



Magnificat

A Newsletter for Married Couples

*United States Teams of Our Lady - Equipes de Nossa Senhora -
Equipos de Nuestra Señora*

.....

Gathered in Communion

LETTERS FROM
ERI SPIRITUAL COUNSELLOR
MSGR. FRANÇOIS FLEISCHMANN

What will be at the heart of our experience as we gather in Lourdes?

From our previous experience of similar gatherings, we know that we will find a heart-warming atmosphere; we may also be looking forward to discovering



the joy of encountering team members of numerous countries who will soon meet in the same spirit. Beyond the

differences of language and culture, the common basis is so deeply rooted in the life of couples and of teams that communication cannot remain superficial.

Addressing myself as much to those who will participate in the Lourdes gathering as to those who cannot do so, I invite you to dig a bit deeper into what is the real basis of our unity, specially on the occasion of this Gathering

of our Movement. We have the same aim: namely to respond, in our lives as couples and teams and as members of the Church, to a very real spiritual challenge. It is a challenge that is presented to us by the Charter. We are all called to celebrate the beauty of marriage and to bear witness to it in society in which marriage is all too weakened and devalued.

But what makes it possible for us to be faithful to this “way of holiness” that marriage is? We hope that the Gathering in Lourdes will make us more attentive to the living source: the love that comes from God. The thoughts of the speakers and the sharing in teams will provide the inspiration for our future orientations, but, as always, the summit of our days in Lourdes will be the Eucharist.

Whether we go to Lourdes or are not able to do so, we will remember the words of Saint Paul: “The loaf of bread which we break, is it not a sharing in the Body of Christ? And as there is one loaf, so we, although there are many of us, are one single body, for we all share in the one loaf” (1 Co 10: 16-17). For couples, the Eucharist, as Father Cafarel said, “completes the union that the sacrament of marriage has established.” For teams and for the whole Movement,

the Eucharist is the prime site of our deep-rootedness in the Church of Christ.

When we receive the Body of Christ, let us recall these words of Saint Augustine: “You hear the words: ‘The Body of Christ’ and you respond: ‘Amen.’ Be a member of Christ that your ‘Amen’ may be true” (Sermon 272). In other words, wherever we may be, let each one of us confess, in the act of faith of communion, our belonging to the one Body, “under one Leader: Christ.” ▶

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Let us know how not to separate the Eucharistic Body from the Mystical Body, since, in faith, we acknowledge that it is the same Body of the Lord. From this point of view, geographical or cultural distances have less importance. The Gathering will be an experience of communion for the whole

Movement. All of us, nourished by the Bread of life, we will be all the more generously united with the whole of humanity that God loves with the same infinite love in his Son Jesus Christ.

A Shrine Awaits Us in Lourdes

When in Lourdes, you will soon discover that all ways lead to the “shrine.” This is a familiar term but, in reality, what meaning do we attach to it?

Let us stand back a bit. A long time after leaving Egypt, when the chosen people had settled in the land of Israel, King David thought that a worthy dwelling place should be given to God, considering that he – a mere delegate of the Lord to lead his people – resided in a Palace. What follows will surprise you. The prophet Nathan had approved of the project but soon had to retract and to tell the king that the Lord refused to be locked up in a sanctuary (cf. 2 Sam 7:1-7). On the other hand, his message leads on to a totally different outcome. God had accompanied his people in their wanderings in the desert after they had left Egypt: he now promises to remain faithfully in the living “house” that is David’s descendants. It is a veiled announcement of the coming of Christ.

Nevertheless, David’s son, king Solomon, will be allowed to build the Temple, the acknowledged place of the divine presence (cf. 1 Kings ch. 8). Yet, if there is now a house built of stone, people will never forget that it is an extension of the “Tent of meeting” (cf.

Ex 33:7). Thus, the stone building is only a sign, a landmark to help us to draw closer to the One who dwells in his people.

Jesus frees us from an excessive fixation on physical sanctuary. In Jerusalem, he purifies “my father’s house” and announces that the “destroyed temple” will be rebuilt in three days – and this temple is his Body (cf. n 2, 13-22). In this way, he gives a new meaning to our entering into the presence of God: the focal point is from now on the Son of God made man himself.

