

Magnificat

A newsletter for married couples published by Teams of Our Lady - USA

Living Your Purpose

As we approach the end of one liturgical year and the beginning of another it is fitting to reflect and give thanks for the many blessings of Teams and also look forward with hope and anticipation.

This year has been very different and sometimes difficult for many of us due to the pandemic. It is easy to take our focus off of our Lord's desire for us if we follow the world's distractions. Like a grape vine may be concerned about too little or too much sunlight, fertilizer or rain. These are real and impact the vine. But the vine's purpose doesn't change, it is still designed, raised and pruned to produce fruit, regardless of the conditions. The Vinegrower is responsible for the other conditions such as sun, water, and fertilizer.

It is similar for us Team members. We are designed to know God and serve him by loving him and loving our neighbor. It is easy for us to be worried about the environment we don't control rather than trying to do our best with the portion we do. We, like the vine, must count on our heavenly Vinegrower to provide the rest. Our purpose as loving Christians, loving Team Members and loving Spouses does not change even though conditions are difficult.

We have seen much love and care for the Movement in brand news ways -- some via electronic communication and prayer – others via new ways to stay in touch. How blessed are we to be part of such a wonderful kind community!

As we enter the Advent season, may the excitement of the anticipation of the Christ child and his overflowing love be shared not only with our spouse, but with our family, our Team and our community. Saint Mother Teresa once said "Love begins at home, and it is not how much we do, but how much love we put in the action that we do." Teams and our search for holiness is no different.

We look forward to seeing many more of you in 2021. Thanks for your prayers. You continue to be in ours.

Your Servants in Christ, Ellen and T.J. Holt Ellen & T.J. Holt USA-SR@TeamsOfOurLady.org

George & Mary KlostermanNorth-PC@TeamsOfOurLady.org

Mike & Trice Towns
South-PC@TeamsOfOurLady.org

Janie & Bob Mericsko
East-PC@TeamsOfOurLady.org

Robin & Colette Quinn
West-PC@TeamsOfOurLady.org

Super Region

North Province

South Province

East Province

West Province



Ellen and T.J. Holt Super Regional Couple

Preparing Ourselves for the Lord:

How can we serve Him?

In the spiritual life, God always initiates; we respond. We look to Mary as our great example. Mary knew the story of God's people and how God had saved them again and again. Her Magnificat testifies to this as it is imbued with images and themes from the Old Testament. Mary was prepared to receive the words of the Angel Gabriel. Mary knew through and through that God had to act if His people were to be saved.

As Teams of Our Lady, we seek to be prepared through our endeavors. It is important to see this as preparation for the work of God rather than our glory. One of the greatest temptations for those who seek to serve God is that we think of what we do as our work; we want to take credit for it. This pride is our downfall. It cuts us off from God who is the source of life because we are thinking that it is by our efforts that we have been able to accomplish all that we have done. When we don't glory in the work of God and are not in awe of his amazing love, we die. If we begin to think about how good we are because of what we are doing - prayer time, couple time, meetings, etc. - and cease marveling at the gift of God in marriage and family life, we are glorying in the wrong things. It is like picking flowers, arranging them in a vase and telling others about how good they look because

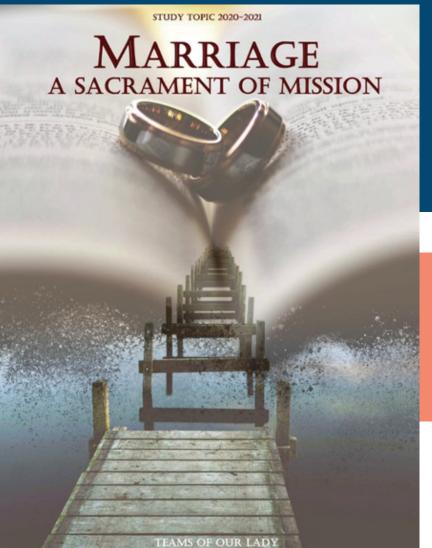


Father Brian Eilers Super Regional Spiritual Counselor

of how well they are arranged. But God created the flowers. God gives the grace of marriage! Spouses are privileged cocreators with God! How amazing is our God!

