



Teams of Our Lady

Magnificat

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

Being Tested

It seems our world and our country are in a time of testing. We are emerging from a pandemic that forced things to be abnormal. The world is on the precipice of war with Russia's invasion of Ukraine with countries taking sides. Our country is as divided as we have experienced in our lifetime.

This season of Lent is an appropriate time to reflect on being tested societally but more importantly personally. Denying ourselves in this season helps us to reflect on God's will and how we choose it in our lives. There is support throughout scripture to assist us in facing trials and we hope that our Endeavor -- Listening / Reading the Word of God -- helps to enlighten us. We have many biblical examples of facing testing. The entire Book of Job is filled with the example of Job choosing God and his will faithfully through all trials and testing.

With Lent, reflecting on Jesus example is even more powerful and leads us directly to Easter. Jesus journey begins with testing by Satan in the desert (Luke 4 & Mathew 4). Yet Jesus chose God's will for his life each time.

Jesus was tempted again by Peter when He predicted the Passion and Peter answered "God Forbid Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you." to which Jesus responded "Get behind me Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do." (Mathew 16: 21-23)

Jesus temptations continued even while on the cross being mocked by bystanders saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, if you are the Son of God, [and] come down from the cross!" (Mathew 27:40).

Jesus knew we would face testing of our own and armed us as he taught us to pray the Our Father. Specifically with the words "Lead us not into temptation". Our Endeavor of Personal as well as Conjugal Prayer helps us to understand and seek His will.

As we come closer to Easter, let us all pray that we can "think as God does" and choose His will for each decision we have on our path. Our crosses are much smaller than that of our Savior but we ask the Spirit to help give us the courage to take up our crosses and follow Jesus. May we always choose God's will and not ours. May Lent be a time to practice listening to Him and choosing Him in small ways and that it may help us to choose Him in bigger and more meaningful ways later.

Lastly, we hope the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians encourage us: "No trial has come to you but what is human. God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it." (1 Corinthians 10:13)

God Bless,

T.J. & Ellen
Super Regional Couple

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Super Region

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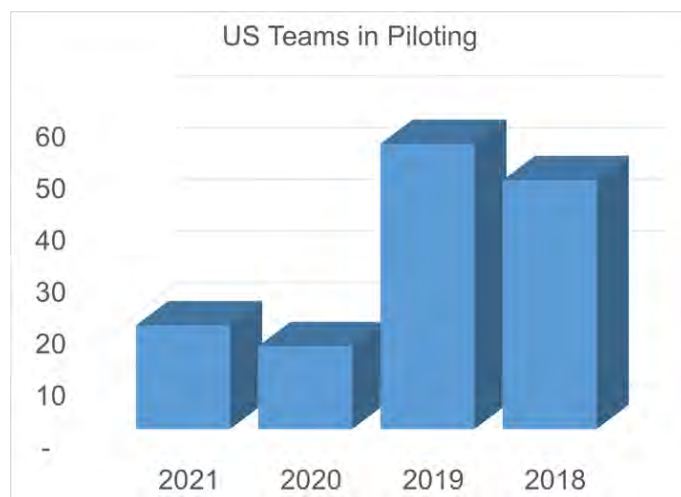
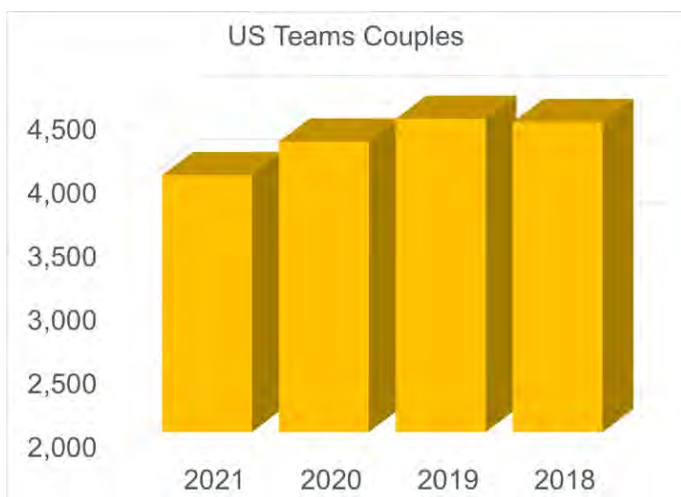
West Province

Spring 2022

US TEAMS OF OUR LADY 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

We are blessed to belong to a movement of many generous members that care about their marriage, marriages of others, our Movement and seeking Christ through the Endeavors and the ways of Teams. In many ways 2021 was a year of turn-around.

