



# L'Écho Montfortain

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## WORD FROM FATHER GENERAL

Snow covered most of France and more snow threatened. Nevertheless the Montfortian Family in its hundreds – religious, associates, friends – streamed into the glacial but luminous nine hundred year old church of Saint-Jean de Montierneuf in Poitiers. It was February 2<sup>nd</sup>, the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the foundation of the Daughters of Wisdom in this ancient city. Places of honour were reserved for the three Superiors General and their Councils, but also more importantly for the blind, deaf, mute and other handicapped persons from Larnay and elsewhere. The young sisters of Année Sagesse had travelled from Rome, immediately recasting the ancient Poitvin church in a multicultural, international mode. The Archbishop of Poitiers, Mgr Albert Rouet, was to preside and preach in such an extraordinary way that he increased our joy and deepened our commitment to the folly of the Cross.

The church of Montierneuf is only a few blocks away from the General Hospital, where Montfort was chaplain and the 18 year old Marie-Louise Trichet joined him, living poor among the poor, scandalizing the good bourgeois society, and quietly dis-organizing the established order. This February 2<sup>nd</sup> one could feel their presence in these streets of Poitiers, in the corridors of the General Hospital, in the church of Saint-Jean. At the conclusion of the Eucharist, word arrived from Turin that Mother Ines Maria, the former superior general, had died an hour before. The sign of the Cross, the complete emptiness and surpassing richness of the Paschal Mystery was enveloping all the celebrations and all the emotions of this day. In our hearts, the Cross of Poitiers truly was lifted high.

Later that afternoon there was a solemn celebration of Vespers in the Basilica at St. Laurent-sur-Sèvre, again overflowing with the Family and friends and civil authorities. The new bishop of Luçon, Mgr. Michel Santier presided. Certainly for all present, a highlight of the celebration was the Sending on Mission of the four sisters who will found the new Daughter of Wisdom mission in Ruteng, Indonesia. Each one was called by name by Mother General and received her obedience to the mission. The new team comes from Canada, India and Madagascar – a truly international effort of the congregation in its 300<sup>th</sup> year.

But no less moving was a final prayer at the tombs of St. Louis-Marie and Blessed Marie-Louise, where Sister Barbara read the Last Testament of Mother Marie-Louise. *“In the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Now that I am about to render to my Creator an account of how I have conducted myself with regard to the Daughters of Wisdom, . . . I feel obliged to recommend to them all, those present and those yet to come, never to deviate from the primitive spirit of our holy Founder, which is a spirit of humility, of poverty, of detachment, of love, and of union with each other...*

*By so doing, they will further my desires; they will do what God has given me the grace to do during my life on earth, and they will fulfil the final wish of a Mother who has always loved them, who loves them still, and who, even after her death, will continue to love them and never forget them.”* For, indeed, in that beautiful Basilica one could feel the presence of Mother Ines Maria alongside the four sisters newly missioned to Indonesia; one could feel the presence of Montfort and

Marie-Louise and the thousands of sisters, brothers and fathers who have gone before us in our Montfortian Family.

The celebrations of Poitiers and St. Laurent distilled for me many things I had been experiencing since October... the entire Circle of Life, the Paschal Mystery, as it is being lived around the Congregation. In October the EGC witnessed the life and energy of the Montfortian Family in India; in November and December I had rich and moving visits with our elderly and sick confreres in Vroenhof and then in Bergamo (where a young Italian brother made his perpetual vows). From there I went to Nairobi to install the first African as superior of the young General Delegation. Then in January I visited all the communities in Canada, witnessing the enthusiasm and dedication of our lay collaborators, and the priceless, timeless love and example of the aged and sick in the infirmaries of the SMM and the Daughters of Wisdom. I presided at the funeral of one of my former teachers, a Daughter of Wisdom whose talents and capacities made her a valiant directress of a complex institution for the handicapped, and then provincial superior. But a tragic injury to her brain transformed her for the last 16 years of her life into one of the handicapped, living proof of the Folly of Wisdom. I had the grace to say a final goodbye to one of my American confreres, an immensely incarnated, multicultural missionary who preached the Good News and helped the poor with selfless zeal till he died at 80 years of age. Then off to Ecuador for a series of meetings to foresee the future of our formation programmes, the future of the SMM in Latin America.... Surely you can see what I mean: the entire Circle of Life, the entire Paschal Mystery being lived out in us and among us throughout the Montfortian Family.