Saint Paul shows us that the Lord lives in us: “...You are part of God’s household. You are built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, and Christ Jesus himself is the cornerstone (Ep 2:19-20). Do you not realise that you are a temple of God with the Spirit of God living in you? (1 Co 3:16)

This brief perusal of the Bible shows that we cannot look in a physical place only in order to meet God; and yet in Lourdes, the Virgin Mary asked Bernadette for a chapel to be built that people

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What purpose do they serve?

BY TED & EILEEN KOSNIK
SUPER REGIONAL COUPLE

“There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven...”
Ecclesiastes 3:1

This passage is very descriptive of the months of May and June. We are invited to attend First Communion, weddings and graduations, to say nothing of family gathering centering around Mother’s Day and Father’s Day! We celebrate milestones as a loving, supportive community and return to our separate homes enriched in mind and body.

So too in teams we look at milestones. Many teams are preparing for their annual evaluation and recommitment. Why do we consider these steps necessary to team life? What purpose do they serve?

It is hoped that as you have studied, prayed, and communicated with your spouse and team during the year you have experienced positive change. You are an improved version of last year’s self! Your teammates have also evolved into improved versions of themselves. The changes may have been very subtle, but take the time to look at yourself and your team and take stock of where you are.

Now – where would you like to be next year? That is what you are evaluating! Be loving in your evaluation of yourself and others. Comments should be sup-

portive and gentle. You should look toward not only to the individual but to the team as well. What can the team do to improve future meetings? Take a meeting and use the evaluation as the study topic. Pray and prepare for this meeting in advance.

Let us look to the passage from the RC Handbook which deals with Commitment:

“The Team commitment is a mutual promise to help each other on our journey of faith and love. Because TOOL understands the difficulty of this journey in today’s world, it offers us the Endeavors as guideposts. We commit ourselves first to God because we believe that this is His will. We commit ourselves to the Movement as a special cell in the universal church, one designed for and by married couples, for our unique vocation. We commit ourselves to each other to support our spiritual journeys toward holiness.”

When we share our lives at a meeting, it is comforting to know that the people to whom we bare our soul are committed to the people in the team. When we share our lives more deeply during prayer or highs and lows, we know that our teammates will be there for the foreseeable future. Commitment is a voluntary act on the part of each couple, and implies a sense of support and loyalty not only for the individual base team, but for the larger Movement and leadership as well.

It is suggested that you have a ceremony of some type to mark your recommitment. There are a short and long form in the RC Handbook, but use your

imagination. We like to use candles during the recommitment, which each couple can use during the coming year when they have their sit-downs.

Evaluate and commit to each other for a new season of growth, you will find it amazingly enriching and satisfying!

Kosniks Corner

Enjoy each God given day and share His love with your spouse, family, team and community, so it can truly be said “See these Christians how they love one another.” •

New Study Material Available for Teams

“Congugal Spirituality and Commitments of Teams of Our Lady”
to be made available in September

The following was written by the International Movement to introduce the study material available this coming September.

The term ‘conjugal spirituality’ has been used from the very early times in our Movement but do we fully understand the fullness of the term and its relevance in today’s world?

To deepen our understanding, the ERI has structured a topic to study the vocation of conjugal spirituality and the purpose of Teams of Our Lady.

Book Leads Team Through Eight Meetings

Meetings Two and Three are devoted to the sacrament of marriage, exploring first the sacrament and then the living out of this sacrament in the real world.

The relevance of the methods of Teams of Our Lady are presented in Meetings Four and Five, while Meetings Six and Seven develop how we orient our lives in the love of God and progress in love for the future.

The final Meeting takes Jesus as our model and opens up some new thinking on our individual and couple path to holiness.

While developing greater understanding of couple spirituality, we propose this study to support the making the new Orientation of our Movement a reality in our lives.

Background to the Study Topic

The purpose of the document is to provide a topic that will enable each member of TOOL throughout the world to develop a greater understanding of what is meant by married/conjugal spirituality and how do we live it out.

Because of the nature of this topic, it is important that we take time to reflect and discuss each chapter in a deep and intimate way.

For this reason each



chapter is short but open to deep dialogue with questions to support the subject matter. There are questions for the Team meeting, questions that could be used during the monthly sit-down and questions for the individual and the couple. Discussions around these questions will stimulate ideas for individual’s Rule of Life.

For couples or teams who wish to dig deeper in their learning journey,

a wonderful book has been published to support this study topic. Each meeting contains references which we encourage those wishing to deepen their understanding of the subject matter of any particular chapter to study.

