



Dearest Friends and Team members,

In the wake of the international gathering in Fatima, on 21st July 2018 we started our service as members of the International Leading Team (ERI), at the service of our Movement as liaison couple for the Eurafrika Zone. Our first activity was to contribute, with other new ERI member couples, to the international training session of Fatima, 21-23<sup>rd</sup> July 2018.

It was a great joy for us to meet new couples and spiritual counsellors of different languages and cultures, who had come from all over the world, to participate in the training session, and to prepare thereby to respond to the Movement's call by taking on a responsibility in the future.

We thus had the opportunity to practice listening to the concerns of couples called to provide a service in our Movement, in a context of internationality.

We give thanks to the Lord for having trusted us, calling us to exercise responsibility as a member of the ERI, through the discernment of To and Zé and Clarita and Edgardo.

We ask you to always pray for us and for all members of the ERI so that the Lord may enlighten us in this common mission of prayer, listening, discernment and action, serving couples and their family.

The short retreat that preceded our first meeting in November 2018 in Paris reminded us of the context of our ERI meetings: a team, better still a family, gathered in Christ's name, in order to grow more and more in knowledge of Him and in His call to holiness.

The ERI is also a team gathered together by Christ to share a responsibility: that of keeping the Teams of Our Lady united and faithful to its charism, by placing itself through the grace of the Holy Spirit, to listen to its members and to work with its leaders throughout the world for the development of the Movement in new countries.

Most of the ERI members did not know each other very well before their service in the ERI. It is the call to serve Christ that unites us and makes us henceforth a family where love and mutual aid will reign.

*“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.” (Jn 15:16)*

Gathered together in the ERI family, we are confident that Christ, true to his word, will accomplish all that he has promised. At this time when Team members throughout the world have just commemorated the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first meeting of the first team, all the members of the new ERI have a great desire in their hearts to make as many countries as possible aware of the riches of Christian marriage, in a world in complete transformation, with very perceptible cultural and socio-economic differences.

Through the grace of the Holy Spirit, the ERI says to us, *“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous hand.” (Is 41 :10).*

The ERI wants to share this mission of discerning, welcoming and accompanying many others on the way to holiness, through the responsible couples of the Super-Regions and Attached Regions, to all team members throughout the world.

Thus, each team member can decide to commit freely, conscious of their limitations, but sustained by the Movement and the Lord, who invites us to go forward unafraid.

During International Colleges and visits, Zone Responsible Couples will work out strategies for discerning, welcoming and improved accompaniment with Responsible Couples for Super-Regions and Attached Regions from each country. This will mean leaving our usual comfort zone in order to go out and meet people who may be different to us socially, economically, culturally and spiritually.

In this time of great change, the Church and the world invite Teams of Our Lady to bring their experience to the table, to share with the world the riches of Christian marriage, which Teams do not own, but merely serve. It also means becoming involved and organised in order to accompany couples on the path of progress, because the couple is in a process that grows “*thanks to the gradual integration of God’s gifts.*”

Thanks to their entry into the Movement, team members have received much from Christ and the Church. They can therefore contribute generously from what they have received, especially by accompanying the significant and fragile moments of couples’ lives: getting engaged and preparing for marriage, the early years of life as a couple, moments of difficulty and crisis, break-ups and desertion of the family, follow-up on new unions after a break-up.

All these dimensions of our Movement’s mission contribute to forming missionary couples and families, who are, in order to have a world of peace and love, essential players.

As a zone couple and members of the ERI, we strongly wish, in communion with all the ERI members, that the ideas contained in the “Vocation and Mission” document permeate the programme of action of the Super-Regions and Attached Regions, but above all that it permeates the missionary commitment of each team member over the next six years.

We have understood our calling to the ERI primarily as an invitation to love our Movement even more and to pray constantly for the team members in our charge.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Teams, you who know the weakness and limits of those whom your Son calls, support our commitment to joyfully serve our Movement and its members.

***Liaison Couple for the Eurafrika Zone within the ERI***