Consider how Mary receives the news of the Angel Gabriel. She exults (rejoices). The prophets of the Old Testament wrote the Israel would exult at the coming of the Messiah. Exult greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout for joy, O daughter Jerusalem! Behold: your king is coming to you, a just savior is he, humble, and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zech

9:9). Mary represents all of God's people as daughter Zion. They are the people awaiting the coming of God.



INTERNATIONAL LEADING TEAM

They are waiting for God to act. When God does act through his messenger, the Angel Gabriel, Mary said, "My spirit exults in God my savior." The rest of her Magnificat emphasized God's action: "he has looked with favor on his lowly servant;" "he had done great things for me;" "his mercy is on those who fear him;" and so on.

Teams of Our Lady prepares us to receive the Lord so that we may be filled with His blessing. We God acts we can join Mary in saying, "My spirit exults in God my Savior!" Then and only then will we be ready to serve Him.

Communication in times of difficulty - ERI Newsletter

News2020-5.equipes-notre-dame.com/en

The new Study Topic from the ERI for 2020-2021 is Marriage a Sacrament of Mission. This study topic contains a wealth of documentation covering the work of our Founder, Father Caffarel, and how he looked at the reality of Christian sacramental marriage." If you would like to use this study topic it is available at TeamsOfOurLady.org under Resources, then look for Study Topics.

Help Canonize Father Caffarel

Paul & Monique Harris Friends of Father Caffarel Liaison Couple

The canonization of Father Caffarel has made progress, but needs your help. The Friends of Father Caffarel promotes, manages, and funds the canonization process. The status follows:

- 1. Request to Open the Cause completed in 2006.
- 2. Final session of diocesan investigation completed Oct 2014.
- 3. File transferred to Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome Nov 2014.
- 4. Roman Postulator appointed—Nov 2014.
- 5. Writing of the "Posito super virtutibus" In progress.
- This work is a summary presenting the life and virtues of the Servant of God, and is intended to be examined by the consultors, Cardinals, and members of the Congregation.
- Only a person who is "living" for us, someone who lives with us, and who has had miracles attributed to them can be beatified.



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- 1. Pray the Prayer for Beatification of Father Caffarel.
- 2. Since miracles are critical to the beatification process, advise your priest and bishop of any miracles received and forward documentation to the Roman Postulator through the Friends of Father Caffarel.
- 3. Join Friends of Father Caffarel and with a donation of about \$20/year; you will be helping fund the cause and also receive semi-annual bulletin updates.



Prepare Yourselves for the Lord

Who is the role model for your marriage? Is it mother Mary, Saints Louis and Zélie Martin, Saint Therese, or Saint Francis? In his book, "Prends chez toi Marie ton Épouse", Father Caffarel said this about an icon of Mary and Joseph: "They are young and beautiful. Their gesture of mutual tenderness—what momentum, what modesty, what sensitivity—transcribes their love that is simultaneously conjugal and virginal, founded on God's call."

What a revelation! Many know Mary, but how about Joseph? How often do we think of Joseph as an old man or that of a man with whom we do not have much identity? Father Caffarel saw it differently. He saw Joseph, Mary, and Jesus as part of God's plan, our Holy Family. God's son was to be born of a woman, but also to be entrusted to the love of a couple, father and mother, both entirely turned towards God.

We can see Joseph, newly married, a young strong man who was the protector of Mary and her child. He accompanied Mary with child (i.e., something we can assume considering the distances traveled and dangers along the way for a lone woman), to visit Elizabeth for 3 months, a huge sacrifice for a poor carpenter to leave his place of work for such a long time; a father who took his wife and child with little belongings and money on a long journey of safety to Egypt; a father who held strong to his faith and took his family on long journeys to worship God in the Temple; and a father who toiled all day in his workshop to return to his family in the evening. We too can strive to be an image of the Holy family.





Intercession, Give it a Try!



1960 - 2020

60th Anniversary of Father Caffarel's Call

"I recommend that volunteers commit to praying for an hour during the night once a month."

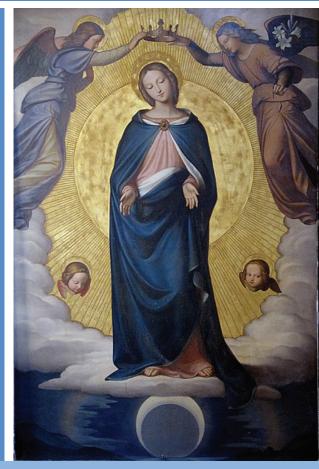
Father Henri Caffarel, 1960

December 8th, 2020

On the feast of Mary: the Immaculate Conception, Mary daughter of Israel, the one who believed and who as our mother accompanies us in our lives,

the Intercessors, together with Teams of Our Lady, will celebrate a thanksgiving mass.

