THE BULLETIN



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OF FATHER CAFFAREL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

-	Editorial: "Hallowed be thy name!"	
	Maria-Carla and Carlo Volpinip. 4	
-	The Postulator's Report:	
	Father Paul Dominique Marcovits, o.pp. 6	
-	Letter from an Italian Team	
	Annina and Gianpaolo Martinelli p. 8	
-	Symposium on Father Caffarel	
	Mgr François Fleischmann p. 10	
-	Archives: Article by Father Caffarel ("Anneau d'Or," 1945)	
	The Vocation of Love	
-	- Testimony by the President of the Christian Family Movement	
	of Argentina,	
	sent by Maria and Agustin Fragueiro p. 18	
-	Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel,	
	Members of Honor p. 21	
-	Membership Renewal Form	
	To Renew Your Membership for 2011 p. 23	

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EDITORIAL

Hallowed be thy name!

Maria-Carla and Carlo Volpini



Every time we recite the Our Father, in the words that Jesus himself taught us, in fact we are united not only with every one on earth, sons of God, but also with Jesus Christ, the eldest and beloved Son of God.

In his book, Présence à Dieu, 100 lettres sur la prière¹, Father Caffarel maintains that "the great and uninterrupted adoration that 'from East to West' rises from all the sons of God to their Father is nothing other than this adoration of the first-born Son, that he transfuses to the heart of each of his brothers."

A father is someone who is with me, who supports me, who helps me grow, who is close to me.... but this God the Father is also far away in the heavens: close yet faraway, in me and outside of me, in the present time and beyond all time, incidental and Eternal, the Abba and the Absolute, the God who is close to me, elusive, unknowable.

The Father: he is someone to whom I can speak and I can be sure of his attention and his love for me. "Who art in Heaven" reminds me that he does not belong only to me, to my reality, to my race, to my culture, to my history; that he is not merely limited to my relationship as a son and a creature; that he preserves his divinity which is completely different to my humanity; that he transcends every earthly and limited dimension; that he is in Heaven and not on earth.

When we say "Hallowed be thy name", we need to remember that the Name is the very reality that it expresses: when Adam named the objects and animals, he recognized their identity and asserted his power over them.

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¹ H. Caffarel, *Présence à Dieu. Cent lettres sur la prière*", Paris, Parole et Silence, 2000, p. 125.

The name of God is God himself and for this reason, for the entire history of Israel, God was never named except by means of synonyms (Adonai, Sabaoth...). And nowadays, on the contrary, it is up to us men to sanctify God's name, almost as if God is not sufficient in Himself to be the Holy One!

The word <u>Holy</u> on the one hand, in biblical language, signifies that which is perfect, blessed and just, and on the other hand, in Hebrew, it contains the etymological meaning of 'separated'. Similarly with the Latin verb "sancire" (from which derives the word sanctus) meaning "cut off from the world" and "banish".

What does all this mean? Once again at the very moment when we are invited to pronounce God's name and sanctify it, meaning praise and bless it, God reminds us that He is far away, that he is separate from us, that he is the Other One that we forever seek but never completely seize.

God who in his Being is the Holy One, who is distant, separate, is the very same God who is close to us because he is by our side. He is the Holy One in the sense that he is fully just and completely good.

Therefore, the word <u>Holy</u> both separates and unites; it places God in heaven, far from man and at the same time, this word implicates him in the history and life of man, because He is the compassionate one, the Father of humanity.

Father Caffarel wants to remind us that every time we pray with these words, we are not alone in front of God the Father, but Jesus himself is with us. For this reason, the prayer should always be said with an attitude of profound inwardness that leads us truly to Our Lord's heart.

The Postulator's Report

Symposium on Father Caffarel

Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, o.p.



The symposium on Father Caffarel held in the College des Bernadins, Paris, December 3-4, 2010, was the opportunity for everyone to discover the real Father Caffarel. For, of course, we all have our own idea of Father Caffarel! We have memories of meetings at Troussures, gatherings in Rome or his visits to Brazil. We see everything from our own point of view. At this symposium, we saw that Father Caffarel was made up of a multitude of facets! And yet, the profound unity of this priest came from God. As the symposium unfolded, so to did Father Caffarel's whole personality, complete with its shadows and highlights. Above all, his influence on the fundamental points of Christian life was emphasized. His vision of marriage, widowhood and private prayer are incontrovertible. Books are beginning to be written about these subjects that help us get closer to Father Caffarel's thinking.