Many Teams are still struggling with meeting in-person while others are resuming more normal in-person meetings. We have heard from our members and see the impacts reflected in the numbers. The number of couples fell for the second year in a row and the number in piloting fell even more dramatically. Giving was down slightly from 2020 and the percent donating was down but the amount per donation was up. Expenses were down since many meetings and training were conducted virtually. We hope as we emerge from the shadow of the pandemic, that in-person meetings resume and benefit each US Team.



YEAR AT A GLANCE

Couples: 4,018

Teams: 791

Spiritual Counselors/Advisors: 281

Average per Donor: \$212.13

Percent Donating: 23.6%

Cost of Piloting a new Team: \$324.00

Cost of Salaries: \$0.00 (100% Volunteer)

Translation Team: 42 Books / Documents Translated

Prayer Request Petitions: 71 Member requests sent

Member Donations to \$1,520

Friends of Father Caffarel: (reported for 2020 - 1290 Euro)

Intercessors: 15 couples praying or fasting for the Movement

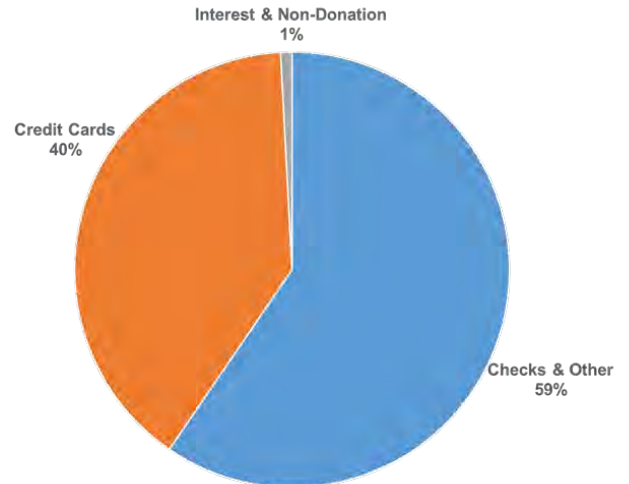
Study & Pilot Materials Printed: 1750 Books & 2000 Magnificat Cards

Magnificat Newsletter: 2 editions with 5000 copies printed & mailed

2021 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

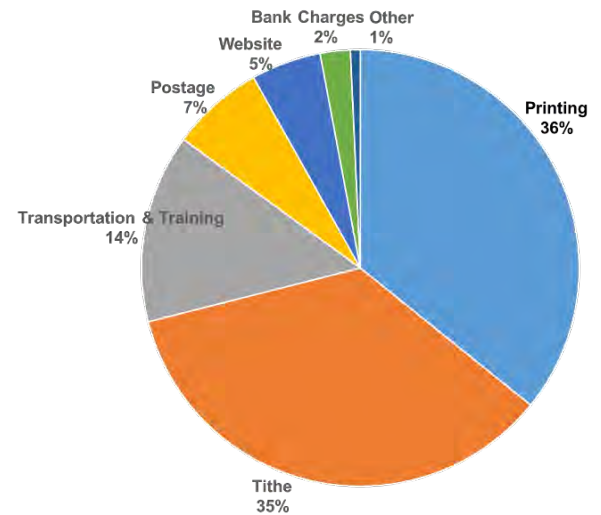
INCOME

Checks & Other	\$ 157,655
Credit Cards	\$ 104,888
Interest & Non-Donation	\$ 2,224
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 264,766
BUDGET INCOME 2021	\$ 270,000



EXPENSES

Printing	\$ 55,703
Tithe	\$ 54,791
Transportation & Training	\$ 21,754
Postage	\$ 10,663
Website & Computer	\$ 8,040
Bank Charges	\$ 3,457
Other	\$ 1,131
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 155,539
2021 BUDGET EXPENSES	\$ 270,000



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Just shop Smile.Amazon.com and select Teams Of Our Lady as your charity. Every time you spend, you passively donate to Teams. Donations only count on Smile.Amazon.com not Amazon.com. You can also activate on your mobile app.

