



Newsletter

Teams of Our Lady



Irish Region



From the Regional Couple

Dear friends in Teams,

The Universal Synod 2021-2023

Summer 2022

Issue 129

There was a wholehearted response from Teams around Ireland to the invitation to join the Synodal Process.

During the process, our vocabulary was expanded, we quickly realised that 'Synodality' and a phrase we know well in Teams 'Collegiality', are synonymous. They describe collaboration and mutual listening where we all have something to learn. In the Autumn of last year, members studied and considered the synod themes in a prayerful way, gathering on Zoom or in our Teams, to share our thoughts and listen to others share theirs. We considered how we are journeying together and what steps the Spirit invites us to take to grow in our journeying together. In the Spring a group of facilitators carried out the important task of listening and collecting the deliberations from the Zoom meetings.

The next task was to draw together a Drafting Team to prayerfully review all the submissions, seek the common trends, hear the prophetic voices and together through a series of prayerful meetings, draft a synthesis. This final draft synthesis, together with the anonymised submissions, was objectively reviewed for any necessary corrections. The synthesis was forwarded to:

- The Teams' Super-Regional Couple, Paul and Annette O'Beirne. From here it will be sent on to the International Leading Team – ERI. The ERI will collate the Teams of Our Lady submissions from around the world and forward them to the Holy See.
- Irish Synodal Task Group. As the Irish Church is conducting her own synodal process concurrently, the contribution from Teams of Our Lady Ireland will be added to the synthesis received from Lay Ecclesial Movements, Associations and Groups from all over Ireland for onward submission to the Holy See in August 2022.

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Enormous thanks are due to the Team members from across the Region, who offered their services to the Movement at each stage of a very demanding process. We understood early on that it would be impossible to report every word and viewpoint, so passionately conveyed, but we trusted in the Holy Spirit to guide us. It was a privilege to have heard the experiences, dreams and concerns of all and to carry them forward as faithfully as we could. There were tensions in formulating the final document, but consensus was reached. We look forward to sharing the final synthesis with you when this phase of the process is complete.

X World Meeting of Families. Rome 22-26 June 2022.

Do you remember the IX WMoF and the visit to Dublin of Pope Francis in 2018? The tenth meeting will be held in Rome this year and you will be able to listen to events in Rome via live streaming. Dioceses all over the world will have events locally, which you can be part of.

The Regional Couple will be representing Teams of Our Lady Ireland, at the invitation of the Bishops' Council for Marriage and the Family. The delegation will be led by Archbishop Martin and accompanied by Archbishop Farrell and Bishop Nulty. The delegation will include two families with children, other individuals, as well as representatives of Marriage Movements - Accord, Retrouvaille and Teams of Our Lady.

This is an opportunity to participate in the meeting, to share the gift of Teams of Our Lady and to link with others who are seeking to support and strengthen Marriage and the family.

Don't miss www.romefamily2022.com for the programme, catecheses, videos and more.

Teams of Our Lady Ireland Facebook page – Update and Gratitude.

Back in April, the Regional Couple circulated an email requesting help with the Ireland Facebook Page as Ingrid and Padraig Lewis are on leave. Thank you to Filipa Aguiar and David Reis from Team 41 Dublin Sector, who answered the call, giving of their time generously. The Facebook page is a great way to spread the spirituality of Teams of Our Lady as well as Fr Caffarel's vision for Marriage which offers so much hope for married couples. If you have not seen it, please do have a look, every "like" counts and you will find yourself encouraged! Google - Teams-of-Our-Lady-Ireland Facebook.

Celebrating the team meeting

As the evaluation meeting approaches, it is timely to take stock of the journey we have made with our Team this year.

In the ERI letter of March 2022 we were treated to a reflection on the team meeting as a celebration

"The monthly meeting of a team should not only be defined by its structure, its spirit, the friendship of its members, or the desire for it to be a stage in their search for God. It must first of all recognise its supernatural substance and its mystery....in the middle of the room where these couples are gathered, there is the intense presence of the Risen Lord, alive, attentive to all, loving each one as he is, with his virtues and weaknesses, and ready to help them become what he wants them to be".

These sentiments also evoke the moment when Thomas placed his hand in the wounded side of Jesus. Like Thomas with his questions, how often have we come to the Team meeting discouraged or disorientated, only to experience Jesus' loving glance mysteriously renew us. In sharing our prayer, pooling, scripture

and study with our brothers and sisters, we find our single fish or broken loaf becomes enough to satisfy each of our needs and send us home revitalised.

This is what Fr Caffarel called “*...meeting on the level of your souls, in the name of Christ, in Christ. The temptation is often very great to remain only at the level of human friendship... How many, even amongst the best, spend their whole life without experiencing this intimacy in Christ: they share everything, everything except what is most precious, their life with Christ.*”

We celebrate these meetings where, in our heart to heart journeying together, we encounter Jesus.

