

# The *Magnificat*

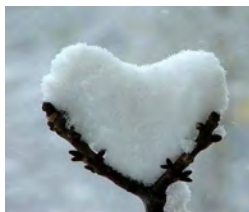


*A newsletter for married couples.*

*Published by Teams of Our Lady USA*

## **Inside this Issue:**

- ◆ A Message from Father José Jacinto Ferreira de Farias, SCJ
- ◆ Serving with Joy
- ◆ Father Landry Appointed to United Nations post
- ◆ Tribute to Father Caffarel
- ◆ Parenting Teenagers
- ◆ Sharing to Gift of TEAMS
- ◆ Resource Support for Couples
- ◆ Regional News
- ◆ New Regional Couples
- ◆ Questions and Answers



## *Varao's View*

### **HAPPY NEW YEAR!!**

Last year was a challenging year; thank you for your efforts, energy, resilience and commitment.

As we start this new year with greater clarity, a greater determination to serve our Teams and a renewed commitment to our marriages:

- Be better in your endeavors – think creatively, efficiently and effectively.
- Be better to our spouses – in how you treat, how you communicate and how you value each other.
- Be better with your teammates – in how you support each other, how you communicate and how you care about them as people.
- Be better in your community – in how you give of your time and effort to make your Parish community and your neighborhood a great place to live.
- Be better with our planet – in how you recycle, minimize your footprint, and how you appreciate the natural beauty God created for us.
- Be better in your relationships with family and friends – in how you communicate, encourage and support.
- Be better to yourself – in your self-talk, in your personal expectations and in your commitment to being all that you can be and do.



*Inez and Joe Varao  
Super Regional Couple - USA*

You control how you approach each day. Commit to being better every day. Learn more. Be more responsive. Be more connected. Be more aware. Be tougher. Be more resilient. Be more creative. Be more present. Just be better. God has given us the gift of life and we should treasure each moment and make the most of each day.

A Year of Time. . . . . Though even thinking on the subject of time may prove discomf-  
ting, it is not a bad idea—especially at the beginning of a new year.

As we look into 2015 we look at a block of time. We see 12 months, 52 weeks, 365 days, 8,760  
hours, 525,600 minutes, 31,536,000 seconds. And all is a gift from God. We have done nothing to  
deserve it, earn it, or purchased it. Like the air we breathe, time comes to us as a part of life.

The gift of time is not ours alone. It is given equally to each person. Rich and poor, educat  
ed and ignorant, strong and weak—every man, woman and child has the same twenty-four  
hours every day.

Another important thing about time is that you cannot stop it. There is no way to slow it  
down, turn it off, or adjust it. Time marches on.

And you cannot bring back time. Once it is gone, it is gone. Yesterday is lost forever. If yes  
terday is lost, tomorrow is uncertain. We may look ahead at a full year's block of time, but  
we really have no guarantee that we will experience any of it.

Obviously, time is one of our most precious possessions. We can waste it. We can worry  
over it. We can spend it on ourselves. Or, as good stewards, we can invest it in the kingdom  
of God.

The new year is full of time. As the seconds tick away, will you be tossing time out the win  
dow, or will you make every minute count?

....Steven B. Cloud, Pulpit Helps, Vol. 14, # 2

Lord, let this year be filled with the things that  
are truly good—with the comfort of warmth in  
our relationships, with the strength to help those  
who need our help and the humility and openness  
to accept help from others.

As we make our resolutions for the year ahead,  
let us go forward with great hope that all things  
can be possible—with Your help and guidance."

Thank you for your loyalty and efforts; we look  
forward to a new year filled with God's many blessings.



My dear couples,

Our Movement is committed to moving forward in keeping with the rhythm of the Church and its Synod. The Church is seeking, in the light of the Gospel, “to discern the ways in which the Church and society can renew their commitment to the family founded upon the marriage between a man and a woman.” (*The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelisation, Relatio synodi*, 4) From where I am writing, I contemplate all of you, dispersed in the four corners of the world, in various cultural contexts, but all united in the desire to correspond to the thought of God, who is manifest in the concerns of the Church’s synod.

In his address to the participants at the Third World Congress of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, Pope Francis offered three suggestions for their journey of faith and ecclesial life:

- First, “preserve the *freshness of your charism* always renewing the ‘*first love*.’”
- Second, respect “*the way of welcoming and accompanying men and women of today*, in particular, the youth, because every person has their own time, their own path, and we must accompany this journey.”
- Third, strive for “*communion*. (...) For the world to believe that Jesus is Lord, it needs to see communion among Christians.” Be in communion too with the Magisterium of the Church and in particular with the Holy Father.

