

INTERCESSORS' QUARTERLY LETTER

N° 164 – October 2018



A New Breath of Life!

Dear Friends and Intercessors in Christ,

We are delighted to share with you the graces received during the International Gathering of Teams of Our Lady members in Fatima last July 16th-21st. The Holy Spirit was at our sides throughout those days that were filled with joy, faith, hope and fraternity!



The Intercessors, who were at Fatima and who came from different countries and different continents, met up and were able to share the richness of their commitment.

Launched 58 years ago following a powerful call by Father Caffarel, the Intercessors' movement, is renewed today and makes a fresh start with the creation, at Fatima, of an Intercessors' International Animation Team (IIAT). This team aims to be the link between the Intercessors throughout the world, **so that the importance of intercessory prayer may continue to be better known.**

God never ceases to approach us, to turn towards us with tenderness. So, we turn towards Him in order that our prayers, requests, doubts, hopes, fears and also our thanksgiving rise up towards Him. We present to the Father, through the Son and in communion with the Spirit, the intentions that have been entrusted to us, in a filial surge of confidence and abandonment towards his mercy. **And we truly believe that God hears our prayers and leans in towards us, no matter what our request or our situation is!**

Aude & Olivier de la Motte

SPIRITUAL LETTER

"I owe everything to prayer," Father Caffarel often repeated, and we know how fruitful his ministry as a priest was. If Teams of Our Lady developed, if the announcement of the grandeur and beauty of marriage and the family shine, we can say that it is due to many people's prayers. Certainly, the Intercessors' prayers were not the only ones... Indeed, who can judge? But each person has their place. And we have ours. As our prayer states, *"Lord,*

let us intercessors addressing ourselves to you, accomplish our service through love for you and through love for mankind." These are Father Caffarel's words.

There is an internal logic inherent in our service as intercessors. *"Intercession finds its source in the Trinity, in its mysterious and powerful dynamism that unites the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."* (Editorial) This source cannot dry up and its dynamism wants to irrigate the entire earth, vitalise the heart of all men, by passing through all the intercessors in the world. Standing humbly before the Holy Trinity—by simply make a sign of the cross—immediately places us in the great movement of love for the universe. We enter into the rationale of love of God, a universal love, it is the powerful rationale of our service.

Once more, we are not the only intercessors in the world... Or rather, the only and unique intercessor to the Father is the Son, He who, through the Holy Spirit, assumes all our prayers. If the "Intercessors" Movement founded by Father Caffarel, now takes on a truly international structure, it is of course so that it corresponds to the reality of its members, who belong to so many countries where Teams of Our Lady are present. But it is possible to discern a spiritual reason too—spiritual and therefore very real: to enter into the desire of God, who wishes to save all men.

Intercessors pray a lot for couples. We know that a particular request is heard by God. When he blesses, his blessing is always great, full, overflowing because he knows the invisible ties that support the world. Therefore, let us accomplish our *"service through love for God and through love for mankind."* God knows how to multiply his graces.

**Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, o.p.
Spiritual Counsellor to the Intercessors**

THE ORIGIN OF THE INTERCESSORS: Father Caffarel's Call in 1960

It was with great confidence in the merciful Father that Father Caffarel, in 1960, conscious of the dangers that threatened the family and Christian couples in the world, launched a pressing call for "**watchmen**" to rise up and pray. His concern was that the Teams of Our Lady Movement, expanding rapidly at that time, would hold its ground! That its growth *"would not occur to the detriment of its soundness,"* as he expressed it. He was convinced that Teams needed (and these are his words) *"a supplement of prayer,"* so that the foundations of the Movement would remain solid. Father Caffarel was 'inhabited' by his "interior monastery." His deep union with Christ moved him to ask Team members with great insistence to root their couple and their life in private prayer.

And this is how the "watchmen" movement was born that then became the "**Intercessors**," within the Teams of Our Lady Movement. This is what he wrote, *"Pray for the Movement, so that it be always a better school of Christian perfection," "so that it fulfils with generosity and accuracy the mission that has been assigned to it in Christ's Church."* The watchmen, and then the Intercessors, are like *"the keel of a boat"* for Teams: prayer is a source of stability.



Father Caffarel thus asks that *“every night, without interruption, between midnight and six in the morning, couples take it in turn to pray.”* That *“volunteers commit to praying for one hour at night once a month, husband and wife together as far as possible.”* That is his request. Those are his words. And the Intercessors today, with humility, conviction and confidence, endeavour to answer that call, each person according to their

rhythm, their limits, alone or as a couple, at night or during the day, in union with the Lord by offering up their joys and sorrows, for families, couples, priests and the Church.

TESTIMONIAL

Aude: “This prayer of intercession put us back like children, like the children of Fatima, into the Father’s arms. We leave our requests with him: the ones that have been entrusted to us. And we believe, truly, that the Father welcomes and embraces them. That’s it. The rest is not up to us. But if we believe, strongly, in this welcoming of the Father’s, we cannot remain with our arms crossed.

This commitment to intercessory prayer plunges us into the grace of our marriage sacrament. It took me a long time to enter into this night of prayer, and it is still a struggle. But every time I manage to get out of my bed at 2am to go with Olivier and depose the prayers that were entrusted to us on Jesus’ heart, I give thanks for this hour that is so special in the month, this hour that unites Olivier and I in the same dynamic of confidence and abandonment towards the Lord. It seems rather a small thing, a little hour during the night once a month, but this little appointment from one month to the next helps us to live every day in this “spirit of intercession.” It opens our hearts towards more compassion, more attention to the challenges in today’s world and to those faced by the Church.”

