

THE BULLETIN



OF THE FRIENDS OF FATHER CAFFAREL

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ASSOCIATION DES AMIS DU PÈRE CAFFAREL
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EDITORIAL

Edgardo & Clarita Bernal Fandiño

*(Responsible Couple of the International
Leading Team, Teams of Our Lady)*



2021

Dear Family of the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel,

In this first issue of this year's Bulletin, we extend our fraternal and loving greetings to you and our best wishes for the coming year. We hope that the celebration of Christmas, which we have just experienced in a context of special reverence (far from the usual noise that prevents us from focusing our attention on the essence of this feast day) has prepared our hearts to approach this year of 2021 by joyfully welcoming this redeeming mystery of Jesus' Incarnation, and by planning to live as heralds of hope and joy.

In the Teams of Our Lady Movement, we emphasize a specific orientation every year and this year 2020-2021, it is "Marriage, a Sacrament of Mission." In the following few lines, we would like to reflect on the mission aspect and on the interest and attention that Father Caffarel paid to it. The fact that Cardinal Lustiger referred to Father Caffarel as a prophet at his funeral highlighted the timeless character of his message, which allows his thinking to retain its complete validity when it is transposed to the current context in which couples, the Church and the world live.

Father Caffarel did not want to limit the missionary character of Christian couples to an apostolate or to a concrete action; but, without restricting everyone's freedom, he was decisive in urging couples to discover their own particular field of mission, always starting from the need not to be spectators of reality, but to be its protagonists by breathing life into it and by highlighting everyone's environment. *"If Teams of Our Lady are not the breeding ground of men and women ready to courageously assume all their responsibilities in*

the Church and in society, they lose their raison d'être." (Henri Caffarel, *La mission de l'Amour*, p. 4-5)

It is undeniable that today, more than ever, this exhortation takes on special meaning, at a time when it is easy to echo the many voices that sow confusion and predict a bleak future.

For Father Caffarel, the sacramental character of marriage is not only a sign which represents the union of Christ and the Church, but it illuminates it to the extent that one participates in it by allowing Christ to fulfil his mission as prophet, priest and king.

It is not a question of distancing ourselves from reality and downplaying the tragedy we have been through lately, by creating escape routes to calm our own anxiety. No! On the contrary, by being aware of the physical, social, professional and spiritual impact that the pandemic has made on our lives, we have the capacity for resilience that the Spirit inspires in us, to bear witness to hope by assuming the mission of being the instruments of the Creator's healing action and ferments of renewal, in order to generate a new spring after the hard winter and storm we have experienced.

As our founder put it, *"Finally, in a renewal of marriage, I see a precious hope for regions of the world where ecclesiastical structures are paralysed or suppressed, where worship itself is not always possible. There, the Church of Christ takes refuge, concentrates if I may say so, in deeply Christian homes. And in these catacomb-families, it lives an undoubtedly elementary life, but one that is capable of the most beautiful fruits of holiness, and it is perpetuated there. And Christ is preparing there a new springtime for his Church."* (AO, n° 107, p. 382)

May our intention for this coming year enable us to bring alive this thinking of our founder's and under the protection of our Mother Mary, we ask for his intercession that it might be so.

Clarita & Edgardo Bernal

Serving

*Jean Allemand,
Father Caffarel's Biographer*

Our friend, Jean Allemand, passed away on November 19, 2020

Both a theologian and philosopher, Jean was one of Father Caffarel's closest collaborators. Father Caffarel hired Jean in 1968 as editor of the *La Lettre des Équipes Notre-Dame* (Teams of Our Lady Newsletter) and *Cahiers sur l'oraison* (Booklets on Private Prayer). He became a permanent employee of Teams of Our Lady from 1973 to 1994.

He was a member Teams of Our Lady since 1968, and with his wife Annick (†), they formed part of the International Leading Team from 1973 to 1985.

He wrote *Henri Caffarel. Un homme saisi par Dieu*, (Henri Caffarel, A Man seized by God) published by Équipes Notre-Dame, 1997 and another book entitled *Prier 15 jours avec Henri Caffarel*, (Praying with Henri Caffarel for 15 days) published by Nouvelle Cité, 2002.