This is not a replacement for annual contributions just an easy supplement.

GOD MUST SEE MARRIED LOVE AS SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL

Going up the river to its source you will find four young couples full of the ardor of their new love. Being committed Christians, they did not want to live out their love separate from their faith. Lacking perhaps precise notions of the doctrine of Christian marriage, a lively intuition nevertheless filled them with hope and led them to a priest. 'It is surely not possible that God should not think highly of this human love that enriches our lives and gives us so much joy. He must see it as something very beautiful and great; we want to know about it; you must reveal it to us'.

Listening to them I had no difficulty in guessing that I would disappoint them cruelly if I was simply to give them legal definitions or rules of morality. In similar circumstances, I had previously met with irony and disappointment: 'we speak to you of love and you reply family'. I wasn't much more knowledgeable than they were. At least, I had the conviction that, since love came from God and marriage was a divine institution, the divine concept of love and marriage must be infinitely more uplifting than could be imagined by these young men and women. My reply to them was: Let us seek together: let us join forces and set out on a journey of discovery'.

THE EARLY MEETINGS

They were unforgettable meetings. There was the same climate of elation as one experiences setting out at dawn on a beautiful day for a hike in the mountains. Each member shared what he/she had to contribute: the priest his knowledge of the sacrament of marriage and Christian doctrine as a whole; the couples the experience of their springtime of love and marriage. There was no doubt that, to find what we were seeking, we must not confine ourselves to biological, psychological and sociological considerations; we had to go beyond purely legal and moral aspects. If marriage is a 'great mystery' as St Paul proclaims, it is only with the eyes of faith that one can plumb its divine treasures. Indeed, our meetings took place in an atmosphere of lively, inquiring and enthusiastic faith.

THE PLACE OF MARRIAGE IN GOD'S PLAN

Gradually, the eminent place of Christian marriage in God's great plan began to emerge. It seemed to us that it was entirely ordained to the glory of God; its purposes were the multiplication of sons and daughters of God and mutual help between husband and wife in the pursuit of holiness. There is no need to look elsewhere to progress towards the Lord: marriage is a sacred way; the Christian family is a living cell of the Church.

Not only is marriage part of God's plan, but it also reveals its treasures. This was one of the most joyful discoveries of these young minds avid for knowledge. With what concentration they applied themselves to decipher the parable of marriage! It was to this parable that the prophets had often turned to reveal the Covenant between God and his people Israel. It was also this parable that St Paul used to help us to glimpse the union of Christ with the Church. After him, the mystics could think of no better way to reveal to us the intimacy of love between Christ and the Christian soul than this parable of married love.

There was yet more to be discovered. Not only does the sacrament of Christian marriage represent the union of love between Christ and the Church, but it makes a couple participants in that union. What I mean to say is that, thanks to the sacrament of marriage, the love that unites Christ to the Church is the very same love that works to unite and give life and joy to a husband and wife.

Extract from 'Vocation and Itinerary' of the Teams of Our Lady First Teams pilgrimage to Rome, 1959

BY KNOWING FATHER CAFFAREL, WE CAN BETTER BE THE LIGHT OF CHRIST IN THE WORLD AND ASPIRE TO HOLINESS THROUGH FULLY LIVING THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE.

