

December 8, 2007 – The 60th Anniversary of our Charter

By Ted & Eileen Kosnik, Super Regional Couple

As we in TOOL approach the 60th Anniversary of the Charter, let us pause for a moment to look at why the Charter was written and what Father Caffarel and those early couples were trying to accomplish. Teams had been forming all over France, between 1937-1947, in spite of the war. At that time they were known as Caffarel groups. Father Caffarel was concerned that some were merely social groups, not the schools of Christian living that he had wished to form. We quote:

The Teams of Our Lady – Why?

We live in an age of contracts. On the one hand, divorce, adultery and selfishness in marriage are increasing; yet on the other, the number of married couples who aspire to a thoroughly Christian life is growing. Some of these couples founded the Teams of Our Lady (Equipes Notre Dame).

- They intend to fulfill their baptismal vows.
- They are determined to live for Christ, with Christ and in Christ.
- They give themselves unconditionally to Him.
- They agree to serve Him without hesitation.

- They acknowledge Him a Lord and Master of their home.
- They base their family life on His Gospel.
- They want their love, sanctified by the sacrament of Matrimony, to give glory to God, to bear witness to men that Christ has redeemed love, and to atone for sins against the marriage bond.
- They aim to be missionaries of Christ at all times and in all places.
- They wish to express their devotion to the Church by being always ready to respond to the requests of their clergy and bishops.
- They strive to be competent in their professional calling and daily work.
- They desire to turn all their activities into a collaboration with God in His work and in the service of mankind.

Because they are aware of their weakness and limitations, because they experience daily how difficult it is to live up to the Christian ideal in our modern world, because they have unflinching faith in the power of fellowship and mutual help, they have seceded to form themselves into Teams. The Teams *Continued on page 15*

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Magnificat

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Please direct all inquiries, Magnificat articles, e-mail, and general correspondence to the Administrative Office at the address and phone number provided below. We will forward requests to the people best able to serve you.

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Teams of Our Lady

Lapel pins bearing the Teams logo (in full color) are available for purchase through the TOOL Office at the cost of \$1 each, plus shipping. To order, e-mail (info@TeamsOfOurLady.org) or

send a letter to TOOL, PO Box 4638, Tyler TX 75712. A bill will be sent with the order to indicate the amount due.

Help Wanted

TOOL is in need of translators of material into Spanish and Portuguese. This includes material that we have written in the USA – “Piloting 1,” “Piloting 2,” “The Team Meeting,” etc., as well as materials that come from Europe. If you can help, please e-mail the TOOL Office (info@teamsfourlady.org) or phone (903) 535-7864.

Piloting and Re-piloting

By Ted & Eileen Kosnik, Super Regional Couple

“Humbly welcome the Word which has been planted in you and save your souls. But you must do what the Word tells you and not just listen to it... But anyone who looks steadily at the perfect law of freedom and keeps it – not just listening and forgetting, but putting it into practice – will be blessed in every undertaking” (James 1:21, 25).

When the Piloting materials were written in June 1993, those of us who were piloted using purple copies of each chapter that were handed out at the meeting before it was to be read were green with envy! To have all the chapters bound in one book with letters from Father Caffarel introducing each chapter – it was the best thing ever! The writers of those books, Harry and Josie Gieske, Marc and Claudia Lucas, Rev. Mark Heath, O.P., Herb and Barbara Vogel, and Ed and Edie Reinsel did an amazing job. They provided meaningful, organized study materials.

In July 2006, while meeting for one of the semi-annual Super Regional Meetings, it was decided that the material needed to be updated and revised so that it stayed relevant to today's couples. Each of the Regional Couples took a book and marked what they felt needed to be changed. In some cases this

meant shortening chapters to allow for the richness of the material to be savored. In other cases it meant that new Papal material was added to reflect the evolution in Catholic thought about families and marriage. Parts of Pope John Paul II's Letters to Families were quoted. Material was added on prayer.

When the work was completed this fall both books have a new look. “Piloting 1” continues to be five chapters, but the history of the Movement was moved from the beginning of Part 2 to the end of Part 1. This actually occurred after the first version of the new “Piloting 1” was printed in the Spring 2007, as we continued to modify “Piloting 1” until this September!

When “Piloting 2” was examined it was decided to take the same material but spread it from four chapters to seven. This allows for greater time to be spent on the foundation stones of TOOL life. It also means that there is a full year of pilot mate-

rial. The same criterion of revision was used, adding in quotes from post-2000 works. We are asking the pilot couples to re-visit the piloting team at the 9th and 12th meetings.