Let us not keep this great gift a secret but pray the grace of Pentecost will embolden and inspire us to find ways to share it this Summer!

We wish you rest and renewal in the Lord, until we meet on these pages again.

Brendan & Rosemarie Gavin

Diary of a Regional Couple!

Linking with the Super-Region:

Faye and Kevin Noonan, the ERI Liaison Couple, are coming to Ireland from 30th July – 10th August following the ERI Meeting in Assisi. They are looking forward to returning to Ireland and to meeting as many members as possible. Watch out for details of their itinerary, by email, closer to the time.

Linking with the Region:

April: Meeting (2) of the Irish Synodal Pathway Task Group, representing Teams of Our Lady.

April/May: Zoom meetings with Teams of Our Lady Synodal Drafting Team x 3

May: Regional Team Meeting.

Linking with the Sectors:

May: Social visit to couples in Belfast.

From The Regional Chaplain, Fr. Richard Sheehy



Earlier this week, I celebrated graduation Masses for school leavers from two different secondary schools. These celebrations recognise in ritual form the need to acknowledge both the sadness of leaving one stage of life behind and anxiety concerning an uncertain future, before one can be open to the gift that the new beginning represents. The experience of having successfully negotiated previous transitions in life, and trust in God's grace, helps one to move forward with hope.

Today, Ascension Sunday, marks the bridge between Easter and Pentecost and highlights the significance of in-between times, which enable us to prepare for change or to give space for a situation to evolve, just as the apostles waited patiently, if anxiously, in the upper room to be empowered for mission.

Since late last year the Church in Ireland, as across the world and at the invitation of Pope Francis, has been engaged in the Synodal Pathway: a 'listening exercise' in preparation for a Synod in Rome in October 2023. As well as individual parishes across the country, lay movements, like Teams of Our Lady, were invited to participate and to conduct their own listening exercise among their members, responding to the same set of specific questions.

Although I did not participate myself, my understanding is that the Teams process involved two Zoom gatherings in January/February which involved around 45 participants from across the Region. Following this a drafting team of couples drawn from across the Region drafted a document for submission to the Teams Super-Region. Many of the points raised reflect similar themes that emerged at parish Synodal gatherings, such as the need for the Church to listen more to the experience of the lay faithful, the need for catechesis in order to empower people for lay ministry and co-responsibility with clergy, concern about how the parish can effectively engage with young people and reach out to those who have become disaffected. It was also pointed out that involvement with lay movements such as Teams, strengthen a sense of belonging in the Church and that Teams provides a good model of listening, since a good part of our meetings involves listening actively to one another.

One practical suggestion that impressed me was that the practice of the Endeavours be somehow shared with the wider Church. It reminded me yet again that the Endeavours are at the core of what Teams is about. I love the word itself: it's not about rules but practices that we encourage one another to do so that we grow in faith and in openness to God and to one another. We may not manage to do all six endeavours (individual prayer, couple prayer, sit-down, scripture reading, rule of life and annual retreat) all the time, but the fact that we keep trying is what makes the difference to the quality of our development as an individual, as a couple and as a Team. Perhaps, rather than waiting for couples to join Teams, we can already find ways of encouraging them to begin practising one or other of these endeavours and discover

the difference it can make.

Speaking of endeavours, it was great to see the turnout at the recent day retreat at Avila organised by the Dublin sector. For some, including couples from our first ‘Zoom’ team, it was the first time to attend in person a Teams’ event. The retreat was given by Fr. Liam Finnerty OCD who based his reflections on love and marriage from the writings of the Carmelite mystic, John of the Cross. Because of First Communion commitments, I only managed to attend the afternoon session, but one of his many quotes which stays with me is that, *‘Christ became human in order to reveal the beauty in God’s eyes of the human person’*. Food for thought and prayer!

As we approach Pentecost, let us pray for a fresh outpouring of God’s Spirit on our Church and on Teams of Our Lady in particular. May we always seek to live out and share the fruits of what we ourselves receive from Teams.

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

As you know we are encouraged to give, where possible, one day’s pay or whatever you can afford.