These are three points that interest us and more particularly interest our Movement: faith to the first love; welcome and help in the decisions that each person must make; maintaining communion with the Church and above with the Holy Father, who has the supreme responsibility for the universal service of charity.

With respect to our Movement and taking in to consideration Pope Francis’ first recommendation, I have insisted, since the beginning of my service, on two Endeavours that belong to our spiritual method: the Sit-Down and Conjugal Prayer.

*The Sit-Down*, thanks to the Lord’s presence, allows the couple, like Mary who listened to him, to share their thoughts on their life and to enlighten it with the Gospel’s light, and thereby fortifying even more their union in the Lord.

In *Conjugal Prayer*, I advise you to say the rosary to Our Lady. Thanks to this simple prayer, which leads directly to the heart, you nourish your union in the Lord and you can be faithful to the ‘*three altars*’ where you celebrate the mystery of love, which is stronger than death:

*the altar of the Eucharist* where you take the Body of the Lord, without which we can do nothing (Jn 15:5)

*the nuptial chamber*, where according to the Lord’s will, you become one flesh, one heart and one soul, in a chaste and pure love, that is open to the fruitfulness of life through collaboration with God to people the heavens and the earth *the altar*, which is the *table* around which you get together to eat in joy and simplicity.

Dear couples, please commit to living faithfully and generously these two Endeavours. They allow the cultivation of the union of your hearts and become an effective prophetic sign for the Church and the world today. I ask for abundant graces for you all. May the Lord, through the intercession of the very Holy Virgin Mary, our Mother and protector, bless and keep you forever.

With fraternal friendship,  
Father José Jacinto Ferreira de Farias, SCJ  
Spiritual Counsellor for the International Leading Team



## To Serve with Joy

Calling a Lebanese couple to liaise the Central Europe Zone seemed surprising because we are from the other side of the Mediterranean; but for us, it was an avant-gardist sign of the interest that the Church has for Christians in the Middle East.

Our Zone stretches from West to East and from Northern Europe, passing by the Middle East to finally include Mauritius; on top of the two Super-Regions France-Luxemburg-Switzerland and Belgium, there are 5 regions: Poland, Germany, Lebanon, Syria, Mauritius and isolated teams in Belarus, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia, Ukraine, Rumania, Norway, Jordan, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Qatar, which require particular attention to the different specific features and cultures.

We learnt that *what is extraordinary is not the fact of meeting someone else but the fact of creating a relationship with them*. Masses and prayers always precede our trips. The couples' warm hospitality has allowed us to experience this relationship and to augment our capacity to listen.

In Munich in 2013, we experienced a very precious moment: all that was necessary was to listen, open our heart and "*don the spirit of humility to overcome obstacles*," while in Poland it was an apostolic commitment that was driven by a strong sense of service. In Hungary, the number of teams grew from 12 to 18 and the Responsible Couple, who is dedicated to transmitting the riches of the Movement, committed to translating the documents and study topics. We found the warmth of their welcome and the sense of hospitality of these Team members very touching.

In March 2014 in Namur, our Belgian friends told us about that they were worried about the aging of the Movement and asked us to pray for them. Today *they hope against all hope*: ten teams are being piloted and couples have come forward offering their services to the Movement.

Within the zone, "*everyone is concerned about each other*." The Super-Region France-Luxemburg-Switzerland responded generously to the requests and appeals of the regions attached to the International Leading Team and the isolated teams for the expansion of the Movement, the distribution of numerous documents and the hosting of couples at training sessions.

Today in Mauritius and thanks to the training sessions organised by the International Leading team, the Teams are now able to set up and run their own new sessions.

Our isolated Teams make great efforts to translate into their mother tongue; they appreciate the richness of the international nature of the Movement and are keen to deepen their spiritual life and know a little better the thinking of Father Caffarel. Since they have few occasions to open up and blossom in their own countries that are non-Christian in the Middle East or non-religious in Europe, couples find the monthly meetings to be a haven of trust and mutual help. In Jordan, the beauty of the ecumenical spirit amazed us when we realised that the members of the 9 Teams belonged to different churches. But what moved us the most was to see the Team members in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. These are Syrian and Lebanese couples who have emigrated because of the war and who wish to persevere in their spiritual life despite two major obstacles: the lack of priests and the lack of freedom to worship outside the parish buildings.

In Syria, the scattered Team members meet as and when they can. They mutually help each other despite the dangers inherent in moving around and circulating.

In the Middle East, the Teams have to deal with the dangers of fundamentalist Islam, which encourages them to emigrate; Lebanon remains a refuge for Christian Arabs and its Church represents a dynamic presence and a link with the universal Church for them.