Each meeting structure contains the following parts:

- a presentation on the core content of that specific meeting, spiritual writings.
- a recommended Scripture piece for reflection before and during the Team meeting;
- the questions for the Team meeting;
- recommended discussion points for our sit-down and for behavioural change which can lead us to a ‘Rule of Life’.

Let us always remember that a study topic is to guide deeper learning of any given topic.

We encourage each of you to accept the challenges which may be presented and try to deepen your understanding as individual, as couple and as Team with the love of the searchers – who described by Father Caffarel form a union:

“...where intellect and heart are thirsting to know and to meet God.”

How to Order

We will be printing “Conjugal Spirituality and Commitments of Teams of Our Lady” in August with shipment that same month. It will be available in English, Portuguese and Spanish.

If your team is interested in this material for study, please notify the TOOL Office by e-mail (info@teamsourlady.org) or by mail (**PO Box 4638 Tyler, TX 75712**).

We try to print only the copies needed, so let us know:

- if you would like the material
- how many copies you will need
- in what language you will need it

Be sure to include your **name** and **mailing address** as well as **team name and number**. There is no cost for materials printed by the Movement, as they are covered by your Annual Contribution.



Tips for
Teams

Annual TOOL Contribution

BY TED AND EILEEN KOSNIK

In the spring of each year TOOL members will receive a letter from the Secretariat Couple, Mary-Ellen and Tim Fleming, requesting an annual contribution. Included with the letter is an envelope addressed to the Team Office for the contribution. Team members are asked to return the envelope to their RC during a regular team meeting, or if they prefer they may individually mail the envelope to Teams. If your team does not meet during the summer months, please just mail the envelope!

The Responsible Couple is asked to collect the envelopes and mail them to the Team Office at the address that is printed on each envelope. A couple with financial hardship may include a note saying that they are praying for the Movement and it will be credited as a contribution. We need the prayers of all TOOL members as we try to spread this marital aid to the largest possible community!

TOOL is a 501(c)(3) organization so your contribution is tax deductible.

Why Contribute?

Because we live a life of mutual help, we all assist in the spread of the Movement. Some couples do this by traveling to pilot teams in remote areas, but most write a check. The funds collected are used at all levels in the Movement. Each Sector is provided with a small budget to pay for expenses including mileage costs incurred while giving In-

formation Meetings and piloting new teams if a distance is traveled.

The Region also has a budget to use to print and mail a Regional newsletter; expenses for the Sector Couples to meet annually with the Regional Service Team; and mileage funds for the Regional Couple to visit local sector events.

The US Super Region uses the funds to print and mail piloting material and

Where your contribution goes...

- Print and mail piloting materials, *Magnificat*, and other literature
- Purchase videos for retreats
- Travel for Super Regional Couple for training and support
- National meeting expenses
- Training sessions
- Tithe to International Movement

other Team literature; print and mail the *Magnificat*; purchase videos to use for retreats; travel for the Super Regional Couple to visit regions for training and support. The US Region also meets with the Regional Couples twice a year in a central location to discuss policy and team formation. Once a year the Super Regional Couple attends a meeting with other worldwide leadership.

US Teams rent a climate controlled storage unit for Team materials. No salaries are paid. Leadership couples at all levels uses their own computers and telephones for the Movement. We are very frugal with your money!

Funds are set aside to pay known future expenses, including national meetings, training sessions and a "rainy day" fund.

On an international level we tithe to the International Movement so that teams can be started in countries without financial resources. Currently the ERI is supporting team formation in the former Eastern block nations, Africa, Oceania and South America. The funds are used to print materials in the local language and pay expenses of piloting couples. When we are assessed the tithe, ERI determines the amount by the use of a formula involving the GNP of each country and the number of couples who are part of the Movement in that country as of January first of each year.

Thank you for your prayerful contribution.

Lake Erie and Metro Region Re-energize with Sector Days

BY BOB AND JOYCE GRINEWICH

Hello Team-mates! It's that time of year again. . . Sector Days: what a wonderful opportunity for re-energizing and re-invigorating teams! Recently the Pittsburgh Teams, Buffalo Teams and Nassau Teams held sector events.

There is truly strength in numbers, and when our individual teams join together for prayer, reflection, sharing and laughter, all of us leave standing taller and filled with the Spirit.