We recommend him, his children and all the members of his family to your prayers.



*A word from
the Editor of the Cause*

Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, o.p.
*Editor of the Cause for Canonisation
of Father Caffarel*



A Tribute to Jean Allemand

In 1968, when he started out as Father Henri Caffarel's secretary, Jean Allemand was 39 years old and Father Caffarel 65 years old. Jean Allemand was to work with him until 1973, when Father Caffarel left the Teams of Our Lady Movement to devote himself to the Weeks of Prayer in Troussures. Jean Allemand then became a permanent employee of the Teams Movement as well as a member of the International Leading Team. But he continued to see Father Caffarel and to work for him until his death in 1996, which adds up to 28 years of close proximity.

If Jean Allemand was Father Caffarel's closest collaborator, he also was the right man. Father Caffarel had a strong personality. He was a perfectionist, demanding of himself and of others. Jean Allemand was a teacher of Literature, was very cultivated and possessed great analytical finesse. When Father Caffarel gave him a page to correct and asked him for three pages of corrections, we can admire Father Caffarel's humility, but also Jean Allemand's ability to understand the founder of Teams' thoughts, his knowledge of couples too to whom the document was addressed. Many famous writers would not have been so brilliant if they had not had someone who understood

them and who could help them and yet all the while respected their thinking. Jean understood Father Caffarel.

Jean Allemand worked with Father Caffarel on numerous projects: *Lettre mensuelle des Équipes Notre-Dame*, les *Cahiers sur l'oraison*, the preparation of a document for Pope Paul VI that would inform his speech to Teams of Our Lady on May 4, 1970, in Rome, the survey on sexuality carried out within the Teams Movement in 1969, the *Cours d'oraison par correspondance* and also the book entitled, *Les Équipes Notre-Dame. Essor et mission des couples chrétiens* (Teams of Our Lady. Development and Mission of Christian Couples).

Jean was not only an excellent secretary, he was a truly spiritual person himself. His talks and speeches on Teams and on Father Caffarel at the various national and international Gatherings demonstrated his own spiritual depth. If he spoke so well of Father Caffarel, it was because he himself was a man “seized by God,” an expression that he used as the title to his biography of Father Caffarel. Instinctively, when we met him, we paid special attention to him, he was Father Caffarel’s secretary and collaborator after all! But very quickly, it became very clear that he too was luminous and radiant. He was always smiling and affable with an attentive, luminous gaze that was often tinged with humour. Jean Allemand was much loved for what he was.

To get to know Jean Allemand, you just have to read the only biography that exists of Father Caffarel.¹ This is the authoritative book. But what is striking is the precision, accuracy, and sobriety of the story. As Editor of the Cause of Father Caffarel, I refer to his book three times a day, I compare with the testimonies. And I am still struck with the relevance of his words. We are all grateful to him and our admiration of him is great.

Now Jean is reunited with his wife, Annick, whom he loved so much and also with Father Caffarel. They are all together in heaven, where they can ceaselessly admire God’s infinite love for them! And there, they also continue to intercede for us.

Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, o.p.

¹ Jean Allemand, *Henri Caffarel Un homme saisi par Dieu*, Équipes Notre-Dame, 49 rue de la Glacière, Paris 13, 1997.

Upon Meeting Jean & Annick Allemand

Gérard & Marie-Christine de Roberty's Testimony

"Dear Jean and Annick,

I have just read your collection of the main documents which have marked the route of Teams of Our Lady for the past forty years from cover to cover. You have managed to find and choose the documents and highlight their living soul: congratulations to you for this painstaking work!

The merit of this collection is to very clearly identity the raison d'être of Teams of Our Lady: I mean the goal it proposes to couples and the means to achieve it. [...]

On this fortieth anniversary of the Teams' charter, is it not necessary that Teams of Our Lady, having rediscovered the charisma of their origins, now reaffirm unreservedly their adherence to the unanimous teachings of the five last Popes on the Christian conception of marriage? And that they bear witness to true marital love...

Rest assured, Jean and Annick, of my warm and faithful friendship.

Henri Caffarel."