At the end of a corridor in the General House, there is an exact reproduction of the Cross of Poitiers and beside it a statue of St. Louis-Marie. Montfort seems to be pointing to the Cross with his right hand, as if to say: "There it is! Take it or leave it! But this is what life is all about!" The Paschal Mystery, the virtues and attitudes inscribed on that Cross, Mother Mary as the womb, the star, who births us into the Mystery and lovingly guides us home. In this 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary year we might well ask ourselves where am I in the journey of life, in the Paschal Mystery? What does the Cross of Poitiers say today to me, to my culture, to my community? In what ways do I still resemble the 18 year old girl of Poitiers, so seized by God's call that she was bold enough to risk all for a dream of Wisdom and Love?

*William Considine, smm*

## **OFFICIAL NEWS ITEMS**

### **PERPETUAL PROFESSIONS**

At Nantipwili, Malawi, on 30 November 2002 : Henry Robert CHAGOMA.

At Bogotá, Colombia, on 7 December 2002 : Édmer Iván SALGADO GONZÁLEZ, Éver Julio VEGA BENAVIDES.

At Redona di Bergamo, Italy, on 8 December 2002 : Fabio GAIANI.

At Nairobi, Kenya, on 8 December 2002 : Ernest AKHONYA MUKAVANA.

At Mysore, India, on 15 December 2002 : Ronald Lawrence DHASON.

At Bandung, Indonesia, on 19 January 2003 : Herman Joseph NUWA NUPA, Antonius TENSI.

At Antananarivo, Madagascar, on 1 February 2003 : Martial RAMAMONJISOA, Jean Claude RAMANDRAIVONONA, Marc Marie Bonnespérance RANDRIANANDRASANA.

## **ORDINATIONS TO DEACONATE**

At Paucarbamba, Peru, on 5 January 2002 : Jesús Leopoldo CUCHO PUCHURI.

At Rome, Italy, on 23 November 2002 : Bruno CUZZILLA, Domenico PEDULLÀ, Andrea PESENTI.

At Huaycán, Peru, on 8 December 2002: Luis SALVADOR ÁVILA.

At Bogotá, Colombia, on 8 December 2002 : Édmer Iván SALGADO GONZÁLEZ, Éver Julio VEGA BENAVIDES.

At Mysore, India, on 15 December 2002 : Ronald Lawrence DHASON.

At Bandung, Indonesia, on 19 January 2003 : Herman Joseph NUWA NUPA, Antonius TENSI.

At Antananarivo, Madagascar, on 2 February 2003 : Martial RAMAMONJISOA, Jean Claude RAMANDRAIVONONA, Marc Marie Bonnespérance RANDRIANANDRASANA.

## **ORDINATIONS TO PRIESTHOOD**

At Huaycán, Peru, on 7 August 2002 : Jesús Leopoldo CUCHO PUCHURI.

At Redona di Bergamo, Italy, on 26 October 2002 : Gianluigi SCUDELETTI.

## **PROVINCE OF THE NETHERLANDS – NEW ADMINISTRATION**

During the Chapter of the Dutch Province, held at Oirschot 25-26 November 2002, a new administration was elected for a mandate of six years. The new Provincial Superior is Fr. Willem (Wiel) LOGISTER. His councillors are Frs. Peter DENNEMAN, Ben FAAS, Simon KUYTEN and Hub KLEIJKERS. The Superior General, who was present for the Chapter, confirmed the election.

## **GENERAL DELEGATION FOR AFRICA – NEW ADMINISTRATION**

The Superior General named a new Superior and a new Council for the General Delegation for Africa. The new Superior is Fr. Thomas MSUSA (Malawi). His councillors are Frs. Charles BEIRNE (England/Uganda), André BABUSIA (Democratic Republic of Congo) and Blaise JAILOSI (Malawi). The Superior General installed the new administration on 14 December 2002, during his visit to the regional house of the Delegation in Nairobi, Kenya.

## **GENERAL DELEGATION OF PORTUGAL – NEW ADMINISTRATION**

The Superior General renamed as Superior of the General Delegation of Portugal for a second mandate Fr. António Martins PEREIRA. His councillors will be Frs. Manuel VIEIRA and Rui VALÉRIO. The Vicar General, Fr. Ivo LIBRALATO, installed the new administration on 27 December 2002, at Fatima.