- Gather Together
 - > Celebrate
 - > Pray
 - > Intercede



"Could you not keep watch with me for one hour?" Mt 26:40

International Animation Team for the Intercessors
Intercessors@TeamsOfOurLady.org

Intercessors

Teams of Our Lady

Intercessory prayer is a service we do for our family, our friends, our neighbors who go through difficult times in their lives: trials, suffering, depression, unemployment, separation...

We are poor, but Jesus and Mary answer our prayers and come to the aid of those we entrust to them. We commit to giving some of our time, of ourselves, to those who no longer feel able to pray.

In practice, we are committed to actively participating in a continuous stream of prayer and offering: A monthly hour of prayer, preferably at night; A day of fasting per month; Daily offering of our joys, trials, and sufferings, in union with the Intercessors.

In our commitment, the important thing is to join with Our Holy Mother's YES and we will be filled with graces as we undertake and fulfill this beautiful mission. Intercessors are asked to pray for the movement and all the prayer intentions of the movement. If you are interested in finding out more information or would like to be part of the intercessors, please fill out the information below and return to Jack and Mary Pulick at intercessors@teamsofourlady.org. Or mail to: Teams of Our Lady, Attn: Jack and Mary Pulick, 4582 Kingwood Dr., Ste. E-276, Kingwood TX 77345.

You will receive the Letter to the Intercessors quarterly to support you in your mission of intercession.

<u>Pray with Intercessors / Electronic Membership Form</u>

Name:	
Address:	
City:	
State:	Zip Code:
Email:	
Telephone:	
I commit to pray (Day of the Month)	from to_ (hour to hour AM or PM)
Day of the month I will fast:	

Offering of your life, joys, trials and sufferings in union with the Intercessors.

TEAMS OF OUR LADY

November 2020

Dear Friends:



THANK YOU for the outpouring of love and support as we all endure this pandemic. We are humbled by the outpouring of love and support that we continue to witness by our Teams Family.

As we mentioned in the our August letter to the membership, one responsibility of being a Teams member is the annual contribution. The Teams Charter states that members are "to give annually, by way of subscription the equivalent of one day's pay." Contributions cover annual expenses such as website, printing materials, postage, translations, leadership training and travel, as well as the tithe assessed by the international body (ERI) based on GNP and membership, to support the International movement.

As we draw close to the end of this year, we ask for your financial support of the movement! Our goal is for 100% participation. You may use the envelope in the newsletter to mail in your contribution or another option is to donate online by logging in first to the Teams' website at TeamsOfOurLady.org/donation-secure1. Logging in ensures all donations are recorded properly in your name. Or you can also contribute through Bill Pay for annual, quarterly or monthly payments. You may now also contribute through stock or mutual fund transfer.

Teams is a self supporting 501(c)3. All donations are tax deductible. Without your generous support our movement could not exist to continue our mission to support Christian marriage in the US Super Region.

If you do use the attached envelope, please DO NOT SEND CASH. Please note your Team name and number, Sector and Region in the memo section of your check or bill pay. Please note the new Teams postal mailing address: Teams of Our Lady, 4582 Kingwood Dr., Ste. E-276, Kingwood TX 77345.

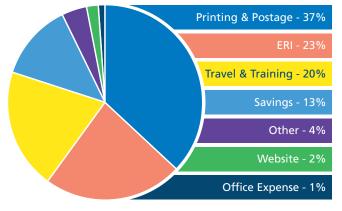
T.J. and I, along with Steve and Glynis, cannot thank you enough for your service, love and devotion to our movement! We hold each member and Team in the United States deep in our heart through prayer. As Father Caffarel shared,

"This human love which is our joy and treasure, God must surely see it as something very beautiful and very great. We want to know about it – you must reveal it to us."

We remain in service to Christ through Mary,

Ellen and T.J. Holt
US Super Region Responsible Couple

Steve & Glynis Sturm Finance Couple



A Prequel from the East...