This strong and enlightening forward opens the book *Les Équipes Notre-Dame – Essor et mission des couples chrétiens* that Jean and Annick wrote in 1988.

It was during the Chantilly Gathering in May 1987, a reference point in the history of the Teams Movement, that we got to know Jean and Annick better. Up until then, and especially during the Pilgrimage to Rome in 1982, we only saw them as discreet couple, who belonged to the Movement's International Leading Team. Then followed the preparation and unfolding of the Lourdes Gathering of 1988 where we ourselves were much more involved and became particularly close to Jean ... We got to know both of them before working with them and we remained in close contact with them after Jean's retirement.

Since we were so close to them, we were able to measure how their commitment and this part of their lives that was given over to Teams of Our Lady was rooted in a past fully devoted to the Church, and after their marriage, to the service of Father Caffarel and the Teams Movement.

Jean Allemand, who turned 91 this year in 2020, and Annick, who returned to the Lord in 2014, got married in 1966 and they had 3 children.

They joined Teams of Our Lady in 1968, and were members of the International Leading Team with Louis and Marie d'Amonville.

Jean graduated in theology (Rome) and in philosophy (Sorbonne), and worked with Father Henri Caffarel as the secretary and editor for the *Lettre mensuelle des Équipes Notre-Dame* and for *Cahiers sur l'Oraison*.

After Father Caffarel's departure, Jean stayed on as a permanent employee of the Teams of Our Lady Movement. He wrote several books with the help of Annick: *Les Équipes Notre-Dame – Essor et Mission des couples chrétiens* (END 1988), *Henri Caffarel Un homme saisi par Dieu* (END 1997) et de *Prier 15 jours avec Henri Caffarel* (Nouvelle Cité, 2002) and numerous articles in Teams of Our Lady publications.

Jean and Annick were great witnesses to Father Caffarel's work and Jean was always very happy to speak about the founder's work at Teams gatherings, in particular at the International Colloquia at the Collège des Bernardins, Paris, as well as at the most recent international Gatherings in Lourdes and Fatima.

Jean Allemand's return to the Lord, after that of his wife Annick's, marks an important turning point in the Teams of Our Lady Movement. Jean and Annick lived and were filled with Hope, enthusiasm and faith. For us, they were and will remain witnesses and examples of humble and missionary commitment within the Church.

We know, because we experienced it at their sides, that they were animated by a strong, demanding and faithful spiritual life, where they allowed the living Christ to assume his place in them and at the very heart of their private prayer. In this sense, and following the example of Troussures, they animated schools of prayer in Nantes and elsewhere.

Together, they were fully aware, through the sacrament of marriage, of having been called on a journey of close proximity to Christ.

Alongside their commitment to the Teams Movement, they were hands-on parents and accompanied their children along a path of life that is not always so easy for young people.

Their spiritual life underpinned their work together and this was embodied in their full commitment to the life of Teams of Our Lady. Jean and Annick together highlighted, as Father Caffarel noticed, the living soul and the *raison d'être* of our Movement and its mission in a world where all landmarks are being eroded. Their work enabled numerous past and present people in service to the Movement, as well as ourselves and many other Team members to move forward in their particular service with boldness and confidence.

Jean and Annick, working alongside Father Caffarel, were keen to make the latter known to a wider public. And they accomplished this in their work that was grounded in faith, benevolence, discretion and probably a selflessness that characterized them. In this sense, Jean always, always responded favourably to all requests that we, or anyone else, made of him.

Given their role with all Team members and their friends, Jean and Annick leave us a beautiful testimony of a marriage where they made room completely for the other's otherness and the charisma of each person.

"We judge a tree by its fruit." We recognise that Jean and Annick's fruits are abundant; we benefitted from them and we give thanks for them.

Thank you Jean and Annick for the fruit of your life. Yes, your life with the Lord will be even more fruitful by continuing to be the intercessors for the men and women of this world and for couples, especially those in difficulty, so that they may grow in faith and life with Christ.

Father Caffarel might have said, as he said to so many others, "Those who have left you, they too are alive and if they are alive, they know you and they love you and your families. They pray for you. They protect you, they help you."