At the end of our second year of service, we have a deep conviction: when "*unworthy servants*" experience joy in their relationship with their brothers and sisters, they allow the Spirit to transform them so that they can navigate upon the ocean.

*Mahassen & Georges Khoury  
Couple for the Central Europe Zone*



## **The Rev. Roger Landry, priest of St. Bernadette Church and Teams of Our Lady Chaplain leaving parish for United Nations Assignment**



Rev. Roger Landry

The Rev. Roger Landry, a Fall River Catholic priest and pastor of St. Bernadette Church in the Flint, will soon be leaving parish life for a high-profile assignment at the United Nations.

On March 3, Landry, 44, will begin working for the Holy See's Permanent Mission to the United Nations. The Permanent Mission is comparable to the Vatican's embassy at the U.N.

Landry, who speaks six languages, will be helping the Vatican delegation's work on the U.N.'s second and third committees, focusing on a variety of issues that include human rights, development, international finance and trade, poverty eradication, globalization, the environment, women's issues and other matters.

"My fundamental task will be a different kind of pastoral work, articulating and defending the Church's belief about the dignity of the human person on the floor of the U.N.," said Landry, who learned of his new assignment in early December

when Fall River Bishop Edgar da Cunha informed him that Archbishop Bernardito Aua, the papal nuncio, or ambassador, to the United Nations, had requested that Landry be temporarily relieved from service in the diocese to assist the Catholic Church's work at the United Nations.

"I'm convinced this is what God is asking of me, as I had nothing to do with it. I'm very happy to do whatever God asks," said Landry, who announced his new assignment to parishioners last month.

Landry is the first pastor of St. Bernadette Church, which was created in 2012 from the merger of Notre Dame and Immaculate Conception parishes.

"I will miss the celebration of baptisms, the funerals, the weddings, the celebration of daily Mass with the community I'm forming, and teaching catechism to the young kids on Sundays," said Landry, who added that da Cunha will be consulting with priest advisers on whom to appoint as St. Bernadette's next pastor. Landry said the appointment will likely be made in early February.

Landry said he expects his U.N. assignment to last four years, and added that he will be living in a parish rectory within walking distance of U.N. headquarters in New York City.

"I wanted to at least stay close to parish work and help out when I can because I anticipate I will at some point return to parish life," said Landry, who has a national profile in the Catholic community.

Landry, the former executive editor of the Anchor, the newspaper of the Diocese of Fall River, is a frequent contributor to the National Catholic Register and is the national chaplain for Catholic Voices USA, an organization that articulates and defends the Catholic Church's positions in public affairs.

John Kearns, a spokesman for the Diocese of Fall River, said the diocese is always pleased whenever one of its own is selected to serve the larger church community.

"Certainly Father Landry is a priest whose personal gifts and talents will seem to make him well-suited to the kind of work he will be doing to assist in the Holy See's mission at the United Nations," Kearns said. "While he will be missed here in his home diocese during his tenure in New York, we know that he will continue to serve the Church in a different way."