Continuing the Endeavors during the Pandemic

Lake Erie Region's Robb and Frankie Ciezki from the Orchard Park, New York 01 Team planned their Team's retreat this year for September 18-20. The team began their retreat on Friday night, saying the Rosary around a campfire and then sharing snacks and fellowship. Saturday was "couple day": each couple could choose from several modules to design their own couple retreat for that day. The modules included Scripture, talks and walks, a movie



pick-list, a podcast pick-list and more. The agenda was according to their own time frame. Sunday, the team attended a scheduled Mass and, in the evening, they got together for a meal and sharing on each couple's retreat experience. Couples from the three Portuguese speaking sectors of Newark New Jersey, Mount Vernon New York and Philadelphia Pennsylvania celebrated the Sit-down Endeavor in October, some meeting in a park, some in a church hall, and others virtually.





East Province

Greetings from the East Province for this Advent Season, when the Church celebrates a new year, a new beginning!



Father John Dillon, the East Province Spiritual Counselor, recently reached out via email to our Spiritual Counselors and Advisors. Father John shared reflections on accompanying couples and families through their special Teams of Our Lady role. He also called their attention to a resource document entitled The Priest Counselor and the Spiritual Accompaniment in Teams of Our Lady, published in 2017 by the International Leading Team.

Also, through Father Dillon's efforts, the Maryland-West Sector Team is currently working with the Archdiocese of Washington's Office of Family Life to create a four-session series for young, newly married couples entitled "Tools for Your Marriage: Learning from Teams of Our Lady."

Having completed their term as Sector Couple for Maryland-West in the Mid-Atlantic Region, Eva St. Clair and Ernie Tedeschi join the East Province Team as our first New Teams Welcome Celebration (NTWC) Coordinator Couple. To quote Eva about accepting the role: "with saying the Magnificat prayer every day, you get used to thinking about saying 'yes' to God."











This is a wonderful time of year to say "yes" to the Lord: the Mid-Atlantic Region welcomes two new Sector Couples. On the left, are the new Maryland-West Sector Couple, Carmen and Dario Canal (with their son Matthew) and, on the right, are the new Philadelphia Pennsylvania Sector Couple, Steve and He-len Schreiner. We look forward to their installation.

Upcoming Event

The Coastal Region will hold a Virtual Gathering the evening of December 8, 2020 to mark the anniversary of the Teams Intercessors. It will include a talk by Fr. Stephen Vaccaro, the Spiritual Counselor for one of the Coastal Region teams that is in piloting, and the praying of the Rosary.

Closing Thoughts

As we reflect on Christ's Incarnation, may we also reflect on the question "Why did God make us?" God made us to know, love and serve him in this world, and be happy with him in the next. May the renewal of our lives through the Endeavors bring peace and joy to our hearts this Advent and throughout the new Church year.

With gratitude and prayer,

Bob and Janie Mericsko, East Province Responsible

Blessings from the South Province!

It certainly has been and continues to be a challenging time we are living in. This was brought home to us even more at the

end of October. Our 24 yr. old grandson was recently visiting us and after a lovely time together, flew back home. Four days later he called to say that he had tested positive for COVID. It appears there is no escaping this dreadful virus. It is all around us. But we remember that we are also surrounded by God's love.

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[a] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:38-39

So whatever difficulties we may be facing, may we all remember there is NOTHING that can separate us from God's Love. He holds us in the palm of his hands.

Mike & Trice Towns, South Province Couple





Dallas Spanish Sector Couple, Tony and Adriana Marquez, leading the Our Lord of Miracles Novena at St. Ann's Catholic Church in Coppell, Texas Houston Team 02 having their monthly meeting via Zoom.





On October 18, 2020 the Southeast Regional Couple installed the new Miami, FL Sector Couple, Holman and Karen Rios.



On October 17, 2020 Holman and Karen Rios, incoming Miami, FL Sector Couple, Fabio and Camila Cristino, outgoing Miami, FL Sector Couple, Mary Kay and Larry Kuchta, Southeast Regional Couple, get together to brainstorm and learn what has been successful for Teams in Miami, FL and share ideas for Miami's Teams future! It will be very exciting to see how Teams of Our Lady will be such a blessing to many more couples and marriages!!

We are pleased to announce the first South Province New Teams Welcome Celebration (NTWC) Coordinator Couple, Josh & Christina Loeffler. In their words, "We live in Tyler, TX and have been married for 7 years. We joined Teams two months after getting married and feel abundantly blessed to have been surrounded and supported by a loving community of married couples so early in our marriage.

