

Écho Montfortain, no. 503, April 2000, English edition

Word from Father General

Some of you may read this before Holy Week, others after Easter. In the truest sense, that does not matter, because I want to write about a mystery which forms a single, unique whole: the death and resurrection of the Lord.

When visiting the Provinces I always try to go to the infirmaries and communities of our aged confreres, and those of the sisters and brothers. Since last October I have had the joy of talking and praying with sick and aged members of the Montfortian Family in France, Holland, Belgium, Canada, United States and Italy. These visits are not at all to men and women sitting on the sidelines; they are visits to missionaries in the fullest sense of the word. As the chapter Letter "*Open to Jesus Christ*" tells us, "... the chapter has thought in a particular and grateful way of our elder and sick confreres. The limits of their health do not take anything away from their role in our mission. On the contrary, it is their prayer and their suffering which open hearts to the Word which others proclaim. They are for us the living sign that religious consecration has no age: it offers us new avenues at each stage of life. The gift which our elder and sick confreres offer to God is complete and constitutes a strong witness for us all." (n.37).

Our consecration as Montfortian religious opens up for us a road which leads into the mystery of the Cross. We walk into that mystery side by side with the marginalized and those who suffer. We walk into that mystery - as the Italian provincial chapter reflected - also in moments of existential crises of identity or work, or change of role, activity or residence; when we experience lack of understanding or frustration. "These experiences of limits and weakness provide further opportunities to give ourselves anew to God, and they prepare us for the day when we will hand over our very lives to the God who raised Jesus from the dead" (*Open to Jesus Christ*, n.36).

The wonder is that the surprise and power of the resurrection are already at work among us, and often with great evidence and conviction in the persons of our elderly or sick brothers and sisters. Among my memories just from these past months: celebrating Eucharist with the sick confreres at St. Laurent, and at the distribution of communion being moved by the quiet, unfailing refrain and response, "The Body of Christ. *Amen*. The Blood of Christ. *Amen*" rising from the mouths and hearts of the sick. Or an extraordinary afternoon at the Motherhouse of La Sagesse with a sister, a dear friend, who sensed her time to pass over to God had almost arrived, and although Parkinson's disease wreaked havoc on her limbs and her speech, she already shone with the Beauty and Love that knows no end. Or witnessing the renewal of vows on February 2nd at our sisters' infirmary in New York, when women with fifty, sixty, seventy years of consecrated life, precisely because of their sickness and ill health touchingly offered to God all that they had as Daughters of Wisdom in the truth of their poverty, chastity and obedience. Or listening with our sick confreres at Villa Montfort in Bergamo to the words of St. Paul, "Continually we carry about in our bodies the dying of Jesus, so that in our bodies the life of Jesus may also be revealed" (2 Cor 4:10).

To our brothers and sisters who are immersed in this mystery of the Cross, we owe our gratitude and our prayer of each day. They are our teachers and prophets, our mothers and fathers in the faith. “For God who said, *Let light shine out of darkness*, has shone in our hearts, that we in turn might make known the glory of God shining on the face of Christ. This treasure we possess in earthen vessels to make it clear that its surpassing power comes from God and not from us” (2Cor 4: 6-7).

William Considine, smm
Superior General

Official News Items

First Profession

On 3 February 2000, in Nairobi (Kenya), **Jean-Marie EWEZ'EWEZE KUTUKANA**, of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Perpetual Profession

On 2 February 2000, in Brest (France), **Jean-Michel NICOLAS**.

Ordination to the Diaconate

On 6 February 2000, in Shanthinagar (India), **Varaprasad VARUGONDA**.
On 25 February 2000, in Sintang (Indonesia), **Siprianus Masjon KENEDY**.
On 25 March 2000, at Villa Montfort-Cumaral (Colombia), **César Andrés GUTIÉRREZ RINCÓN**.

New Apostolic Vicariate in Colombia

As already announced, on 29 January 2000, the Holy Father appointed **Fr. Alberto ROZO**, of the Colombian Province, as **Vicar Apostolic of Puerto Gaitán** in Colombia, this new vicariate having been erected on 22 December 1999, as a result of the division of the former Prefecture Apostolic of the Vichada into two territories. Fr. Rozo, a former Provincial of the Colombian Province, received his Episcopal Ordination in Villavicencio on 19 March 2000.