The number of questions was reduced at the end of each chapter to no more than four, and for the most part there are not questions within questions. We hope that this will help couples focus on a few ideas from each chapter for their meeting preparation.

We are proud of the results, and the initial reactions have been very positive. If you have not re-piloted in awhile, we invite you to consider it!

Thank you to **Joe and Diane Manuel** who are piloting English-speaking teams in Toronto, Canada, and to **Ed and Anne Franco** who are piloting Spanish-speaking teams in London, Ontario, Canada. As part of the Americas Zone co-operation we are doing these tasks for the Region of Canada

who has only French-speaking teams at the present time.

We are in need of people to translate the new piloting materials into Spanish and Portuguese. If you are able to help with this important work please contact the TOOL Office. Because we often pilot bilingual teams, it is important to have identical piloting material for all languages.

The Movement can spread only if there are laborers. When the TOOL Office receives a request to give an information meeting or pilot a team, we need to have couples willing to invest their time in the couples eagerly gathered to hear the message of conjugal spirituality.

Please reflect on those early fishermen that Christ recruited to do his work. He provided the means necessary for them to do their job. They were willing to sacrifice job, family and even their lives. We are only asking for your time! Christ supplies the rest. ■

Telling About TOOL

Central Region Couples Spread the Word

By Jake & Ruth Graves, Central Regional Couple

Couples in the U.S. Central Region continue to expand interest in Teams of Our Lady, and also to introduce the Movement in new areas through Information Meetings and by word-of-mouth. Evangelizing TOOL has been spearheaded by enthusiastic couples returning home after participating in the 2007 National Conference and the Sector Couple Training, held in conjunction with it.

In the Central Iowa metro area of Des Moines, Sector Couple Don and Carolyn Chleborad have initiated an energetic project of postcard contacts with parish members and acquaintances, including former members of local teams. Several fruitful Information Meetings have resulted, with two full teams preparing for piloting, one of which in from Adel, a small, rural town outside the city. Through personal contacts, TOOL is also about to be introduced in St. Teresa parish, where five pioneering couples wait to begin. Additional couples will backfill several smaller Teams.

Scenic Northeast Iowa also is preparing to add several Teams.

In the Pre-Sector of Dubuque, Sector Couple Joe and Carrie Mauss have coordinated eager efforts of recruiting, carried out with the enthusiastic work of Information Couple, Tom and Ruth Becker, and also Jim and Susan Heinle, who are bringing TOOL to Resurrection parish for the first time. Joe and Carrie have also utilized the U.S. Mail in sending personal letters inviting former members to consider coming back to Teams, and following up with personal and phone contacts. This work means that two full Teams and couples to backfill are about to be realized.



Central Region couples have been busy piloting new teams. From left to right, by couple, George & Mary Klosterman, Jake & Ruth Graves, Jim & Moogie Roeder, Don & Carolyn Chleborad, Joe & Carrie Mauss.

Through the efforts of Sector Couple Charles and Rindi Bernhard and veteran Pilot Couple Ron and Regina Rasmussen, the Ames, Iowa

Sector is about to bring Teams to an eager group in the tiny town of Jewell, a quick drive North on I-35. Their personal contacts have meant new Teams involvement for these families and their community.

Moogie and Jim Roeder have energetically welcomed the opportunity to plant Teams in the Frankfort, Kansas area. Theirs is a specific challenge in this very rural region in the rich, agricultural northeastern part of the state. With cluster parishes and small towns, families are quite spread out and some often have a significant distance to travel to their

monthly meetings. Yet Moogie and Jim have established two strong Teams, with potential for a third, as interested couples await just a few more to join them and round out another Team.

In a very opposite kind of challenge,

Mary and George Klosterman have brought TOOL to the large and sprawling city of Omaha, Nebraska, which had not had Teams existing at the time of their moving there from

Virginia. Their undertaking meant starting from scratch in a very wide sphere. Yet through persistence in personal contacts and Information Meetings, Omaha supports two strong Teams. George and Mary will continue to spread the word as they host a TOOL information center at the Mary Our Queen parish Stewardship Fair in October.

Through the stellar energy and faithful persistence of these couples, TOOL continues to grow and to thrive in the Central Region. ■

Leadership In Teams – Is God Calling?

By Jim & Ruth Wagner, Coastal Regional Couple

As our term in office as the regional couple for the Coastal Region (Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina) draws to a close next year, we find ourselves not only thinking about who will come after in positions of leadership, but what leadership in Teams means. Leadership in an organization that operates entirely on volunteer efforts really only means one thing – service. Leadership roles aren't about being in charge; they are about serving others and serving the greater movement.