*O You who are at home at the heart of my heart
Let me join you at the heart of my heart.*

Gérard & Marie-Christine de Roberty

News from the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel

Excerpt from the Report of the Treasurer of the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel – 2019 Fiscal Year

General Situation

A further reduction in subscriptions marked 2019.

Balance Sheet of Activities

The ordinary activities followed the consolidated trend of previous years. Sales corresponded mainly to the sale of the book "L'Amour Conjugal" prepared by the Marriage Workshop. Included under Miscellaneous Costs is the publication cost of the book "L'Amour Conjugal."

Balance 2019

<i>Income</i>	2018	2019 budget	2019 actual
Subscriptions	13 463,02	20 000	11 544
Gifts	50 000		10
Sales	1811	1500	532
Financial Products	587,09	400	
Miscellaneous			
<i>Total</i>	<i>65 861,11</i>	<i>21 900</i>	<i>12 086</i>
<i>Costs</i>			
Travel & Testimonials	420,66	500	
Postulation	12 224,59	13 000	1 459,38
Office Expenses & Documentation	3 149,48	3 500	383,47
Bank Charges	181,41	200	379,81
Secretarial Assistance	6 790,17	5 000	5 460,51
Bank Corrections			3 865,72
Miscellaneous	13 046,90	3 000	4 723,28
<i>Total</i>	<i>35 813,21</i>	<i>25 200</i>	<i>16 272,17</i>
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>30 047,90</i>	<i>- 3 300</i>	<i>- 4 186,17</i>

Origin of Memberships

As already mentioned, in 2019, Brazil paid no membership fees. During a videoconference meeting with the couple responsible for Brazil SR, we agreed that it was a good idea to postpone the bank transfer from Brazil for a while, given the sharp deterioration in the exchange rate in this period of crisis linked to the Coronavirus pandemic (the exchange rate has deteriorated by 40% since January 2020).

Income generated from Membership fees in 2019

<i>SR or RR</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>
French-Speaking Africa	15	395
Belgium	150	125
Brazil	15	15
Canada	565	20
Colombia		15
Spain	5 040	10
France-Lux-Switzerland	1 965	1 835
Hispano-America North		8 098
Hispano-America South		
Mauritius		15
Italy	155	30
Lebanon	45	250
Oceania	2 233	501
Poland	505	
Portugal	2 000	40
Transatlantic	160	
USA		
<i>Total</i>	<i>13 503</i>	<i>11 544</i>

Giovanni Cecchini Manara
Treasurer of the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel

News

**60th Anniversary of the Creation
of the Intercessors**

**1960-2020: 60 Years of Intercession!
On the Feast day of Mary, the Immaculate Conception,
December 8th, 2020**

2020 marks the 60th anniversary of the creation of the *Veilleurs* (Watchmen), who then became the Intercessors.

60 years of Intercession: initiated by Father Caffarel and supported by the Teams of Our Lady Movement, intercessory prayer is a cry towards the Father, through Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and through Mary, Immaculate Mother, who is celebrated on December 8.

Throughout all eternity, God predestined the Virgin Mary to Divine Maternity and therefore to the fullness of grace, so that she would be perfectly worthy of her mission as the Mother of the Saviour. If Christ is the unique and perfect Mediator between God and mankind, the Blessed Virgin is the most perfect partner of her Divine Son.

Mary Immaculate is Mother of God even more *“through her soul than through her body.”* (St Augustine) Mary was present at Calvary, upright at the foot of the Cross. Her soul, her heart, all her sensitive and spiritual powers intensely experienced all the pains endured by the Body and Soul of her beloved Son.

Christ, the unique “Intercessor,” gave his mother to the world. Mother of God and Mother of mankind, associated with all the graces, she sees humans with their needs and their prayers and she discerns in each person the will of the Lord to grant them through his intercession. Mary sees all this in and through God. Her intercession for all of humanity is an integral party of his glory. She experiences immense happiness in wanting what God wants, in loving what God loves, and therefore in interceding for all those to whom God wants to give the gift of his graces.