New Superiors and Councils

On 17 January 2000, following the Provincial Chapter of the Canadian Province, the new Provincial Council to assist the Provincial, Fr. Wilfrid Bergeron, was announced: **Frs. Jean-Guy RICHER, Clément PAQUIN, Ronald BEAULNE and Gaétan OUIMET**. A little later, Fr. Clément Paquin was appointed Provincial Vicar, and Fr. Gaétan Ouimet Provincial Bursar.

On 20 January 2000, the Provincial Chapter of the United States Province, meeting in Bay Shore, re-elected **Fr. Gerald FITZSIMMONS** as Provincial Superior for a period of six years. Father General was present at the Chapter, and immediately confirmed the

election. The Chapter also elected the following as the new Provincial Council: **Frs. Donald LA SALLE, Matthew CONSIDINE, George WERNER and Thomas POTH.** Later, Fr. Donald La Salle was appointed as Provincial Vicar, and Fr. Matthew Considine as Provincial Bursar.

On 15 March 2000, the new Superior of the General Delegation of Madagascar was appointed: **Fr. Claude BOICHUT.** His councillors will be: **Frs. Orazio ROSSI, Jean Baptiste RAKOTOARISOA, Paul RAZAFITSIAROVANA and Carlo BERTON.**

On 21 January 2000, the Provincial of the Dutch Province, Fr. Charles Voncken, reappointed **Fr. Piet DERCKX** as Superior of the Provincial Delegation of Indonesia. Fr. Derckx will be assisted by three councillors: **Frs. Joseph van LIER, Ignatius WIDODO and Konradus HANCU.**

On 28 March 2000, **Fr. Alphonse WALDER** was re-appointed as Superior of the General Delegation of India for a period of three years. He will have three Councillors: **Frs. Anthony PEREIRA, Peter MASCARENHAS and Bala Showri POLAMARASETTY.**

Various News Items

Comings and Goings at the General House

Fr. General and Fr. Jean-Louis Courchesne left for Canada on 9 January 2000 to attend the Canadian Provincial Chapter, which took place from 11 to 14 January, when the new Provincial and Council were chosen. From Canada, they made their way to the USA to attend the Provincial Assembly (18-19 January) and Chapter (20-21 January) of the United States Province, when the new Provincial Superior and Council were elected. Following on this, Fr. General remained in the USA, and Fr. Courchesne returned to Canada, for a short break, both returning to Rome on 9 February. They left Rome once again on 11 March for India and the Philippines (where new Delegation Administrations will be appointed). They will return to Rome on 13 April.

Fr. Miguel Patiño returned to Rome from his holiday in Colombia on 14 January 2000. He returned to Colombia on 16 March to attend the Episcopal Consecration of Mgr. Alberto Rozo as Vicar Apostolic of the new Vicariate of Puerto Gaitán, as the representative of Fr. General, who was then in India. Fr. Patiño returned to Rome on 29 March.

Fr. Ivo Libralato visited the General Delegation of Madagascar from 7 to 21 March. During his visit, the new Delegation Administration was appointed.

Fr. Hub Louis returned to Rome on 12 February, having visited Kenya, Uganda and Malawi in January, and the confreres of the German Province in February. He left Rome on 4 April to visit the Province of Gt. Britain and Ireland, and will return to Rome on 16 April.

Among various visitors to the General House in the past few months were Mgr. Paul Bakyenga, Archbishop of Mbarara, Uganda; Anne Allerton and Vin & Sue Allerton (the

sister, brother and sister-in-law of the Secretary General, come to help Fr. Paul celebrate his 60th birthday); and Jeanne de Grunt and Dik & Toos Mooijer, relations of deceased and past members of the Company of Mary in Holland.