## **ITALIAN PROVINCIAL DELEGATION OF PERU-BRAZIL – NEW ADMINISTRATION**

On 1 January 2003 the Provincial of Italy renamed for a second mandate of three years Fr. Francesco MARTINELLI. His councillors will be Frs. Alejandro CHUQUIMBALQUI, Daniel MALÁSQUEZ, Giuseppe MIZZOTTI and Luis STEFANI.

## THE MONTFORT MISSIONARIES IN INDONESIA (PART 2)

The 1980s ushered in a time of reflection and planning for the Montfort Missionaries in Indonesia. This was for various reasons: first there were the changes taking place in the Diocese of Sintang; then there was the question for the foreign missionaries of whether or not to adopt Indonesian nationality; there was a Provincial Chapter in Holland; and finally a start was made in Montfortian formation.

Before the Provincial Chapter, a regional Chapter was organised for the 24 May 1980 in Sintang, in the presence of the Provincial, Fr. H. Somers, at which the following topics were discussed.

**Changes in the Diocese** – For thirty years, the management of the Diocese of Sintang had been wholly in the hands of the Montfort Missionaries. Not only the Bishop, but all the other offices in the Diocese were occupied by them. The policy of the diocese was that of the Company of Mary and vice-versa. With the arrival of a diocesan priest, Mgr. Doera, as bishop in 1977, the situation changed, and it had to change even more when, at the beginning of the 1980s, two other important posts were taken over by diocesan priests, Vedastus Riky and Mateus Rampai. The latter took over the job of Lam van den Boorn as secretary of the diocese, and Vedastus Riky took on the teaching post formerly held by Serf Hamers. Those Montfort Fathers who remained in diocesan posts were Joep van Lier as “social delegate” and Vicar General, and Piet Derckx as Bursar.

After 37 years of hard work in and for the diocese as Inspector of Schools, parish priest, Vicar General, Apostolic Administrator, Superior of the Mission and, in the latter years, as diocesan secretary, Fr. Lam van den Boorn returned to Holland in 1983. Some time later Serf Hamers followed him, having handed over as parish priest to Vedastus Riky.

**How do the Montfort Missionaries live and work in Borneo?** – In the report of his Visitation, the Provincial, Fr. Hub Somers, described it as follows: “Relations between the confreres are not bad, but too often they show a reluctance to share their work and their working methods, even when this is judged appropriate by the authorities. There is less good will and openness shown to others. We are all very busy, and on the material level we are doing better than in the past. We even want a little more luxury. While in the past the group was more homogeneous and almost around the same age, today we have to recognise the differences in age and opinions. There is a new bishop, and there are other congregations involved (OMI, CM). Means of communication have improved to the point where we are learning to know one another more deeply. There is no specifically Montfortian group. The links are more accidental than spiritual. But we have to be able to deepen our Montfortian life, for example, by the translation of the writings of Montfort, and of works on Montfort, by prayer services on Marian feasts and, in Montfort’s own spirit, by our service of the Church. The work is certainly important, but life is more important: that was the conclusion of our meeting.”

**Yes or No to Indonesian nationality?** – This was up to the free choice of each one. However, the government expected that all functionaries would be Indonesian citizens. This meant that nearly all the missionaries chose to take up Indonesian nationality.

The positive side of this process of *Indonesianisation* lay in the special attention needing to be given to priests and vocations, and this applied just as much to our own group of Montfort Missionaries. **There was more and more talk of Montfortian formation.** In the past those who wanted to become Montfort Missionaries had first to be ordained priest. Now certain Montfort Missionaries were asking if it were not now time to begin a specific Montfortian formation, in collaboration with the diocese of Sintang. Was there someone in our group who could take on this responsibility? During the regional Chapter of 1983, it was proposed that those who came forward as candidates for the Congregation, should first of all have a period of getting to know us in one of our communities, with a view to making a proper choice afterwards. The idea of a special formation house in Malang or Bandung was raised.

At the beginning of 1983, our Regional Superior, Fr. Lam van den Boorn, was invited to take part in a meeting of Asian Montfort Missionaries in Bangalore, India. For the first time Montfortian

collaboration in Asia was on the agenda. The discussions were limited to the reflection that Asia is a truly vast area and the regions where Montfortians are working all show great cultural differences. A common formation programme seemed very difficult.