We have been privileged in the Coastal Region to have known and worked with so many beautiful and giving leaders. Leadership in Charlotte, North Carolina has grown Teams into seven (maybe soon to be eight) teams in a few years and already produced four pilot couples. In Richmond, Virginia, leaders there have a dynamic Teams community of five teams where dropping in on a local event feels like dropping in old friends – you are welcomed and immediately made part of the family. In Greer, South Carolina, selfless leadership has introduced teams to the growing Hispanic community there and planted seeds that are beginning to sprout throughout that area. In Northern Virginia, leadership couples nurture teams, whether they have been together for 20 years or 20 months.

You may be thinking that folks in the Coastal Region must have lots of time on their hands if so many couples are able to volunteer time to Teams leadership jobs. No, not at all. Our lives are as hectic as anyone else's in today's world. Indeed, we challenge anyone to find a pace more frantic than that of the high-powered suburbs of Washington, D.C. where we live. But, whenever we think that we aren't going to have enough time to get everything done and still have time for Teams business, we remember the June 2007 National Conference and the stories recounted by leadership couples from the earliest days of Teams in the United States. It is almost impossible to imag-

ine the reality of Teams life 40-50 years ago. Members of one of the oldest teams in the U.S. told how they were originally piloted by letter from a pilot couple who resided in another state. By letters? Who has the time to write anymore? Or the couple invited to travel to France for leadership training who had to find someone to care for the infant and pre-teen children while they were in Europe and not able to have instantaneous communication via cell phone and e-mail. For them, the trans-Atlantic call could only be placed through an operator (who remembers talking to an operator?) and with a healthy degree of patience. No, rearranging our schedule to fit in Teams work is not hard compared to what our first Teams generation confronted half a century ago.

What is a nationwide reality about Teams and leadership is that we cannot survive as a movement without couples willing and able to take on service. There are so many possibilities – Sector- or Regional Couple, Piloting Couple, Information Couple, Prayer Couple – that jobs can be found to fit a variety of time, talents, and interest. If leadership roles go unfilled, however, our movement is a risk of withering away.

A cautionary note, though. A Teams leadership role should never be seen as the job for only one of the spouses. Such a situation creates resentment and leadership ceases to be service and instead becomes a burden. Just as Teams is a movement of couples, leadership must be a service shared by the couple, each bringing his/her strengths into the position. In our own service, it is Ruth, the people person, who takes care of outreach and communication and Jim, the organization guy, handling the data upkeep and

Rearranging our schedule to fit in Teams work is not hard compared to what our first Teams generation confronted half a century ago

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longer term planning.

We think back to that phone call we received asking if we would be willing to serve first as a Sector Couple and subsequently as Regional Couple. Saying “yes” to the first was fairly easy and quick, answering the invitation to the regional job took more consideration and prayer. Ruth, though, reminds that it wasn’t “Teams calling,” it was God calling! God is very much an active member of our marriage and our local Team. If God has accompanied us this far on the Teams journey, we figured that He wasn’t going to abandon us just because we said “yes” to the leadership call! So, we close with a simple question to you – Is God calling you to a leadership role in Teams? When that call does come, don’t answer right away. Take it to God in prayer and, if it is the right time, your response will be “yes.” God will bless you for it and be with you on the journey. ■

A Team of Our Lady: A Church Community

By Fr. Angelo Epis – Spiritual Counsellor of the International Leading Team

The times in which we live are not just a backdrop to a believer’s life: Christians do not live apart from reality and society. Their personal life unfolds totally in human society. They are called to live in the historical context whilst holding on to precise guidelines so as to distinguish between what is good for human beings and what is negative. The Christian faith today must take into account its social context and notably the confusion of many men and women living in a society which is both of very diverse cultures and very individualistic. It has seen the end of strong ideologies, leaving the individual isolated and in difficulty. We need to develop a culture of welcome, mutual respect and dialogue between different civilizations and religions without forgetting the Christian roots of a great part of the world.

The first approach must be between Churches so that, through ecumenism, a greater sense of mutual respect and brotherhood may develop. Furthermore, it is important to discern the cultural transfor-

mations that are taking place today and their implications for humanity. Such was the challenge that Teams faced in Lourdes in 2006. We belong to Teams in order to enlighten and strengthen our Christian

but because we belong to the Church, we respond to the call of the Holy Spirit. It is not by chance that we are team members or simply because we seek holiness individually and on our own. If we are to mirror Christ in our lives, we need to be visible, understood and to appreciate the value of belonging to Teams. We must respond today, as we did yesterday, to humanity’s yearning to love and to be loved.