Episcopal Consecration of Mgr. Alberto Rozo Gutiérrez, S.M.M., First Vicar Apostolic of Puerto Gaitán, Colombia

The Episcopal Ordination at Villavicencio

In giving thanks for his Episcopal Ordination on 19 March, Mgr. Alberto Rozo said: “I chose the cathedral in Villavicencio for my Episcopal Ordination, because this is the heart of the Diocese of Villavicencio, which is the mother-church of these two new ecclesiastical entities: Puerto Carreño and Puerto Gaitán, as it was also for the dioceses of Granada and San José del Guaviare, and for the Vicariates of Mitú and Puerto Inírida. In this way, I want to pay a tribute of admiration and thanksgiving to so many missionaries, Montfortian, Xaverian, Salesian and diocesan, who, through their work in a spirit of self-denial and courage, sowed the seed of the Gospel and laid the foundations for progress.”

Mgr. José Alberto was ordained by the Apostolic Nuncio, Mgr. Beniamino Stella, the principal consecrating bishop, assisted by Mgr. Gregorio Garavito, Bishop Emeritus of Villavicencio, and Mgr. Alfonso Cabezas, the titular Bishop of Villavicencio. The event had immense value as a sign, as much through the celebration itself, so very well prepared by our houses of formation, as through the place, the date, and the spirit of faith, fraternity, joy and hope which was present in the various visiting groups, for whom the wide expanse of the recently restored cathedral seemed too small. It is worth making mention – and I am not exaggerating at all when I say it – of the perfect homily delivered by the Nuncio: a real pastoral message, masterfully delivered in the context of the very rich liturgy of the Second Sunday of Lent and that of the Jubilee Year, underlining the pastoral mission of the bishop and, more especially, of Mgr. Alberto as a Montfortian in his difficult Vicariate. Taking his inspiration from the believer, Abraham, he told us that “a Pastor must be ready to give everything for the flock entrusted to him; like the Good Shepherd who gives his life for his sheep (Jn 10.11), the bishop must have this same availability.” Later he added: “As a Pastor, the bishop must pay special attention – as the Lord says in the Gospel – to the little ones, the outcasts, the poor, and in a very special way, to those who have left the Church and those who are seeking gropingly for the truth that might give meaning to their lives.” Then, speaking more particularly to Mgr. José Alberto, of the pastoral task awaiting him, he said: “I am well aware of the difficulty of the task you are going to have to continue in this territory, which you already know, and which has been so pitilessly touched by the fratricidal violence produced by the desire for limitless power and easy wealth on the part of some, at the expense of the suffering of their brothers.” Finally, in line with his message of a programmed martyrdom, he concluded: “May your prudence and your wisdom, Mgr. José Alberto, help you to obtain and facilitate the reconciliation of the Colombian brothers of this region, but, by the same

token, may your prophetic mission lead you to bring to light, with courage, the injustices heaped upon the smallest ones, who are the favourites of the Lord in the Gospel.”

Taking Possession as Vicar of Puerto Gaitán

The signs continue to multiply... On 20 March, in this year 2000 of the Incarnation, the Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin and protector of the new bishop José Alberto and of the Prefect who preceded him, José Aurelio, the Eucharist of Taking Possession was celebrated in Puerto Gaitán. It is worth noting the presence of the Bishops of the six ecclesiastical divisions which make up the immense territory of 350,000 km² entrusted 96 years ago to the Company of Mary, and also the Bishop of San Vicente de Caguán, where is to be found what is known as the “zone of détente”, where, in the midst of generalized warfare, there is taking place the so-called dialogue between the Colombian Government and the leadership of the largest terrorist group in Colombia, the FARC, who operate largely with drug money and by other acts of pitiless and indiscriminating extortion.

