

PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM  
PRO LAICIS

Vatican 26 August 2002

Dear Madam, dear Sir,

I have pleasure in enclosing in appendix the Decree of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, dated the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2002, confirming the recognition of the *Teams of Our Lady* as a private international association of the faithful in pontifical law and definitively approving the Statutes of the Association.

We are sure that this new approval of the *Teams of Our Lady* represents, for all those who belong to them, a new impulse in their journey towards holiness, as well as a great encouragement to develop the Movement's action in depth and in the service of Christian couples.

With my cordial salutations.

Stanislaw Rylko  
Secretary

(Appendix)

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**DECREE**

The *Teams of Our Lady* were started in France during 1938, on the initiative of some couples who, accompanied by a priest, Father Henri Caffarel, used to meet every month to rediscover together the meaning of marriage and the riches of this sacrament. The first team meeting took place in Paris on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 1939. Soon these couples found in it so much benefit for their married life that they attracted several others to share their experience. Thus it was that on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 1947, the Charter of the *Teams of Our Lady* - which is considered the founding document of the Movement - was finalised.

The *Teams of Our Lady* are a movement of married spirituality established to meet the needs of Christian couples who wish to live their married life to the full on the basis of their sacrament of marriage. According to their Statutes, the *Teams of Our Lady*, being a “movement of spiritual formation and renewal”, help their members to progress in the love of God and in the love of their neighbour. They look to fraternal mutual help as a way to help their members to live out, individually and as a couple, the concrete conditions of their married, family, working and social life in accordance with the will of God. They encourage them to become aware of their evangelising mission in the Church and in the world and to carry it out by the witness of their married love and by other forms of actions of their choice” (*Statutes*, art. 3).

During the Jubilee of the year 2000, Pope John Paul II, stressing the meaning and value of married communion, said that, “in the sacrament of marriage, the spouses endeavour to express to one another the indissoluble love with which Christ loves the Church and to bear witness to it in the world. This is a ‘great mystery’, as the apostle Paul calls it (Ef 5: 32) (John Paul II, *Homily of the Jubilee of Families*, 15<sup>th</sup> October 2000, 4).

The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, as well as the post-councilar Magisterium, paid very particular attention to associative forms of participation in the life of the Church, by expressing its deepest esteem and consideration of these forms of participation (see the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 18, 19, 21; John Paul II, Post-Synod Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles laici*, 29).

In a similar vein, Pope John Paul II wrote, at the beginning of the third millennium, that ‘the duty to promote various types of associations is of great importance for communion, whether they be in traditional forms or in the form of more recent Church movements. They continue to give vitality to the Church which is a gift from God and which is a true “spring-time of the Spirit” (Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio ineunte*, 46).

Therefore:

- Bearing in mind that the Pontifical Council for the Laity has, by a decree dated 19<sup>th</sup> April 1992, recognised the *Teams of Our Lady* as an international private association of the faithful, with juridical status in pontifical law, and that it approved these Statutes *ad experimentum*;
- responding to the request presented to us on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2002 by Gérard and Marie Christine de Roberty, Leading Couple of the International Leading Team of the *Teams of Our Lady*, who requested a definitive approval of the Statutes;
- accepting, at the same time, the modifications made to the text of the Statutes;
- taking into consideration the apostolic influence of the Movement and the in-depth formation of the members of the *Teams of Our Lady* - an association that has served the family and society for all these years by helping couples to live out their married life in a Christian way and to discover God's plan for them in their daily life;
- and in view of articles 131-134 of the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus* on the Roman Curia, as well as canon 312, §1, 1<sup>o</sup> of the Code of Canon Law,

the Pontifical Council for the Laity, by this decree,

1. confirms the recognition of the Movement of the *Teams of Our Lady* as an international private association of the faithful, with juridical status, in conformity with canons 298-311 and 321-329 of the Code of Canon Law,
2. and approves definitively the Statutes of the *Teams of Our Lady*, the original of which are deposited in the archives of the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

Given at the Vatican on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 2002, on the liturgical *Memoria* of Saint Joakim and Saint Anne, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Stanislaw Rylko  
Secretary

James Francis Cardinal Stafford  
President