



# Newsletter

## Teams of Our Lady

### Irish Region



Equipes Notre-Dame

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Brendan and Rosemarie by the Logo at the World Meeting of Families

Autumn 2022

Issue 130

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## From the Regional Couple

Dear friends, as we near the end of the holiday period, we hope you have found refreshment with friends and family on some of the long summer days we were blessed with.

For ourselves, the highlight of the summer was our pilgrimage to the 10th World Meeting of Families in Rome. As many of you know, we travelled, representing Teams of Our Lady, with the Irish delegation from the Bishops' Council for Marriage and the Family. Hopefully you were able to view some highlights sent to your email on 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> July.

In his final commission Pope Francis called all families to

*“Announce to children and young people the grace of Christian marriage. Give hope to those who have none. Act as if everything depends on you, knowing that everything must be entrusted to God. Be a sign of the living Christ, do not be afraid of what the Lord asks of you, no, be generous with Him. Open yourselves to Christ, listen to Him in the silence of prayer.” (1)*

As a Movement, this call to prayer and action is familiar. We are invited to both, through our practise of the Endeavours. The July ERI letters are inspirational on this theme

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*“When we say the Endeavours are the pillars of married spirituality, what does this mean? Let us imagine the construction of a building. The pillars are a core structural element, responsible for supporting the construction. We can use this same image to understand the close relationship between the Endeavours and the growth of married spirituality as a path to holiness” (2)*

as we integrate them in our lives through “gradualness, personalisation and effort”.

We continue to ask for your generosity in offering your talents to assist the flourishing of the Movement in Ireland. We thank those who have already offered their talents so that existing and new couples will enjoy the support of Teams of Our Lady into the future. If you have yet to respond, please see the email invitation entitled “Don't bury your talents!” sent on 8<sup>th</sup> August.

We draw your attention to the Teams Ireland website <https://www.equipes-notre-dame.ie/noticeboard-newsletters> where you can view the ERI letters from March and July 2022, World Meeting of Families Updates, News of Tandem Teams and much more!

- (1) Pope Francis' message to families at the World Meeting of Families 2022.
- (2) The Endeavours: Pillars of conjugal spirituality by Mariola and Elizeu Casling, ERI Couple– Responsible for Satellite Teams; Bernadette and Sylvestre Minlekibe, ERI Couple– Liaison for the Eurafrica Zone

The link for the August Letter from ERI, which we recommend, is

<https://equipes-notre-dame.com/en/letter-of-august-2022/>

We pray blessings on the incoming Responsible Couples and look forward to meeting up soon.

Brendan and Rosemarie

### **Teams Stand Youth 2000 Summer Festival**



Rosemarie Gavin, Maureen and Pat Seery with Fr. Adriano Oliveira, CC Kilcock (and Brazil Teams Chaplain). Over the 3 days of the Festival, Ilaria and Pierpaolo Dondia and Mark and Anne O’Leary also volunteered on the stand.

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## **From the Regional Chaplain, Fr. Richard Sheehy**

As I write, Summer is gradually giving way to Autumn, and we certainly cannot complain about the weather! Hopefully, most of us have been able to avail of the opportunity to get outdoors, head for the hills or the beach, and enjoy spending leisurely time with family and friends. I passed through Killaloe a few weeks back, and it looked for all the world like the Costa del Sol! Some of us may have enjoyed the visit home of family members living abroad, and I'm sure too, that some of our International Team members in Ireland availed of the opportunity to spend a few weeks at home in France, Italy, Slovakia or the USA. Others among us may have found themselves unexpectedly dealing with the illness of a loved one or providing support to a family member in crisis.

In my own case, I received a new Parish appointment this summer, which involved wrapping things up and saying goodbye to one group of parishioners and then landing in a new place and beginning once again the process of getting to know people. It's a major upheaval in the life of a diocesan priest, which we can anticipate every nine years or so, but a new challenge also calls forth new energy. For parishioners, too, it is a big adjustment as they say farewell to a priest whom they have come to know and have to adapt to a new person – that's provided they are fortunate enough to get a replacement! The physical house move, which inevitably accompanies a new appointment, although time-consuming, nevertheless provides an opportunity to de-clutter. Maybe we all need such opportunities from time to time.