Eileen and Ted Kosnik joined the Pittsburgh and Buffalo Teams for their Sector Days. It was great for these sectors to meet Eileen and Ted and get first-hand experience of the larger movement. Meeting couples from other teams in your own area is one of the highlights of a Sector day, and hearing about Teams from other parts of the country and around the world from Eileen and Ted was a wonderful insight into the larger movement for the couples in attendance.

It was our privilege and pleasure to join the Sector Day held by the Nassau teams.

Decades of sharing the joys and sorrows of married life through Teams has made these couples like seasoned athletes who know the importance of specific day-to-day activities necessary to maintain peak performance. How precious the endeavors are!

From season to season, these couples continue to grow stronger through

mutual support and encouragement. Teams has clearly been a gift from God that has blessed their marriages and families. They want the gift of Teams to continue to grow and their Sector day deepened their resolve to re-energize the growth of Teams in Nassau County by holding information meetings and issuing personal invitations. We left filled with joy, after an afternoon of love and laughter.

If your Sector is looking for Sector Day activities and ideas, remember you are part of a larger movement with brothers and sisters in teams all over the world. Contact them for new ideas and sharing.

May God bless you and keep you and fill your hearts with peace.

Regional Reports



Team members from Pittsburgh Sectors listen attentively to guest speaker Marilyn Barton. See also "Pittsburgh Celebrates Sector Day" on the back cover.

Southeast Region: Kleins agree to serve as Regional Couple

BY ED & SUSAN KLEIN

We are delighted to begin service as your Southeast Regional Couple, bringing our



Susan and Ed Klein, new Southeast Regional Couple.

twenty-five years of Teams experience to the position.

In 1981, John and Carolyn Lyman, current Mid-Atlantic Regional Couple, invited us to join their team, Alexandria 1, of what was then

the Maryland West Sector. While on that team, we piloted two new teams and helped to produce the Sector Newsletter. Professionally, Ed had been Dean of Men at Georgetown University and later the Financial Aid Director at its School of Medicine. Susan started association work in 1980. We stayed in Alexandria 1 until 1989, when we moved to Clearwater, Florida.

Though Teams had been strong in Tampa and Brandon since the 70s, it had not come across Tampa Bay, so we started Teams in Pinellas County in 1990, the same year we were appointed Sector Couple of Florida. From 1993 to 1997, we served as Regional Couple for the Southern Region, which then extended from the Atlantic Ocean to Texas and Oklahoma. During that time, we installed Ted and Eileen Kosnik as the first Texas Sector Couple.

Ed retired from the Pinellas County School District in 2005, having taught math and English. He continues as head of his area-wide tutoring service. Susan is Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer for the International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineering (ISPE), in Tampa. She retires June 30,

but will continue as a consultant with the Society.

We have two children. Peter lives in Seattle, while Katharine and husband Mi-

Regional Reports

chael live in Jacksonville, Florida with their son Jackson.

We would like to thank the many couples who have helped us in our work for Teams, including the members of teams we've been on. Without their great help and prayerful support, we could not have accomplished what we did. To future leaders in Teams at whatever level, we want to say that the rewards of service will far outweigh the work that you will do. The present leaders know that. We hope you will know it soon. •

Please!
 Keep your email addresses current. A large number of emails bounce back each time they are sent – new ones each time. Email changes should be sent to *info@teamsofourlady.org* and your Sector Couple, clearly stating your **name** and **team**. We get lots that just say we have a new address – but with nearly 6,000 people to track, that does not help!

Bob and Carol Stouvenour answer the call for National Prayer Couple

BY TED & EILEEN KOSNIK

Bob and Carol Stouvenour have assumed the duties of National Prayer Couple, facilitating the TOOL internet prayer chain. You may reach them at the new email address (prayer@teamsofourlady.org) established to allow continuity in this ministry.

Bob and Carol live in Rockville, Maryland, a suburb of Washington, D.C. They have been married for thirty-six years and members of Silver Spring 6/12 team for over twenty of these years. During their time in TOOL they have served as Sector Couple for Maryland East Sector, and Mid-Atlantic Regional Couple.

Bob grew up in Texas, and Carol grew up in the suburbs of Washington, D.C., where they met shortly after Bob moved to Washington to begin a career with the Federal government. The Stouvenours have four children, David, Holly, Paul and Kristen. The three oldest are married and live in the Washington area. Their youngest daughter lives in Greensboro, North Carolina. They have five grandchildren, four boys and one girl, whom they describe as “perfect.”