Olivier: “I have been a member of the Intercessors for almost 24 years now. I used to like praying at night when on retreat and I said to myself that I could try and do it more often than just once or twice a year. During a gathering, at the Intercessors’ stand, Jean-Michel Vuillermoz suggested I sign up, and I found the idea attractive. I did not know if I would be able to do it... He replied that only time would tell, that it was easy for no-one.

A treasure was hidden behind this commitment. Something marvellous that I did not suspect existed. My whole life of prayer was transformed by this rhythm of monthly appointment, which, in fact, structure all the other moments. I quickly understood that this appointment need to be supported by daily prayer, during which I also carry the intentions of the month, and all those entrusted to us. It remains a struggle and a course with many obstacles. But I offer them up, I find another moment when I do not succeed in praying on the chosen date. My commitment is even sometimes even more present in the failings... and off I go again! And what a joy it is for me when Aude joins me during the night!”

INTERCESSION: POPE FRANCIS



In his *Apostolic exhortation Gaudete et Exultate on the call to holiness in today's world*, Pope Francis invites each one of us to deepen or rediscover the value of intercessory prayer.

Paragraph 154, *"Prayer of supplication is an expression of a heart that trusts in God and realizes that of itself it can do nothing. The life of God's faithful people is marked by constant supplication born of faith-filled love and great confidence. Let us not downplay prayer of petition, which so often calms our hearts and helps us persevere in hope. Prayer of intercession has particular value, for it is an act of trust in God and, at the same time, an expression of love for our neighbour. There are those who think, based on a one-sided spirituality, that prayer should be unalloyed contemplation of God, free of all distraction, as if the names and faces of others were somehow an intrusion to be avoided. Yet in reality, our prayer will be all the more*

pleasing to God and more effective for our growth in holiness if, through intercession, we attempt to practise the twofold commandment that Jesus left us.

*Intercessory prayer is an expression of our fraternal concern for others, since we are able to embrace their lives, their deepest troubles and their loftiest dreams. **Of those who commit themselves generously to intercessory prayer we can apply the words of Scripture: "This is a man who loves the brethren and prays much for the people" (2 Mac 15:14).***

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on 19 March, the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, in the year 2018, the sixth of my Pontificate.

INTERCESSORS TODAY

Intercessors have spread over the past 58 years in over more than 30 countries. Today, a new set up and organisation has been put in place, so that the importance of intercessory prayer may be ever better known.



An Intercessors' International Animation Team (IIAT) was created at the Fatima Gathering of July 2018.

It is made up of 3 couples:

Cristiane & Luiz Antonio P.F. de Brito (Brazil); **Olga Cid & Paco Garrido** (Spain); **Aude & Olivier de la Motte** (France) and we hope that a couple from the Eurasia Zone will soon join us.

It is helped by a liaison couple from the ERI (International Leading Team) and supported by a Spiritual Counsellor, Father

Paul-Dominique Marcovits. In order to reinforce the ties between the Intercessors and Teams of Our Lady, each Region and Super-Region mandated a Correspondent Couple for the Intercessors. These 18 couples, many of whom were present at Fatima, are committed to ensuring the diffusion of intercessory prayer in their region, to collecting the prayer intentions that come from the Team members (or elsewhere), in particular during Sector or Regional gatherings, and to entrusting these prayer intentions to the Intercessors.



Our Lady of Fatima, Pray for families, couples and priests!

THANK YOU

We extend our heartfelt thanks to To & Zé Moura, who accompanied the Intercessors these past years in their desire to reorganise in order to better open themselves up to the world and its challenges. We thank Georges & Mahassen Khoury who, within the ERI, helped us with their prayer and their capabilities to set up this new structure.



We thank the previous Intercessors' animation team for their fidelity and investment throughout these past years, in particular Jean-Michel Vuillermoz, together with Gérard & Marie-Christine de Roberty.

We thank our dear secretary Brigitte, who worked with enthusiasm and efficiency for the Intercessors.

We thank Anne-Laure & Jean-René Bregeon for their precious help on the Intercessors' stand at Fatima.

We thank Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits who supports, accompanies and encourages the Intercessor movement.

We thank all those couples who have accepted their mission with the Intercessors. May the Lord bless you!

May the Holy Spirit guide us and send us strength, courage and confidence!

May Mary our mother, give us the grace to believe in the strength of prayer.

GENERAL INTENTION

Together with Teams of Our Lady, we associate ourselves with the ERI's intention, ***"And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight."*** (Ph 1:9)

"Let us pray that the Movement assumes, with a clear conscience, the true meaning of its mission in the Church and in the world. That each person may discern that the goal, according to their charisma, is not only the cultivating of conjugal spirituality and the sacramentality of marriage, but also the promotion of a missionary conscience and spirit."

**ERI's Letter from Fatima to Team members throughout the world
July 2018**

TESTIMONIALS

You are an Intercessor! Send us your testimonial: your graces, your difficulties, your questions, your doubts, your requests...

Email: eiaifatima2018@gmail.com

Thank you so much!