# The Cause for the Beatification of Father Caffarel

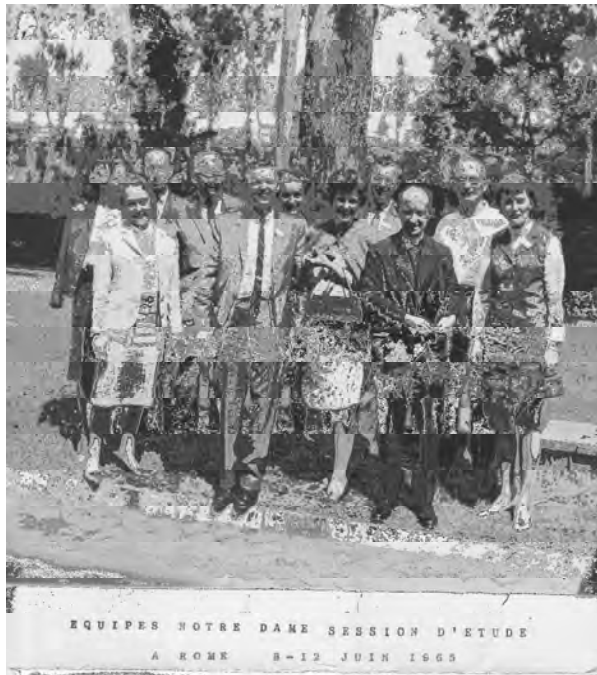
Submitted by Walt and Sue Madigosky

On October 18, 2014 over 113 team members and 5 priests gathered for mass, potluck dinner and reflections on the life of our founder Fr. Henri Caffarel and the founding of teams by 4 couples in 1939. The event drew families from the VA sector and even a team family from France spending a year in PA. The event took place at St. John the Evangelist Church in Silver Spring and we thank the pastor Fr. Calis for providing the facilities. Mass was celebrated by Fr. David Reid ss.cc. chaplain of Mount Vernon 4 (NOVA) coastal region team. His sermon reflected on the charisma of Fr. Caffarel and his vision of marriage, prayer and conjugal spirituality in the foundation of Teams. Following mass we had a short pictorial presentation of the life of Fr. Caffarel, the pot luck supper (as usual in teams there was plenty to eat, thanks to all), and a video of Fr. Caffarel's life (happily provided by the International Teams office) with early team pictures, international gatherings, meeting with two Popes and reflections by the first leading team members. A picture of the 1965 international meeting in Rome included three US attendees and we were able to track them down and ask for their reflection of Fr. Caffarel that was read at our gathering (included below). Walt put on his history detective hat and found that the Long Island Levittown 01 team couple, (Louis and Eileen Garavente) now live in PA and are actually the godparents of team member of Mia Holman (Stratford PA 01) as her parents and the Garaventes were in teams together. The team gathered enough money to send them to the Rome meeting. The other US members shown are Andy Favret (Andy and Loretta were the first US leadership couple) and Gerrie Lavin who is now widowed and lives in Alexandria VA. As usual the best part of any team event is meeting and sharing with the other team members. The event ended with a Congo line to the tune of the international song "Magnificat, Magnificat, Magnificat, Anima mea Dominum, etc".

Finally, we must thank Harry and Josie Gieske (MD E SS 1) for doing the lions' share of work in organizing our successful event: the site, announcements, set up and especially editing the video



Father Caffarel



From the left: Gerrie Lavin, Andy Favret, Fr Caffarel and in front Eileen and Louis Garavente.

Others are members of the leading team.  
3<sup>rd</sup> International Gathering Rome 1965.

## Reflection by Andy and Loretta Favret

Submitted by Walt and Sue Madiosky

We, Andy and Loretta Favret, were blessed to have had considerable contact with Abbe Henri Caffarel between 1965 and 1976. This was due to our job as the 1st American Responsible Couple for the US Region, and later as English-speaking members of the International Counsel.

Abbe Caffarel was a gifted speaker who had an amazing insight into the Spiritual Potential of Married Love. Perhaps honed over the years by his extensive contact with couples in the Teams. His talk to the Teams in Rome in May 1970 is a gem. There was even a TOL discussion document on it in the US.

He also had a special interest and ministry in encouraging and teaching people how to pray. Later in his life he devoted more time to this work. He was keenly aware of its importance in married spirituality. We found a book he wrote, " Being Present to God—letters on prayer ", a very interesting and useful book (Published in 1983 by Abba House).

It is also interesting to know that when Caffarel heard about the rapid growth of the Charismatic Movement in the US, he and several friends made a special trip to the US to attend a national meeting at Notre Dame. On the return trip they stopped at our house and were very excited about all they had learned. Soon thereafter a strong Charismatic Movement developed in France and other parts of Western Europe.



Celebrating 75 years of Teams of Our Lady on October 18, 2014.

## ARE WE QUALIFIED TO PARENT TEENAGERS?

Submitted by Janet and Brian Mark

We are on the fast train to having multiple teenagers under our roof. Our oldest, Nathan, is 15. Justin is 13 and will soon join the shave-once-a-day club. Liz is a sweet 9-year old. They are great kids but we still worry. All the time. And we question whether we are up to the task of parenting teenagers in this world where music (all kinds, but especially rap!), movies, and maybe even friends are telling them one thing and we're trying to teach them a different thing. Society tells them that it is okay to "hook up" – even on the first date – and you're strange if you don't hook up (or worse, if you don't want to).

Our team recently finished reading Christopher West's *Theology of the Body for Beginners*. We also attended – as a group – one of his presentations when his speaking tour brought him to Kansas City. We were impressed by both his book and his high-energy talk. In his book, Mr. West summarizes Pope John Paul II's weekly talks that he broadcast over a five-year period early in his pontificate. The Pope begins with Biblical passages showing that we are made in the image of God and sexuality is a beautiful gift. From that premise, several themes emerge, including the importance of living our sexuality in a way that upholds and affirms the dignity of our body and the other person's body, and how we are only truly fulfilled if the sexual act is done out of mutual love and selflessness. Such themes are definitely controversial in a society where most people are concerned with, "What will make me feel good (even if only in the short term)?" and "What's it in for me?"