We still have a wonderful opportunity to know Father Caffarel better, to see him and hear him speak. Recordings of Father Caffarel and the Novena for his Canonization are provided at neuvainecaffarel.equipes-notre-dame.com/en/. When Monique and I participated in his Novena last Fall, we were blown away by experiencing his love of Christ, devotion to prayer, faith, and passion for the beauty of the Sacrament of Marriage. Little did we know that when he talked, literally thousands upon thousands of Catholics filled his venues. He had a message for all generations. People were hungry then as they are today to understand how fully living the sacrament of marriage could be a path towards holiness. No wonder he is often called "The Prophet of Marriage". Another Teams of Our Lady couple said, "The videos shown each day with his words of wisdom really touched our hearts. It was as if he was speaking to us here and now. His messages are very powerful and timeless."

The Canonization process is moving along and your prayers are helping. Later this Spring or early summer, much of the documentation and the Cause will have been completed. Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, the Editor of the Cause, and Friends of Father Caffarel are working with their counterpart, Father Paleri, the Roman postulator, to complete the Cause.

If you are interested in supporting the cause of Father Caffarel's canonization, please go to Henri-Caffarel.org to "join on line" and become a member, renew your membership, or to simply donate. Please note that memberships are made on a yearly basis, so, if you have not done so this year, please renew your membership. According to the latest information we have received from Friends of Father Caffarel, support for his canonization in the U.S. is growing, thanks be to God.

West Province

North West
West

West Province College Gatherers!

On February 19th the Western Province College Gathering took place at Our Lady of Assumption Church in Turlock, California. Most sectors of the eleven state Western Province were represented. The theme of the Gathering was "Saying 'Yes' – Ours and Mary's Fiat". The Leadership Gathering allowed Region and Sector Couples to personally discuss Teams successes and hardships with each other and an opportunity to network with each other for future Teams growth. Some Topics covered were Sector Teams, New Teams Welcome Celebrations, Sector and Regional Events and Study Topic. Leadership is looking forward to more personal, face to face gatherings in the future, and an outburst of interest in building the Movement! "There are many parts, yet one Body!" 1 Cor 12:20



Portland Area Retreat

October 22-23 Retreat Teams from Portland A & B Sectors. These Teams opened up their retreat to Team Couples in the Northwest Region as well as couples not in Teams interested in a marriage retreat. The theme was: Fidelity, Fruitfulness and Family Prayer: a recipe for marriage. Bishop Liam Carry of the Diocese of Baker celebrated Mass for the group, and Fr. Ryan Simas of Providence, Rhode Island was the Retreat Master.

Western Regional Day

With a wonderful turnout, John & Nichole Sablan were guest speakers covering "The Pursuit of Happiness" and "Mass in Marriage". The morning began with Mass and Installation of the newest sector couple – Abner & Evelyn Aguilar, Whitter CA Sector. The day was such a success, the Sablans were invited to the Fresno Sector Retreat in person retreat to be held March 5th in Three Rivers, California. Thank you to Tony & Karyn Alamo, Western Regional Couple, and Mike and Camille Popp, Fresno Sector Couple for planning and hosting the Day at St. Peter Church, Lemoore, California.



Meet the West Province Prayer Couple

Did you know that every time there is a Province Event a Prayer Couple is praying for the event to give Glory to God, to be successful, and to accomplish the goals of the Teams of Our Lady Movement – to bring couples closer the Christ!

Meet Gail and Jim Santos, the West Province Prayer Couple. Gail and Jim have been in Teams since 2015 on Fresno Sector CA, Hanford Team 13. Both have been active in their parish ministries as Sacristan, Eucharistic Adoration Guardians, Deliverance Ministry and Prayer Group. About Teams they say "When everyone is together, its such great support! Pray together, that's where the real power is!!" The Santos' live with their two dogs, one cat, with recent additions of son Greg and grandson Evan and their dog. Together they have six adult children and eight grandchildren.

Thank you Gail and Jim for keeping the West Province covered in Prayer!!

East Province

Costal | Lake Erie
Metro (NY) | Mid-Atlantic
New England

Costal Region hosts Regional Colleges

The gatherings consisted of the Regional Couple, their Sector Couples and the RCs from each team. Because of the size of the Region, they split the College into two parts.