It is ever more important to re-discover Father Caffarel and the charisms he gave the Church. To a religious who asked him: “By what sign do you recognise a decline of love in married people,”

he replied, after a moment of thought: “to decide no longer to do more for one’s loved one is, I am convinced, not only the sign but, first of all, the cause

If we are to mirror Christ in our lives, we need to be visible, understood and to appreciate the value of belonging to Teams.

experience of living in a faith community of hope and love. Because we are part of society and not on its margin, we constantly face new questions;

of the decline of love. It must be understood that 'to do more' for the good and happiness of someone, sometimes consists also in encouraging him or her to do more for one's own well-being and happiness... Love knows no rest... The day we decide not to do more for the happiness of the other (taking the view that we have already done enough for him or her), on that day, love is condemned – perhaps we should even say that it has died... There may remain a certain devotion, kindness, physical attraction, a 'kind of love', but it is no longer Love" (Henri Caffarel, *At the Crossroad of Love, Word and Silence*, pages 131-132).

As we can conclude from this quotation and from others as well, Father Caffarel constantly sends us back to love,

- to the love that knows that "there is more joy in giving than in receiving,"
- to the love that reveals all its characteristics: relationship, fruitfulness, pleasure,

and to consider the love that often seems 'sick' today because it precisely limits itself to kindness or to pleasure or to dialogue. This leads me to say that we must heal this sick love. We must rediscover with strength and courage all the chords of a loving symphony. In the reality of married love, we often speak of family, fruitfulness, marital problems, but

we must dare to go further: to the source of love, fruit of the Spirit which is "joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Gal 5: 22). It is time for a Sit-down to question ourselves on our love. Society needs it; the Church needs it.

Does our love express itself as Christ did and model itself on him? Does it draw from the Father's love? Is it the work of the Spirit? Does it remember that "God is love"? Humanity's love has often a distorted – not to say absurd – way of expressing itself.

If we are to be a true Church community, it is our mission within the Church to rediscover and offer afresh a love that is healed of all deformations and freed of all wrong expressions. To be a Church community is an invitation to lead a good and mature personal life through education of our feelings, of motherhood and fatherhood, of family and finally of social relationships so as to generate a climate of hope in society. It is an invitation to find ways of being a Christian community that is a point of reference in the anonymous environment in which it exists. Teams can forge real bonds between people, between generations, between institutions, bringing about concord and collaboration.

What is the meaning of our life as men and women? It is urgent for us to look at the cur-

rent mentality that seems to run away from any self-control and which damages the family and social structure, following lifestyles and a pace of life that undermines community life and human dignity. A society dominated by technology and scientific rationality

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does not do away with human frailty. Nor does it do away with peoples' experience of failures, illusions, successes and joys through which they discover their limitations as well as their wonderful potential. Christian hope shows itself in a way of experiencing these ups and downs with dignity and in caring for weaker people: children, the sick, the poor, the stranger, the deserted, prisoners, terminally ill people and the elderly and in showing solidarity with them. We need to think of a lifestyle that takes account of human nature and of human beings as they are.

How can we pass on today a love that has its source in

Christ and gives meaning to life? How can we pass it on to the new generations? This problem concerns every level of society. Unfortunately, as a Church, we often lack the capacity to understand the political/cultural workings of present day society so as to con-

demn the sources of information that all too often spread superficial and commonplace data and that encourage a culture of individualism and consumerism. As a Church, we are liable to think only in terms of better information techniques and of involving reli-

gious people in them without considering ways of combating the above life-styles and failing to provide a cultural input suited to current problems.

With regards to the choice of new team members, we should stress the importance a Christian formation rooted in the Gospel. We also need, as a movement, to be a visible and enriching presence in society. Finally we must not trivialize team life but experience it with its full creative force and give it to a world that needs love to heal its individual and collective wounds. ■

“If you knew the gift of God”

By Carlo & Maria Carla Volpini, ERI Responsible Couple

Why do we ask ourselves the meaning of this verse from St John's Gospel? It is because it was the text on which the couples of the International Leading Team, together with all the Regional and Super-Regional Couples, reflected upon during the working session of the International College that took place in July at Durham in Great Britain. Since it is not possible to share these days of work and reflection with all the couples of the Movement, we wish to share at least a few thoughts so that we can feel spiritually united even though we are physically far apart.

First of all, read again this passage of the Gospel and imagine yourself by the side of the well, having come to fetch water and unprepared for meeting the Lord. You can imagine yourself as an ordinary spectator or as the Samaritan woman.