The Provincial Chapter was expecting initiatives in the line of renewal of religious life. How were we to live as Montfortians? The Chapter said: community prayer is necessary, and is even an essential and urgent element.

On 14 January 1983, Fr. Cees Smit was elected as the new Regional Superior. Because of the arrival of candidates who had to spend a period in our communities, the need for community life was heightened. Each community would have to reflect and search for some way of praying and living together. Who was going to translate the writings of Montfort? Who was going to take on the task of publishing a brochure? There was an increasing interest in favour of the idea of an Indonesian Montfortian entity. There was an evident interest also in community life, in the renewal of religious life and in a specifically Montfortian formation. It was proposed to hand back to the diocese those parishes outside Putussibau and Sintang and to build a centre from which we would begin a specifically Montfortian apostolate. The increasing number of diocesan priests and the coming of other congregations only reinforced this desire for an apostolate proper to the Montfort Missionaries.

In 1983, Mgr. Doera raised the idea of a Major Seminary in Bandung. Who would be the Rector? Eventually Fr. Piet Derckx was chosen for this task. In June 1984, Piet left for Bandung to become the first Rector of the Major Seminary "Betang Batara". Two Montfortian candidates did their postulancy there under the direction of Fr. Derckx, who was also entrusted with the task of finding a suitable house to serve as a Montfortian novitiate. This was found at Jalan Gunung Kencana n° 10, and on 8 September 1985 Wim Peeters, who had come in the meantime from Sintang to Bandung, started the canonical novitiate year with five novices. Following the example of the Crosiers, the Company of Mary settled on 2 years of novitiate. Finally, **on 15 August 1987, three novices made their first vows.**

Given the increasing number of novices and the inappropriateness of having novices and scholastics under the same roof, a new house had to be found. Piet Derckx finished his job as Rector of the diocesan seminary, and became the Rector of the new Montfortian seminary in Jalan Sukasenang in Bandung. The scholastics did their studies in philosophy and theology at the Catholic University of Parahyangan.

As the number of novices and scholastics continued to increase, a second floor had to be built. Later, the original building of the Montfortian seminary, which had 9 rooms, was exchanged in 1990 for a new building in Jalan Surya Sumantri with 35 rooms. In August 1991 Fr. Nico Schneiders arrived in Bandung to help Piet with the courses in the Major Seminary and the Novitiate. The same year four Brother candidates entered the Congregation. They did their postulancy years at the scholasticate, and later continued their novitiate training together with the other candidates.

In 1985, as these changes were beginning in the diocese of Sintang, and in the wake of the training of a diocesan clergy, a conflict arose and began to affect the relationships among the various jurisdictions in the diocese.

This event highlighted the need to set up a proper Montfortian residence in Sintang, which, after the Novitiate house, would become the first Montfortian residence. In 1986 the construction of Biara Montfort was begun, and on 2 January 1988 the Montfort Missionaries who up till then – with the exception of Joep van Lier – had been living in the Bishop's house, moved into their new house in Menyurai. Father Hub Swerts was the first superior. A further year was needed to complete the building, but it was blessed by Mgr. Doera on 2 February 1989. Brother Ad Sommers remained in his post as mechanic and Brother Piet van Hoof as architect in the diocese. Fr. Cees Smit moved from *kampong* to *kampong*, thus fulfilling his task as regional superior. The new house became the heart of the Montfortian work in Borneo. At that time (1988) there were 14 Montfort Missionaries working there, namely Hub Swerts, Joep van Lier, Jacq Maessen, Ad Sommers, Piet van Hoof and Jamal in Sintang, Toon Bernard in Serawai, Nico Schneiders in Ng.Pinoh, Cees Smit in Lebang, Janus van der Vleuten and Peter Hoogland in Putussibau, Alois Ding in Mendelam, Frans Luiten and Henk Kalter in Benua Martinus. Piet Derckx and Wim Peeters were working in formation in Bandung on the Island of Java.

In April 1989, on the feast of St. Louis Marie, an impressive ceremony commemorated the arrival of the first Montfort Missionaries in Borneo on 7 April 1939, 50 years before. On this occasion, Fr. Provincial, Thei Hustin, blessed a small church dedicated to St. Louis Marie in Jerora.

During the years 1990-1993, the strained relationships in Sintang brought about the displacement of many confreres. November 11, 1993 Piet Derckx was named as the new regional superior. The residence of the regional was transferred from Sintang to Bandung.

