



TEAMS OF OUR LADY

NORTH PROVINCE Regions: Central, North Central, Lake Michigan, Midwest

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What do you thirst for?

If you remember, at one time in commercials that featured the soft drink, Sprite, they used to have a slogan saying, "Image is nothing, thirst is everything, obey your thirst". That got me thinking, what do people truly thirst after anyway? What do people really want? And what truly satisfies our thirst, besides a soft drink? Throughout Jesus' preaching, life and death on the cross, he points to four general areas in particular that people have a tendency to thirst after which distracts us from God. These four things, Jesus tells us, are things that we need to live a life of detachment from so that we can be attached to God instead. And they are: Pride or ego, pleasure, power and possessions. Not that it is bad to have these things, but when it becomes more important than God, that is when we become attached, that is when it becomes a problem, that is when we end up looking for these things to fulfill us, and they don't. They can't satisfy us; instead they just separate us from God when they become the number one priority.

When people for example look for pride, or to have their egos stroked, they will say or do whatever they need to in order to look good, even if it isn't the truth. Some people will tear others down to make themselves look better. That's pride, its ego. Some people search for pleasure. They take drugs, or get drunk on alcohol or live promiscuous lives in a never ending search for pleasure. Some people totally immerse themselves in their own hobbies in a never ending search for fun. Some people look for power, power over people, to make people do whatever they want. Or sometimes when people insist that truth is all relative, it is out of a desire to have control over morality and define for oneself what is right and wrong. And then of course there are those who look for possessions, money and wealth to fulfill their every want and desire.

But none of these things truly leaves us satisfied for long. Jesus dying on the cross is a stark contrast to these areas of life that the world clings to. Jesus certainly wasn't reveling in pride on the cross as he suffered humiliation from his tormentors. He certainly didn't experience pleasure on the cross. He was willing to forego his power as Son of God and allowed himself to be tortured and killed. And he also was without possessions as the soldiers even cast lots for the only thing he had, which was his garment.

Jesus throughout his life and death was telling us that there is another way, a better way to find what we are really thirsting for. Jesus is telling us that God is reaching out to us in love and seeking to share His life with us. His love calls for our free response. We can accept, reject, or ignore His love. But that offer of love can only be fruitful in us if it is accepted. Accepting it means loving in return, entrusting our lives to Him. Of course to do this, we first must be detached from the pride, pleasure, power and possessions that so many crave. That is why it is important for us to take a step back now and then, strip away the excesses in our life and get back to the basics of our faith. When we take the time to learn from Jesus how to put God first, we will leave behind the things that take us away from His love, and truly find what satisfies our thirst.

God Bless,
Fr. Paul Ballien
Northern Province Chaplain





Leadership Meetings



Super Regional meeting with Jorge & Noelia Sousa along with Province couples, TJ & Ellen Holt (South), Rob & Sharla Walsh (West), Robert & Janie Mericsko (East), Robin Colette Quinn, Secretariat, Ed Cadieux, webmaster for Teams website and Fr. Manuel, Spiritual Counselor.



Northern Province Meeting at Royal Oak, MI with Regions: Central, North Central, Lake Michigan, Midwest. Many thanks to all the host couples.



Submission by Kirk and Peggy Peterson Central Region Couple

Today, as I write this article for Central Region's contribution for the North Provence newsletter, I am helping to prepare a class of 2nd graders for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and I find these moments as great times for reflection. I can reflect on my life as a child of God, as a wife, mother, daughter, and as a couple, Kirk and I can reflect on the past year as the Central Region Couple. During this year we have had the opportunity to meet with all Central Region Sectors, attended a great training session in Texas, and we had the pleasure of installing many new Sector Couples. Growth with Teams of Our Lady is apparent in all we see and do. The people we have met throughout this year have touched our hearts and we are truly blessed to be part of this wonderful group.

As we approach the Lenten season, which starts on St. Valentines' Day this year, it makes sense to journey together as a married couple. I found the "Examination of The Soul's Condition as Regards God" a checklist for self-examination by Saint Francis de Sales found in his book titled: *Introduction to the Devout Life*. The ten examinations are:

1. What is the aspect of your heart with respect to mortal sin?
2. What is your position with respect to the Commandments of God?
3. How do you stand as regards venial sins?
4. With respect to spiritual exercises - do you like and value them?
5. With respect to God Himself - does your heart delight in thinking of God, does it crave after the sweetness thereof?
6. If a wife has been long separated from her husband,...
7. With respect to Jesus Christ as God and Man - how does your heart draw to Him?
8. With respect to Our Lady, the Saints, and your Guardian Angel - do you love them well?
9. As to your tongue - how do you speak of God?
10. As to actions - have you God's visible glory at heart, and do you delight in doing whatever you can to honor Him?

