TeamsOfOurLadyUSA](https://www.facebook.com/TeamsOfOurLadyUSA)

Ellen & T.J. Holt Super Region  
USA-SR@TeamsOfOurLady.org

George & Mary Klosterman North Province  
North-PC@TeamsOfOurLady.org

Mike & Trice Towns South Province  
South-PC@TeamsOfOurLady.org

Janie & Bob Mericksko East Province  
East-PC@TeamsOfOurLady.org

Robin & Colette Quinn West Province  
West-PC@TeamsOfOurLady.org