As our team read the Christopher West's book, we talked about how its messages would be important for our teenaged kids to hear. The book explains *why* it is important to abstain from sex outside of marriage and why it is such an important part of married love. Our kids would hear *why* we preach abstinence and not just "Don't do it." And instead of drawing the conclusion that sex is a bad thing, they would hear that it is good (and a gift from God) but only if in a mutually-supportive, loving, and committed relationship. We all know how (in)effective "Don't do it" or its close cousin "Because I said so" are when it comes to teenagers. But by explaining the rationale behind our advice, perhaps we stand a fighting chance of "getting through."

At Nate's high school, students study the Theology of the Body during their junior year theology class. Nate is getting a head start – he's reading our copy of Christopher West's book and we will come up with questions to discuss with him (as much as any 15-year old discusses anything with his parents).

No one said parenting is easy but we're happy to have Pope John Paul II's teachings to guide us. God bless.



Janet and Brian Mark

Kansas City, #1, Kansas Sector, Central Region



## The Gift of TEAMS

Submitted by Mary Pat and Vince Arostegui

We are Mary Pat & Vince Arostegui. We're blessed with 3 married children and 10 grandchildren and have been in Teams for about 28 years!

We started with Teams in Northern Virginia in about 1985 when we joined an existing Team that included couples from several different parishes.

We accepted a leadership position when Ralph & Jackie Tygielski, the Super-Regional Couple at the time, asked if we would be their Secretariat Couple. This gave us a fantastic opportunity to meet Teams couples and Spiritual advisors from all over the USA. We also have held positions as Responsible Couple, Pilot Couple, Information Couple, and Sector Couple.

The gift of Teams was something we wanted to share with couples when we moved to Charlotte in 2000. There were no Teams in NC when we started Teams in Charlotte in 2002. We are parishioners at St. Matthew Catholic Church, the largest parish in North Carolina. When we moved there and looked at the bulletin we realized that of the many active ministries for individuals, there was not anything that offered spiritual growth for married couples. Teams of Our Lady was just the opportunity for so many couples. With the blessing of our pastor, Msgr. John McSweeney, we placed a bulletin announcement with a very brief description of Teams and encouraged couples to come to an information meeting. The couples came, they were eager to incorporate Teams into their lives and their marriages. When they realized there was a six-month commitment to meet with a Pilot Couple and 4-5 other couples on a monthly basis it was deemed very doable and the majority of couples have continued in Teams! There are now two sectors in the Charlotte area; 11 Teams, 1 in piloting and possibility of piloting 2 new teams.

We truly believe that the Holy Spirit was and is in charge of this movement and with Our Blessed Mother as Patroness of Teams, many marriages continue to grow spiritually. Teams encourages a deeper faith life through a specific rule of life and shared endeavors.



Mary Pat and Vince Arostegui

Charlotte South Sector Couple

## **Good News Regarding Marriage and The Challenge of Scripture: Bishop Laffitte Supports New Resources for Married Couples**

“Two in one flesh” is the name of a group of couples and a priest who are providing resources to support, uphold and strengthen the beauty and sanctity of marriage. They believe that God speaks to us all in our marriages when we take the time to listen to Him. Jesus said “I am with you always” (Mt 28:20), and “I am with you”, years A,B,C, are books they have written which are weekly reflections for couples on the readings for every Sunday and most Feast day Mass throughout each of the liturgical years. These are available through their website as is their booklet Two in One Flesh - Towards a meaningful understanding of the Sacrament of Marriage.

All these resources for couples and priests have the backing of the Hierarchy. The Cardinals (past and present) of Westminster in England: Murphy-O'Connor and Vincent Nichols, both provided Forewords for their books. “New” is for this coming liturgical year (Year B), is a Word Doc online Book called “Marriage matters” which can be downloaded free of charge. This contains the essence of their “I am with you” (year B) weekly reflections. They have been reduced to a maximum of 60 words and made available to be used within Parish newsletters, websites or blogs. These inspiring and very human considerations sow seeds of hope, offer meaningful challenges and encourage an openness in couples to deepen their relationship with each other and with God. Bishop Jean Laffitte, Secretary to the Pontifical Council for the Family, has himself written a very positive and encouraging Foreword for this remarkable and unique online Book “Marriage matters”.

For more information visit the web site: [www.twoinoneflesh.org.uk](http://www.twoinoneflesh.org.uk).