But let us return to the celebration presided over by Mgr. José Alberto in his moment of taking possession of his see. In his opening address, as pastoral as it was Montfortian, the Nuncio took the opportunity to express a special appreciation for the work of the Montfort Missionaries in “this territory which recalls the cradle of the freedom of the five Bolivar countries gained by their heroic Plain-dwelling inhabitants who forged their independence.” Then, referring to the former Prefecture of the Vichada, he added: “This Prefecture was established by Pope Pius XII on 6 April 1956. Since that time, there have been six Prefects; I mention particularly your cousin, Mgr. José Aurelio Rozo Gutiérrez, whom you succeeded in 1995.” Having exhorted all the pastoral workers to bring about, in communion with their bishop, a new evangelisation, which calls for a new zeal and a fresh missionary enthusiasm, he emphasised the difficulty of the present time “which your dear country is passing through, saddened by such acts of violence, which are so much more absurd in that they are aimed by brothers against their own Colombian brothers. I exhort all parties in this conflict (in the Puerto Gaitán region, the Paramilitaries are dominant, using the same terrorist methods as the guerrillas) to have a respect for man, for his life is sacred and untouchable. In the midst of these divisions, there is an urgent need for reconciliation and solidarity based on the fundamental value of man, who, in Jesus Christ, has become the son of God.” There had to be a reference to Mary and to our spirituality in Mgr. Beniamino Stella’s address; after invoking St. Joseph, he added: “I also invoke the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, at the marriage feast of Cana, was marked out by her maternal solicitude, at once tender and attentive to detail, sharing the real needs of her brothers. She who is so loved and appreciated by you as a Montfortian, through the practice of *‘the slavery of love’*, she will accompany you in this other service which the Lord, in his loving Providence, has entrusted to you, just as, one day there in Galilee, he entrusted to his apostles the great responsibility of bearing to all peoples the good and joyful news of salvation.”

At the beginning of the celebration, and as part of it, various messages were delivered, among them one by the writer of this article, who read out the message of the Superior General for this occasion. Father General recalled in his message that Pope John

Paul II is continuing the tradition established nearly a hundred years ago, of giving to the Montfort Missionaries enormous tasks of evangelisation with a minimum of personnel and resources, and of “calling for and receiving from the Montfortian family in Colombia a collaboration which is sincere, zealous, creative and committed.” This new Vicariate has an area of 47,000 km²...

Speaking of practical things, all those of us who were present at this celebration, arrived from Villavicencio in two buses and two helicopters, one Russian and the other American, placed at our disposal by the army. For the moment, Mgr. Alberto stayed in Puerto Gaitán, where there is everything to be done, from the church to the bishop's house, and where he had to go looking for sheets at the neighbouring house, so that he could lie down in bed to sleep at night, having received various groups of visitors.

Final Scene on 25 March at Villa Montfort – Cumaral

For two days, 23 and 24 March, at the Villa Montfort, the Colombian Province celebrated in a real atmosphere of faith, fraternity and joy, an assembly designed to put into practice the Letter of the Capitulants, *Open to Jesus Christ...* in preparation for the next Provincial Chapter in May. Prepared by this atmosphere, we arrived at the celebration of the solemnity of the Annunciation.

On 25 March, the celebration of our Family Feast took on a deep meaning, both because of the central mystery of Christianity, celebrated in this Jubilee year 2000 of the Incarnation and in communion with the Holy Father who was on pilgrimage in the Holy Land; and because we were specially celebrating the 50th anniversary of the priesthood of Fr. Jean-Claude Leborgne, the only foreigner remaining in the Colombian Province, and also of Frs. Jean Martin, in France, and Wilhelmus van Eunen, in Holland, who are also celebrating this year, respectively their 50 and 60 years of priesthood, and who worked in Colombia with a great deal of generosity, love and competence. And, as if that were not enough, during this celebration presided over by Mgr. José Alberto Rozo and concelebrated with Mgr. Garavito, our Colombian confrere César Gutiérrez was ordained a deacon. The celebration was a great family affair, replete with memories. In fact, Mgr. José Alberto and Fr. Tarcisio Marroquin, the present superior of our theology students, were the first two priests ordained by Mgr. Garavito, in 1962. Fr. Claude Leborgne, who enjoys the esteem and admiration of all the confreres in Colombia, especially of Mgr. Alberto, and who was one of those who shaped our Province, both in the minor seminary in Choachí and in the mission of the Vichada, made us recall the presence of so many heroic missionaries from our mother-provinces: France and Holland. Mgr. Alberto made special mention of Fr. Wilhelmus van Eunen, who was his fraternal and spiritual support in the Major Seminary and whom he remembers with fondness and immense gratitude.

Certainly with humility as well as great joy, with faith and hope, and with a sense of both the Montfortian and Church family, we celebrated these events with the significant presence of Fr. Francisco Martinelli, the superior of the Delegation of Peru, and Fr. James Brady, the representative of the United States Province, very much sharing in these events. Mgr. José Alberto, who for many years was the leader of Montfortian integration in Latin America, and who filled, with competence, generosity and

effectiveness, various administrative posts, such as superior of the Minor Seminary in Choachí, Bursar and Provincial Superior, expressed his thanks to all who had made these moments possible, and asked forcefully for the help of prayer to make up for his own deficiencies and help him to accomplish the mission entrusted to him by God.