Each began with Mass and the day's agenda included: a stirring keynote address from Fr. Stephen Vaccaro on the Annunciation's "Do Not Be Afraid" (Luke 1:30); talks on the Teams' leadership structure, the Mission of Teams, Insights from Father Caffarel; small group discussions; and sector breakout sessions. Zooming in were Greg and Melanie Gehrt, the NTWC Coordinators and TJ and Ellen Holt, the Super Regional Couple. Each of the endeavors were highlighted by a couple in short presentations.

Ted and Jackie Stephens commented, "We enjoyed being in a faith filled environment with our fellow RC's. The day exceeded our unknown expectations. Sharing requires a look into oneself and perhaps peeling away a layer or two...We came away with a better appreciation of an RC. We are 'juiced' to share with our team, in particular, why we need to work on endeavors."

Joe Serio said, "I think from an organizational standpoint, it was interesting to understand [how Teams]...is structured geographically. I also thought going through the Responsible Couples binder was good to see what should be in there and how it should be organized. I thought having [Father Vaccaro's] talk in the beginning of the event was well done because he said many things that stood out to me...Some other things I found interesting was a point made that the Responsible Couple is to feed the world, spread the word and really expected to help grow and create more Teams. I thought the entire event was well done, and I thank everyone that participated to put this together. I thought the role play was good and is really the basis [why] we joined [Teams]...to bring you and your spouse closer to Christ."



NTWC comes to the East Province

The Mid-Atlantic Region hosted the first East Province New Teams Welcome Celebration (NTWC) on March 26, 2022 at Holy Family Seminary in Silver Spring, Maryland. The energetic NTWC presenting team showed us how Teams supports marriages through talks and interactive experiences. Father John Dillon, in his homily, recounted working with and marrying young couples, and that the key lay in a comment made by his uncle on their 50th wedding anniversary, "It only gets better!" Kudos to Eva St. Clair and Ernie Tedeschi, the coordinating couple, who sparked the excitement and kept things moving through a highly organized day of information and fun. The following comments from the attendees capture some highlights:

[This experience] "...made me feel energized about Teams and blessed that I am part of something this special."

"Childcare was key. Our son shared with us his experience of sharing highs and lows. I'm grateful for the children experiencing it outside of family life." "We appreciated the deep dive into the endeavors."

"It was amazing to hold a team meeting with people I don't know and yet everyone seemed comfortable and knew what they were doing." "My favorite part was the opportunity to have a sit-down with my spouse."

"I appreciated hearing about the larger Team movement."

" Children program - EXCELLENT! MANY THANKS!"

"I came away grounded in what Teams is."



North Province

Central | Lake Michigan
Midwest | North Central



Great Retreats Focusing on Endeavors, led by Team Couple Deacon Ben and Jennine Seitz

The Fargo-Moorhead Sector, part of the North Central Region, in the Northern Province is blessed to have a couple, who are using their gifts, and SHARING their gifts in leading Couple Retreats.

Deacon Ben and Jennine Seitz joined Teams of Our Lady in 2019. At the time, Ben was in formation in the Permanent Diaconate Program. Last year, and now again this year, they have planned Couple Retreats for Teams Couples, and this year, 3 different weekends were offered: November 2021, and January, and February 2022. The Retreats were held at the Franciscan Retreat Center in Hankinson, ND, about 60 miles South of Fargo, ND. It is a beautiful setting in a warm and inviting Convent.



The theme of the retreat focused on understanding the true meaning of each of the Endeavors and resolving to adopt them into our daily lives. Deacon Ben and Jennine gave lively talks, with couple time for conjugal prayer, discussion, and sit-downs. Fr. Bill Gerlach, Team 5 Chaplain, was able to join us on Saturday morning, celebrating Mass and fellowship/ lunch afterwards. Deacon Ben and Jennine led Morning and Evening Prayer, with Evening Rosary and Eucharistic Adoration.

It was truly a gift of Married Spirituality, delving deeper into the Endeavors, Conjugal Prayer, and fellowship with other Team Couples.