Brian and Maureen Devine and Bishop Laffitte,  
Secretary to the Pontifical Council for the Family

## **Catholic Couples Seek Holiness Through the Sacrament of Marriage.**

Submitted by Rob and Sharla Walsh

Teams of Our Lady recently hosted a Mt Angel Retreat for Catholic couples. Along with Teams of Our Lady couples, 32 couples from throughout the Portland, Bend, Keiser, and Salem areas gathered at Mt Angel to attend a weekend retreat led by Father Theo Lange. The retreat focused on developing and keeping a Christ centered marriage. Father Lange challenged the couples to follow Christ in their every day lives with presentations of the Wedding at Cana, Christ's Washing of the Apostles' Feet, the Crucifixion, and Resurrection. Teams of Our Lady is a growing ministry in the Archdiocese with 19 teams mostly in the Portland area. Each Team consists of 5-7 couples who meet monthly sharing a simple meal, prayer, spiritual topic discussion, and support to each other in continuing to lead Gospel lives.



Couples, young and old, one couple married only 6 months, others over 40 years; reflect the joys of marriage and the faith refreshing weekend retreat. Teams of Our Lady encourages all married couples to continue to deepen their conjugal spirituality and attend one retreat every year.

# TEAMS Updates

## Minnesota

Submitted by Steve and Glynis Strum

The Rochester Minnesota Sector enjoyed Sector Day at Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch. Mass was celebrated by Father Mark McNea. Music was provided by the group called “Two teachers and a Mailman. Father McNea later spoke of the new evangelization and our role as married couples and families to witness to our communities with hope and love.

The children enjoyed crafts and games while the parent engaged in small group discussion from Father McNea’s talk on evangelization. Sleigh rides, potluck dinner and music was enjoyed by



Father McNea



The group: Two teachers and a Mailman



## TEAMS Now in South Dakota!

Submitted by Steve and Glynis Strum

Teams of Our Lady is now in South Dakota! The new team, which is in Sioux Falls, SD, was formed in October, 2012, and completed piloting in January, 2014. Carrie and Joe Mauss, who are acting as pre-sector couple for the new Sioux Falls pre-sector, were in TOOL in Dubuque, IA prior to a job change that took them to Sioux Falls in 2010. Carrie and Joe, who went through pilot couple training at the national conference in Chaska, MN, piloted the team and will remain with the team as permanent members now that piloting is complete. All of the couples on the team are members of St. Katharine Drexel parish in Sioux Falls, where Fr. Joe Vogel is the pastor. Fr. Vogel is the Spiritual Advisor on this team. On February 7th and 8th, the team completed a retreat at the beautiful Broom Tree Retreat Center, in Irene, SD. Broom Tree is a retreat center that is operated by the Diocese of Sioux Falls. Steve Sturm, of the Regional Couple for the North Central Region, was able to participate in the entire retreat with the team. Steve's presence served as a great opportunity for the team to really see that they are part of a much larger movement and to learn more about the operations of TOOL on a Regional, National, and International level. A photo of the team, including Steve Sturm, is nearby. The retreat really got all of the couples even more fired up about the TOOL movement, and they are now very excited about working to continue to expand the presence of TOOL in South Dakota!



## The Central Region Update

Submitted by: George and Mary Klosterman

The Sector Couples, Information Couples and Pilot Couples have been a blessing to the Central Region. Many hours have been spent and many miles have been traveled in meeting, organizing, promoting, listening, encouraging, teaching, learning, sharing, giving, calling, emailing, asking, offering and saying “Yes” to the call to serve the couples who seek a deeper relationship with the Lord and their spouse through their Sacramental Marriage.



Retreats helped to build unity in the Sectors. The St. Louis and Kansas Sectors reported that their retreats early in the year were well attended. St. Louis teams gathered in January at a hotel while the Kansas Sector met at Savior of the World Pastoral Center in Kansas City. The Omaha Sector’s retreat was held at the Columban Fathers Retreat House in Bellevue, Nebraska. **Father Donnell Kirchner**, Redemptorist Missionary based in Liguouri, Missouri led each of the retreats.

The Des Moines, Iowa Sectors A and B held a Day of Reflection at St. Pius in Urbandale, Iowa in February. This is an annual tradition for the Des Moines Teams, bringing together couples from 13 teams. Lunch was served, followed by a presentation by Matthew Halbach, Director of the St. Joseph Educational Center in Des Moines. In October, the diocese of Des Moines kicked off the year of Marriage & Family with a Mass at St. Ambrose Cathedral. Ten couples from Teams in Des Moines celebrated milestone anniversaries. Information on marriage and family organizations was available. **Brian and Ann Moylan** and **Anne and (Dave) Merschman**, Des Moines Sector Couples passed out Teams of Our Lady brochures to interested couples.