So this is how Mary Immaculate hears our prayer, each and every one of them, and presents them to the Most Holy Trinity. The Lord wanted to come to us through the mediation of this Immaculate Woman, whom He entrusted to us forever on Calvary with his *“Here is your Mother.”*

As Intercessors for our fellow human beings, let us entrust ourselves to Her! Father Henri Caffarel was deeply and intimately attached to the Virgin Mary. A man of action and a man of prayer, he lived in the world and yet remained connected to his “interior monastery.” He placed prayer at the forefront of all human activity. He was deeply convinced that a movement of conjugal spirituality, like Teams of Our Lady, could not do without prayer. As early as 1959, he expressed this prophetic intuition to call for *“Veilleurs”* (Watchmen), that is couples who would pray at night for the Movement and for the world.

Let us stand in the gap! Who will God find awake and praying? *“I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.”* (Ez 22:30).

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice!

Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Ph 4 :4-7).

May this call of Father Caffarel’s resonate again and again in the heart of the people of God!

May the treasures of intercessory prayer be known.

May men and women support each other in prayer.

Fratelli Tutti ! We are all brothers, as our Pope François reminds us in his last encyclical.

May Christian families open their hearts to the suffering and cries of mankind.

Aude & Olivier de la Motte
International Responsible for the Intercessors
eiaifatima2018@gmail.com

News
**60th Anniversary of the Creation of
the Intercessors**

Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, o.p.

Spiritual Counsellor to the Intercessors



The Strength of Intercessory Prayer Today!

At the heart of Easter celebrations is the great intercession on Good Friday, when the Church prays for all the intentions of the world. Then there is the intercession that arises from the faithful's hearts on Sunday at Mass. Similarly, in the breviary that is read every day, the moment for intercession holds a special place: it introduces the great prayer, the Our Father, that is followed by private interior prayer as a conclusion. There is also the intercession that arises in our heart and makes its way to God at any given time: we implore for others, and for ourselves.

When we speak of intercession, especially in the Intercessors' Movement within Teams of Our Lady, we give it the precise meaning that the Church gives it: intercession is the act of praying on behalf of others, for someone, for a family, a group, a country, the Church.

Who are the Intercessors?

The great and unique Intercessor is Christ, the Son of God, the only mediator between God and men. He accomplished the Father's will to save all of humanity. Both completely man and completely God, Jesus, through his death and resurrection, enables us to enter into the life of God. In our world and indeed in ourselves, the resistance to the life of God within us is great. But the Shepherd intercedes for us with the Father, for he is constantly seeking out the lost sheep.

Seeking the lost sheep. With great sensitivity, Jesus associates us with this work of salvation. He uses us to give his life to others. Since we are members of the Body of Christ, we offer God's salvation to others. Prayer, and particularly intercession, accompanies this testimonial. Christ makes us witnesses as well as intercessors. He associates us with his work of salvation and intercessors are to be found both in heaven and on earth.

In heaven, the primary intercessor is the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, the one who gave Christ to the world.

We never cease asking her to intercede for us, for the sick, for peace at Aparecida, as at Fatima or Lourdes. Just as we ask for the intercession of the Angels, Saints and the Blessed, we appeal to these friends in heaven to whom we often turn, and of course Father Caffarel is included here.

It is within this company of light that we place ourselves on earth. Surrounded by this multitude, we intercede for others. With our heart full of intentions for couples, priests, the sick, for various countries, with our heart full of Christ's prayer, we intercede with the Father sometimes with concern, but always with confidence.

Intercession Today

Is there something new about this momentum that sweeps us up today? Does intercession have a new face in comparison to the time when Father Caffarel launched the Intercessors? No and yes.

No, in the sense that the structure of intercession is always the same in the Church: placing our prayers for others in the prayer of the Lord, who intercedes for us with the Father; and also asking the Virgin Mary or a certain saint, or loved one who is in heaven—like Father Caffarel—to intercede for us. Christ rejoices in all this brotherhood of intercession.

But Yes too, there is something new for us today. It is the very concrete experience of the communion of the Church, which is expressed by the international nature of the Intercessors. Since they are present everywhere throughout the world, they breathe life into the Movement of "The Intercessors."

"They bring the great intentions of the Church to God. They will intercede for all of humanity. (Father Caffarel)

Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, o.p.