This meeting of the Samaritan woman with Jesus at Jacob's well unfolds around both real and figurative meanings of the word 'thirst'.

- On the one hand, there is Jesus who is thirsty and

has nothing with which to draw water. He has a clear need.

- On the other hand there is the Samaritan woman who has a need within herself but is hardly aware of it.

Jesus' words suggest a reversal of who is doing the asking: "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you: 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

Like the Samaritan woman, we are not able to give a name to our needs, to what is, like water, truly essential to us to live. The condition Jesus sets "If you knew..." leads us, like the Samaritan woman, to ask ourselves how we can become aware of our need, what would allow us to discover the source from which our life would gain significance and beauty. The "gift of God" is available to us now; we need to recognise it and proclaim it as Jesus proclaims it.

It is a big undertaking to make the world aware that it is loved by God and is intended to receive the greatest gift obtainable: that of God's very life, his

vitality, his joy, his creativity.

Humanity's needs, humanity's thirst, humanity's suffering comes to our attention everyday from more and more areas of the world: the great tragedies of violence and war, the multitude of poor people in a world in which a minority live in opulence and selfishness. We need to recognise these needs and give them a name. Only those who see with God's eyes can see the pain and needs of a suffering humanity, the tragic situation of many families, their loneliness, their rejection and feel their pain. Those who do not welcome "the gift of God," look at life without seeing and touch only the surface of reality.

Welcoming "the gift of God," his love for us, is therefore the indispensable condition for us to open our eyes to the thirst for Life that is all around us, beginning with our own family: the need for tenderness and forgiveness in our life as a couple and as parents and reaching out with love to the poor who need it more than bread, as Mother Teresa of Calcutta used to say.

"Those who drink of the water

that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life" (Jn 4: 14).

And so, knowing the depth of God's love for us, we can give new meaning to our life and, in the end, we can see and listen to the need for God in us and all around us. We can perceive the calls for living water, stifled or sometimes not expressed, and the calls for love that come to us. We can look into ourselves and identify our needs. We can look around us to those nearest to us. We can look out for and discover the needs of humanity today. We can look with God's eyes and be first in welcoming his gift. We can remain close to Him and experience the joy of passing on to others his gift: a married love that mirrors his love. We can feel part of a Church community that is meant for the whole of humanity.

In this way, we can ourselves become a spring of living water, docile instruments in God's hands so that his smile may reach the lonely, the despairing, the forsaken. This is what the Father

expects from us: that we become bearers of his tenderness, his forgiveness, his grace and continue his creative work so that everything may truly be immersed in his grace and love.

To sum up, there are three fundamental elements to this encounter by the well:

- Water as a metaphor of an unquenched thirst. What are our real needs? What water can quench our thirst?
- The well from which we can draw. Which well shall we drink from?
- The encounter with Christ who can transform our life. What are we prepared to change after meeting the Lord?

An earnest 'Sit-down', a deep and prayerful reflection or perhaps sharing our thoughts with our fellow team members, may be a valid help in finding answers. ■

Get in the Zone

By Francisco & Maruja Nemesio-Gonzalez, couple of the International Leading Team responsible for the Euro-African Zone

The methods and organization of Teams have developed gradually over the years in order to help couples to build up and renew their own married spirituality. They aim to follow Christ as a couple, seeking him more and more each day so that their love may be a reflection and sign of the Love of God. All teams came into being with this aim in view.

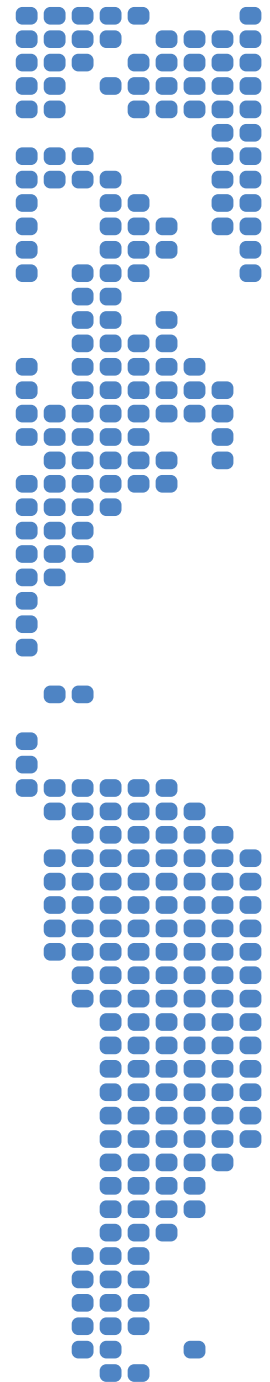
As the number of teams grew and spread, first in France, then in some countries of Europe and America and finally in the countries of other continents, the Movement set up structures to promote unity and mutual help between teams.

