



Equipes Notre-Dame

An International Colloquium

Rémi & Françoise Gausse

The International Colloquium on “Father Caffarel, a Prophet for our Times, An Apostle of Marriage and a Master of Prayer” was held in the Collège des Bernardins, in Paris, this past December 8th and 9th. Why was this second Colloquium held merely a few years after the previous one, organised by the Friends of Father Caffarel in 2010? The reason is simple. Father Paleri, the Postulator in Rome for Father Caffarel’s Cause since the file was brought to the Vatican (in the interim Father Marcovits has become the editor), believed that it would be helpful to advance the Cause by highlighting the universality of Father Caffarel’s thinking. The first Colloquium had concentrated on the man and his place in the twentieth century as well as conjugal spirituality and its international influence.

To & Zé Moura Soares, the Responsible Couple in the International Leading Team of the Teams of Our Lady, and the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel, aware of what was at stake, accepted the challenge to explore the international side. The result, according to all the participants, measured up to what was a stake. All the correspondents of the Association abroad were present as were the Responsible couples of the Super-Regions and Attached Regions. The speakers hailed from different countries: France, Portugal, Colombia, Spain, Africa, Italy, the UK, Ireland, Canada, the US... Furthermore, video clips were shown at each session to show how each country had adapted the Movement’s founding charism, and multilingual round table sessions explored and commented on them. Direct or pre-recorded broadcasting of all the sessions enabled Team members throughout the world to follow the event and also contributed to the international impact of this Colloquium.

It was very moving to see and feel the great fraternity, the great joy and the great enthusiasm that all these Team members gathered together had for Father Caffarel. So many graces were received through the different testimonies! So much emotion was felt when faced with the unshakeable faith of a Brazilian couple, who are fighting a very handicapping illness!

The choice of December 8th and 9th was not a coincidence, for on December 8th, 1947, the Teams' Charter was promulgated. So, it was the 70th anniversary of this foundation document of Teams. The anniversary was celebrated in a dignified way with a mass presided over by Monsignor de Moulins-Beaufort, auxiliary bishop of Paris, in the Church of St Augustine, Paris, Father Caffarel's old parish and concelebrated with all the international Spiritual Counsellors, who attended the Colloquium. The Super-Region of France-Luxembourg-Switzerland organised a wonderful festive moment after the mass for everyone.

The following day, a pilgrimage to Troussures and the tomb of our founder was organised for the Correspondents, Responsible Couples and Speakers, for all those who wished. Father Marcovits, editor of the Cause for Canonisation of Father Henri Caffarel, had organised a little celebration with readings of texts written by the one who was the apostle of marriage and master of prayer, followed by a blessing. Despite the cold and rain, the participants' reverence and emotion was intense. After a quick visit of the Troussures House of Prayer where Father Caffarel spent the last days of his life, the Team members went to Massabielle, the House of Couples, for a festive lunch organised by Antoine & Thérèse Leclerc, Responsible Couple for France-Luxembourg-Switzerland. This was followed by a mass presided over by Father Jacinto Farias, Spiritual Counsellor to the International Leading Team. And then it was time for all these brothers and sisters in Christ to say goodbye.

Now all that remains for us to do is to recite the very beautiful prayer for the Canonisation of Father Caffarel every day in our houses, in our Teams, in our countries.

PS: For those who wish to watch and follow the Colloquium, click on www.henri-caffarel.org.