FROM FATHER CAFFAREL'S ARCHIVES

“We are looking for Volunteers” *Monthly Letter of Teams of Our Lady* XIII° Year – n° 6 – March 1960

Movements are like people: some possess strong vitality, while others are weak; some progress, while others fall behind. How many have I already seen, nonetheless full of promise in the beginning, that declined quickly, while others, of modest appearance at the start, acquired unexpected influence within a few years. It is a question of internal momentum.

Would you be surprised to hear that I am on the lookout for everything that can be learnt about the vitality of our Teams, dreading what might compromise this vitality? When faced with the rapid increase of Teams, I am currently having the reaction of a father and mother before a teenager, who has grown too fast: in order for the growth not to impact negatively on the sturdiness, the diet needs to be carefully monitored. And so I am concerned with the spiritual diet of our Teams. I think that they require at the current time a prayer supplement. Indeed, solidity, vitality, strength of expansion are nourished in prayer, for Movements as well as for individuals. I launch therefore a pressing call for volunteers: I aim to have couples succeed each other continuously in prayer every night between midnight and six in the morning. I propose that these volunteers commit to doing an hour of contemplative prayer during the night once a month, husband and wife together in as far as is possible. I am convinced that the Movement needs this and that it will benefit tremendously from it.

During this hour, the volunteers ought to pray for the Movement, so that this “school of Christian perfection,” where we learn to know, love and serve God may always become better; so that it may be radiant, welcoming throughout the world for all those couples who aim to find spiritual help; so that it accomplishes with generosity and accuracy the mission assigned to it in the Church of Christ.

May they pray not only for the Movement, but also for each couple, and most especially for those who depend most particularly on them. In such a way, every couple in need of God’s help, every couple threatened by danger, or temptation, will be able to address the Lord in these terms: “I entrust myself to these brothers and sisters who, this coming night, will offer up uninterrupted prayers to you.” And the certainty that their needs have been presented to God will enable them to find strength, confidence and peace.

Do I need to add that their prayer ought not to be limited only to Teams? By uniting their prayer with that of all the great saints of the night, the Carmelites, Trappists, Benedictines..., by uniting themselves with the One whom the Letter to the Hebrews tells us that at the right hand of the Father, “*He always lives to make intercession*” for everyone, they will bring before God the great intentions of the Church, they will intercede for all of humanity.

They will pray for others, but will be the first to benefit from it. “*But seek first his kingdom (...) and all these things will be given to you as well.*” Undoubtedly, amongst all the graces given as well, they will receive the grace of prayer: I have so often met men and women, who explained that they discovered, precisely during night prayer, what true contemplative prayer was.

“*Could you not keep watch with me for one hour?*” Christ’s question to his apostles is perhaps addressed to you... If you think so, ah! above all, do not disappoint his expectation.

Henri Caffarel





FROM FATHER CAFFAREL'S ARCHIVES

“Teams of Our Lady in the face of Atheism”

An Excerpt from Father Henri Caffarel’s Talk
Rome, May 5th, 1970

The Christian Couple’s Mission

Allow me to express God's thoughts on the couple in the manner of Péguy, the French writer, perhaps all too forgotten today. God says, *“Christian couple, you are my pride and my hope. (...) You are the bearer of my reputation, of my glory; for the universe, you are the great reason to hope, because you are love.”*

Let us take a closer look at your mission as God’s witnesses. The first way to fulfil it is to live your love more and more perfectly, to make it unfold all its potential, to make it manifest, faithful, happy, fruitful. It is true that this is beyond your merely possibilities. Husband and wife soon realise that evil is at work in the home. You must necessarily have recourse to the grace of Christ, the saviour of the couple, and suddenly, your union becomes the witness not only to God the Creator, but also to God the Saviour.

Your home will bear witness to God even more explicitly if it is the union of two seekers of God, according to the admirable expression used in the Psalms. Two seekers who intelligence and hearts are eager to know, to meet God, to be united with him because they have understood that God is the great reality, because God interests them more than anything else.