Great list, however, number 6 caught my eye:

"If a wife has been long separated from her husband, so soon as she sees him returning, and hears his voice, however, cumbered she may be with business, or forcibly hindered by the pressure of circumstances, her heart knows no restraint, but turns at once from all else to think upon him she loves. So it is with souls which really love God, however engrossed they may be; when the thought of Him is brought before them, they forget all else for joy at feeling, His Dear Presence nigh, and this is a very good sign."



Kirk and I began our monthly sit-down with this paragraph in hand. What is it like to see your spouse after a long absence? We agreed just to see each other at the end of the day gives each of us great joy. Are we finding great joy when we seek God or when we hear God's words? Are we listening for God's voice? Are we forgetting all else and basking in the joyful feeling of God with us?

Kirk and I have decided to take a journey this Lenten season and really let our souls find joy in our love for God. We pray for you and your spouse, that your souls recognize the joy of God.

Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored. - Lamentations 5:21



More fun from Central Region.

Kansas B Sector -
Jamie and Danielle Blosser provided photos and a note from Hiawatha Team 2.

They enjoyed a "Team" building exercise by going to an 'escape room'. They broke into a Husband Team and a Wife Team.

Wife Team Kansas B



The photos show the Husbands may have escaped, but the wives had more fun!

Way to get together for fun Hiawatha Team 2.

Kirk & Peggy Central Region

Husband Team Kansas B





We became the Midwest Regional couple two years ago and since then we have been on a more motivated journey of faith and revitalization. Along the way we have met many inspirational couples who have impressed us with their devotion to Teams.

Roz and I have been enlivened by the devoted leadership of our Provincial Couple as well as the Regional Couples and the Sector Couples in our Midwest Region. We have had an opportunity to meet new Team couples along the way including last summer at the Summer Conference in Fredericksburg, Texas. We will travel with a group from the United States to Fatima, Portugal in July to join with Team couples from all over the world. We look forward to the National Conference at Navasota, Texas July 16-19, 2019.

Our two sectors in the Toledo Ohio area continue to grow. Toledo 13 in the Maumee Sector was recently inducted and Toledo 14 is slated to be inducted soon. Meanwhile the Toledo Sector has seen its first team in Bowling Green, OH nearly finished with piloting and will also be inducted in March.

The Toledo and Maumee Sectors are looking forward to a joint Sector day in Findlay, Ohio on March 3, 2018 at St. Michael the Archangel Church. Dr. John R. Wood, author, will be speaking on his new book The Light Entrusted to You to learn practical ideas of how we can all pass on our faith in the modern world to our children and grandchildren.

We travelled to Granville, Ohio to meet with couples from the Granville Pre-Sector. There were representatives from all four teams in attendance. We felt most welcome and inspired by the many church and community activities in which they were active.

We journeyed to Pre-Sector Hamilton, Ohio, near Cincinnati and met some gracious couples who continue to be committed to Teams and are interested in reaching out to other parishes and encouraging new couples to join Teams.

Finally, we met with our two teams in Kentucky on a Saturday afternoon. Our team in Covington consisted of couples who together have many children that joined us for the occasion. The Louisville 1 team drove over two hours to meet with the Covington 1 team that they had not met. It was a joyous occasion to see the two teams in different life stages find common ground in Teams of Our Lady.

What we have learned and continue to witness is that the more you put into Teams of Our Lady the more you get out of it. We urge everyone in Teams to respond to calls for leadership positions in your sector and region. You'll be glad you did.



John and Roz Needham

Midwest Regional Couple



Events from Midwest Region



This is a photo of the our Granville teams at a Pre-Sector meeting.

Photo of Hamilton1 Ohio team.



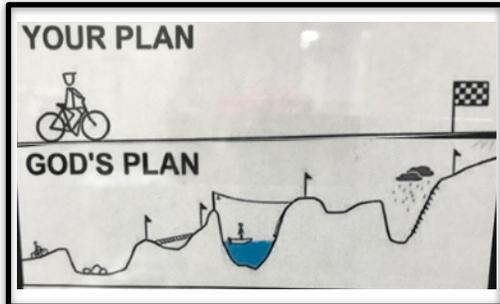
Photo of Louisville 1 meeting with Covington 1



Sector day for Toledo sector in Bryan, Ohio



This and That in the Northern Province



We had the privilege to attend a Mission at our parish last weekend. "Time for God in a busy world". The presenters asked us what we would do with \$86,400 dollars a day for a week. We would have to spend all of it every day. Well, that's how many seconds are in the day. How do we spend those seconds that we will never get back and can not save it for another day? It is important to respect the moments. Give our time to God and take time for God because all of our time is for God our Creator.

We have been blessed to attend sector events throughout our province and always come away inspired. One couple shared the observation that one maybe a natural athlete but who is naturally good at marriage. Teams was the answer they were looking for with active tools to enrich their marriage. A speaker reminded us to always look for what is good in others. Paul suggests in Philippians 4:8 "whatever is true whatever is honorable whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, of there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise. think about those things".

