



Newsletter

Teams of Our Lady Irish Region



From the Regional Couple

Dear Friends in Teams,

We hope that you all have had a lovely summer and enjoyed some beautiful warm sunny days. Indeed as we write this and the children are returning to school and our own granddaughter Molly is beginning her school journey, the sun is still shining.

Responsible Couples' Day - Saturday 2nd October

Our RC Day will be on Zoom again this year and following the huge success of last year's RC Day we are encouraging all couples to link in. Once again it will be open to all couples and not just the RCs. It will give us all the opportunity to meet virtually and unite as a Team family. Details will be sent to all Teams nearer the time. We would like to thank the Dublin Sector for organising this.

Expansion

We are delighted to advise you that the first Laois/Carlow Team is ready to go in early September and Bishop Denis Nulty has kindly agreed to be the chaplain. There is also a 'Zoom Team' starting in October so if you know of any couples who might be interested in joining Teams Contact: breros7@gmail.com for more information. Please keep these new couples in your prayers as a new year of Teams begins.

Finally, we would just like to wish every blessing on our successors Brendan and Rosemarie and indeed to all new couples/chaplains who are taking on roles of responsibility. We would also like to thank our wonderful Regional Team that we have had the honour to work with over the past four years and our special thanks and appreciation to Fr. Sexton for his guidance to the movement through his term as Regional Chaplain.

Let the Holy Family encourage us, as we begin a new year of Teams, that as we open the ordinariness of our lives and relationships, to his grace, God can bring about his saving plan.

God Bless you all.

Jim and Elaine Keogh.

Autumn 2021

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*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.
Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.*

Prayer Intentions

For those who have died:

Fr. Andrew Carroll, Camillian Community
Sylvia O'Donohoe, daughter of Frank and Margaret Fagan, Mullingar
Les Dawson, uncle of Jack Walsh, Mullingar 3.

For those who are ill or are recovering:

Eddie Lloyd, Galway

**From the Regional Chaplain Fr. Peter Sexton SJ****Reflections on a wedding day in church**

(Since this is my swansong, it seems appropriate in a movement that is for married couples and run by married couples to ponder a little on sacramental marriage)

Seamus Heaney, in an interview shortly before he died, said “the biggest shift in my lifetime has been the evaporation of the transcendent from all our discourse and our sense of human destiny”. (Transcendent meaning an unselfconscious acceptance of the reality of God) – an observation we easily resonate with in the politically correct climate of Irish society today, where the mention of God or religious faith often is a source of religious embarrassment. However, for the Christian to say that God or the Gospel is not relevant to 21st century life is absurd, as God is the source of all relevance.

Thomas Merton, the American Cistercian author wrote: ‘If you want to identify me, do not ask me superficial questions like where do I live, or who do I know, or how much money do I earn – but ask me what I am living for, in detail, and ask me what prevents me from living fully for what I want to live for.’ There are certain moments or days in our lives when we know with some clarity what we are living for – and a wedding day is one!

What is the secret of a happy marriage? As any married couple will certainly say: there is no easy or single answer to this question. The commitment, the covenant made to one another publicly on the day of a Christian marriage will have to be worked out in the days and years ahead. It is all part of the great adventure. In the words of Patrick Kavanagh: ‘To be dead is to stop believing in the master pieces we will begin tomorrow.’ Setting out on the journey of committed Catholic Christian married life is to start on a masterpiece that will take a lifetime to complete, in which God through His Spirit in Christ is profoundly involved, an abiding providential presence.

Some time ago in Celtic Tiger Ireland a poet/philosopher writing in the Irish Times was reflecting on contemporary Ireland – an Ireland which he felt was in growing need of spirituality – which he defined as the call for meaning, integration, healing and belonging. I think this is not a bad template for a healthy and happy marriage. We live in post Celtic-Tiger Ireland, but the same qualities are surely called for. The world aches for integrity, for commitment, for faithfulness – qualities often remarkable for their absence in our Western world. As St Augustine of Hippo says: ‘Right is right even if no one is doing it; wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it!’

