

PRIVILEGED: YES**PROFITING: NO**

October 1950 editorial

Privileged, you are - that is a fact, whether you want to be or not. Profiting entirely depends on you.

Privileged... profiting... the distance between the two is small; it is soon stepped across by the unwary.

So make a quick review of your privileges. But, first of all, draw a circle; divide it into five equal segments as one does a cake. One of the five segments represents the percentage of Catholics in the world. But how many among them are only nominally Catholic and do not practise their faith at all? Among those who do practise their faith, most will have received only a most rudimentary Christian formation. You are among the very small number that had the good fortune to receive a sound formation (at home... at school...). Within that small number, how many have had the good luck – rather, I should say, the grace of a wonderful Christian love and of the friendship of other equally blessed couples who are striving after the same ideal of Christian perfection in marriage?

Now, take your circle again. Divide the fifth segment by 100 or perhaps by 1,000. Even a pencil line would be too thick to represent the number of people like you who enjoy such a rare privilege.

Now tell me, what is your reaction?

Why you? Why not the others: these hundreds of millions of couples? I would like it to be unbearable for you. I would like you to be tormented by a pressing need to be ‘forgiven’ for enjoying such rare privileges.

I will not speak to you today of the duty of the apostolate in general. I simply want to invite you, during this year that is beginning, to do everything you can for the married and family spirituality that you get from Teams to reach couples around you. May it strengthen their union that is perhaps breaking up. May it reanimate their love and reveal to them the riches of their sacrament of marriage. May it help them also to know the joy and strength that comes from fraternal friendship between couples.

Are you short of the necessary ardour? Are you not aware to what extent the ambient culture in which they live threatens the Christian life and union of so many couples?

But do not tell me that there is nothing to be done. If you really care for all these threatened couples that are short of love and grace, you will know how to invent what needs to be done and you will persevere in your efforts. Inventiveness, perseverance, such are the qualities of missionaries. How numerous are the missionaries who struggle, preach and persevere for years without result! Well, yes indeed, be the missionaries of this married spirituality that gives you life.

Do make use of the means of spreading Teams that I could mention: articles on married spirituality, days of formation and discussion for couples, days of recollection for couple, parish retreats, residential retreats, etc.

Let no one accuse you of profiting without giving!

Henri Caffarel