Miguel Patiño, S.M.M.

Echoes of the Jubilee

In Rome one of the simplest and most prayerful events of the Jubilee Year occurs each evening at 7 o'clock - rain or shine - in St. Peter's Square. Pilgrims and visitors gather around the great statue of St. Peter for a half-hour of prayer, with songs, a passage from the Gospel, a brief reflection, the singing of the Credo, prayers of the faithful, and a hymn to the Virgin Mary. The co-ordination and direction of this daily prayer has been entrusted to a Montfortian, Fr. Corrado Maggioni of the Italian Province, and he is assisted by Fr. Francesco Ferrari, smm and also by Fr. Pierre Paul, OMV. Each evening a different group of pilgrims or associations participates in the readings or songs, and often their cardinal or bishop will preside.

On Tuesday, March 7th the Montfortian Family was invited to lead the prayer, with Father General presiding from the steps of St. Peter's. Sr. Barbara O'Dea, Superior General of the Daughters of Wisdom, and Br. Jean Friant, Superior General of the Brothers of Saint Gabriel, proclaimed the Gospel in French and English. Other brothers, sisters, fathers and lay people of the Montfortian Family participated with prayers and readings. The combined choir from some of our parishes near the Via Prenestina led the singing. In all a very large number came from the three General Houses, the local communities, the parishes, and the scholasticate, joining hundreds of other pilgrims in St. Peter's Square.

It was the evening before Ash Wednesday, and Father General spoke of the Lenten journey in this Jubilee Year. "It is the gift of God, the goal of our Lent, to offer ourselves totally to God, transformed in spirit and in heart, to become on this earth the hands, the eyes and the heart of the Risen Lord. This is the gift of Baptism.... The Holy Father, Pope John Paul II has taken as the motto of his pontificate TOTUS TUUS. These words are an echo of the experience and the teaching of St. Louis Marie de Montfort which show us the transforming power of the perfect renewal of the baptismal promises through the hands of Mary... Throughout the journey of this Lent, let us offer ALL that we are and ALL that we have to God: Totus Tuus. Let us entrust our past to his mercy, our present to his love, our future to his providence. *I am all yours, and all that I have is yours, O most loving Jesus, through Mary, your holy Mother.*"

Our Departed Brethren

Fr. Eugene MOYNIHAN (1907-2000)

Died on 27 January 2000, in Sayville (USA), aged 92 with 72 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 15 August 1927, and was ordained a priest on 11 March 1933. His priesthood covered a wide variety of responsibilities: teaching in the

minor seminary, disseminating the works and spirituality of our founder, writing, preaching parish missions, chaplaincies, the pastoral care of a parish, and finally Provincial archivist. At the time of his death on 27 January 2000, he was the oldest member of the American Province of the Montfort Missionaries.

Bro. BOUDEWIJN (Boudewijn Herman van der KROON) (1945-2000)

Died on 3 February 2000, in Oirschot (Netherlands), aged 54, with 36 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 19 March 1963. He was first of all responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of the house in Voorschoten, and later moved to Oirschot, where he remained for the rest of his life, for many years looking after the garden. He was a keen and talented musician, playing the trombone in the local brass-band, and even travelling with them to give concerts abroad. He died suddenly while still serving the community in Oirschot.

Fr. Agostino CARGNIN (1925-2000)

Died on 29 February 2000, in Bergamo (Italy), aged 74, with 55 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 8 September 1944, and was ordained a priest on 4 March 1950. His priestly ministry was devoted to teaching in the minor seminary, preaching, caring for the material needs of the communities as bursar, and the missions as procurator, and latterly the organisation and direction of pilgrimages. He was preparing to celebrate his golden jubilee of ordination when he died just a few days before it.

