



# INTERCESSORS' QUARTERLY LETTER

## OFFERING OUR LIVES

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Dear Intercessors,

*"There is no greater love than to give one's life for one's friends."* (John 15,13). Christ invites us to offer up our lives, but how should we experience and live it? The Intercessors propose "the offering of our lives" as a formal commitment associated with prayer and fasting, as a trilogy. Presenting to the Lord our sorrows, joys, difficulties, ordeals, daily life, not with resignation, but indeed as a gratuitous offering of what we are, for the people entrusted to us through the prayer intentions that we received. An offering experienced and lived in hope.

*"You will love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'"* (Matthew 22,37-39). The way is clearly shown to us. It is very simple: love your God with all your heart, with all your strength and offer yourself to Him by welcoming your neighbour, by reserving a place for them in your heart, despite all that encumbers and overwhelms you. Let us offer our lives, our daily routine, like St Therese and St Teresa of Calcutta suggest we should do, by turning with confidence to our Father, who receives and transforms our gifts, large or small, into graces for our neighbour.

*Aude et Olivier de La Motte,*

*EIAI - Responsible Couple for the Central Europe Zone.*

### FATHER PAUL-DOMINIQUE MARCOVITS' SPIRITUAL LETTER



We can offer other people a great variety of different things : a book, flowers...

We can offer big or small things, but these gifts are always signs: sympathy, devotion, love. When a young man offers a ring to the girl he loves, she understands what he is saying to her.

The Eucharistic liturgy enlightens what the Intercessors want to do when they speak of "the offering of our lives." God rejoices! The centre of every Christian life is the celebration of the offering up of Christ to his Father. And, by offering himself up, he offers up all humanity filled with his love. In order to understand what we say when we speak of "the offering of our lives," it is useful to remember St John Chrysostom's words, *"the altar is everywhere, at every street corner."*

"The offering of our lives" is accomplished in various ways during the day, over the months, years... One day, it is a question of choosing marriage, priesthood again; another day, we need to smile when our hearts are so far from being joyful; another day, the offering of ourselves will be to fully taste the joy that is given to us after having waited so long; or again, the offering of ourselves will simply be to stop and admire a beautiful painting... Joys and sorrows, they all form part of our offerings.

But not only that! The person that the Lord gives in marriage, in friendship too, those children that we care for with love, anxiety sometimes, we also offer them because, in one way or another, all of them are a part of ourselves. What would we be without them? And then, there are also those, who have been entrusted to our Intercessor prayer. Perhaps the latter affect our sensitivity less, and that is normal, but they touch the depth

of our faith, and that is the most important thing. The love carried by this intercession is true because it is guided by faith.

But let us get back to St John Chrysostom's *"The altar is everywhere, at every street corner."* What are we to understand by this? That all these altars where we leave our offerings join up and are united with the altar of the Church, where the Son of God offers his life and therefore where the offering of our lives finds its meaning, its goal, its fulfilment: in the offering of Christ's life our lives are offered.

Should we make great offerings to God? Life is not always made up of heroic moments. Life also allows us to breathe. No, our life is made up of these continual offerings, just like the pianist's art is the result of long hours of study, and scales practised over and over again. The offering of ourselves is thus made up of many humble moments, little ones, but, in the long run, founding moments. Once again, the bottom line is this: what makes up an offering is love and freedom. Without that, who could rejoice in these offerings? Not God.

The offering is made to whom? *"For the glory of God and the salvation of the world."* That is the motivation behind the offering! For the love of God, for the love of those entrusted to us, quite simply we offer up these days that go by, that make us rejoice or that we find heavy and sad. We bring the offering of our lives... The words that the priest says to God, the Father, then take on their full force, *"Therefore, O Lord, we humbly implore you: by the same Spirit graciously make holy these gifts we have brought to you for consecration, that they may become the Body and Blood of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose command we celebrate these mysteries."* (Eucharistic Prayer 3)

**Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, o.p.  
Spiritual Counsellor to the Intercessors**

**MY VOCATION : LOVE**  
**SAINT THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX (1896)**

*As was the case for Saint Therese, our paths are strewn with little things.*

*Let us not seek prowess, let us offer what we are in all simplicity, That is what we are called to.*

*Let us offer our life: every detail will be worth eternity.*

“Yes, my Beloved, this is how my life will be consumed... I have no other way of proving my love than throwing flowers, that is to say, not letting any small sacrifice escape, no look, no words, taking advantage of all of the smallest things and doing them for love... I want to suffer for love and even to enjoy for love, thus I will throw flowers before your throne; I will not come across a single one without stripping it of its leaves for you... then throwing my flowers, I will sing, (is it possible to cry doing such a joyful deed?) I will sing, even when I have to pick my flowers amongst the thorns and my song will be all the more melodious as the thorns are long and prickly. Jesus, what use will my flowers and songs be to you?... Ah! I know it well, this balmy rain, these fragile and worthless petals, these little love songs from the smallest of hearts will charm you, yes, these little nothings will make you happy, they will make you smile (...)