Since the Montfort Missionaries no longer held any administrative posts in the diocese, they felt freer with regard to the Montfortian mission to give more attention to the deepening of the faith and to the training of various groups in the diocese of Sintang. Team work centred on 2 places, Sintang and Putussibau, became the priority. As well as the formation of Montfortians, Bandung looked also to the Legion of Mary, preaching and conferences.

The events mentioned above led us to a deeper awareness of ourselves as a Montfortian group. We became aware also of our weakness in the wake of an illness suffered by Alois Ding and the departure of several confreres. We ran the risk of not having enough personnel especially for the formation of the young members of the Congregation. But despite these negative experiences, the group of Montfort Missionaries was full of optimism for a future oriented towards typically Montfortian works. This optimism was reflected in the support offered by the group to projects set in motion by Jacques Maessen for KOBUS, a centre for cultural and social information.

Relations between the Montfort Missionaries and Mgr. Doera continued to be strained until January 1995, when the bishop was replaced by Mgr. Agustinus Agus.

Our confrere Ignatius Widodo, the first fruit of our formation programme, was ordained priest by Mgr Doera on 14 May 1995, just before the Bishop's departure. New blood brought new life... Very gradually the situation returned to normal and the number of Montfort Missionaries increased. In 1996 there was the ordination of Fathers Konradus Hancu and Mateus Juang, followed in 1997 by 3 other ordinations. The project for a new house in Putussibau began to take shape. When, after five years in Bandung, Joep van Lier returned to Sintang, he was called to begin the building of our house in Kedamin which was to be called "Deo Soli". At the same time, the idea of starting a parish in Flores was born. A parish in this place would facilitate the reception of candidates coming from the four minor seminaries in that region. This plan was put into effect when Father Konradus Hancu moved to Flores. So the parish of Poco, dedicated to St. Louis Marie, was started and officially inaugurated on 31 December 1999 by Mgr. Eduardus Sangsun, S.V.D.

In the meantime the construction of "Deo Soli" in Borneo was making progress, and in 2000 the first Montfortians occupied the new house, with Brother Yusuf Gunarto as local superior. On the occasion of a meeting of all the local superiors, Biara "Deo Soli" was inaugurated on 10 January 2001 by Mgr. Agustinus Agus, Bishop of Sintang. The new house was to serve as a centre for the deepening of the faith, and the pedagogical training of youth.

The beginning of the new Millennium brought with it the putting into effect of a number of projects. The publication of the writings of Montfort in Indonesian was followed by other publications linked with our spirituality and guided by a team of Montfort Missionaries in Bandung. The books and other writings already translated form a good base for the propagation of Montfortian spirituality among the lay-folk. A start has been made even on the translation of the rule of the Daughters of Wisdom, who, after a first visit in 2001, have promised the opening of a community in Flores at the beginning of 2003.

Because of the increasing number of candidates, the scholasticate had become too small, so the idea arose of using the novitiate house for the last two years of priestly formation. Given the fact that the majority of candidates were now coming from the island of Flores, it was decided to build a new novitiate in Ruteng/Flores. The Dutch Province was in agreement and helped us to put this project into effect. In April 2001, building work began, and at the beginning of May 2002, our novitiate moved to Ruteng with Wim Peeters and his novices.

At the end of May 2002, the Superior General, Father William Considine, and the Provincial of the Netherlands, Fr. Charles Voncken, paid us a visit. On 2 June 2002, during a simple celebration of

Evening Prayer, **the former Provincial Delegation of Indonesia was given the status of a General Delegation.** The former administration, with Piet Derckx as superior, was appointed to continue its term of office for one year. On 5 June, these senior officials left for Ruteng for the ordination of three of our confreres. On 10 June, after the celebration, our new novitiate was opened and officially inaugurated by the Superior General in the presence of Fr. Charles Voncken, Provincial of the Netherlands, Piet Derckx, Ignatius Widodo, the vice-superior, and Novice-master Wim Peeters with his 13 novices.

The Indonesian Delegation looks forward to a future which will bring alive the heritage of our founder in the hearts of men.