Fr. Alain RIOU (1924-2000)

Died on 17 March 2000, in Roscoff (France), aged 75, with 56 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 8 September 1943, and was ordained a priest on 20 February 1949. The first years of his priestly life were devoted largely to the itinerant mission, working from a number of bases (Cholet, Brest, Vertou, Tourcoing). About 1972, he spent a year or two as parish-priest in Ile-Bouchard, and for many years afterwards was the Superior or Animator in a number of communities, including St-Laurent. Latterly he served as local bursar in Le Rody.

Fr. René HOTTE (1920-2000)

Died on 24 March 2000, in Nicolet (Canada), aged 79, with 58 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 15 September 1941, and was ordained priest on 1 March 1947. He devoted the early years of his priestly life to preaching, then for nine years, was superior of the Minor Seminary in Papineauville, where he had to oversee the construction of a new seminary (1957-1966). After a year of studying in Europe, he was superior of the Montfortian Marian Centre in Montreal (1969-1974). After this he spent nearly 20 years as Parish Priest of St-Adolphe d'Howard, before going to Dorval, where he spent his last years as chaplain to the Sisters of Notre-Dame.

Bibliography

- Corrado MAGGIONI, smm: *La via mariana alla Porta Santa*, Edizioni San Paolo, Milan, 1999, 101 pages. This book is a series of guided meditations on Mary, in

view of the Great Jubilee. Its aim is to help us to cross the threshold of the new millennium in the spirit of the Magnificat.

- Valentino BOSCO, smm, *È questione di cuore*, Editrice Elledici, Turin, 1999, 191 pages. The theme of this book lies within the spiritual tradition which has always seen consecrated marriage as a sign of the common vocation of the People of God. It aims to meet the need to translate theological arguments into a more existential level, awakening an interest and a passion for God.
- Joseph GUNDRY, smm, *Archiefbrieven 1871-1905* (Archive of Letters 1871-1905), Oirschot, 1998, 342 pages. This book, based on the Montfortian archives in the Netherlands, traces the beginnings of the Dutch Province of the Company of Mary.
- *Liturgia própria da Família Monfortina*, Edições Monfortinas, João Monlevade, 1999, 116 pages. This is a Portuguese version of the Liturgy proper to the Montfortian Family, produced by our confreres in Brazil.
- Montfort: *El Secreto admirable del Santísimo Rosario*, Centro de Espiritualidad Monfortiana, Lima, Peru, 3rd edition, 1999, 238 pages.
- Montfort: *El Secreto admirable del Santísimo Rosario*, Centro Mariano Monfortiano, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia, 3rd edition, 1999, 202 pages.
- Montfort: *Il Segreto meraviglioso del Santo Rosario*, (e metodi per recitare il Rosario), Edizione Monfortane, Roma, 4th edition, 1999, 219 pages.
- Montfort: *Marijina tajna ili Sveto ropstvo Ijubavi* (The “Secret of Mary” in Croat), Missionari Monfortani, Zagreb, 1999, 52 pages.
- Montfort: *El Secreto de María*, Centro Mariano Monfortiano, Bogotá, 1999, 55 pages.
- Montfort: *El Secreto de María*, Editorial Lumen, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1999, 94 pages. With a commentary by Michel Lemarié, smm.
- Montfort: *Le Cahier de Notes*, A reading and transcription of the manuscript made in 1948 by Fr. Pierre H. Eyckeler, smm, Rome, 2000, 341 pages. This latest presentation was transcribed as a computer document by Fr. Alphonse Bossard, smm, and is here presented by Fr. Battista Cortinovis, the Postulator for the Doctorate of Montfort.
- Luciano NERVI, smm, *Malawi, Flames in the African Sky*, Editrice Velar, Gorle (Bergamo, Italy), 1994, 186 pages. A translation of the original Italian, to celebrate 100 years of evangelisation.
- Luciano NERVI, smm, *Peru, Crocevia di popoli e civiltà*, Editrice Velar, Gorle, 1998, 226 pages.

Montfortian Family News

The Brothers of Saint Gabriel celebrate their General Chapter in Rome from 6-28 April. The Daughters of Wisdom will celebrate their General Chapter at Ariccia from 23

July to 18 August. Carry in your prayer and thoughts the clarity of the witness and mission of our Brothers and Sisters around the world, and their discernment and election of their next General Administration.