After the break over the past few months, we can now look forward to gathering again with our teams in the coming weeks. But rather than seeing it as simply taking up where we left off, maybe it is a good moment to re-evaluate where we are as a team, to focus on what we want to prioritise or do differently this year. It is also a good moment to check in on each of the members of our team: to see how they are and what has been going on for them over the summer. Good 'pooling' is not simply a matter of sharing holiday highlights but of listening deeply, so that we can discern where the Spirit is calling us. May the autumn bring us the blessing of new beginnings!

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## Report from the 10<sup>th</sup> World Meeting of Families- June 2022

The 10th World meeting of Families 2022 took place in Rome last June. There were just 2,400 delegates invited from 120 countries across the world. The Irish delegation was led by Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh and Bishop Denis Nulty, the Chair of the Council for Marriage and the Family. The delegation comprised a family, with their 3 children, lay representatives of marriage movements and associations as well as priests. Brendan and I were honoured to travel as members of Equipes Notre-Dame/Teams of Our Lady.

It would be impossible to note all the impressions, but we have chosen three highlights to share with you.

-Firstly, it was wonderful to share the pilgrimage with many of the couples, individuals and clergy who are dedicated to caring for marriage and the family in Ireland at this time. We ate breakfast and celebrated the Eucharist together, huffed and puffed about the heat and the mosquitoes, shared delicious Italian food as well as the hospitality of the Irish College in Rome. We also learned more about each other's movements and vocations and have built bridges which we are sure will enrich our movements into the future.

-Secondly, we were encouraged by the presentations at the meeting which were inspirational and challenging. The joy and power of God's love shone through the most difficult circumstances. As Pope Francis said in *Amoris Laetitia*, "no family drops down from heaven perfectly formed". This conference was a master class in practical examples of how God causes us to grow and mature in the ability to love in everyday family life. The speakers who were mainly couples and families, were honest and courageous. They shared their stories and showcased many initiatives developed by couples, movements, parishes, and Bishops' Councils all over the world. Initiatives which provide invaluable, culturally specific, scaffolding to couples and families and provide practical tools for families to live their vocation as 'domestic churches'. The 'domestic church' was described by Lisa and Greg Popcak as "an outpost of grace in a hurting world". There were many witnesses to how experienced married couples can mentor engaged and newly married couples and how this has been structured in parishes and movements.

Prayer punctuated our days. There was a time of prayerful adoration for all the delegates in the conference centre, Masses in St Peter's Basilica and in the beautiful chapels of the Irish College and finally in St Peter's Square presided over by Pope Francis: He charged us "Proclaim the beauty of being family with joy! Proclaim the grace of Christian marriage to children and young people".

- Also included in the delegate programme was an evening in a local parish, fittingly called Holy Family Parish. They welcomed a bus load of delegates, Irish, Korean, Kenyan and Congolese. They fed us and prepared a beautiful multi-lingual prayer service which we participated in. During this, several couples and families spoke about their journey of faith as a couple or as a family. (It was all so natural, and we wondered could this happen in an Irish parish?) We were invited to speak on behalf of the Irish delegation and shared how we came to Teams of Our Lady, how the Endeavours and the Team Meeting support our journey towards holiness and how we live our mission as a married couple in the church. All in all, we had a great experience and thank sincerely Bishop Denis Nulty and the Bishops' Council for Marriage and the Family for inviting us to be part of the 10th World Meeting of Families in Rome.

Below we attach the summary prepared by EWTN for each day of the meeting to give you a flavour. Each video lasts about an hour. Some are translated, many are in English.