We're very excited for the opportunity to continue serving through the New Teams Welcome Celebrations!"

And we are just as excited to work with them bringing our next NTWC event to the Southeast Region in 2021 (God willing)!



North Province



News from the North

Greetings from the North Province. We hope all are well and safe. Advent seems like it will not only be looking forward to Jesus birth and a new church year but an end to the COVID-19 virus and an end to 2020.

Our monthly meetings are a mixed bag of face to face get-togethers, with or without masks, and online meetings depending on the location and the comfort level of the Team members. Some, sadly, are uncomfortable with normal meetings and do not have computers so they are somewhat isolated. Hopefully, through prayer and God's intervention we will have a cure or vaccine or both.

On the lighter side, while the virus tapered off during the summer and early autumn, we were able to install new leadership in two of the four Regions here.



In the Central Region, Jim and Deb St. Louis were quasi installed as the Regional Couple. They immediately took the reins and installed Karen and Dan Laposha as Sector Couple in the St. Louis Sector and then flew to Denver and installed Mat and Katherine Aschenberg in the Colorado Sector.



St. Louis Sector

Colorado Sector



In the North-Central Region we installed John and Jan Klocke as the Regional Couple at a Sector event at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Fargo, ND. At the same time Fr. James Ermer was installed as Regional Chaplain and then the Klockes installed Dr. John and Sharon Beauclair as the Fargo Sector Couple. We had a great time in Fargo and hope as Spring comes we can make more trips to install leadership.

Mike and Barb Timm, John and Jan Klocke, Fr. James Ermer, Dr. John and Sharon Beauclair, Mary and George Klosterman

The Midwest and Lake-Michigan Regions have been laying low and trying to keep their Teams meetings on track even if by ZOOM or other online meeting AP.

We hope you all have a blessed and safe Christmas and may 2021 be a good year. George and Mary Klosterman - Northern Province Couple

West Province

"The Sacrament of Matrimony helps us live through times of crisis and doubt. Crisis are necessary if we are to grow in love. They compel us to surpass ourselves; they test our creativity and lead to new behaviors. They can have a positive influence if we, as a couple, are able to discern God's Will for us at that moment in our lives."

The Second Wind", Guide to Teams of Our Lady, page 163

How fitting this excerpt from "The Second Wind" Teams Document is for today's COVID19 times! Written in 1988, the Second Wind Document is a Look Towards the Future of Teams. It explains the Charism of Teams of Our Lady, and clarifies the Good News about Marriage!! We are at the Service of Love, the Service of Happiness, and at the Service of Sanctity – to each other, to the Church, and to the world.

When we move through difficult times as these, we do so with our spouse beside us. It is an opportunity to not only grow as a couple, but to share with our Team what we have learned; and to share with others outside of Teams the positive power of prayer, the Sacrament of Marriage, and the solidarity of the Teams Movement. It's something worth talking about!! Are you sharing the joy of your growth with others?



Robin & Colette Quinn West Province Couple

Blessing of Babies in the Womb

Following their tenth meeting in the Piloting meeting, Father David Gaines, Spiritual Chaplain, Spokane 1, blesses children in the wombs of two couples on the Team. What a beautiful experience to share with Team Members!!

Congratulations on continuing to meet and be creative and safe during this COVID19 Pandemic challenge!!





Northwest Central Oregon Retreat

The first annual Teams of Our Lady Retreat was recently held at the Diocese of Baker, Powell Butte Retreat Center in Powell Butte, Oregon. The Diocese provided this beautiful retreat Center to Teams for its Spiritual renewal and inspiration.

The Most Reverend Bishop Liam Cary and Fr. Sibi Poulose concelebrated Mass for all that attended. Great kudos were expressed to the prayerful nature and inspiring talks given by Fr. Sibi. All marriages received a very needed renewal!

This was truly a spirit filled retreat. When all of the confessions were heard, not only the "Communion of Saints" were present, but all of the saints that had just exited the Confessionals! It took a little longer than planned, but the beautiful priests knew the importance that every possible confession must be heard......and they did it!!!!!!!!

