

WHAT IF MARRIAGE WERE A SPIRITUAL ADVENTURE CAPABLE OF TRANSFORMING A LIFE?



We are Edith and Jérôme EKOUE KOVI, originally from Togo, a country located in West Africa. We live in Lomé, the capital of the country. We were married in 2002 and joined Teams of Our Lady in 2004. We have three sons.

As members of the ERI (International Responsible Team), we serve as the liaison with the Eurafrica Zone, which comprises four Super-Regions: Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Francophone Africa.

It was this bold intuition that, in 1939, set ablaze the heart of Father Henri Caffarel and gave birth to Teams of Our Lady.

A simple and luminous conviction drove him: **married couples are called to holiness**, not on the margins of daily life, but at the very heart of the home, where glances, decisions, gestures of tenderness, and sometimes trials are exchanged.

Father Caffarel stated emphatically: "Marriage is not merely a human union: it is a vocation, a path to holiness." This vision is rooted in the Word of God: "Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." (Mk 10:9)

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church." (Eph 5:25).

Today, this fresh spring continues to nourish thousands of homes around the world.

1. A Founding Charism That Illuminates the Path of Couples

The charism of Teams of Our Lady rests on three inseparable pillars:

a. *Conjugal Spirituality*

Marriage is not merely a sacrament received on the wedding day: it is a spiritual path that unfolds every day. Father Caffarel wrote: "God has a grand plan for each of your homes: that you be witnesses of His love in the heart of the world." The Bible itself reveals this mystery: "So they are no longer two, but one flesh." (Mt 19:6); "Love is patient... it bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things." (1 Cor 13:4, 7).

b. *Fraternal Communion*

Living in a team means walking together on the same path of growth and mutual support. Father Caffarel often reminded us: "A couple alone is a couple in danger. A supported couple is a couple that moves forward." The Holy Scriptures confirm that: "Two are better than one... if one falls, the other will lift him up." (Eccl 4:9-10). One couple testifies: "Today, we have discovered that our home can become a little *domestic Church*. Our meals have become moments of dialogue and prayer, not just consumption."

c. *Ecclesial Mission*

Christian marriage is not turned in on itself. According to Father Henri Caffarel, "*Couples have a mission in the Church. They are a sign, a light, a silent proclamation of God.*" Our Lord Jesus stated in Matthew 5:14: "You are the light of the world," thus inviting us to reveal the glory of God through our way of living.

Yes, this charism, as luminous as it may be, must be lived out concretely in daily life. That is why Teams of Our Lady offers a simple yet profound pedagogy that accompanies couples step by step.

2. The Concrete Points of Effort: A Simple and Demanding Path for Growth

To embody this charism in daily life, Teams of Our Lady offers a realistic and profound pedagogy: the six Concrete Points of Effort. Father Caffarel said: "Nothing solid is built without spiritual discipline."

- a. **Listening to the Word of God:** Read, meditate, let the Word illuminate each of our days.
- b. **Personal Prayer (Oraison):** Have a daily heart-to-heart conversation with God; "But when you pray, go into your room... and your Father will reward you." (Mt 6:6)
- c. **Conjugal Prayer:** Praying together is a moment that unites, soothes, and guides; "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Mt 18:20).
- d. **The Sit-Down (Duty to Sit Down):** A monthly encounter of deep dialogue, under the gaze of God. Father Henri Caffarel insisted on "conjugal dialogue" as the "**primary means of loving.**"
- e. **The Rule of Life:** Set a concrete goal over time to move forward. "Let us examine our ways and test them and let us return to the Lord." (Lam 3:40).
- f. **The Annual Retreat:** A spiritual pause to recharge, as the Lord tells us so well in Mark 6:31: "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."

When these practices become a regular path, they transform not only the life of the couple but also their outlook on the world. This is where the charism of Teams of Our Lady reveals its full relevance today.

3. A Charism More Relevant Than Ever

In a world where bonds are weakening, individualism is on the rise, and love is often wounded, Teams of Our Lady offers a prophetic path: to make each home a place of light, peace, and mission. Father Caffarel observed as early as the 1950s: "*The Christian couple is called to be a light in the darkness of the world.*"

Everywhere, couples accompany engaged couples, bear witness, open their homes, and share their hope. The founding charism is not a frozen heritage; it remains a living compass: "**Seek first the Kingdom of God**" (Mt 6:33).

It invites each couple to seek Christ together and to let the joy of the Gospel shine forth. Father Caffarel reminded us with great gentleness: "**Conjugal happiness is not found by chance; it is built, day after day, with God.**"

The message of Teams of Our Lady remains astonishingly simple: God believes in the love of couples and calls them to grow together, day after day. By welcoming this path, relying on the Word, prayer, and fraternal life, each home can become a place where God allows Himself to be seen, loved, and encountered.

May each couple dare to embark on this adventure of trust, allowing Christ to make their love a living sign—humble and luminous—for the world.

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