Nonetheless, other questions need to be looked at in depth, for example, the relationship between the sacraments of marriage and orders. Both sacraments are presented in the Catechism of the Church as 'the two sacraments in the service of communion' in the Church. Father Caffarel wrote on this subject and he always insisted on the fact that priests were to be present in the Teams of Our Lady as spiritual counsellors.

Another area that needs work is the relationship between Father Caffarel and the Church, in terms of his obedience and his intelligent liberty. It would also be useful to look at the charismatic movement and ecumenism and at the symposium there was one paper on this topic that opened avenues of

exploration. The place of the laity too could be examined in Father Caffarel's thinking, or his attitude to Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, or his attitude to art. When he was young, for example, he painted and ordered stained glass windows that express his faith for the chapel at Troussures. These are some ideas that could be explored and researched.

Of course, there are many other areas of research to be uncovered. And in order to support a cause for beatification, nothing can replace prayer! But nothing can replace research either. If we believe that Father Caffarel can do more and more good to the Church and to the world, it is our duty to emphasise and highlight the depth of his life and his thinking.

(You may write Father Marcovits by postal mail, at the Association's address, or by e-mail at: postulateur@henri-caffarel.org)

Letter from an Italian Team

Commentary on the brochure entitled:

"Father Caffarel, prophet of the sacrament of marriage"

Our names are Annina and Giampaolo Martinelli, and we are the responsible couple for the **N.-E. Region of the Italian Super-Region**.

During our last Regional Gathering, November 14-15, 2010 at Varese in Northern Italy, we organized a short meeting between couples who had spent the year working on the study topic: "*Father Caffarel, prophet of the sacrament of marriage*".

Briefly, we would like to share the result of this collaborative reflection. For us, this study topic on Father Caffarel's texts constitutes a <u>true collection of "pearls" about spirituality</u>, not only for Team members but also for all couples and Christians.

Upon reading the texts, we got the impression that while Father Caffarel was writing for couples, in fact he was aiming it at the whole Church. It seems to us almost as if Father Caffarel wanted to invite the whole Church to completely trust Christ, especially and most particularly through the "dialogue" that he called "oraison" or personal prayer. This kind of prayer is the primary source of all "actions" that a Christian may accomplish.

He sends this message primarily to Christian couples and in particular to Team members so that their testimonial of incarnate love will strengthen this message and true personal prayer, which is in fact a dialogue of love.

Within the group of Teams who worked on this topic, there were couples who were involved in the Movement and who adhered to Father Caffarel's message, but there were also couples from new Teams and other couples who were a bit sceptical and disillusioned. What surprised us was the fact that across the board, all these couples accepted and welcomed with real interest the

spirituality Father Caffarel suggested and they seemed to discover the true basis of the Teams of Our Lady movement, which perhaps they had not yet understood completely or properly.

The other remarkable aspect that was highlighted by the collection of texts was that "holiness" is a "way of life" and is accessible to all Christians. It is not just a "goal or objective" reserved for those who experience their faith deeply. It is true that the Church often repeats this idea, but it emerges in a very precise and particular way in Father Caffarel's words. Finally, we emphasized that Father Caffarel realised that holiness is an accessible goal for both husband and wife and that it is to be experienced and lived out by both. This is one of the fundamental reasons why, today more than ever, Father Caffarel is to be recognised as a *prophet of our time*.

We would like all Teams across the world to meditate and work on this wonderful topic!

SYMPOSIUM On Father Caffarel

Mgr Fleischmann



A FRUITFUL SYMPOSIUM

The Collège des Bernadins, Paris, was the venue for the Symposium on Father Caffarel, December 3-4, 2010. Numerous participants attended and discovered this Cistercian building that has been renovated and is now dedicated to Christian reflection. The organization team welcomed everyone and simplified everything.

We recognize easily aspects of Father Caffarel's personality and work where ever we find them. Here I can only list a few.

Friday

After the fascinating opening of the symposium by Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, a film reminded us of the significant events in Father Cafferel's life. One of his relations presented a paper on the Caffarel family in late 19th century Lyon. After assessing his written works, Claire Daudin highlighted Father Caffarel's literary culture and showed that he sought inspiration in Péguy, Claudel and many other poets. Father Gerard Pelletier described for us what Father Cafferel's life and ministry must have been like during the first ten year of ministry.

