

Letter from the International Leading Team (ERI) November 2010

International News

Friends hello!

Let us tell you about the American Zone, where there are three Super-Regions: United States, Hispano-America and Brazil, together with one Region, Canada, that is directly linked by the ERI.

Spread throughout a vast territory that represents over 14000 kilometres from Canada to Argentina, there are more than 4300 teams with 25479 couples who speak 4 different languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese), together with a great variety of cultures, customs and socio-economic differences. Side by side in this Zone are the countries with great purchasing power and poor countries from the Third World.

This is the Zone where the Movement already has deep roots and a long past: all regions are more than 50 years old (except Hispano-America that will celebrate its golden jubilee in 2011).

On the photos, you can see the Responsible Couples of these Super-Regions and of that Region. They are the great architects of unity and fidelity to the ideals of the Movement.

At the last meeting of the International College in Madrid, we asked each of them to present the high points and challenges facing their respective Super-Regions and Region, so that we can now give you a synthesis that will enable you to understand the realities of our Zone.

The three Super-Regions and the Canada Region have been expanding constantly, as these figures show:

United States	in 2007 = 556	in 2009 = 600	+8%
Hispano-America	in 2007 = 600	in 2009 = 674	+12%
Brazil	in 2007 = 2.782	in 2009 = 3.089	+11%
Canada	in 2007 = 42	in 2009 = 48	+14%

In the Canada Region, despite the fact that it has been around for more than 50 years of life, the Movement has remained concentrated in the French-speaking Region of Quebec. But in the past few years, and with the help of the Super-Region United States for getting it off the ground, the west coast of the country has started to burgeon with English-speaking Teams and also Spanish-speaking Teams, made up of Latin immigrants. The solidarity of the Super-Region Hispano-America must also be highlighted because they have given the Canadian Responsible Couple all the material in Spanish to facilitate work with the 'Latino' Team members. The Responsible Couple tell us that the Teams have become a place of welcome and solidarity for these people. The greatest challenge facing the Region is expansion. But in the last three years, a very positive result has emerged with the creation of new Teams not only in and around Quebec, but also in other towns like Edmonton (Alberta), Ontario, London and Calgary.

The Super-Region Hispano-America drew attention to the fact that their members have a very clear notion of belonging to the Movement and the search for holiness is an integral part of the couples' lives. They point out that they have many young couples entering the Movement.

On the challenging side, there is the vastness of the territory and the high administrative cost that goes with it. The Super-Region is made up of 13 countries (Mexico, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia). Faced with these special circumstances, we have to struggle with great economic hardship because the contribution does not allow large projects to be put in place, nor even some kind of gathering to strengthen the links between the Team members. And it is here that we see, on certain occasions, the ties of solidarity and material help given by the Super-Region United States and Brazil, together with the support of the International Leading Team (ERI) for certain special projects.

On the occasion of their golden jubilee, the Super-Region United States created a project called "50 x 50". In order to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Teams, each Team was asked to do 50 hours of personal prayer. They were to pray for the expansion of the Movement, which indeed worked, as well as the growth of the Teams and the multiplication of the Regions.

Another important factor to cite about the Super-Region United States is its cosmopolitan character, because it consists of Teams made up of English, Spanish and Portuguese speakers, all totally integrated and certain documents are even edited in the three languages!

The biggest challenge they mention is the lack of executives available to take up service in the Movement.

Super-Region Brazil concludes this presentation. They emphasise the oiled workings of the structure where, at various levels, great collegiality is to be found. There are no difficulties in finding people to accept responsibilities and couples are open and happy to do so. On top of this, they underline the complementary wealth encountered in the joyful and relaxed manner of the Team members.

In terms of challenges, they cite the care that is needed to help the expansion of the Movement. Faced with the ever-growing number of teams, they need to concentrate on maintaining the unity and fidelity between the teams that are scattered across the Brazilian territory.

In conclusion and in our role as Liaison Couple for the American Zone within the International Leading Team (ERI), we can assure the Team members throughout the world that the American Zone seeks to live in harmony and total communion; they reach out and help each other and try to circulate the energy of the Movement. With God's grace, vibrant Teams, with missionary and evangelising spirits, are to be found here. They are well integrated into their local communities and churches and are recognized

as a part of committed Movement that produces fruit for the holiness of couples and families in general.

In the name of the American Zone, we warmly embrace all our brothers and sisters throughout the world. May Our Lady of all Teams protect our Movement!

Silvia & Chico—members of the International Leading Team and Liaison Couple for the American Zone.