Why not have the wedding in registry office? It is enough for the State – but not enough for committed Christians. In a purely civil ceremony there would be, needless to say, no prayers, no readings from Scripture, no Eucharist, indeed no religious symbols of any kind. By contrast, in the ceremony of Catholic marriage the commitment of integrity and faithfulness is made ‘in the Lord’, in the community of the Church, as Christians have been doing down through the centuries, and as so many of our parents did – seeking God’s blessing and Christ’s promised constant presence in their lives – a presence always guaranteed but only glimpsed from time to time, and normally experienced in the knowing we call faith.

A couple in committed love have already experienced considerable faith with a small ‘f’ in each other, and found the treasure in the field of the person they want to spend the rest of their lives with. On the wedding day, in a qualitative change from simply being or living together, they have come to this profound and solemn moment when they are consecrating that commitment in faith with a large ‘F’, as they confer the sacrament of matrimony on each other before God, and in the presence of the community of the Church.

A text often chosen for the wedding Mass is the famous passage in I Corinthians 13 where St Paul spells out the meaning of Christian love to the people of Corinth, describing what he calls “the best way of all”.

The word he uses in Greek for love is agape – the love that God has for us that is unconditional and does not look for a return. But this love, as Paul says, that is patient and kind, never jealous or rude, that does not insist on its own way and rejoices in the right; the love that believes and hopes and endures everything, the love that never ends – this love is not something that any couple create and fashion from their own natural and many obvious talents: this kind of love is a gift of God, poured into their hearts specifically in the sacrament of matrimony as a goal, an ideal towards which they are called. The message is clear: God loves you; God lives in you; God unites your love for each other to His, unites it to the unselfish love that led Him to give His own Son to the Cross for you. This love is a gift – we may not demand it; we do not deserve it; we cannot buy it. God gives it out of His sheer goodness, and it is His pledge that through the years that lie ahead this couple need never be alone, and that their love can indeed be endless, can endure all things if they are not simply two but three – God Himself being the third – if their own wonderful love for each other is carefully, caringly cradled in God's own love.

St John of the Cross, the 16th century Carmelite, wrote famously that in the evening of our lives we will be judged on love. This love, this Christian married love, often stumbling, always imperfect, nonetheless is unconditional, it relativizes all other relationships in life, it seeks to order them without compromise and without ambiguity in a culture of relationships that is redolent with compromise and ambiguity and unhappiness – this Christian married love is the same as God's love for us, the source of all happiness. But of course, as we well know it is a costly love.

The bar is indeed high, the measure sought for by disciples of Christ. Christian marriage is not for the immature or self-centred. Nor is it for the 'perfect' or the flaw-free. But it is for humble realists. I have often asked myself what is the function of a homily at a wedding: hardly to give advice about living a married life – there will be plenty of that from parents and experienced friends. But it is, I think, to point to the context of marriage 'in the Church' – the community that has 2000 years of experience, and has something very definite to say. The sacrament of marriage – a sacrament being a sign with a God-charged meaning, accessible only in faith – which the couple confer on each other, despite all the preparations and frenetic surrounds, is remarkably simple: the exchange of vows – their word; the exchange of rings – the sign and symbol of commitment to that word – only possible with the grace of God, offered on this day. The whole context, of course, is one of faith. Rahner defined religion as 'the dimension of depth in all human experience.'

The stakes are high, as with anything really worthwhile, but I think many couples today will not settle for less – and we who are invited to be present at a Christian wedding are invited, not simply as friendly spectators, but as active witnesses in faith, committing ourselves to the support of the couple in the journey ahead in the years to come – to help them work on their masterpieces.

Draft programme for RC Formation & Team Training Day 2021 on Zoom

10.00 Welcome & Orientation

10.10 Opening Prayer

10.25 Kevin & Faye Noonan - International leading Team

"The Christian Couple - Leaven of renewal for the family and society."

Formation for roles of service

All participants register for presentation 1 or 2

10.40 5 min presentation followed by Q&A in break out groups.