It began with a *Leading Team*; then *Sectors* and later *Regions*; then *Super-Regions* (with some isolated Sectors and Regions directly linked to the International Leading Team); and finally, *Zones* that link two or more Super-Regions and a number of isolated Sectors and Regions that are directly linked to the International Leading Team.

The Zones were created at the meeting of the International College in Houston in July 2001. They are so recent that they are not mentioned in the "Guide to the Teams of Our Lady" (May 2001). There are four Zones:

- **America** (comprising the Super-Regions of Brazil, Spanish-speaking America, the United States and the Region of Canada);
- **Central-Europe** (comprising the Super-Regions of France-Luxembourg-Switzerland and of Belgium, the German-speaking Region and the Regions of Poland, Mauritius and Lebanon);
- **Euro-Africa** (comprising the Super-Regions of Spain, Italy, Portugal and of French-speaking Africa, and the Region of Syria);
- **Eurasia** (comprising the 'Oceania' Super-Region of Australia, New Zealand, India, Philippines and Korea and the 'Transatlantic' Super-Region of Great Britain, Ireland, Trinidad, Tobago, South Africa, and Malawie).

The International Leading Team is thus linked through these Zones to all the teams of the movement. *Continued on page 10*



Letters from the International Leading Team

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Among the six members of the International Leading Team, four are responsible for liaison with a particular Zone. They are called "Liaison Couples of Zones."

An ascending and descending vertical link

The Liaison Couples of Zones bring the teams in their Zone up to date with the events and life of the whole movement. They do so in a climate of mutual friendship and trust.

It is essential for them to get to know the history and situation of the countries in their Zone (economy, culture, traditions, religions...); to communicate by telephone, e-mail and internet with the leading couples and to visit them, staying if possible in their homes or in the homes of other team couples, thereby getting to know them. It is important to find time for one-to-one meetings with leading couples and their team. It is only thus that we can know one another well and discern what are their needs and objectives, successes and failures so that we can share and shoulder these with them.

Liaison Couples of Zone must also transmit to their Super-Regional and Regional Couples the objectives and concerns of the International Leading Team and in this way to further unity and solidarity within the international Movement. After every meeting of the International Leading Team, they inform them of matters discussed at these meetings and seek their collaboration.

A horizontal link

Happy events take place in each country and it is good that all should know about them. Likewise, the concerns and difficulties of some can be shared and remembered in the prayers of others. The exchange of news, active involvement and shared prayer between Super-Regional and Regional Couples who are linked to the International Leading Team, benefit all. We must promote deep friendship and mutual acquaintance in order that, together, we constitute a small community of Christian couples who pray for one another, share our joys and sadness and help one another.

Zone meetings

There are generally two per year:

- One that takes place at the end of the meeting of the Interna-

tional College of Super-Regional Couples with the International Leading Team and which lasts a day;

- The other, a few months later, in the course of a weekend. It follows the pattern of an ordinary team meeting: pooling of news, prayer, sharing, study-topic, solidarity and Zone activities. Our custom is to hold it each time in a different country of the Zone since hospitality draws closer together those who provide it and those who receive it. We make time during these meetings for a period of celebration and to meet team members who offer us hospitality in their homes.

The "Liaison Couples of Zones" must seek to create a universal climate of communion, not 'lording it' over anyone. They seek to

encourage contacts between Super-Regional and Regional Couples, to circulate the conclusions of every meeting of the International Leading Team, and to establish a free-flowing two-way communication between these leaders and the International Leading Team.

The Super-Regional and Regional Couples of each Zone practise spiritual and material mutual help and

foster international solidarity between teams. As an example, may we quote the case of the Euro-African Zone. As early as 2004, teams in the Super-Regions of Italy and Spain helped by their prayers and by substantial and sustained financial help some programs of training of Sector and Regional Couples and Pilot Couples of the Super-Region of French-speaking Africa and of the Angola and Mozambique Regions.

All the terms of service within the International Leading Team are for a period of six years. This applies to Liaison Couples of Zones. It is a very exciting task and we must make the effort to learn languages and to listen to and hear what people have to say. For example, in the Euro-African Zone, five languages are in use: Arabic, Spanish, French, Italian and Portuguese.