O my Jesus! I love you, I love the Church, my Mother, I remember that **“the smallest movement of pure love is more useful to her than all the other works brought together.”**...



*St Therese of the Child Jesus*  
**MANUSCRIPT B**

**GOD ONLY SEES OUR LOVE**



We can do nothing great, just small things with great love. Let no one boast of their successes: everything ought to be attributed to God with the deepest gratitude. On the other hand, no failure should deter us if we have done our best.

God only sees our love. God will not ask us how many books we have read, how many miracles we have performed, but rather if we have done our best out of love for Him. Nothing is insignificant to God, because He is almighty, and so every one of our actions with, for and through Jesus Christ is a great success.

***“Help us, most loving Father, to take all that You give us And to give all that You take from us with a broad smile.”***

**Saint Teresa of Calcutta**

*In the Silence of the Heart, Meditations by Mother Teresa of Calcutta, 1983*

**A “SPIRITUALITY OF SELF-GIVING”**

“We are not called to perform heroic gestures nor to proclaim resounding words, but to bear witness to the joy that comes from the certainty of knowing that we are loved, from the confidence of being saved.”

“When we put Christ at the centre of our lives, we ourselves don’t become the centre! The more you unite yourself to Jesus and he becomes the centre of your life, the more He leads you out of yourself, leads you from making yourself the centre and opens you to others. When we meet the Lord and follow him faithfully, that is a message of joy.”

**General Audience, Wednesday, February 28, 2018 :**

“...Certainly our offering is small but Christ needs this small amount. The Lord asks little of us and he gives us so much. He asks for little. He asks us for good will in our ordinary lives; he asks us for an open heart; he asks us to seek to be better in order to welcome the One who offers himself to us in the Eucharist; he asks us for these symbolic offerings which will become his Body and Blood.

**(.) May the spirituality of self-giving that this moment of Mass (the offertory) teaches us illuminate our days, our relationships with others, the things we do, the suffering we encounter, helping us to build up the earthly city in the light of the Gospel. God bless you! »**



**Pope Francis**

*The offering of one's life is one of the three commitments suggested to Intercessors.*

*Being open to others, compassion, is this not characteristic of the disposition of an Intercessor's heart?*

*The offering of our lives brings us towards Christ, and thus towards prayer and private prayer.*

*Father Caffarel presented offering path to and the gift of one's self as a holiness within marriage.*



## SPouses Sanctify Themselves in the Gift of Themselves

FATHER CAFFAREL

In their vocation, spouses sanctify themselves through the gift of themselves that is renewed every day of their lives. Every day, offering up to the Lord our perseverance in the gift to the other person.

“If truth be told, it means committing to a life where the giving, renouncing, surpassing will be multiplied, in response to the repeated demands of love. This unity, that young spouses have forged through the gift they have made to each other, never becomes a definite acquisition; it must be won back every day and be deepened through the renewed gifts and renunciations that become ever more perfect. Will they at

least find in it the reward for their generosity and be able to rest in possessing it? No, for love is ruthless, it continually commands us to go forward. This unity is not for their sole satisfaction, but is for a new gift, that of life, that will lead to a chain reaction of renunciations, and yet all the while offering them marvellous joys. So each time progress is made in love, a new manner of surpassing is proposed, that will lead to new progress. On the human level, marriage therefore appears to us as the great educator, both of renunciation and of love. From this point of view alone, it is already quite true to say that it promotes and encourages Christian life.”

*L'Anneau d'Or,  
Special Issue of “Le Mariage, ce grand sacrement”  
n. 111-112, May-August 1963, Excerpts.*

## THE TRIPLE DIMENSION OF THE ACT OF OFFERING

FATHER NICOLAS BUTTET, FOUNDER OF EUCHARISTEIN.

(1) In Hebrew, sacrifice is **korban**, which means “drawing near or close.”

(2) This **teshuva** (or return) involves a complete renewal of our way of seeing and thinking the world. (Rm 1: 2).

**“Offering God yourself and everything that you have means giving him a present and an offering of yourself, of all of your thoughts, words, actions, goods, both spiritual and temporal, in a word, everything that you possess in this world,”** St Jean Baptiste de La Salle used to say.

source of all goodness. Consequently, we are asked to align our existence to his word of truth.

This offering of yourself is accomplished in the form of thanksgiving and praise for the benefits received. It is embodied in the determined desire to serve God and our neighbour; to place ourselves entirely, according to our state in life, at the Lord's disposal in order to build his Kingdom; to bring into coherence our thoughts, words and actions.

### Offering your Sins

The following anecdote is to be found in the life of St Jerome. God asks him, “What are you giving me today, Jerome?” He answers, “I give You, Lord, my prayer.” “Good! But what else?” Jerome cites various works: his asceticism, his vigils, his love for those who come to visit him. And God ask him, “And what else?” Jerome replies, “But I do not know anymore. I have nothing else!” Then the Lord says to him, “There is something else that you have not given me, and that is your sins.”!