1. Base Team Responsible Couple

Expansion

Q & A (10 mins)

2. Sector Team/Regional Team member

Accompanying Couple for a Tandem Team

Q & A (10 mins)

11.00 Break

Update on other roles of service in break out groups

Presentation on service provided by Couples serving in these roles, followed by Q&A.

All participants register for presentation A or B

11.15 A) Newsletter

Literature

Website Couple

Intercessors

11.15 B) Finance

Role of Chaplain

GDPR Regulations

Pilot Couple for new Teams

Endeavours

11.30 Each Endeavour will be witnessed to by individual/couples from across the Region - live on Zoom or by video

12.00 Log on to parish webcam for **Celebration of Eucharist** from **Our Lady of Dolours Church, Glasnevin, D09K5R6.**

12.15 Eucharist via webcam at www.glasnevinparish.ie Celebrant: Fr Peter Sexton

1.15 Address by Regional Couple, Jim & Elaine Keogh

1.25 Update from Super-Regional Couple, Paul & Annette O'Beirne

1.50 Closing Prayer:

2.00 Lunch

3.30 - 4.30 Mixed Team Meetings by Zoom

Teams Summer Outing 2021 - Sunday, 5 September

Important! Driving Directions

Farmleigh is accessed from the interior of Phoenix Park. Driving directions are as follows.

(Please do not follow SatNav or Google Map directions to Farmleigh Estate, as these will not currently bring you to the car park

Instead please enter these coordinates: 53.3661, - 6.3516

OR

If you prefer, the following Eircode will take you to the **Gate Lodge** (Farmleigh House) from where you can continue to the car park.

Go to Google Maps and enter the Eircode D15 F853

Then keep **left** to drive to the car park at the end of the road.

Advice from the Farmleigh estate website:

Current road and gate closures for Phoenix Park should be checked on the Phoenix Park website.

Please read the further detailed information on directions (for different modes of Transport) click the link <https://farmleigh.ie/how-to-find-us/>

There is free car, coach, and motorcycle parking on site.

Please note that there is approximately a five-minute walk from the car park to the House, and approximately a seven minute walk from the car park to the Gallery, Gardens, and Boathouse Restaurant.

Public toilets are currently **CLOSED**,
(Portaloos available only – in carpark behind gallery).
Please observe the social distancing guidelines.

Around the Region

Dublin

Regional RC Training Day, 2 October 2021 on Zoom, hosted by Dublin Sector.

Despite great hopes to hold an in-person event, after much deliberation, we have decided to provide the RC meeting on Zoom.

The upside of this is that we have an opportunity to open the day to **every couple, across the country**. We are certainly looking forward to a shot of inspiration, exhortation and friendship as we enter a new Teams Year and really hope you can join us for that.

We are delighted that Faye and Kevin Noonan from the International Leading Team (ERI) have agreed to give the keynote address on the theme of "The Christian Couple – The leaven of renewal for the family and society". This is also the title of the 21/22 International Study Topic which is a very timely theme based on the Encyclical by Pope Francis, 'Laudato Si', subtitled 'on care for our common home'.

You too may be approached in the coming month and asked to share your experience of an Endeavour, of being a Responsible Couple or of providing one of the many roles of service to the Movement in Ireland. Please consider putting your light on a lampstand, so all in the house can see!

Liaison

Your Sector Team Couples are concluding their period of liaison over the coming month and will provide information on

How to order the 21/22 Study Topic "The Christian Couple - Leaven of renewal for the family and society."

How to register for the RC and Team Formation Day on Saturday October 2nd 2021

How to confirm your contact details for GDPR and send updates to fanadclayton@yahoo.co.uk

Expansion: Piloting and Accompaniment

Two Tandem Teams of engaged and newly married couples and chaplains are continuing to meet on Zoom. We continue our contacts with couples who link with us through various sources, the Teams website, personal contacts, Youth 2000 and others.

Please pray for a 'Zoom Team' starting in October for couples who are geographically distant but who wish to explore the Spirituality of Teams.