Western Region Gathers in 2020

By Karyn & Tony Alamo, Western Region Couple

Although it didn't seem possible, the Western Region managed to host its annual Regional Day on October 3, 2020 on the beautiful grounds of Our Lady of Assumption parish in Turlock, CA. The day took on an abbreviated format, as we were forced to meet outside. However, this became a tremendous blessing as we were surrounded by God's beauty in nature, and we were able to host over 140 people representing 42 Teams from our Region. Additional participants viewed the day's events via livestream made possible by Helder DeSousa, Turlock 4P.

The day started with a beautiful Mass concelebrated by Father Tom Orlando, Pastor of All Saints Catholic Church and Father Manuel Sousa, Turlock, previous Super Region Spiritual Counselor. Recently ordained Deacon Stephen Valgos, Turlock 40, assisted at the altar during the bi-lingual Mass.

To close the day the Joyful mysteries of the rosary were recited and each mystery was led by a Teams Couple. Special thanks to all the couples, too numerous to count, who supported the Region's efforts to make this day available to our community. The old adage "many hands make light work" was definitely witnessed that day!



Immediately following the final blessing at Mass, new Sector Couples were installed. Left to Right - Joe & Connie Madruga, Turlock 2P, will lead the Turlock Portuguese Sector and Mike & Camille Popp, Hanford 12, will serve as the Fresno Sector Couple. Congratulations to both couples!



The featured speaker for the English sectors was Deacon Stephen Valgos. He offered some great insight into the Endeavors. Some of our favorites included: Together Everyone Achieves More and Everything we have is not ours; it is God's These sessions are available for everyone to see at TheCatholicDeacon.com/Teams



The Portuguese Sectors were treated to two panel discussions with six couples discussing their Endeavors experiences. The honesty and openness they shared touched the hearts of all those who attended these sessions.

A Reason to Rejoice

By Father Tom Orlando is the Pastor of All Saints Catholic Church in Turlock, CA

What is it that we rejoice over? Is it great results? Increased numbers? Is it the ability to conquer the devil in the name of Jesus? For the seventy-two disciples it seemed they were pretty excited and were rejoicing about this new found power. Christ certainly acknowledges their potential to 'tread upon serpents' but he also reminds them of its ultimate purpose... that their names will be written in heaven. What more could we want than that?

I recently saw a short video on the difference between what parents want and what children want. A group of parents were asked, if they could have dinner with anyone...who would they invite? As you might imagine they mentioned names of movie stars and famous singers, important people of the past and world leaders. When they brought the kids in, all the kids said the same thing...we want to have dinner with my parents, grandparents. They simply wanted to spend time with their family. To me this is what Christ means when he says to be childlike. The innocence and directness of a child helps them to still see what is most important in life. They want to be surrounded by the ones they love and who love them.

Numbers and quantities can be a trap for us. They seduce us into believing that if our numbers aren't constantly going up, up, up, we aren't being successful. But the truth is, quality time is always more important that quantity. Christ is reminding us to not lose sight of what is most important. It's not the amazing feats or the flashy numbers, it's that day when our names are written in heaven.

How might this relate to Teams of Our Lady? Do you ever get overly concerned if new teams are not forming? Or when a Team loses a couple? These are real concerns and can dampen your spirit. But remember where the real power comes from.

Your power comes from God. The transformative power that takes ok marriages to great, to holy marriages.

Rejoice that Teams of Our Lady is a conduit for couples to grow in holiness. It is a beautiful way, inspired by the Holy Spirit to help married couples achieve the goal we all seek, that our names be written in Heaven. That husband & wife come together with the help of an all mighty God to get each other and their families to heaven.

Stay childlike, so that you might see what the Father in Heaven has planned for Teams of Our Lady. Every married couple you help grow in holiness, is a reason to rejoice. Amen.

4582 Kingwood Drive Ste E-276 Kingwood, TX. 77345

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Husband and Wife Name Address Address 2

Did You Know?

- 1. Teams of Our Lady is active in over 92 countries
- 2. Dec 8 will be the 60th anniversary Teams Intercessors, couples who pray for the movement and prayer intentions of all Teams couples.
- 3. 24% of US Teams members contribute financially to the movement. Our goal is 100% participation.
- 4. There are over 860 Teams in the United States, organized into 16 Regions in 4 Provinces.
- 5. Teams has a National Facebook page at

Facebook.com/TeamsOfOurLadyUSA

CELEBRATE THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF FATHER CAFFAREL'S CALL FOR INTERCESSORS.