Bob and Carol Stouvenour become National Prayer Couple, taking over duties from Ellen and TJ Holt.

Bob retired from his position of Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families at the Department of Health and Human Services in 1995. After many years of being a volunteer catechist at their parish, The Shrine of St. Jude, Bob became the Director of Religious Education there for seven years. Carol also taught religious education classes for many years, was very involved in PTA and Girl Scouts, and worked in the parish building and maintaining databases and information systems. They both retired again in 2002, and now enjoy cruising, traveling, baseball, and reading. They are also readily available to baby-sit their grandchildren, which they do regularly with great joy. They continue to teach adult and children’s classes in their parish. •

Faces from across the Super Region...



Jim and Ruth Wagner, Coastal Regional Couple (right), welcome Mid-Atlantic Regional Couple counterparts John and Carolyn Lyman and Rev. Mark Mealey, Episcopal Vicar of the Diocese of Arlington (Virginia) to the Teams of Our Lady Day of Enrichment 2006 for the teams in Northern Virginia.



Ed and Anne Franco, Midwest Regional Couple (left), Cindy and Walt Romano, newly installed Sector Couple of the Detroit Sector and Marie and Carl Weber, retiring Sector Couple of Detroit at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral.



Tom and Florence Levy, organizers of the Nassau Sector Day.



At the Buffalo Sector Day. Front row: Mike and Vida Erysz, Buffalo North Sector Couple, Joe and Diane Manuel, Buffalo South Sector Couple. Back row: Eileen and Ted Kosnik, Super Regional Couple, Joyce and Bob Grinewich, Lake Erie - Metro Regional Couple.



Heidi Rotella, Gloria and John Roetzer, and Joe Rotella (Williamsville NY 06) enjoy lunch at the Buffalo Sector Day.



John and Claire Lynn and Fr. Thomas Costa, Nassau Sector Chaplain.



Buffalo's Sector Day took place during Lent and included "Sorrow: A Rosary Musical" presented by Quiet Waters Productions. Tim Noonan, Williamsville NY 07, played Jesus.



Tony Browning and Pat and Dave Sampson (Clarence NY 01) at the Buffalo Sector Day.

FLEISHMANN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2
might come to it on pilgrimage.

It is true that we always need reference points to become aware of the presence of the Lord and do so together. There are churches in our parishes and prayer corners in our homes. But from time to time we have to set out on pilgrimage and assemble in places that are marked out, inhabited, identified as bearers of a message.

What marks out Lourdes is the visit of Mary to Bernadette and, through her, to numerous people. The apparitions have made the grotto and the area around it a special sanctuary where the Mother of God welcomes us – not so much for her own sake – but to lead us to her Son who is present in Lourdes – think of the importance for all pilgrimages in Lourdes of the Mass and of the procession of the Blessed Sacrament. Mary remains on the threshold of that house to take us in to Jesus, to intercede, as a helpful Mother, for all humanity. She guides us towards Jesus who offers himself to our adoration, who heals hearts and even bodies, who reconciles and forgives.

The Teams of Our Lady are going to Lourdes next September, to this special sanctuary, a place of truth in faith. And is not this sanctuary a house of Teams since Father Caffarel led couples to it in 1954 and was inspired there to consecrate the Movement to the immaculate Virgin?

Called to holiness as a team

BY JEAN-LOUIS AND PRISCILLA SIMONIS

Discovering Christ.” Such is the topic that we are studying as a team in preparation for our great international gathering in Lourdes. Why this topic? What meaning must we attach to this work of research? And, simultaneously, what meaning must we attach to our gathering – personally for every one of us? It is on these questions that we propose to reflect for a moment in this Letter from the International Leading Team.

The will of the Father

It is my Father’s will *that you love one another as I have loved you* (Jn 15: 12)
...that you may *be one, just as you, Father, you are in me and I in you* (Jn 17: 21)
...that you may *be holy and faultless before him in love* (Eph 1: 4).

To be holy — what does it mean? Do we still dare today to seek holiness without running the risk of being accused of naïve ‘other-worldliness’? What did our patron saints in the calendar do that was special – other than to seek the will of the Father by imitating the Son? For no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him (Mt 11: 27). It is my Father’s will that whoever sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and that I should raise him up on the last day (Jn 6: 40). This is the will of God for each one of us, for every baptised person.