Annual Mass December 2021 - in planning

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin has been invited to celebrate the 2021 8th December Mass. He has kindly agreed to review his availability closer to the time. The incoming Sector Team will keep you posted.

Congratulations!

We honour Mark and Anne O'Leary, Dublin 37, who have agreed to serve as Sector Couple for the coming three years. They have already served energetically on the Sector Team for the past three years! We are sure they will have the support of your prayers and involvement, in the months and years ahead.

Appreciation

Finally, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the couples and Chaplain who generously accepted our invitation to be part of the 2018-2021 Dublin Sector Team. They were Brian and Una Moore D13, John and Bernie Healy D34, Pierpaolo Dondio and Ilaria Furlan D36, Mark and Anne O'Leary D37 and Father Richard Sheehy D36. Their hard work and enthusiasm for the Sector Pastoral Plan and the mission of Teams, was inspirational to us.

We are also indebted to the Regional Couple, Jim and Elaine Keogh and the Regional Team for their support. It was a joy to work with all of them to serve the Dublin Sector and the Teams Movement over the past 3 years.

Most of all our thanks goes to “Him, *who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*” Ephesians 3:20

Our Lady of the Teams, pray for us!

Brendan and Rosemarie Gavin

Belfast

As we write this short report for our sector, all our lives are still very much affected by the Coronavirus. Even though many of the early restrictions have been eased over the past few weeks many of us still remain cautious. This is not really surprising when it is reported in the media this week that up to 11 deaths have occurred daily and over 1300 new cases of the virus have been reported every day.

In spite of the current situation one team have had at least one meeting together trying to maintain social distancing. The other teams have not met since the start of the pandemic which is so sad as we all miss coming together to pray and encourage one another on life's journey of ups and downs. The one positive for the past few months is that we are able to attend Mass in our parishes. The other positive is the support that family members do provide to parents especially those with health problems or recovering from the virus.

God willing the great hope is that our Teams will be able to meet safely within the next couple of months. Last week on the Feast of the Assumption Fr. John Foley S.J. wrote an article which reminded us of something we are all aware of as members of Teams. It was entitled

“The more we talk the less we listen “

Truly listen, I mean. If we talk all the time our energy is taken up by our own thoughts and actions and effects. We miss the greatest treasure of all, the beauty of other people in their complexity and in their simplicity and their interiority.

Alright, should we just sit in silence and let others talk? No no we must take care to exchange with others. To talk yes. But also, to listen.

All true relationships, be they societal niceties or deep friendships, are founded on receiving and giving. We give the gift of attention to the other and we receive it back from them.

Fr. John goes on to ask why Mary talked so much when she met up with her pregnant cousin Elizabeth? He answers this by saying that Mary's prayer of the Magnificat to Elizabeth was not about herself but in praise of God.

Charlie and Maureen McMullan

Mullingar

As we move towards another Teams year, please God it will be a year when we will all feel safe meeting up.

We are looking forward to the RC Formation & Team Training Day on 2nd October 2021.

We again thank Elaine and Jim for their dedication to the Teams movement and wish Rosemarie and Brendan God's blessing for their term as Regional Couple.

Team 4:

Team 4 had our first face to face teams meeting in 16 months hosted by Tom and Valerie.

We dined al fresco and were blessed with fantastic weather; we thanked God for the safe arrival of three grandchildren. Joe and Assumpta welcomed a granddaughter Eirin,

Tom and Valerie have a grandson Tom and Dermot a granddaughter Eliza Jane in far off Vancouver, God bless them and all our grandchildren and keep them safe.

We had our end of year outing to Nanny Quinn's on the banks of the Royal canal. The more energetic members cycled there.

Thank God that the pandemic seems to be easing off.

Team 3:

We send our heartfelt sympathies to Fr Frank Monks and the Camillian community on the death of Fr. Andrew (Billie) Carroll, who died 3rd June. May Fr Andrew rest in peace.