Liaison-, welcome- and mutual-help activities are achieved with the grace of God for which we pray every day so that He may increase our Faith, Love and Hope and renew our availability and enthusiasm in the service of the Zone. We receive a hundredfold in return and, because of that, we thank the couples and priest of Cameroon that we met in the course of an intensive weekend of formation at Douala. We have received so much from these people! Thanks to all! ■





Dinner is served! Each of the zone couples prepared a meal for the others during the Zone meeting. Friday night was our meal, and we prepared one of Ted's family's favorites.



We celebrated Mass with the local teams' couples at a chapel used for the police and military. Here Ted is addressing the congregation before the final blessing. Eileen looks on while our translator of the day does her best to tell the couples what we are saying. Each of the Zone Couples in turn briefly told of the Movement in their country.



Paula and Murillo Axevedo translated for us during a session of the meeting. Paula and Murillo are Florianopolis TOOL members. Murillo lived in New York for a time about twenty years ago; Paula also speaks English.

Americas Zone meets for the first time in Brazil

By Eileen & Ted Kosnik

As part of our responsibilities as USA Responsible Couple, we meet with the other Super Regional Couples in the Americas Zone (North, Central and South America) as well as the Regional Couple of Canada once a year. Brazil has almost 3,000 teams, and Hispanic America about 500 teams. Canada has 41 teams, hence is a Region, not a Super Region, which is defined as 200+ teams.

The Zone couples met with Silvia and Chico Franciso de Assis Pontes, the ERI liaison couple, October 4 through October 7 to discuss areas of common concern, on the island of Florianopolis off the coast of Brazil. Florianopolis, a two-hour flight south of São Paulo, was settled by Portuguese fisherman a couple of hundred years ago, but the life along the coast still reflects those early roots.

It was decided that not only would we meet and discuss concerns in our countries, but in order to forge a closer bond

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between the couples, we would each prepare a meal. It was an interesting experience to come up with a meal that would be fast (we prepared food during meeting breaks) and be able to be prepared in a different country. It would not be possible to shop when we arrived so all ingredients

were listed in an e-mail and purchased by a local team couple. The concept of bread crumbs does not translate into Portuguese! We improvised and laughed!

On Saturday evening we worshipped with local TOOL couples and spoke briefly after Mass, each in turn, about the Movement in our Super Region. On Sunday after our meeting ended the local teams

prepared a barbecue of lamb, beef, and sausage before we left to return to the “real” world of work and family.

We met in the vacation home of a local TOOL couple who had volunteered to host the Zone meeting, and the house faced the beach and the sea. As a result we had the opportunity to observe local fisherman bring their nets to shore filled with the day’s catch. It was a very biblical experience! The vision of Jesus on the seashore with his friends became vivid. The parables and stories took on an entirely new meanings.

“As he was walking along by the Lake of Galilee he saw Simon and Simon’s brother Andrew casting a net in the lake – for they were fisherman. And Jesus said to them, ‘Come after me and I will make you fishers of men.’ And at once they left their nets and followed him” (Mark 1:16-18).



It was possible to understand why the apostles might not have recognized Jesus when they were in their boats and he was on the shore. One day the sun was bright on the water, blinding in its force, and another the water was shrouded in mist. On the beach the power of the wind coming off the water literally takes your breath away by its strength. It was amazing to be pushed and pulled walking on the sand, the sky dark and forbidding.

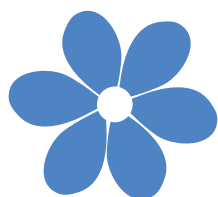
The trip took 25 hours each way and there was plenty of time for reflection on these images and the meeting. The meeting was powerful in many ways! ■



When all else fails, use sign language! Here we are explaining part of our presentation about TOOL in the USA to the other Zone Couples. We met on the third floor in a wonderful room full of windows. Alas, we had to cover them with blankets and newspaper to see the PowerPoint reports and slides. Zone Meetings require a lot of patience and stamina. All presentations must be translated into three languages, lengthening the days of meetings. The situations are handled with grace and humor!



Local TOOL men preparing a meal before we depart on Sunday.



SLOW DOWN!

Take time to smell your husband

By Pamela Sieracki, *Magnificat* Editor

It is Friday morning. I am still recovering from last night's Cub Scout den meeting. If you have ever been to one of these, you know what I mean.

Ten eight-year-olds running around like squirrels chasing each other up trees for an hour and a half. It takes me a good 24 hours to recover from one of these meetings. They don't tell you that when you sign up.

I'm having surgery in eleven days. I have no idea how long I'll be out of commission. I've told this to Ted and Eileen Kosnik, since this issue of the *Magnificat* deadline is around then. So Eileen sent me 25 pictures and articles late last night and they greeted me in my inbox this morning. "Good morning! Look at all the work we have for you!"