The Northern province meeting was held in Royal Oak, Michigan on March 3. We were hosted by a wonderful group of teams couples, Phil and Francesca Sobek, John and Karen and Wilson, and Mark and Kathy Maisonneuve, Shondell Patterson was also a chauffeur.

Steve and Julie Whitmore, Lake Michigan regional couple, did a great job organizing the meeting location at the Shrine of the Little Flower. (We discovered that the Stone from the baptismal font it's from our home state of Minnesota, Cold Springs Minnesota.) We were happy that Fr. Paul Ballien, our spiritual counselor, was able to join us.

We have the best regional couples in the United States. Please thank your regional couples as they are working very hard for the teams movement. Teams is growing numbers and connect-edness due to their leadership. We asked you to pray for them and also to prayerfully consider the call for leadership, whatever role that may be. Every yes we have spoken has yielded graces beyond measure and we wish the same for you.

"Love knows no limits" 1 Corinthians 13:7. May the Love of the Risen Christ fill your life with peace and joy.

Steve & Glynis Sturm
Northern Province Couple



John McQuire from Catholic Charities speaking at Winona Sector Day on “Affirmation in Marriage”

Winona MN, Service Team



Des Moines, IA Day of Reflection speakers



Day of Reflection - “Preparing our Hearts and Home for Lent”.
Des Moines, IA Sector



New Teams Weekend Celebration

Fargo, ND-NTWC

We had a beautiful fall weekend to travel north to Fargo with Jorge and Noelia joining us on the trip. (Holy Spirit moment-the next weekend turned bitterly cold with snow and travel advisories.)

The best parts of the weekend are many. Jorge and Noelia were the celebrities and the connection to the rest of the movement in the United States. They flew into the Minneapolis airport where they were hosted overnight by the Sector couple which was another touchstone for the newest sector in the North Central region. The Fargo gathering was the first time anyone there except the Sector couple had met them and they were very honored to host them. So great connections.

Friday evening was one presentation and activity followed by a social and music. Saturday was a full day. Fr. James Ermer's talk on "Who Guide's us" was excellent as a Teams chaplain and promoter of Teams. Several of the activities we did were very effective including a rope braiding exercise for team building and a "Jeopardy" game based on Teams organization on all levels. Saturday evening culminated with Mass followed by a potluck with other Teams invited.

The organization of the weekend by the Sector couple and Fargo Team members was awesome. The host families, babysitting, the food crew, and parish help were evidence of a unified sector that works together. The overall welcoming of the NTWC Team was warm which we felt was an openness to the larger movement. There were many indications of good piloting from responses from the couples during the weekend.

The New Teams Weekend Celebration (NTWC) is not a retreat but a time to celebrate the completion of piloting with other couples who have also recently completed piloting. This allows all on a smaller scale to experience the greater movement of Teams. It is not only a time of celebration but allows all to have a review of the charter, endeavors, format structure and community.

Our special thanks to John and Jan Klocke, Sector couple and the NTWC team, Rick & Carol Fishbune, Wayne and Marlyn Eisen and Mike & Barb Timm North Central Regional Couple.

Steve & Glynis Sturm
Northern Province Couple



Ed & April Mitchell,
Team 9
Fargo, ND



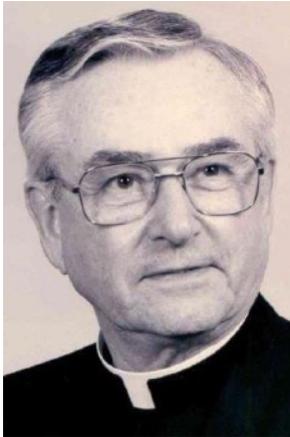
Jorge & Noelia Sousa USA Super
Regional Couple



New Teams Weekend Celebration at
Fargo, ND



In Memory of Monsignor Roy Literski



Fr Roy will be dearly missed by Rochester Team 3 and the Rochester Sector. We met him when he was Pastor of The Church of the Resurrection and was invited to be our Teams Chaplain. He was a very gentle man who loved the Lord. He was a spiritual guide to our team and we listened as he shared his experience of building The Church of the Resurrection. He listened as we talked of raising our families. Some of those stories were food for homilies. He often told us we were too hard on ourselves. At Christmas time, Roy had us and our children for a turkey dinner at church. He so enjoyed being with the kids that he sat with them for dinner and not with us adults. We shared many good years including outings on his houseboat on the Mississippi. Later, he retired to Winona and his townhome there. When our team was looking for a chaplain, we invited him again and he said yes. In his retirement he had mass every morning in his townhome and invited his neighbors and anyone who wished to come. In his aging he only became wiser and more reflective of how God works. He traveled to Rochester for our team meetings for many years and we were always welcome at his place. He sure could make a delicious prime rib at Christmas time.

Bill & Mary Doucette Rochester MN Sector Team #3

Events:

International Gathering
July 16-21, 2018 Fatima

National Conference
July 16-19, 2019 Texas