### Offering your Sufferings

Finally, there is what is “undergone,” “suffered”: the great ordeals of life and “the minor daily hardships that continually strike at us like irritating jabs.” Offering up these “little annoyances” means “inserting (them) into Christ's great ‘compassion’ so that they somehow become part of the treasury of compassion so greatly needed by the human race” in order “to contribute to the economy of god and of human love.” (Benedict XVI, *Spe salve*, paragraph 40)

Instruction manual to achieve this:

Saint Paul insists, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.” (Rm 12:1). The aim of a sacrifice (1) is to bring us closer to God, to invite us to experience an intense communion with Him. For that, it is necessary to “do *teshuva*” (2), or repent. (...) And here is the triple dimension of the act of offering:

### The Offering of Yourself

Inasmuch as our life is a “gift” from God, we should take into consideration all that is good in our being and in our existence: our soul, body, talents, cultural inheritance, family culture.

St Paul writes on this subject **“What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?”** (1 Co 4:7). “Doing *teshuva*” also means recognising God as the

## TOGETHER IN PRAYER FOR THE LEBANON

*Général Intention :*

*Lord, we pray to you for the families who live in difficult situations, with precarious resources.*

*May they have the courage to turn to You to confidently offer You their distress, to lay before You their intentions.*

*Enable us to present our poverty and inadequacies to You, while preserving in our heart of hearts the hope of being heard.*

At the time of writing this October letter, we have been profoundly touched by the ordeal affecting Lebanon, following the explosion on August 4 in the port of Beirut, which impacted in particular a neighbourhood where we have lots of friends.

Here is Georges & Mahassen Khoury's testimonial. They are former International Leading Team members. *"The apocalyptic explosion in the port of Beirut, (2750 tons ammonium nitrate), left the city devastated and damaged with 170 dead, 7500 injured, 60 missing... and 300.000 homeless. With the economic and social deterioration of the country (the Lebanese pound has lost 80% of its value in 6 months) and the health issue caused by Covid-19, the Lebanese state is bankrupt and the Lebanese people lack the basic needs like food, medicine, etc... The current situation is catastrophic. We do not know what lies ahead, but we will not give into despair, because we trust in the fact that "a new Lebanon will rise again." We rely on God, on our friends and on ourselves.*

*We still believe in a pluralistic Lebanon, a sign of peace and reconciliation between peoples, civilisations, and cultures, according to Saint John-Paul II, and a bridge between the West and the East.*

*We need you! We need your prayers and your solidarity. It encourages us to survive and to always keep hoping, in spite of everything."*



**Dolly & Chaouky Khoury**, Responsible Couple for the Lebanese Intercessors, told us of their distress in this disastrous economic situation. Added to this are personal health concerns for them, and they are currently finding it difficult to keep the flame of the Intercessors alive. However, they *"remain hopeful of seeing Lebanon be reborn and of being able to lead a normal life soon."*

*Dear Intercessor Friends, let us be committed to offering our lives, our ordeals for those who are suffering, in particular, for the families suffering in Lebanon and for all the intentions that are entrusted to us. With Hope, let us believe in the power of prayer. Let us offer everything, our confusion, our doubts, our lives. Let us associate all our intentions with our prayers for the Lebanon.*

## IN 1960, FATHER CAFFAREL LAUNCHED A CALL TO TEAMS OF OUR LADY

**"I AM LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO PRAY."**

**THE INTERCESSORS WILL CELEBRATE THE 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THIS CALL ON**

**DECEMBER 8, 2020,**

**AND LAUNCH THEIR OWN MESSAGE**

**"INTERCESSION, GIVE IT A TRY!"**

The Intercessors invite Teams of Our Lady to join them in masses organised around the world on **December 8, on the occasion** of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, a feast day very dear to Father Caffarel's heart. Everyone is encouraged to find out if a mass is being organised by Teams of Our Lady in their sector on December 8. Together with the Team members, the Intercessors suggest the following:

- Collect prayer intentions at the beginning of the celebration;
- Read the Welcome note\* by Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, Spiritual Counsellor to EIAI;
- Prepare songs and the Bidding Prayers;
- At the end of mass: read the message\* by Clarita & Edgardo Bernal, Responsible Couple for Teams.

If the sanitary conditions in place at that time allow it, organise a get-together after mass to share: the testimonial of an Intercessors, information about the Intercessors (with a slideshow\*), distribution of the *Intercession, Give it a Try!* flyer. A **"Night of Prayer"** in communion with all the continents will end this thanksgiving mass!

**International Organisation Team of Intercessors**

**L'Equipe Internationale d'Animation des Intercesseurs (EIAI).**

*\*These documents will be sent to the Intercessor Correspondents in your Region and Super-Region. The latter will contact the Teams of Our Lady Responsible Couples in their Region, who are already aware of our initiative.*

**TO CONTACT US :** [EIAIFatima2018@gmail.com](mailto:EIAIFatima2018@gmail.com)

**WEBSITE:** <https://equipes-notre-dame.com/en/who-are-the-intercessors/>