How many of you whom I know ought to be seekers of God? Such a home is a place of worship. Not only in the sense that the spouses are his worshipers

in spirit and in truth, that their children are also brought up to be worshipers, but also in the sense that this outpouring of adoration directs hearts and all tasks throughout the day.

The Christian home is the small Church community that St John Chrysostom spoke of, that Church cell that Paul VI spoke about to us yesterday morning. Were all other places of worship to be closed, disused, destroyed, as in certain regions of the world, the Christian family would remain God's home among men. And because God dwells there, it is a place where God acts, continues to operate his "*mirabilia*," those great things that the Bible tells us about. The existence of a Christian home is a holy story because it is a story led and guided by God.

And those who come and ask him for hospitality, whether they realise it or not, find there the One whose home it is. Where love and charity are, there too is God. It is through multiple clues that the visitor discovers this God at work in the home. A concern for poverty, for charity, a habitual way of emphasising the good side of people and things, a spontaneously evangelical judgment of events, an independence from the world, from intellectual or other fashions. There is no risk that such a home will be a ghetto in which to lock oneself away from the distress of the world. Rather, it is a place one leaves to go out and deal with all human tasks.

God, the friend of men, sends out his servants on a mission when they have rebuilt their strength by means of mutual love, prayer and rest. So, it is not surprising that in the midst of men, Christian spouses are witnesses of the living God.

As proof of this, I give you this remark by an atheist woman scientist to a Catholic friend. *"For you, God is alive just as your husband and kids are. My arguments against God seem ridiculous to you. It is as if I was trying to prove to you that your husband doesn't exist."*

You will say to me that this portrait of the Christian home presupposes that the problem is solved, namely that we are saints. No: I did not speak of holiness, but of the search for God, of the honour given to God, of having recourse to Christ the Saviour in order to overcome temptations and obstacles on a daily basis in married and family life.

Penance, and by that I mean the humble recognition of one's sin, of one's all too frequent infidelity to God, already bears witness to God, already reveals his holiness.

Indeed, I remember this remark by a Latin American diplomat, after a stay in a Teams' home, where he easily recognized that the spouses were not perfect, but that they were precisely that kind of penitent couple, who were seeking God. He wrote me the following, *"I now know that if my country, like this small family community, recognised its transgressions and did penance, it would know the peace that reigns in the home in which I have just stayed."*

I would like to have communicated to you my conviction that, in our world which no longer believes in love, a home of seekers of God is a theophany, a manifestation of God just as that bush in the desert that blazed and was not consumed was for Moses.

If your home life, if your love bears witness to the loving God, then, but only then, must you and can you bear the testimony of the word, for it will be guaranteed by your life.

Papal Audience in Rome, May 1970



Prayer for the Canonisation of the Servant of God, Henri Caffarel

God, our Father,
You planted deep in the heart of your servant, Henri Caffarel,
A fountain of love, which bound him totally to your Son
And inspired him with a wonderful capacity to speak of Him.

A prophet for our time,
He revealed the dignity and beauty of the vocation of every person
In the words Jesus addresses to each of us: "Come follow me."

He made couples enthusiastic about the greatness of the sacrament of marriage,
The sign of Christ's fruitful love for the Church and of His union with her.
He showed that priests and couples
Are called to live a vocation of love.
He was a guide to widows: love is stronger than death.
Prompted by the Holy Spirit,
He accompanied many Christians on the path of prayer.
Seized by a devouring fire, he was a dwelling place for you, Lord.

God, our Father,
Through the intercession of Our Lady,
We ask you to hasten the day
When the Church will proclaim the holiness of his life,
So that people everywhere will discover the joy of following your Son
In accordance with their particular vocations in the Holy Spirit.

God our Father, we invoke the intercession of Father Caffarel for.....
(Indicate the particular favour being sought)

**Prayer approved by Monsignor Andre Vingt-Trois – Archbishop of Paris.
"Nihil obstat": 4th January 2006 – "Imprimatur": 5th January 2006.**

*In the case of a particular favour obtained through the intercession of Father Caffarel,
Contact: The Postulator,
Association "Les Amis du Père Caffarel"
49 rue de la Glacière – F 75013 PARIS*

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¹ ERI: International Leading Team of the Teams of Our Lady

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