Several penetrating views on his work followed, including the international influence of the movement recalled by the Volpini and the development of the movement particularly in Brazil by the Nadas. Jean Allemand, a living reference because he worked with Father Cafferel, presented the Teams of Our Lady Charter. Odile Macchi reminded us about Father Cafferel's intuition to accompany widows and the historian, Olivier

Landron, sketched a picture of Father Caffarel and his involvement in the Renewal of the Church.

Saturday

Agnès Walch, in charge of the symposium, uncovered the origins of conjugal spirituality that preceded and nourished Henri Cafferel. The theologian, Father Bordeyne, placed Father Caffarel's thinking about marriage within the context of the Second Vatican Council. The Gomez-Ferrer from Spain talked about how their team had evolved over the years. Father Mattheeuws analysed the originality of Father Cafferel's conjugal spirituality.

Xavier Lacroix highlighted the didactic and theological characteristics of Father Caffarel, while Father Arnaud Gautier concentrated on the main traits of private prayer in Father Cafferel's ministry. The Roberty talked about a week of prayer with Father Caffarel at Troussures and Monsignor Guy Thomazeau gave a moving personal conclusion.

I am happy to point out that three young priests, authors of various university works on Father Caffarel, also attended.

We all await with eager anticipation the publication of the fascinating and dense Acts of the Symposium.

Archives

Father Henri Caffarel:

The Vocation of Love



Of the many texts about the couple written by Father Caffarel, we have chosen this article that particularly impressed us, and that first appeared in 1945 in the first copy of l'Anneau d'Or, (Wedding Ring), $n^{\circ}1$.

(And as usual, due to the length of the text, we have taken the liberty of leaving out certain passages marked by .../...)

The word 'love' refers to various and sometimes opposing feelings.

I would like to talk to you only about conjugal Christian love, the kind that one often encounters, - but not always, alas! - in households and in couples founded on the sacrament of marriage. It is a generous and reciprocal gift: much more than a shared fervour, it represents the commitment of two people who give themselves to each other totally, exclusively, definitively. It is a momentum that, springing from the depths of the soul, passes through the being, makes it quiver completely and connects with another heart through its envelope of flesh; but this vibrant fervour is not always consistent; it can come to know hours of decline without love necessarily being affected. This is because a fervour of will exists that is made up essentially of love: a very pure melody that does not necessarily need to be accompanied by sensitive fervour, although the latter often sustains it and is a useful means of expression.

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What would have become of human love, if Christ had not brought salvation to it? Just like those invalids, paralytics and possessed people at the

gates of towns in Palestine, it was waiting for a saviour. The Saviour passed, he put love back on its feet, he healed it through the institution of the sacrament of marriage, and he reconciled it with God. Love will now have the strength to resist all enemies be they outside or in.

Woe betide presumptuous loves that do not want the Saviour. Blessed are those who humbly place their trust in him: "Love does not triumph, it knees before grace, begging to be clad, feed and fortified by her for the glory of God," wrote Mireille Dupouey, recalling the morning of her wedding.

Once she has healed love, Grace, that tireless worker, recreates it unceasingly, renews its youth daily and, with supreme art, uses the joys and sorrows, efforts and mistakes themselves to make it more joyful and stronger. The conjugal community is solid because Grace is a powerful worker of unions. She creates, repairs and consolidates this union day after day. Jacques Rivière, having gone through a painful crisis, found these penetrating words to pay homage to Grace. "Yes, the Sacrament is upon us. We received it without really knowing it, but with the necessary soul. This is why it 'took' in us. Now we are rewarded with that vague little confidence that we have in it. It gives us back our love delivered, multiplied and founded on the Eternal."

The source of this grace is the sacrament of marriage. And this sacrament, like all the others, is a fruit of the Cross. "I spilt that particular drop of blood for you." Pascal puts these words in Christ's mouth and they can also refer to human love. Why is it that so few married Christians take the time to thank the Lord for this marvellous gift?

One could object and say that before Christ's coming great examples of conjugal love were given to humanity in profane literature and in the Bible. That is not a problem for the Christian, who knows that the gushing source of Calvary flowed on both sides of the mountain in the Old and New Testament. It was already Christ's grace that sparkled in Toby's household as well as in those of the patriarchs. Even today, it is that grace that tends and minds, without their knowledge, couples of good will and their love.