Contributions this year may be sent to us at:

19 Rockhill Avenue, Salthill, Galway. (091 528409)

If you wish to pay directly to the Teams Bank Account, the details are:

IBAN: IE94 AIBK 9334 5710 2411 80

BIC: AIBKIE2D

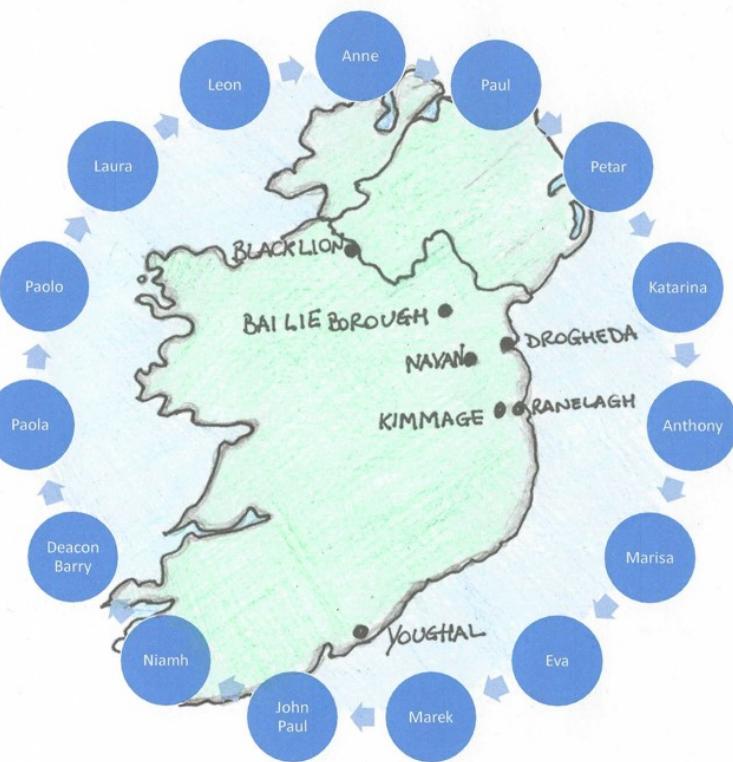
BRANCH ADDRESS: 9 Terenure Rd., Rathgar, Dublin 6.

Please include narrative identifying yourself and your team.

Please do not send cash in the post.

God bless,
Billy and Ann Hyland

Introduction to Teams by ZOOM: nurturing seeds across Ireland



The Irish movement has promoted a new initiative - Introduction to Teams by ZOOM - with the aim of reaching out to Christian married couples who live in areas of the country where it is currently difficult to join a face-to-face team.

Seven couples spread out across Ireland feel blessed by the gift of Teams and the spiritual guidance of Deacon Barry. The international vibe is a special blessing, as members come from Croatia, Italy, South Africa, Slovak Republic and Ireland, of course. *"We met couples from all over the country and despite being a virtual meeting, a really strong bond developed between us, until we could have the opportunity to meet in person."*

This initiative seems to have turned one of the main challenges of Covid times – meeting in ZOOM – into a new way of evangelization. *"We first joined Teams*

during covid lockdown, when zoom meetings were the only option. We found the fellowship with other couples an incredible support, especially at a stage in our lives where we were both physically and emotionally isolated from other Christian couples."

Couples had the opportunity to live the powerful gift of the endeavours. *"The Endeavours, particularly the scripture reading and couple prayer, are helpful to us in our marriage, binding us as one through His word. The rule of life provides a true challenge to make a genuine effort for self-improvement and self-reflection."*

We feel blessed. *"Teams have played an important part in our marriage and on our spiritual journey as a couple and as individuals. It is our anchor which helps us to stay focused and to go deeper in our mutual relationship as a couple and in our personal relationship with God."* *"Teams of our Lady has become the backbone of our marriage, knowing the support is always there, the joy of meeting the other couples and sharing the ups and downs, is a true blessing for us from the Lord."*

We thank the movement for embracing us and pray the Holy Spirit to send us new couples, wherever they live.

Team by ZOOM

Around the Region

Dublin Annual Sector Retreat



The principal event in the Sector during the last few months was the Sector's annual retreat for 2022. It had been originally planned to take place during Lent. However, owing to circumstances beyond the control of the Sector Team it was deferred until May.

Taking place on the 7th May, in Avila Retreat Centre, Donnybrook, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., it was presented by Fr. Liam Finnerty OCD, on the theme of "Marriage in the Divine", with a focus on some of the writings of St. John of the Cross – mainly the *Spiritual Canticle*. Numerous St. John of the Cross quotes throughout added extra depth to Fr Liam's talks.

The retreat was attended by 56 retreatants – representing 40% of the Sector's membership and also representing 14 of the Sector's 16 base teams.

Evaluation sheets were completed by retreatants and have since been analysed by the Sector Team.

Apart from the responses indicating appreciation for the day, key messages for the Sector Team for future retreat planning included:

- Longer retreat time,
- More time for prayer and personal reflection, and
- More open discussion time.

The Sector Team invites suggestions from Teams’ members of potential topics for consideration by the Sector Team for future retreats.

Tandem Teams

The two Tandem Teams which were launched last year by the Dublin Sector (and accompanied by two couples from the Sector) are nearing the end of the 14-meeting programme, which is being conducted through *Zoom*. It is hoped that the final meeting for each team will be an “in person” gathering.