Warm regards,  
*Brendan and Rosemarie*

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This is the Opening Concert For World Meeting Of Families 2022 | EWTN News In-Depth <https://youtu.be/W4Mn5Zq4BPM>

World Meeting of Families - 2022-06-23 - Highlight Show  
<https://youtu.be/IiV6IKVO2Dc>

World Meeting of Families - 2022-06-24 - Highlight Show  
<https://youtu.be/70-7uZ3wmEM>

World Meeting of Families - 2022-06-25 - Highlight Show  
<https://youtu.be/cmf53II32lo>

Here are a few extra links to presentations we were very impressed by.  
**The Domestic Church and Synodality** by Gregory and Lisa Popcak | World Meeting of Families  
[https://youtu.be/\\_XvIdPeTANU](https://youtu.be/_XvIdPeTANU)

World Meeting of Families 2022 | Day 1: **Festival of the Families with Pope Francis** | June 22nd  
This link to the Festival of Families, gives full coverage of the witnesses of the families and the words of Pope Francis from 46 mins into the clip. The witnesses, from couples who have struggled in one way or another, are very real and moving.  
<https://youtu.be/TDmWn2RDyzE>

This is an excellent presentation on the **Marriage catechumenate**, a new proposal by Pope Francis, to strengthen Marriage Preparation and Accompaniment. The document is currently only available in Italian and Spanish, hopefully it will be published in English soon and will be of particular interest to Teams of Our Lady are well placed to be part of such an initiative.  
<https://youtu.be/PgTrQURllbM>

**Accompanying early years of marriage** Eduardo y Monica Gonzales Soriano  
This is beautiful presentation again speaking about themes we in Teams of Our Lady are familiar with.  
<https://youtu.be/mnmJqum4cK8?t=629>

**Homily of Pope Francis** | Closing Mass in St Peter's Square June 25th  
<https://youtu.be/q1GxB6Z8Lc8?t=3127>

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## **Responsible Couples' Day**

**Calling All Responsible Couples!**

**Saturday 24th September 2022**

**Special Guests Paul and Annette O'Beirne, Super-Regional Couple**

**Avila Retreat Centre, Donnybrook D04 YF66**

**Further details to follow**

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## **International Gathering 2024**

Dear Couples,.

Every six years, Teams organises an international gathering. This marks the term of service of the International Leading Team, the ERI. The last gathering was held in Fatima in 2018. The next is announced to be in Turin, Italy between 15th and 20th July 2024.

At previous gatherings there have been 10,000 participating from across the world; it is a wonderful opportunity to meet others and have inspiring input for reflection.

We wish to judge potential interest in attendance, your indication now will not form any commitment at the moment.

It would be great to have your response, either....really interested, possibly or unlikely to attend.

Please use the Google form to respond [www.tinyurl.com/END-Turin](http://www.tinyurl.com/END-Turin) the form will be open for two weeks, until 14th September.

Paul & Annette O'Beirne

Responsible Couple

Equipes Notre Dame– Teams of Our Lady

Transatlantic Super-Region

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## Around the Region

### Dublin

#### Tandem Teams

Both of the Tandem Teams had their 14<sup>th</sup> and final meeting since the last newsletter.

Team A had its final meeting “in person”, in the home of one of the couples, in Co. Monaghan, at the end of June. It was wonderful to meet in person. One of the four couples has expressed an interest in joining Teams of Our Lady. (Statistics from the French experience indicate that one in ten couples subsequently join Teams of Our Lady.)

Team B had its final meeting at the beginning of August. Because of the broad geographical spread of the couples, this meeting (like all the previous meetings) was held on *Zoom*. We are hoping to host a follow-up “in person” gathering for Team B in December.

In the hope of forming new Tandem Teams for the coming year (in person or on *Zoom*), an on-line Tandem information meeting is being hosted on *Zoom*, on Saturday evening, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022, at 8.30pm. Details for accessing the meeting were posted on the Tandem website: [www.tandemteams.ie](http://www.tandemteams.ie)

#### Youth 2000 Summer Festival

Youth 2000 held its annual Summer Festival in Clongowes Wood College SJ, Clane, Co. Kildare from Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> August to Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

Members of the Dublin Sector volunteered to take turns at a Teams of Our Lady / Tandem Teams stand on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 13 August. The purpose of having a stand at the event was to spread the word about the Movement and about Tandem.

The volunteers distributed leaflets and had plenty of conversations with lots of young people and clergy over the two days.

Special thanks are due to the volunteer couples: Brendan & Rosemarie Gavin, Pat & Maureen Seery, Pierapaolo & Ilaria Dondio and Mark & Anne O’Leary.