Sector events brought couples from different teams together for celebration, food and fellowship. Installation of 2 new Sector Couples for the Ames, Iowa Sector and the St. Louis, Missouri Sector was celebrated earlier this last year. In February, **Stephen and Mary Stritzel** gathered with their fellow Teams couples (and families) at St. Cecilia Church to celebrate Mass, then share in refreshments provided by the group. The installation of Stephen and Mary had a special significance. The 8 teams in the Ames Sector had been without Sector leadership for several years. It was by the grace of God that Stephen and Mary said yes to the call.

In April, **Vincent and Stephanie Lombard** were installed as the first Sector Couple for the new St. Louis, Missouri Sector. Mass was celebrated at Holy Infant Church. Following Mass, the teams’ couples met in the parish hall for Vincent and Stephanie’s installation. A Crossroads Meeting took place patterned after a Teams’ meeting. Couples were seated at tables with other couples from different teams. They shared a meal, then moved to prayer, followed by sharing on Endeavors. Discussion of the study topic came next. The Magnificat was prayed at the end of the meeting.

Sector Couple, **Joe and Valerie Niemeyer** and the Omaha teams gathered for a Potluck meal at St. Columbkille Parish Hall in Papillion. **Father Kevin Vogel**, Spiritual Counselor for Omaha, Nebraska Team 06 and the Omaha Sector, spoke on the relationship between Marriage and the Eucharist. The Dubuque, Iowa Sector held an event in September at St. Anthony’s Parish Hall. The meeting was a gathering of about 12 couples and 2 Priest/Spiritual Counselors. This was our first visit with the couples in Dubuque. The meeting had a dual purpose: first, to encourage community - building in the Sector and second, to recognize and thank **Don and Kathy Rupp** for their leadership as Sector Couple. We ask the Holy Spirit to guide the Dubuque Team’s couples in their consideration of taking on the Sector Couple role.

## *Continuation of Central Region Update*

**Ed and Sally Henry**, Sector Couple for Kansas, shared with their teams the Marian Pilgrimage they participated in through the Archdiocese of Kansas. The Henrys traveled to Fatima, Portugal, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, Lourdes, France, and Rome to see the Pope. In addition, Ed and Sally lunched with Archbishop Joseph Naumann and shared with him how Teams of Our Lady compliments his focus on family unity and prayer. The meeting resulted in an interview with Ed and Sally published in the Archdiocesan online newspaper. The article can be found at [www.theleaven.com](http://www.theleaven.com) (November 28, 2014 issue).

Teams in the Central Region marked the event on October 18, 2014, of the official closing of the French part of the dossier for the cause of canonization of Teams of Our Lady founder, **Father Henri Caffarel**. The Ames Sector invited their teams to join in an hour of prayer at St. Cecilia's Church Adoration Chapel throughout the weekend. In lieu of going to the Adoration Chapel, couples were encouraged to "pray for a few minutes wherever you may be."

The St. Louis Sector Couple invited Team couples to join for an hour vigil prayer at Holy Infant Chapel on the evening of the 18<sup>th</sup>. A link to "les amies de Caffarel" was offered to the Teams which included prayers for Father Caffarel's canonization and excerpts of his writings.

The Omaha Sector celebrated with a Wine and Cheese party. The gathering was coordinated by the Sector Couple, with the help of the Sector Service Team Couples. The event included a biographical overview of Father Caffarel's life, readings of some of his writings, and a prayer service. On hand were books by Father Caffarel offered for lending and a powerpoint of photographs showing Father Caffarel at various stages in his life including pictures with Pope St. John XXIII and Pope Paul VI.

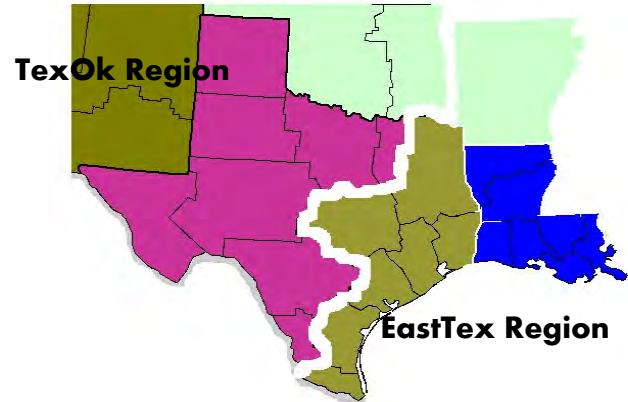
This year we bid farewell to **James and Rachelle Landry**, Denver, Colorado's Sector Couple. A job transfer took James, Rachelle and family to New Jersey. We look forward to hearing about the growth of Teams in the Garden State. **Father Donnell Kirchner**, Central Region Chaplain and Spiritual Counselor for St. Louis Team 01 answered the call to "Go west." We hope Whittier, California appreciates the treasure they have in Father Don.