Given such conviction, how is it that Christian couples are not unflinching optimists? Difficulties and temptations can only make them tremble with fear for their love and its future. They know that to doubt that love is to doubt grace. Hope cannot be lacking from those who learnt that Christ gave his life through love of love.

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The source of Christian love is not in man's heart. It is in God. For couples who want to love, who want to learn to love even more, there is only one piece of advice: seek God, love God, be united with God, give him all the space.

Those who move away from God, if they do not lose the power to love, give up nonetheless the best of his love. On the other hand, love grows as the love of and for God grows. The conjugal union is worth, in terms of human and eternal quality, as much as the union between spouses with God. The more they open up to the God of love, the richer the exchange of love between them. The perspective in front of them is infinite. Their love will never cease to grow, since they are able to open up more fully to the gift of God. If they want their love to be a lively flame, forever taller, let them love God more and more every day.

A greater love of God does not necessarily lead to a greater conjugal love, but it leads to a more abundant grace that gives the Christian greater ease and strength to do their duties, of which conjugal love is one of the foremost.

It is by the prayer and the sacraments that the couple draws to the sources of the divine grace. The Penance maintains the transparency of the heart of the couple, and this germ of fire, which the Eucharist puts down in each one, illuminates and warms the married life. Looked at in this light, both confession before marriage and communion during the wedding mass, make even greater sense.

The decline of so many loves can be explained by the forgetting of this fundamental principle of straying from God and sinning against him. It amounts to sinning against love by cutting oneself off from the source of love. Refusing to accept God is the equivalent of refusing to give one's spouse their daily bread: love. The person who pretends to value love when he despises love is a liar.

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God is at the beginning or origin of love, but he is also at its end. Love comes from God. It goes to God. God is the Alpha and Omega of love.

It is a mistake to make love an absolute, the ultimate goal, and a god. Undoubtedly man would not make this mistake if love did not speak so well about another love, that Love which the human heart hankers after.

"If their voice was not so touching, if they did not speak so well of other things, "The creatures would have no questions for us and we would be in peace with the rose." (Claudel)

If natural simple love did not have a foretaste of that other Love, humanity would not put so much hope in it and would not blame it so bitterly for deceiving them.

We would be at peace with love if the fire of God's love did not shine in it. The mission of love is to invite us to seek God's love by passing through it, but not stopping with it. This is because he makes an amazing promise to humanity on behalf of another, and only this Other one can achieve it. Love is merely a messenger while God is its master.

"I am the promise that can only be kept and my grace consists in that very thing." Love can assume this confidence that Lala expresses in Claudel's 'La Ville' (The Town).

And yet for all that, human love is not a 'big swindle'. It is not love that deceives; it is man who misunderstands. If one has to speak of deception, love is not guilty, but rather those who make it out to be an all-powerful god, capable of filling the human heart. That is the great lie. Duped, man's heart demands everything from love and love deceives him. How could it be otherwise? The creature cannot fill a heart big enough to receive the Creator. This deception often makes one lose one's faith in love and this disbelief is as serious as idolatry of which it is the rotten fruit. Having expected everything from love, the human heart no longer expects what should happen: that love is a way to become close to God. Indeed, that is what man should have asked for in the first place. Love is a means and not an end, but the means is powerful!

Love is, indeed for the human heart, a great opportunity. It tears him away from himself like from the unfair grip of creatures. It makes him vacant, free, offered up. The visitation of love is an hour of grace. "This strength that calls us out of ourselves, why not trust and follow it?" Follow beyond love and on to the author of love.

In happy love, spouses do not take long to find the one who inhabits the centre of their union. One spouse wrote, "I understand more and more that true marriage is the marriage of the soul with its God." In unhappy love, suffering hollows out the place in the heart where God would have come and lived, if the unhappy heart had not first given in to the temptation of despair or even worse to that of denying the thirst for love and the infinite in the deepest recesses of his being. In such suffering couples, it is also true therefore to say that love leads to God.

Throughout the couples' life, a love that is alive never ceases to be a way that leads to God, because he forms the great school of generosity and detachment.

Love is a means, and more. A means that is put to one side once the goal is achieved, just like the now useless boat is left of the shore. Spouses should lead this love that carried them to him to God. Love contributes to their salvation: daily, they ought to work on love's salvation. But gradually a change occurs. Whereas in the beginning they took love's way to get to God, a day comes when it will seem more accurate to say that they pass through God to get to love. Or rather, their love is in God and there is no leaving one to go to the other.

