



The Intercessors

WATCH AND PRAY

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CONTENTS

P. 1 : Editorial / Father Marcovits' Spiritual Letter

P. 2 : Father Caffarel's Call

P. 3 : The Intercessors and the Geese Theory

P. 4 : News from Malazar

INTERCESSORS' QUARTERLY LETTER

Dear Friends,

As we begin our journey of 2024, we intercessors and members of the Teams may not be perky and excited to start a new year. Our Advent and Christmas joy and peace may have been marred by the suffering of others and our own suffering too. Our joy is still there though, buried under the frenzy of life. How do we make trusting steps towards our destination of oneness with Christ Jesus. For us intercessors we walk towards Turin, whether we are going physically or in spirit. We go to encounter the Lord, where He will lift us from our pain and uncertainty and our hope, peace and joy will be renewed. On the road to Emmaus the Lord did not leave the disciples in their pain, He was there at their side, though they did not know it. After much time their hearts began to lift. Isn't this very much the daily and weekly journey of our lives, in our homes, even while preparing for Mass. There are so many times that as we go/walk/drive to Mass our spirit is downcast and heavy with our worries and burdens that we carry, we feel not to go, but as we begin the Mass, with the sign of the cross and enter into it, doesn't our hope flicker, that today at this moment we will meet Christ as did the disciples on the road to Emmaus, who eventually with burning hearts recognised Jesus. Let us trust in the Lord. We will be rewarded. This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church, let us stand firm and persevere.

Christine & Dwight Gonsalves
Responsible couple of the Eurasia Zone

FATHER PAUL-DOMINIQUE MARCOVITS' SPIRITUAL LETTER

THE DISCIPLES OF EMMAUS: 1/ DISAPPOINTMENT



This year, we are moving towards Turin for the great Gathering of the Teams of Our Lady movement. In order to prepare for this meeting, we are going to follow the Disciples of Emmaus on their journey (Lk 24:13-35): they are

going to be enlightened and I hope that we will be too.

We only know the name of one of the two disciples, Cleopas. On a stained glass window in Strasbourg, he is called 'Luke', the name of the author of the story, the Gospel writer. But perhaps we ought to give him our own name because the road to Emmaus is the journey of all human life.

The starting point is one of disappointment, bitterness and dismay. They were touched deep within themselves: they expected everything from Jesus and he died. It is true that they heard from some angels and from some women that Jesus was alive, "*but Him, they did not see.*" The disciples do not wait, they leave with heavy hearts. Nothing more can happen, otherwise why would they leave Jerusalem! The distress is great.

The starting point for us is perhaps not the same, although hours of distress may have marked our lives. In any case, the starting point for us, Intercessors, is to have been sensitive to the distresses of others, to have been shaken by the dangers that our societies experiences. And so, moved by all these people who carry heavy burdens, we want to intercede for them. We want to raise up our prayers so that the Lord helps them carry what is heavy, so that the Lord delivers them and gives them strength and peace. Of course, we want to help others live, yes indeed; but interceding is also a response to the call of God, who expects us, along with his Son, to be watchmen, Intercessors with him! In union with his Son, and with all the saints, we ask the Father for "the salvation of all." Intercession generates great peace: our own anxieties are overcome or in the process of being so, because we care about those of others.

The disciples of Emmaus have not reached that point yet but their hearts are open. They are going to speak frankly to this man, who will join them on their path. Their distress is great, but they were trained by Jesus: as disciples, they are still capable of being taught, their hearts are open, they are not totally locked in pain. Jesus, hidden in the guise of a stranger, is going to make them talk, make them "empty" their hearts and prepare them for the encounter! And the path will become brighter and brighter.

Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, O.P.
Spiritual Counsellor to the Intercessors

YEARS OF INTENSE BROTHERLY LOVE



HENRI CAFFAREL

Extracts from the Golden Ring,
N°S 87-88.

May-Aug 1959

A Thousand Couples in Rome

In the years between 1940 and 1945, friendship between the couples, stimulated by the joy of discovering things together, grew in the first group. In the grave atmosphere of the war years, they discovered more deeply the demands of Christ's love. In one form or another, hardship visited every home and the material deprivations were not the cruellest. The absence of fathers, death... In such circumstances, **the essence of charity is mutual help**, the material and moral aid brought to a brother in Christ to help them respond completely to God's wish, to properly fulfil their human and Christian mission. Those who experienced those years of intense brotherly love retain a certain nostalgia for this time, mainly because with an easier life, mutual help often has a tendency to disappear.

‘The Spirit of the Lord shall rest on him’ Isiaha 11: 1-10

Things do not always work out the way we picture them. As Christians, we interpret this within the providence of God and seek to follow where we believe Christ leads. I would add to that a belief that where we take steps that are found later to have been clearly wrong, our Lord can and does call us from there into a new place. Such is his love for us that, no matter what, it never fails. Somehow life with Christ demonstrates this; redirection, when it comes, thought we may think of it like the re-calibration of a sat nav, is more akin to a friend walking with us, sometimes getting and occasionally bringing us up sharply to see our error.