We look forward to upcoming events in 2105. Sectors are already planning retreats and events for the coming year. And we hope to install five new Sector Couples to fill vacated positions. Once again, we feel blessed to be a part of this Region.

## South Central Region Divides

Over the last several years the South Central Region has experienced incredible growth. As a way to help manage the continued growth in this region it was recently divided into two regions. The EastTex Region consists of Houston, Coppell, Tyler, Katy, Kingwood, Richmond, Missouri City, Nacogdoches, Cypressm Spring, Corpus Christie Texas, as well as Louisiana and Arkansas. Bob and Arlane Sponaule are the EeastTex Regional Couple.

The TexOk Region is lead by Ronnie and Mary Montemayor. This regional consists of Abilene, Amarillo, Austin, San Antonio, Texas and Oklahoma.



## **New Regional Couples**



### **Bob and Jane Mericsko New Mid - Atlantic Regional Couple**

We are happy to announce that Bob and Jane Mericsko have accepted to serve as the next Mid-Atlantic Regional Couple. When asked by the Super Regional Couple Joe and Inez Varao they replied, “Yes, we are honored to accept”. Their acceptance was announced at our 18 October event and was overwhelmingly welcomed by all. They will officially installed at the Super Regional meeting in February in Turlock, CA.

### **Ronnie and Mary Montemayor First Regional Couple of TexOk Region**

Ronnie and Mary Montemayor were married on June 3, 1989 and just celebrated 25 years of marriage last summer. They are blessed with three children, Jessica age 25, Vanessa age 21, and Ryan age 14. Active parishioners at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in San Antonio, Texas since 1996; began their journey with Teams of Our Lady in 2007. They enjoy Teams and believe it graces their marriage in so many ways! Ronnie and Mary became involved in Teams leadership because they wanted to share this ministry with other like minded couples in our Parish.



### **Bob and Arlane Sponaugle Lead EastTex Regional**

The Sponaugle’s have six grown children and seven grandchildren. They have lived in Kingwood for their entire married life, 29 years. They are members of St. Martha Catholic Community.

Bob and Arlane joined Teams of Our Lady in 1998 with Kingwood Texas Team 3. They have served as Information Couple, Pilot Couple and Sector Couple and became the EastTex Regional Couple in 2013.

Arlane is a native Texan and a graduate of Sam Houston State University and a Speech Therapist in the Humble ISD. Bob is from the Washington DC area and a graduate of the University of Colorado and is the CFO with a Houston based Hotel Company.



**Q: What's the big deal of having Sector events?**

A: Sector events, where they are family or couple get togethers are a great way meet other members of the TEAMS community. By meeting others teams share ideas, solve challenges and realize that TEAMS is a much larger supporting community. Sector events can be getting together for a BBQ, soup supper, wine tasting, Easter egg hunt, coffee and donuts. Just being together can be very energizing and rewarding!

**Q: It's our turn being RC and we were told we need to go to a Service Sector Team meeting. Why?**

A: Sector Service Team meetings are the ideal tool for Sector couples to rely information and happenings to the local teams. Without them there is a disconnect to the larger movement and team members miss out at the opportunity to be enriched in TEAMS at a sector, regional and national level.

**Q: I'd like to get more involved with TEAMS but how?**

A: Your love for TEAMS is the first step. Tell your Sector couple that you'd like to help with Information Meetings. Help organizing Sector Events and other Team functions. Getting to know more people in TEAMS is very rewarding, not to mention FUN!



## Questions and Answers

**Q: Why do we have to go to an information meeting before we join a Team?**

A: Information meetings are critical. They serve the purpose of letting a couple know how TEAMS began and how it can help to enrich your marriage. The information meeting helps couples to make an informed decision if they would like to try Teams of Our Lady.

**Q: We have young children and would like to be part of TEAMS, but money is tight...what can we do?**

A: TEAMS in different areas approach this challenge in a variety of ways. Some form co-ops, some Teams take turns watching other Teams children, and some let older children in the Team watch the younger children. Your Sector couple will often have other ideas of how Teams in your area can help.

**Q: What do we do if we didn't get a copy of the Magnificat?**

A: The Magnificat is now in an electronic format to save the movement on printing and postage fees. If you have members of your team that do not use the internet or do not have a computer, we ask you print a copy of the newsletter to share with them. Thank you!