On a rating scale, 1-10, we gave this weekend a 10+!

Toledo 3, Midwest Region, celebrated an in person retreat in early December 2021. We were reminded how important it is for us! As we brainstormed together at the end, we came up with this list of benefits of a Team retreat:

- **Feeling more relaxed**
- **Easier to sense presence of God in each other**
- **Timelessness, not needing to rush onto the next thing**
- **More flexibility in talk on DVD, we could pause and take a break to discuss**
- **Opportunity to dive deeper in a topic**
- **Learn interesting things about each other**
- **Strengthen the bond of team**

While it is challenging to carve out a weekend (or part of a weekend away, it is time well spent!

South Province

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

Southeast Regional College



Our first Southeast Regional College was held on February 26, 2022. Although we had to hold it virtually instead of in person, we had about 20 couples including RC's and Sector Couples attend throughout the day. It was a day meeting other couples, hearing some of the history of the start of some of our teams, the exchange of information, learning about the website, job descriptions of RC's and Sector Couples, forms available for reports, what is a Sector Team and who makes it up and why it is important, breakout sessions where RC's talked with their Sector Couples, and non-Sector RC's spoke to the Regional Couple, and another breakout session that included conversation between Sector Couples to exchange ideas and support each other as well as all the other couples time to share with the Regional Couple their ideas and support, and we also had an overview of the Endeavors and their importance and where information can be found.

New Team - Another team in the Hillsborough, FL Sector has finished Piloting. South Tampa, FL 04 held their Commitment Ceremony March 12, 2022. Welcome to Teams of Our Lady!!

From left to right: Fr. Connor Penn(Spiritual Counselor), Evan & Christine Wuthrick, Emily & George Fisher, Tyler & Brittany Yonge, Melissa & Joe Doenges, First Responsible Couple for their team, Wendy & Matt Swezey, Lori & Tony Martinez, Abby & Clay McEntire, and Kitty & Tim Whitehurst, Pilot Couple.



New Sector Couple

Bill and Theresa Jardine were installed by East Tex Regional Couple Steve and Lori Hesse as the second Sector Couple in January 2022.

Pictures left to right.

Steve and Lori Hesse, Father Wayne Ly, Bill and Theresa Jardine along with Mark and Theresa Roseland, the other Sector Couple in Kingwood.



Miami FL #3 attends movie night

Fort Meyers, FL Sector Meeting



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Kingwood, TX. 77345

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Husband and Wife Name
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IT IS SAID THAT THERE ARE 3 RINGS IN A MARRIAGE: THE ENGAGEMENT RING, THE WEDDING RING AND SUFFERING

Lent is a desert in which we take on suffering willingly. I don't like the desert. Sun, dry air, wind – my skin gets dried out, chapped lips, sunburn and I feel miserable. I also don't like suffering. Fasting, cold showers, early mornings, the stuff of Lenten penances is not comfortable. But when I give myself to penance, God does amazing things. I recently went on retreat and fasted for a few days. Prayer during those days was intense and continuous. When I started eating, it was hard to pray. Looking back, I see that the suffering of fasting opened me up to Jesus – my attentiveness to him grew as I set aside my fleshly desires. St. Paul writes, "I consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." Phil 3:8. If something (like food on a retreat) does not lead to Jesus, it is loss.

In marriage there are deserts, times of great discomfort. Normal fleshly desires are not being satisfied leading to temptations to rebel in anger, revenge or escape. In Lent we join together as a Church in denying those desires control over our lives. We say yes to Jesus. We say yes to suffering for the good of the other. We say yes to humility, accepting the weaknesses of the other and acknowledging our own. In these moments God can do the most amazing things in our hearts. We approach "the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus."

In Croatia there is a tradition of using a crucifix during the interchange of the marital vows. The groom holds the crucifix in his right hand and the bride places her right hand on the top of the crucifix uniting their hands together. Both bride and groom are bound and united to the Cross of Christ. There are 3 rings in marriage: the engagement ring, the wedding ring and suffering.



*Father Brian Eilers
Super Regional Spiritual Counselor*