



Magnificat News

ERI MEETING, MARCH 2025

Between March 14 and 19, the International Responsible Team held its second annual meeting at La Pareille, a Jesuit training center in Namur, Belgium. Each gathering represents an extraordinary opportunity, as we meet from different countries with a common purpose: to work for the well-being of all teams in the Movement.

An ERI meeting resembles a team gathering that extends over several days. We begin by catching up on our personal lives, an essential step considering that we can only meet in person three times a year and our members live thousands of kilometers apart. This initial exchange allows us to better understand our current situation, as our personal experiences naturally intertwine with our service.

The days follow a defined structure: they begin with morning prayer, continue with intensive work sessions, and culminate with the Eucharist. Mealtimes offer relaxed spaces for sharing, while the rest of the day is characterized by concentrated work. In less than a week, we must address numerous matters related to the worldwide organization of the Teams of Our Lady: managing mutual aid to Super Regions and Regions that request it, reviewing and selecting the study theme for upcoming courses, planning the international college in July, discerning issues linked to the movement's charism, and defining guidelines that we propose as the International Responsible Team.

Despite the intense work pace, prayers and Eucharists nourish us spiritually, reminding us who brings us together and to whom we entrust our decisions: Christ himself and our founding father are those who inspire and guide us. Our spiritual counselor, Father Augusto, constitutes a fundamental pillar during the sessions. As in any base team meeting, his insightful words illuminate our path, especially in moments of uncertainty, complementing our work as married couples who work on behalf of the Teams.

Logistically, these meetings would be impossible without the "guardian angels" who take care of facilitating every detail. On this occasion, Brigitte and Michelle Simons, the responsible couple for the Super Region Belgium, along with other team members, made our stay an unforgettable experience. The day of Sunday, March 16, deserves special mention, as we had the privilege of sharing it with the SR Belgium, an experience so extraordinary and prepared with such care that we will detail it below.



MEETING OF THE ERI WITH THE SUPER REGION BELGIUM

On Sunday the 16th, we suspended our work routine to enjoy a day with the team members of SR Belgium who wanted to join us. We visited Brussels, where we toured some of its most emblematic monuments: the City Hall, the Cathedral, and the majestic Grand Place. We concluded this interesting tour at the Royal Museum of Fine Arts, where we had the privilege of receiving, from a kind team member, a magnificent explanation in the form of catechesis about several masterpieces of sacred art.

Subsequently, we were taken to the house that the Jesuits maintain in the capital, where an exquisite meal prepared by team members awaited us. The welcome was exceptional, giving us the opportunity to enjoy both the gastronomy and enriching conversations with Belgian couples.

Afterward, there was an event in which Mercedes and Alberto, the responsible couple of the ERI, gave a presentation on Hope, in line with the jubilee year dedicated to this theme. Their message was received with great appreciation by all attendees. The other members of the ERI introduced ourselves and, likewise, we met several couples who are members of the Regional Team and their spiritual counselor. It was very enriching to understand the reality of the different Belgian sectors, learning firsthand about the challenges they face and the achievements made thanks to their dedication and perseverance. One of their main current challenges seems to be the growing secularization that the country is experiencing. As a highlight, it is worth mentioning the announcement made by the current responsible couple of the SR about their successors in that responsibility: Françoise and Gaetan Gorremans. To conclude, Youssef and Georgina Boutros, the ERI couple coordinating the Central Europe and Middle East zone (to which Belgium belongs), spoke some moving words that put the final touch to the assembly.

The mixed teams constituted an excellent opportunity to share in small groups the experiences of the ERI couples and the Belgian couples on topics such as young teams, senior teams, and outreach, facilitating a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge. The Eucharist, prepared with extraordinary dedication, represented a particularly special moment, where music, performed with excellence, occupied a central place. On the altar, we presented the communion offering that we all carried in our hearts, culminating a simply perfect day.

The day concluded with a typical Belgian dinner with which we were gifted, including the famous french fries and waffles, providing a relaxed atmosphere to close an unforgettable day. These meetings give meaning to our mission as ERI: to directly know the reality of a Super Region among the many that make up the Movement, to dialogue and share experiences, meals, and celebration with leaders and grassroots team members. The ERI deeply appreciates the effort made by all the people who made our visit possible. We thank God for so much and for everything.



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