The Charter of the Teams reminds us: They aspire to carry out fully their baptismal commitments.

In his editorial of the October-November 1970 Newsletter, Father

Letters from the International Leading Team

Caffarel wrote: “It is well and truly ‘in and through marriage’ and not on the fringes of married life that Teams couples intend to pursue holiness.” For us, husband and wife, this determination is mutual. Is not the reciprocal sanctification of the spouses one of the ends of marriage, if not the main one? Therefore, whether we go to Lourdes or remain at home, our participation is a call and an encouragement to set out individually and as a couple “to discover Christ” who shows us the Father.

As a team

Going beyond our situation as a couple, the Charter encourages us to help one another through our team life:

“Aware of their weakness and of the limits to their strength, if not of their good intentions,

- because they experience daily how difficult it is to live as Christians in a pagan world,

- and because they have unshakeable faith in the power of fraternal mutual help,

they have decided to form a team.”

We attended recently the monthly meeting of a new team of the Beyrouth-Metn Sector on the occasion of a visit to Lebanon last March. They had reached chapter 4 of the study topic “Discovering Christ.” For their discussion time, they had slightly modified the question: “What support do I get from each member of the team to grow in my spiritual journey?” Each member in turn then expressed, in all simplicity and truth, in what particular way each team member was helping him/her in their spiritual journey:

- Georges and Anna’s unfailing faithfulness to conjugal prayer, even on days when they come home late at night;
- Mona’s daily reception of the Eucharist;
- The team’s presence for Samia during Antoine’s many business trips.
- Anna told us how she discovered a “positive jealousy,” that is to say one that “urges her to bestir herself and imitate the good example of such or such a member of the team.”

Each one of us could lengthen the list of the benefits of mutual help within our team. We could in this way dis-

cover or rediscover how our fellow team members help us to conform our life to Christ’s example and respond to his personal call.

“Where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them” (Mt 18: 20). We put our finger there on the deep significance of our belonging to a team: the presence of the Lord among us. Let us give Him



free rein therefore to carry out his work of sanctification in us!

In another of his editorials (March/April 1973), Father Caffarel, speaking of the team as a ‘a small ecclesia’ (a small church), added: “If someone asks me what allows us to apply the same term ‘ecclesia’ to both the big Church of Jesus Christ and a small meeting of the faithful, I would reply [...]: a little group of Christians is truly a cell of the Church. Now, a cell lives of the life of the body: in each cell of my body, my soul is totally present and alive. Similarly, in each cell of the Church, in each ecclesia, the soul of the great Church is present, alive, impatient to bestow and display all its potential for sanctification.”

In Lourdes

Let us broaden our reflections to our great gathering in Lourdes. More than 10,000 participants (enough to cause agoraphobes among us to hesitate!) are expected from approximately sixty countries situated in all five continents. In this international setting, team members like us, of diverse races, languages

and culture will enrich each other by sharing their experience of seeking the same perfection in Christ under the loving gaze of Mary, the first among all the saints. They will all be in search of the same Father. They will constitute an ‘ecclesia’ greater than a team, made up of a multitude of universal ‘ecclesiolae’ (miniature churches), mirroring the one “Great Church.” It will therefore be an opportunity of ‘being’ Church, of making it visible for so many isolated couples seeking, if not perfection, at least to grow towards perfection.

What a boost! What an encouragement for our own sanctification!

Looking forward joyfully to seeing you in Lourdes.

If you would like the couples attending the International Gathering in Lourdes, September 16-21, to bring your prayer requests with them, please email petitions (info@teamsofourlady.org) or mail them to the TOOL Office (TOOL, PO Box 4638, Tyler TX 75712) by 9/9/06. We will print them and bring them to the Shrine with us, remembering your intentions in prayer with the International Movement. We are attending a leadership meeting prior to the Gathering so the earlier date is necessary.

*M*aryann Young is the mother of six of her own children and 12 step children of which I am one. She managed a household of 18 children and I am proud to say that she herself never had to wash a dish, set a table, bring in a grocery bag, clean a room, iron a shirt or mop a floor. 'All' she did was the cooking, shopping, and washing of the clothes!

She has never stopped going to school. She has probably taken more classes on the Bible and the church than most priests. In addition, she paints and, as you can see by the article, writes.

