



Equipes Notre-Dame



We already know that a life in Jesus Christ is one that knows no boredom! And why is that? Because love keeps us busy, gives us something to do, stirs us. As St John of the Cross said, *“The soul that walks in love neither tires others nor grows tired.”* This is what happens in Jesus’ Church and it is what happens in movements and institutions that make up this Church. Indeed it is what happens in Teams of Our Lady too! Love in Jesus Christ affects us and forces us to step out of our selfishness. It led us, Dora & João Pedro, to Teams of Our Lady, and within this wonderful Movement that belongs to the Catholic Church, it led us to work now in the ERI

(International Leading Team). A great privilege, a great grace, but also a great responsibility. And on top of it all, we are to work and give feedback on a relatively new subject. Especially within Teams, it is one of the greatest importance: communication!

But first, a brief introduction about who we are. We have been married for almost 27 years, and have been in Teams for 23 years. We have four children ranging in ages from 24 to 14 years old. We live near Lisbon and we work in radio. We discovered Teams of Our Lady at a moment in our lives when we wished to move closer to the Lord! The Lord has given us so much through Teams, such as friends, a deeper sense of the marriage sacrament, an experience of praying together as a couple and as a family, a better life together as a couple with more human virtues, different graces and still more friends. So, when the Lord called us to work in this part of his vineyard, we could not turn our backs on him and use the frequent and plausible excuse of “We have no time for it.”

That is why we are here, calm and totally confident, firstly in the Lord and then in all the Team members. This includes the thousands of couples and spiritual counsellors throughout the world who, like us, wish to love more and more this little part of the Church that we came across by chance: Teams of Our Lady.

We have a difficult task! The Movement is huge. But we wish to contribute, as far as possible, to helping Teams of Our Lady move forward using “communication” as a tool.

We were able to speak about this aspect at the most recent College held in Valencia this past July to all the Spiritual Counsellors and Responsible Couples of the Super-Regions and Regions. This was in order to heighten awareness amongst those responsible in Teams of Our Lady throughout the world to the question of communication. We spoke of the digital environment that underpins modern life and we highlighted the fact that we cannot remain indifferent to it. We spoke of the importance of the new tools, like Instagram and Facebook, that help to pass on ideas and can also help us to further transmit what we have learnt in Teams. We spoke of the positive image that we must all build up together, and we warned of the dangers that exist when, for example, an ill-chosen photo can jeopardise and associate our Movement with a distorted reality.

We presented the new website that is under construction and that is to be an easy and practical means for everyone, both within and outside the Movement, to get to know Teams - how they work, where they are to be found, who is their founder etc. We also committed to putting together “a style book” that will help all those responsible for communication to have a common basis, in order to show the world in a more assertive way, what Catholic marriage is and how Teams of Our Lady helps couples to experience the challenges of life together.

We also explained that having digital communication at an international level, even though many Super-Regions and Regions have their own networks, is justified by the necessity of presenting a wider vision, a sense of unity and internationality to Teams. This is why we ask for the cooperation of all Super-Regions, so that they may be a source of content and thus help the International Leading Team to show to the world the greatness of our couples’ Movement.

Similarly, in terms of internal communication—and without taking away from the importance of the usual methods of communication between the different levels—we have offered our help so that the messages, guidelines or suggestions that originate with the ERI, reach all Teams at the grassroots across the four Zones that make up the world map of Teams of Our Lady.

This is why we stress it is only together, if we are attentive, aware and ready to shoulder the importance of communication, that we can enable Teams of Our Lady to progress. This is our proposal!

Work? A lot, of course! But once more, we feel the power of the Holy Spirit who strengthens and unifies us. The Holy Spirit firstly unites us with each other as couples; then with others as a team (once again we find fantastic people with whom to work); then to God the Father himself... who always awaits us with open arms, just as Pope Francis tells us and just as we see him in the parable of the Prodigal Son. The Father’s mercy was described very well last year at the Fatima International Gathering by Monsignor José Tolentino de Mendoza, who has just been named Cardinal. How wonderful! We were lucky enough, as Portuguese people and Team members, to have had the grace to listen to his wise and stimulating words all through the week of the Gathering.

And so, we end this letter with some of his words...“We have experienced this several times as a family. If we want to be moderate and non-partisan, if we just want to be fair, we will be good people, but we will not know the Gospel of Mercy. This is because the Gospel of Mercy requires an excess of love from us...”