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.../...

Christ does a lot for love, but he also expects the spouses to remain active. Love, marvellously saved and called to the most holy of destinies, remains vulnerable and threatened. Christ did not give love the graces of immunity, but rather the graces of work and combat that ensure it has the strength to overcome temptation (habit, for example, being one of the most formidable) and to triumph over enemies from without and within. Love that refuses work and combat is a love vanquished from the start. There is no peace for love only an armed peace. "Love is never pure rest." (Mauriac)

Love's most dangerous enemy is self-love. One sometimes hears married men or women saying, "I expected much from love and I was completely disappointed." The truth, often, is that they disappointed love: love expected much from them. Love is proud; it does not give its joy or grace to selfish hearts. It insults love's dignity to demand its riches while not even

condescending to spend freely for it. Claimants are dismissed, while those who give everything receive everything.

.../...

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Great love requires hard work: it does not happen in a day and it is not an easy undertaking. Love will come to know suffering too; some sorrows will occur through its fault, others will be inherent challenges in all human life. Love needs to accept them. They will purify him and help him fight and conquer those germs of sin and death that he contains. The cross protects love, just as the blood of the Pascal lamb on their doors protected the Hebrews' houses in Egypt: the exterminating angel did not enter.

.../...

Whereas some, who do not truly love, are appalled before the outstretched arms of the cross, others see in it a great opportunity for their love to be strengthened and to grow. It is easy to love when you get something out of it; it is exalting to love when you need to sacrifice yourself so that the other person can be joyful. This greatness of love was unknown before sin. On a road without any obstacles, love had no need to exceed itself. Sin, by causing suffering, gave love this opportunity; even better, it gave love a weapon to defeat it. Following Christ' example, in order to expiate sin that is the refusal to love, human love is going to use suffering, the daughter of sin and will conquer the glory of sacrifice.

The Christian couple loves the cross.

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What is the vocation of Christian love?

Just like all creatures, a Christian is invited to sing about the glory God for which he was created, "Benedicite omnia opera Domini Domino". This is the very first aspect of their vocation. But let there be no misunderstanding about this obligation. It does not mean only putting aside time for prayer in the Christian home. God is not looking for his 'share'; he wants it 'all'. All life of love must be praise.

It is possible to believe that out of all the different types of praises on earth, the Lord is especially fond of the one that Christian love offers him.

And the analogy would be with an artist, who prefers his works that express the best of himself, where he recognises himself best. For those spouses who wish to praise God, let them therefore make their love a beautiful and radiant work!

.../... * * *

Besides being a type of praise to God, love ought also to be a message to God.

The work bears witness to the artist's talent: a particular choir, for example, brings us close to JS Bach's inner life. Similarly, creatures speak to us of the Creator, revealing his thoughts and perfection. The starry sky tells us of his science, the ocean demonstrates his power, the clear face of a child allows us to catch a glimpse of his purity, but love lets us into an even deeper secret, infinitely more enriching for the human heart: we learn that love is at the Heart of God.

Great human love proves that love exists on earth—and it is already an especially singular and important piece of news for so many of our contemporaries who have lost faith in love —but above all, it presents us with an authentic picture of the divine home, of that love of the Father and the Son in the unity of the Holy Spirit: it proclaims that 'God is love'. Human love is the reference that helps us understand divine love. Through its power to make two beings one, and yet all the while retaining the personality of each one, love allows us to understand the mysterious union of Christ with humanity and the spiritual marriage of the soul with its God.

This therefore is the message of God that conjugal love is supposed to bring to men. And its importance allows us to measure the esteem and trust that God has in it.

* *

A speech cannot make a proper eulogy about love, but your life can, you Christian spouses who are committed to the wonderful adventure. People are looking at you; people are listening to you. Do not shirk your responsibility.

You have a testimony to bear. Christ's instructions, 'You will be my witness', also refer to your love.

Testimony about Father Caffarel

Maria and Agustín Fragueiro, the co-responsible couple for the Super Region of Hispano-America, sent us this account that was given to them by the **President of the Christian Family Movement of Argentina**, Pablo Adrian Cavallero.

The book, "You love those you know. The CFM in Buenos Aires: Notes on the General History of the Christian Family Movement" [1], points out, when talking about the origins of the movement, that the Holy Spirit inspired similar ideas in various parts of the world.