Excerpted from Journeying to the Light; Daily Readings through Advent and Christmas by Father John Mann (pg. 9)

THE CHARTER - THE MYSTIC OF MUTUAL HELP

The obligations of mutual help are between spouses, between couples, between teams. Mutual help is another name for charity. “*Carry each other's burdens*,” St Paul wrote to the Galatians, “*and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.*”

- *Mutual help between spouses* is one of the essential aims of marriage according to Pius XI in *Casti Connubii*.
- *Mutual Help between Couples* is the *raison d'être* of the Teams of Our Lady

1 Cf. *Human Hospitality, the Ministry of Hospitality*

Remember this passage in the Charter: “*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.*”

All moments and every part of the monthly meeting are orientated towards this brotherly mutual help. They include the Meal and the General Sharing, where the team members share their news, their joys, sorrows, successes and failures, where they ask for advice or help, the **Sharing on the Endeavours, the cruel and beneficial moment where each team member explains how they respected the obligations of the Charter**. Prayer and the exchange of views should also be seen in the light of mutual help between couples... But you know very well that mutual help cannot be limited to the means of mutual help that we have just examined. It must be tailored to the needs of the team members. We are all aware of couples that it has saved, materially and morally.

- *Mutual help between teams*. Our Movement is a team of teams.

Thus older teams help newer ones, which are created at the other end of the world by sharing their experience with them. On the other hand, **the whole Movement takes advantage of the example of each team, of the apostolic dynamism of those in Brazil, of fraternal friendship** which, in Mauritius, has made the team members triumph over racial prejudice etc. The testimony of a Belgian couple, who offered up to God the death of their small child, was read out during a retreat and helped comfort a Swiss couple, who were going through a similar ordeal.

INTERCESSORS AND GEESE



At some point, we've probably all seen the spectacular sight of geese flying together in a V.

Why do they do this and what can we learn about leadership from it?

- Each bird flies slightly above the bird in front of them, reducing wind resistance.
- The geese take turns being the leader, falling back when they get tired. This means they can fly for a long time before they need to rest.
- The V formation makes it easier to keep track of every bird in the group. Flying in formation helps each member to communicate and coordinate with the group more effectively.

Just as the birds fly together to create less resistance, if as a leader we can inspire and motivate others to share a common direction and work cohesively towards that goal, we will get there much quicker and with better outcomes, towards that goal, we will get there much quicker and with better outcomes.

When geese are flying together, if a bird gets tired or tries to resist the will of the group, it feels the drag of the other birds pulling it back into formation. In our workplace, we need to stay close to those with the same goals and aspirations as they are heading where we want to go.

Geese use distributed leadership. When the leading goose gets tired, it swaps places with another member of the team so that it can support from behind and recharge itself. This reminds us that a distributed leadership model is the most effective in building a strong team. Each person bringing their own valuable skills and ideas, each leading when they are the best person to do so.

Geese honk to encourage those in front to keep up their speed. We should ensure we speak out to encourage others to be their best. This supportive environment will allow team members to flourish and feel valued. Ensure that your "honking" isn't negative and accusatory as this will result in a demotivated team that lacks purpose.

Finally, when a goose gets sick or falls behind, two other geese break away from the flock and stay with it, either until it dies or is strong enough to re-join the group. When members of our team are struggling, we need to stand by them and support them until they can perform at their best again. Good leadership means being there for people when the chips are down, not just when they are helping us be successful.

The Geese theory was presented at Regional training seminar in Rome 2015.

THE INTERCESSORS

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WATCH AND PRAY

GENERAL INTENTION:

LET'S OFFER OUR TIME OF INTERCESSION SO THAT THE PEOPLE WHO ARE IN SADNESS OR DESPAIR AROUND US FIND WITNESSES WHO COMFORT AND KNOW THEM TO TALK ABOUT GOD'S LOVE.

LET'S BEAR ALL FAMILIES IN SUFFERING DUE TO CONFLICTS IN THE WORLD.

DECEMBER 8TH VIGIL AND CELEBRATION IN MALAWI



In Malawi we observed the Teams birthday Masses in all the four Sectors. That was after, again, the observation of the 24-hour prayers from midnight 7th to midnight 8th December for Intercessors and some members who felt the whisper of the Holy Spirit to do so.

HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS

January: for the gift of diversity in the church

We pray that the Holy Spirit may help us to recognise the gift of different charisms within the Church community and to discover the richness of different traditions.

February: for the terminally ill

We pray for those with a terminal illness, and their families receive the necessary physical and spiritual care and accompaniment.

March: for the new martyrs

We pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world inflame the Church with their courage and missionary enthusiasm.

* NEWS FROM THE EIAI *

“Let us go with burning hearts” is the call of the teams to the Turin gathering. As Intercessors, we join them, through our presence or our prayers. For those who are able, these END gatherings are an opportunity to demonstrate our commitments to intercession in support of the teams. Don't hesitate to register and join us in

Turin! Contact us: EIAIFatima2018@gmail.com

Find us on : intercesseursmobile.org or <https://equip-es-notre-dame.com/qui-sont-les-intercesseurs/> or <https://www.equip-es-notre-dame.fr/deux-poumons/les-intercesseurs/>