Tandem Teams was profiled recently in the *Irish Catholic*, by one of the Tandem Team members.

World Meeting of Families 2022 – Rome

As Teams of Our Lady representatives on the Council for Marriage and the Family (of the Irish Episcopal Conference), we are delighted to advise that our Regional Couple, Brendan and Rosemarie Gavin, have kindly accepted an invitation from the Council / Bishops to represent the Irish Region of the Movement in Rome, at the World Meeting of Families which takes place in Rome (and also in individual dioceses throughout the world) from 22nd to 26th June 2022.

Annual Sector Outing—date for your diary

The next event being planned for the sector is the Annual Outing. This is currently proposed for Sunday, 18th September 2022, from 2pm. The likely venue will again be “Farmleigh House and Estate”, in Dublin’s Phoenix Park. A reminder and full details will follow nearer the time.

Anne and Mark O’Leary

Mullingar

We thank Stephen & Mary R/C Team 9 who have expressed their support for the Sector and we are delighted to have them on board.

Mullingar Sector Retreat

Mullingar Sector Retreat/Reflection will take place in the company of Fr Frank Monks in the:

St Camillus Nursing Centre Chapel

Friday 17th June 2022

5-8 pm

Cost is €20 per person

We are looking forward to being united in prayer with our fellow Team members and thank Fr Frank for his unwavering support.

Our proposed agenda is as follows:

- Reflection by Stephen & Mary Cummins
- Conducted Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament
- Three Team members will share their thoughts and reflect on a prayer of particular importance to them
- Quiet time for prayer/reflection either before the Blessed Sacrament or strolling in quiet throughout the beautiful suggestive grounds
- Tea & Sandwiches
- Mass

If you would like to join us for the evening via the webcam in St Camillus Nursing Centre, Killucan the link is as follows:

<https://www.churchservices.tv/killucan>

We send our sincere sympathy to:

Andy Donohoe (Team 3) on the death of his sister Catherine Donohoe.

Fr. Ciary Quirke (Chaplain to Team 3 & Team 13 in Galway) on the death of his sister Sighle Twomey. May Catherine and Sighle rest in peace.

We wish everyone a peaceful summer and we will keep all your intentions in our prayers.

Mullingar Sector

Galway

Team meetings in Galway are back to normal. Even though we had become quite adept at meeting through Zoom, we were very pleased indeed to get back to meeting face to face and breaking bread together. Galway Team B had a lovely experience of holding the May monthly meeting in Co. Sligo. We travelled in convoy (2 cars) to be hosted by our Team member in Sligo. On a beautiful day in May we journeyed through the sunshine midst the hills and mountains of Mayo and Sligo. We had a most fruitful meeting which ended with a house mass.

It has been a wonderful season of Confirmations and First Holy Communions for Galway Team members. After the restrictions of the Covid era, grandparents were back in force and a new joy was added to these great events in the lives of our young people, by the return of the grandparents and of course the “afters”!

Some Galway Teams adopted the Synodal process as their study topic and they and others went on to make submissions to join the International Teams Synodal process or their own Diocesan synodal process, or both. We found it very worthwhile to reflect both on the value of Church in our own spiritual nourishment and how it might change to better offer hope and Christian witness to the generations of our grandchildren currently being inducted into the church through the sacraments. All Teams made submissions which are being synthesised into one national Teams document. Let us hope that the honest speaking of truth in these submissions are reflected in the final document.

Plans are being made for our annual retreat in June and our annual outing in July. Dates to be confirmed. We continue to benefit from our monthly meetings and look forward to even greater engagement now that we are back to what was normal in the pre Covid era.

Please continue to pray for Eddie Lloyd who celebrated his 80th birthday recently and is in a Nursing Home.

Also please pray for Fr Ciary whose sister Sighle died in England recently.

Anne & Jack Hutchinson

Prayer Intentions

For those who have died:

Pierre Zakrzewski, son of Mariange and the late Andrzej, former members Team 24

Sighle Twomey, sister of Fr. Ciary Quirke, Team chaplain

Catherine Donohue, sister of Andy Donohue, Mullingar

Anniversary:

John Blayney, husband of Bernadette, 17th June, 4th Anniversary

For those who are ill:

Eddie Lloyd, Galway

Memories



Members of Team 24 in the early days. Front: Bernadette Blayney, Mary Orr, Monique Long. Back: Martine Donaghy, Fr. Hubert Delaney (decd), David Orr, Pat Clinton, Paddy Donaghy, Colette Ellison, Billy Long (decd), Bill Ellison. Photo provided by Bernadette Blayney.

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We wish all a pleasant summer.

We would like to receive contributions for the Autumn Newsletter by Sunday 28th August..