The idea emerged almost simultaneously in Europe, mainly in France where the Teams of Our Lady movement began upon the initiative of Father Henri Caffarel in 1939 and in Spain where Pius XII groups were formed with an emphasis on conjugal spirituality.

In the United States at the end of 1947 the Christian Family Movement emerged under the stimulus of Pat and Patty Crowley from Chicago. It was oriented towards the apostolate and was structured as a national movement in June 1949 during a meeting at Chiderly, near Chicago.

In Cordoba too, the Jesuit Father Juan Berro García began to gather together couples because, when he had been the superior of the seminary in Buenos Aires, he had regularly met with and counseled fiancés and couples. Similarly, a Pauline priest from Alberione, from the order of Cardinal Ferrari, Francisco 'Paco' Rotger, who lived at 700, Maipú Street in Buenos Aires and was secretary to the Nunciature since 1933, formed two groups of couples in line with the rules of the Teams of Our Lady. However, in the beginning, these were *ad intra* spiritual groups and not evangelical groups, despite the fact that he wished to change the self-centred character with its accent on the couple and to turn them towards *the exterior*. This is why he later founded the Institute of Assistance, Promotion and Inquiry into the Family (INAFIP). Throughout the world, there was a general consensus about the need to rebuild the family from its foundations, after the vacuum of the two World Wars and the military

conflicts in various parts of the world. Pope Pius XII frequently made reference to the family too during his pontificate. [2]

Father Pedro Richards, well informed about Father Caffarel and his writings, also founded the MFC (called the "Grupos de Nuestra Señora" back then) in many parts of Argentina and used the help of Uruguayan instructors from the MFC in Montevideo.

In March 1950, Federico Soneiras and his wife were traveling through Buenos Aires on their way to Europe. There they met Father Pedro. Federico Soneira was the Uruguayan delegate of the International Catholic Organisation for Cinema and his mission was to improve the commercialization of films of catholic character. Father Pedro Richards asked him when in Europe to find out about an organisation that was concerned with the family. Madame Garcia Arocena suggested that the Soneiras contact Father Caffarel. They did this and not only attended a couples' meeting, but also went to the Teams of Our Lady headquarters to pick up a copy of the Golden Ring, *l'Anneau d'Or*. [3]

Responding to Pope Pius XII's call, Father Pedro met up with fiancés, but he also started a movement that led to the creation of a "Widows' Secretariat". In 1958, under the stimulus of Elvira Zorraquín de Fredenhagen and Father Pedro, Father Pedro de Rivera preached a retreat. Then May 1959 saw the creation of a group of widows, under the impetus of Father Richards and coordinated by Sara Solari de Puente. Father Richards was inspired by Pius XII's text on widowhood and their role in the community that he pronounced on September 16th, 1957 in Rome at the Congress organised by the International Union of Family Organisations. Father Caffarel had begun similar work in France and as early as 1941, young widows began to meet up to pray, be helped and find meaning and value in their state. To help them progress, these groups of widows used Father Caffarel's book entitled: "Love is Stronger than Death".

¹Pablo Cavallero. Buenos Aires, Agape, 2008

² *Ibidem* pp. 7-8.

³ *Ibidem* p. 37.

⁴ *Ibidem* p. 57.

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¹ E.R.I: International Leading Team of the Teams of Our Lady

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Ema Prof	ail:@fessional/Religious affiliation
	I renew my (we renew our) membership in the Association "Les Amis du Père CAFFAREL" for the year 2011,
	And I(we) remit the annual dues of: o Single member: 10 € o Member couple: 15 € o Member / Benefactor: 25 € or more

Check or money order payable to "Les Amis du Père Caffarel"

On the back of this form, please list the names of friends to whom you would like us to send a membership application.

Please send information and a membership application to the following friends:

Last name:	
First name(s) :	
Address:	
Zip code :City/State :	
Country:	
Telephone:	
Email:	@
Last name :	
First name(s) :	
Address:	
Zip code :City/State :	
Country:	
Telephone:	
Email:	
Lillan	
Last name:	
First name(s):	
Address:	
Zip code :City/State :	
Country:	
Telephone : Email :	@
Eman	
Last name :	
First name(s):	
Address:	
Zip code :City/State :	
Country:	
Telephone:	
Email:	