#### Dublin Sector Outing

The Annual Dublin Sector Outing is scheduled to take place (like last year):

In: Farmleigh Estate, Phoenix Park, Dublin

On: Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Time: From 2pm

Meeting point: In front of the main house.

In the expectation of a sunny day, bring something to sit on, a packed lunch and sunglasses! All are welcome to attend – even from outside the Dublin Sector! Feel free to bring a guest! We look forward to meeting as many of you as possible on the day!

Mark and Anne O’Leary

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## Belfast



Brendan and Rosemarie travelled to Belfast during the summer to meet the teams. Pictured are Brendan Gavin, Brendan Bunting, Liam McKinney, Moyra Bunting, Eithne Clenaghan, Eileen McKinney. Photo by Rosemarie.

## Mullingar

Richard and I would like to thank the outgoing responsible couples/person and welcome those who have accepted the role for the coming year; we are looking forward to our new Teams year. Please God it will be a year when we all feel comfortable meeting up with our various Teams.

Here in Mullingar we are still on a high following the success of the Fleadh Cheoil. It was truly fantastic to see the streets full of people and music at every corner of the town. The future of Irish music is very secure when you see so many young people playing instruments of every kind; it seems many young people learned how to play on-line during the Covid restrictions. Thank God for the gift of music.

## Mullingar Sector Retreat

Mullingar Sector Retreat/Reflection took place in the company of Fr Frank Monks in St Camillus Nursing Centre Chapel (*a very special place of healing*) on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

The Retreat was enjoyed by those who could make it. It was very prayerful and relaxing and we enjoyed being together.

We thank Fr Frank most sincerely for his continuous support.

Mary and Stephen Cummins started with an outstanding reflection on the Gospel of **John 14: 23-29** Because they found in Team 9 that the Gospels are so rich in meaning they decided to use them as their Study Topic. The Team found this to be very rewarding, insightful with deep sharing at their meetings. Stephen and Mary shared with us the thoughts expressed at their last meeting and this in turn encouraged us to respond and share our own thoughts.

Fr Frank reminded us that 24<sup>th</sup> July was grandparents' day and that the Holy Father has set the theme; "in old age they will still bear fruit" (Ps: 15)

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### **Quoting Fr Frank:**

We all first encounter old age through our grandparents, then our parents, elderly neighbours and friends, we watch them grow old and come to grips with it and then we find it is our turn.

We experience love through listening, and in making ourselves really present to one another (that phone call for no other reason than to say hello).

“My personal philosophy has always been: Wherever you are, when you are there, be there. The present is the only thing I’m sure of. It is in the present that I must live. I can look back in anger, forward with fear or around me in awareness – the choice is mine.”

We find God close to us when we pray and through those praying with us. “*Where two or three are gathered together in my name I am with you*”.

But we experience the love of God; you could say that we can sense it, mostly through the ordinary and extraordinary loves of every day, in marriage, through the family that we had to re-appreciate through the cocooning time, through the friendship and care for others. I always believed there was an eighth sacrament - the sacrament of presence. When we are truly present to one another real healing takes place.

### ***God is always working – don’t squander this special time of senior citizenship.***

Following this time of reflection and prayer we had the opportunity to catch up with each other and enjoy the “cuppa” followed by the Celebration of Holy Mass.

### **Going Forward:**

We are in the process of organising with Fr Phil Gaffney a Teams Mass/information evening to introduce the Teams to other couples in the Mullingar region. We will let you know exact details in due course and ask for your prayers and practical support in this endeavour.

### **Prayers:**

Stephen and Mary have asked to include in your prayers members of their Team (9) who are sick, their children and grandchildren going back to school and college.

We keep in mind all who have asked for our prayers, remembering especially those who are worried about their health or undergoing treatment.

### **RIP**

Breda Monks, Peadar Hyland.

In the Mullingar Sector we send our condolences:

Fr Frank Monks on the death of his cousin Breda.

Billy and Ann (Galway) on the death of Billy’s brother Peadar.

Faye and Kevin Noonan (*Liaison Couple for the Eurasia Zone*) on the death of Kevin’s dad.