We also remember Sylvia O'Donohoe, beloved daughter of Frank & Margaret Fagan (Team 3), who died August 11th. May Sylvia rest in peace.

We pray for all who have had a difficult time over the summer months due to health concerns, especially Fr Frank, and we thank God he is making a wonderful recovery. Congratulations to him on a significant birthday.

Mullingar Sector



Kevin and Faye Noonan, Australia, from the ERI, during their visit to Ireland in 2019.
They will be the keynote speakers at the RC Day on 2nd October

GALWAY

Teams in Galway are still active with our Zoom meetings. However, we see some “light at the end of the tunnel” with the lifting of some Covid restrictions. Some Team couples have been able to meet informally and this is a blessing. Most of us have missed physical contact with our wider families, our grandchildren/nieces/nephews and our friends. We have only recently met our grandchildren after the longest time which was lovely. Like many Team members, we have been struck by how much the young people have grown without our noticing.

In mentioning grandparents there was a First Day for Grandparents and the Elderly held recently. This took place on 25th July 2021. Pope Francis announced in late January 2021 that he was establishing this day to be celebrated each year on the fourth Sunday of July to coincide with the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne, Jesus’s grandparents. The theme for Pope Francis’ idea is the promise from the Gospel of Matthew “I am with you always”. This according to Pope Francis is the promise of closeness and hope that the young and the old mutually share. Not only are grandchildren and young people called upon to be present in the lives of grandparents, but the older generation also have a mission of evangelisation of encouraging young people in their faith. The idea of “World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly” was beautifully articulated in Galway by Bishop Brendan Kelly on 25th July 2021 in Galway Cathedral at 10.30am mass.

The above ideas certainly strike a note in the hearts and minds of Galway Teams.

Please continue to pray for Eddie Lloyd who is in a Nursing Home.

Anne and Jack Hutchinson



Fr. Gerry Cassidy and Billy Hyland at the RC Weekend in Knock, 2018

Newsletter
No. 6—July 2021
Les Amis du Père Caffarel

Dear Friends,

September 18, 2021 will be the 25th anniversary of the death of Father Henri Caffarel. Edgardo and Clarita Bernal, Responsible Couple for the International Leading Team and members of the International Leading team asked the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel to prepare an audio-visual novena of prayer, to celebrate this anniversary and honour the memory of Father Henri Caffarel. This novena is for the benefit of Teams of Our Lady members, Intercessors, members of the Fraternité de Notre-Dame de la Résurrection (Fraternity of Our Lady of the Resurrection) and members of the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel from around the world.

FATHER CAFFAREL, A COMPANION ON OUR WAY TOWARDS GOD
“BUT LOVE IS MY ESSENCE”

This will be the title of this novena. Let us remember that a novena consists of praying for nine consecutive days, generally to entrust God with an intention or to ask for a particular grace. **This novena will take place from September 10 to 18, 2021.** Each day a video will be published on the ERI website, with a link to the Friends of Father Caffarel website. This daily video will include an audio or video extract of Father Caffarel and a clip, followed by a prayer and a prayer intention. It will conclude with the Magnificat and the Prayer for the canonisation of Father Caffarel. The day before the first day of the Novena, September 9, 2021, an opening video will be published on the International Leading Team's website.

The Novena will be presented in the five official languages of Teams of Our Lady: French, English, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese. Each person or couple can pray this novena at a time of day that suits them in communion with all the other participants.

This novena is an opportunity to pray in communion with one another around the figure of Father Henri Caffarel in an expression of thanksgiving. In partnership with your Super-Regional leaders, we trust you will ensure that the necessary information about this novena is broadly communicated, using all the means which seem appropriate to you, in order to incite the greatest number of Teams of Our Lady and members of the Friends of Father Caffarel to pray this novena. This endeavour and your help in making it widely known will clearly form part of the work undertaken by our Association to support the cause of canonisation currently underway in Rome.

Francois Genillon

Secretary of the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel



Members of the Dublin Sector Team at their recent meeting

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We would like to receive contributions for the Winter Newsletter by Sunday 28th November.