Her love for God is very practical. She has worked in many a soup kitchen in the Washington D.C. area and she has worked tirelessly in her parish in programs to feed and clothe the poor.

She is a humble woman who embodies the spirit of St Mother Therese, who said, "We cannot do great things, only small things with great love." That's my mom!

– Tom Young, Whitehouse TX 01

Jesus gives his mother to the beloved disciple

by Maryann Young

*A*fter Jesus is stripped of his clothes and left hanging on the cross, there is a moment filled with gentleness and kindness. Seeing his Mother and the disciple he loved standing together near the cross, Jesus says to Mary, "Woman, behold your son." Then he says to the disciple, "Behold your Mother."

Mary, the seed of the first Eve, is our second Eve. She watches as Satan does his worst to her son. Did she know as she stood there by her dying son, that this was the way of the strange glory by which he would conquer sin and death? We do not know.

Maybe Mary had thought often through the years about what old Simeon had said when Joseph and she took baby Jesus to the temple that first time. "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and a sword will pierce your own soul."

It was in the space created by Mary's faith – not simply in her womb – that the WORD became flesh. Mary, this poor very young woman of Nazareth was rooted in faith and in the struggles of her people. In the darkness of faith, she offered her consent to the mysterious plan of God. When I think of Jesus I think of Mary too. He received his humanity from her – the color of his eyes, the cut of his nose and that odd way of smiling. She potty trained him. All the while she was probably pondering the prophecies – and whatever was the meaning of the gift of myrrh at his birth?

At Cana, when the wine ran out and she told Jesus about it, his response had been, “O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come.” Then she told the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

And this is still her message to you and to me. “Do what ever he tells you.”

But here at Cana is where she learned that she must let him go. It surely must have hurt. Love that lets go is never easy. This is the love that must be learned. You and I have all had that experience – probably more than once.

Then, do you remember the time that Mary and some of the brothers went to find Jesus? He was teaching in a crowded house when someone broke through to tell him that his Mom and brothers were looking for him. They were worried about him – especially about his safety. But Jesus’ reply was, “Who are my mother and my brothers? Who ever does the will of God, is my Mother and brother.” What was Mary thinking then?

Do you suppose that Mary did get to see her son that day? They had been so close, but now she could have felt shut out – even put down. That is how I would have felt. This distancing of love is really a deepening of discipleship. Has this ever happened to you especially in your ministry? How did it make you feel? Were you able ultimately to find it a growing experience?

Mary is to be honored as the first disciple of the church, the icon disciple. Mary is also the Theotokos – the Greek title – God Bearer, not to honor her, but in order to tell the truth about Christ. Jesus Christ is God and Mary is his Mother. Therefore she is the mother of God.

St Irenaeus said, “MARY is the new Eve – Mother of all the living who have come to life in Christ and Christ is the new Adam.”

The disciple whom Jesus loved is standing in for all the disciples of whom Jesus loves. “BEHOLD YOUR MOTHER.” The Beloved disciple represents all of us – you and me, the entire Church. This makes Mary the mother of the Church. However the church is more important than even Mary. Mary is a part, a holy and excellent member, but never the less a member of the whole body. And the church is the body of Christ.

I still hear Mary’s message to us, “Do what ever he tells you.” •



Pittsburgh celebrates Sector Day

On Saturday Feb. 18th Pittsburgh North and South Sectors gathered for Sector Day, at the Kearns Spirituality Center, a place that also has a magnificent chapel and outdoor labyrinth to walk. We chose as our speaker Marilyn Barton who is a licensed family psychologist, the mother of six and grandmother of twenty-one. Her expertise is in family systems theory and through the use of her own personal stories she shared with us how every family member, past and present, has a great deal of influence on how we lead our lives today. Through the use of her own family tree she took us through a journey of how our ancestors lives often impact our own lives.

The day ended with Mass in the chapel celebrated by Fr. Bob McCreary, a Capuchin, who was responsible for bringing teams to Pittsburgh fourteen years ago.

Sector Day was a wonderful way to get us thinking about our marriages and our journey with the Lord that we live every day.

We were especially honored to have Ted and Eileen Kosnik, US Super Region Responsible Couple, join us for this sector event. *- Jim and Maureen Romano*



Eileen & Ted Kosnik, Karen & Ron Lutz, Jim & Maureen Romano, Father Robert McCreary OFM, Georgia & Joe Moncada

Teams of Our Lady

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