Mullingar Sector

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## Galway

The summer months have been quiet from a Teams Meetings point of view. Traditionally it is a time to reconnect with our wider families. Children are home from school and it is time for holidays and sport camps. In Galway we have families visiting each other from near and far and aren't we lucky to have had such good weather this summer!

The "Teams Summer picnic" took place in Portumna Castle grounds in July. We had our picnic on the grounds adjacent to the old (now a ruin) friary. The friary consists of a church where the friars worked and prayed. The church has a "nave" and "chancel" plan. The nave was where the congregation sat; the chancel was the site of the altar. We felt a connection with the many people who attended mass here until 1762. Our Teams celebration of Mass was certainly enriched by the wonderful surroundings.

In spite of the busy summer family activities, the Teams did make time to go on a short team event. There is a beautiful "Pilgrimage way" nestling in the gap of the Maam Turk mountains. It is called Maumeán (the gap of the birds). Team representatives undertook the three quarters of an hour climb to the oratory. Two young boys Edwardo (12) and William (15) set the pace. It was a beautiful day in the most beautiful part of Connemara. Mass was celebrated by Fr Ciary Quirke. It was a lovely day and a lovely memory.

Congratulations to Anne and Peter Costello whose granddaughter Maebh was christened recently. We welcome a new member of the Church.

Also, congratulations to John McCarrick who has a new grandson Leopold born in Dublin in July.

Congratulations to Anne and Billy Hyland on the marriage of their son Michael to Eithne in Tipperary in July. Our sympathy to Billy on the death of his brother Peadar. May he rest in peace.

Our sympathy to Peter and Betty Quinlan on the death of Peter's sister Hillary in August. May she rest in Peace.

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

Jack and Anne Hutchinson



Teams members from Brazil whom Brendan and Rosemarie met at the World Meeting of Families

## Review of Study Topic: 'To Grow in Love' by Fr. Brian Grogan, SJ

The very title of this book "To Grow in Love" immediately recommends itself as an ideal text for a Teams Discussion topic particularly for those of us who have been on the road for a while. We can identify with so much of what is said – more applicable to older members perhaps, but '*if you haven't yet entered this strange world, some knowledge of its landscape can help you prepare for it*' (p12). Old age can be very difficult indeed. In times of hardship we often ask, 'Where is God?' With rich spiritual insights the book explores many ways to grow in love.

Ch. 2 The Awesome Task of Ageing: In earlier years we are following an outward path into the world around us but the journey home demands different skills as we move into an intensely private world. Divine energy surrounds us. Will we let God carry us forward?

Ch. 10 The Prayer of a Tired Pilgrim: Theme is very consoling: we all find it hard to pray, and we get comfort from that fact. On how to pray, Fr Brian says: '*Prayer is a loving conversation with God, by whom we know we are loved: so says St Teresa of Avila. Ignatius echoes this and speaks of prayer as a conversation between two friends. So, in prayer we talk about what occurs to us, and attend to how God responds. You can chat to God about anything, because as a good and faithful friend he is interested in every bit of your life.*'(p.69)

We began to study it in 2020 while having zoom meetings. Now very happy to be physically together, we take a chapter a month, savouring its depths. Chapters are reasonably short, 6/7 pages and very suited to Teams. Fr. Brian suggests *Prayerful Pondering* at the end of each chapter inviting us to ask God what he wants to show us, and respond to that.

In the face of a deeply individualistic culture, our shared reading of *To Grow in Love* alerts us to our interdependence. We highlight what has value, not price. We seek what nourishes relationships in the face of fragmenting families and we enjoy the poetry of everyday life.

There are 29 chapters: we're in no hurry to finish the book!

**Team 32 :** Mary & Hugo, Kate & Proinnsias, Fr. John, Breda, Joe & Áine

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## **Prayer Intentions**

### **For those who have died:**

**Eilish Carberry**, mother of Maureen Seery, Team 38

**Peadar Hyland**, brother of Billy, Galway

**Hillary**, sister of Peter Quinlan, Galway

**Darragh Muldoon**, brother of Paul, Team 39

### **For those who are ill:**

**Eddie Lloyd**, Galway



Mullingar Sector Retreat/Reflection 17th June, 2022

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We would like to receive contributions for the Winter Newsletter by Sunday 26th November.

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