And those messages were hidden among notes from clients: "Just a heads up. I may need this as soon as tomorrow and this other thing I need for next week..."

OK, I'll try to fit that in around the meeting I have this afternoon, the annual holiday giving letter I'm writing for our local Habitat for Humanity, blood work and a doctor's appointment next week, picking up our share at the organic farm, selling popcorn for the Cub Scouts, getting long-overdue haircut, the elementary school's ice cream social, buying Halloween costumes and candy, the orthodontist appointment, laundry, fixing dinners ("What do you mean you're hungry? You just ate five hours ago!!"),...

And on top of that, our team meeting this month is tomorrow night. *At our house.*



We have nine people coming to the house - *including a priest!* I haven't even shopped for ingredients yet and what about the bowls and coffee cups? Do we have enough decaf? The porch needs to be swept, the grass

needs to be cut (it looks like a *forest* out there), the bathroom looks and smells like it hasn't been cleaned in months, there is a layer of dust over everything, the table cloth needs ironing, there are Legos and Hot Wheels everywhere, I have to pick up the mirror from the glass cutter to hang in the dining room so it doesn't look like a *warehouse* in here - we can't have our team (including a priest!) see the place looking like *this!*

Whoa! Slow. Down.

My mind is spinning from all of this stuff. I am focusing the things, not on God or His people. Yes, hospitality for teams is important, but in that litany of to-dos, I didn't once mention my husband. Shouldn't we be spending time together getting ready for our meeting - spiritually and mentally? After all, that's why we're in Teams, right?

So slow down. Take time to talk and pray with your husband. Everything else will fall into place.

And who knows? He may even smell like roses. ■



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are not nursery schools for responsible adults, but groups of freely committed and dedicated Christians. No one is forced to join the Movement nor to remain in it. But those who do belong, must abide by the rules (*The Charter of the Teams of Our Lady*).

So it was decided that the groups would have a structure to provide a skeleton on which to form the team. Each part

of the meeting was thought through for purpose, and those groups that would not comply with the Charter were separated from those that would adhere to the rule of the endeavors and the TOOL format. Father Caffarel continued to work with both groups, but the ones without structure slowly ceased to meet.

It is the form developed by Father Caffarel and those early teammates that we have inherited today. It is for the same

reason that Father Caffarel wrote the Charter, that we work to have teams follow the TOOL format. There are not Teams' Police, but we know through 70 years of experience what works! Is your team following in the spirit of the Charter?

Take the time to evaluate your team's faithfulness to the Movement. Return to the basics. If you have not piloted in many years, consider doing so as a way of returning to the

core ideals and strengthen your foundation.

Materials are available through the TOOL Office (info@TeamsOfOurLady.org), or call (903) 535-7864. ■



FOCUS ON THE ENDEAVORS: PERSONAL PRAYER

“One of the chief dead-ends in developing my spiritual life is to want to have someone else’s spiritual life. If, for instance, I visit a convent one day, or see a monastery on TV, I may find myself thinking, ‘I wish I could pray like them.’ But if I am a schoolteacher, or an accountant, or looking after my children all day, then that rhythm of prayer may just not be suited to me. ‘Pray as you can, not as you can’t’ is an obvious maxim, but one that is frequently overlooked, leading to a lot of unrealistic expectations, and frustration. Finding my own rhythm, a way of praying that suits me, may involve some experimentation with times and places and with different styles and approaches. At times I will need to persevere and not give up on something too easily. I also need, however, to be prepared to say, ‘This doesn’t work for me.’ Finding a way of praying I can sustain is an important step in developing my relationship with God.”

Words on Prayer from Sacred Space (www.sacredspace.ie)

New Retreat Material Available

Apostolic Fathers: Handing on the Faith

The latest installment in the *Footprints of God* series has been released and is available from the TOOL Office for retreats. "Apostolic Fathers: Handing on the Faith" is about 90 minutes long and features Ignatius of Antioch, Clement of Rome, Polycarp of Smyrna, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Justin Martyr, and leads you in an exploration of the world of the early Christians. The DVD traces their steps through Israel, Turkey, France and Italy in "a fast-paced, entertaining biography, travel documentary, Bible study, apologetics course and Church history study rolled into one" (from the DVD jacket).

Contact info@TeamsOfOurLady.org to reserve this new material for your team retreat. We will ship it a week or two before it is needed and ask that you return all material immediately following your retreat. There is no charge for the use of this material.



Teams of Our Lady

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