*Piet Derckx, s.m.m.*

## **OUR DEPARTED BRETHREN**

### **Father Claude BABIN (1923-2002)**

Died on 20 November 2002 at Cholet (France), aged 79 years with 60 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 8 September 1942 and was ordained priest on 21 February 1948. At first he was an itinerant missionary, very ardent and talented, a good communicator, singer and animator of crowds. An orator of great talent, he made the Good News accessible, attractive and exciting. From 1965 until the end of the 1980's, he was the director of the Montfortian Pilgrimage in France, where once again he gave his all. He was good at organization, and always very close to the people involved. Bit by bit his health forced him to withdraw from active life. In the community of the elderly and sick confreres at St. Laurent, where he spent these last years, he was a humble witness of simple friendship and peace. He was much appreciated there for his deep and discrete piety.

### **Father Bernard BLOOD (1923-2003)**

Died on 15 January 2003 at Bay Shore (USA), aged 80 years with 58 of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 15 August 1944 and was ordained priest on 25 March 1950. Initially he was assigned to vocation promotion. Then followed various assignments in parish ministry and also in preaching, in St. Louis, Missouri, in Ozone Park, NY and in Eastport, NY. Over the years he learnt several languages to be of better service in ministry, thus he could also speak French, Italian, Chichewa, Creole and Spanish. For over 20 years he served as chief chaplain of Good Samaritan Hospital, ministering to multicultural patients until a year before his death. His zeal and capacity for preaching in several languages, his love for the mission and the poor, his dedication to the SMM, leave him cherished by all who knew him.

### **Brother Claude (Jean PELLEAU) (1925-2003)**

Died on 21 January 2003 in Cholet (France), aged 77 years with 46 of Religious Profession. Born in Finistère, he made his first vows on 7 October 1956 at 30 years of age. From his parents he had learned to cultivate and cherish the land and the farm. Thus he worked as the farmer and cultivator at St. Laurent, at the minor seminary of Pelousey near Besançon, and also at Pontchâteau. Both visitors and professional gardeners appreciated the quality of this work. The confreres and his friends much enjoyed his simplicity and his dedication. He lived his union with God and his Montfortian religious consecration, expressing it in his love for creation and the fertility of the garden.

### **Father Álvaro VIVAS MARTÍNEZ (1937-2003)**

Died on 31 January 2003 in a transport accident in Bogotá (Colombia), aged 65 years with 44 of Religious Profession. He made his first vows in San Juanito on 2 February 1958 and was ordained priest on 2 August 1963. For 40 years he exercised his pastoral ministry with dedication and self-sacrifice, first as professor in the minor seminary, then in various parishes in the dioceses of Villavicencio and Medellín. But the greatest part of his life was given to the mission of the Vichada. His death came alone, instantaneously, due to a bus accident in Bogotá. Padre Álvaro was a joyous, extroverted confrere of great

good humour, filled with stories and anecdotes of his missionary journeys. He was gifted in languages and this served him well in his varied ministries. The suddenness and shock of his death is a great loss to the Vichada mission and to the Province.

**Father Jean DE THOURY (1932-2003)**

Died on 1 February 2003 in Madrid (Spain), aged 70 years with 51 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 8 September 1951 and was ordained priest on 16 February 1958. After a license in theology at Rome and another in classics at Poitiers, he was professor and then superior at the minor seminary of Pontchâteau. In 1970 he went to teach in Spain, at our minor seminary at Loeches. Then he continued in parish ministry at Torrejón de Ardoz, Madrid. The week before his death, he had undergone routine surgery and was recovering well, when unexpectedly he died. For the people of his parish and the confreres in Spain, his death was great shock and a deep loss.

**Brother Raymond LACOURSE (1917-2003)**

Died on 12 February 2003 in Nicolet (Canada), aged 85 years with 64 of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 19 March 1938, the feast of Saint Joseph. He worked on the farms and gardens in the seminaries and novitiate of Papineauville, Nicolet and Vanier. From 1974 till 1998 he did the same at the retreat house of Drummondville. He was a man of nature, of the farms, the gardens and the fields. There he gave the best of himself. In return, these places taught him to admire and respect the great mystery of Life, and developed within him patience and recollection. After the example of St. Joseph, he wanted to spend his entire life in Mary's house, and wherever he worked were for him spaces where Mary could act, forming hearts, supporting vocations, renewing the spirit of Christianity.

**Father Eliseo ACHURY GARAVITO (1915-2003)**

Died on 15 February 2003 in Choachí (Colombia), aged 87 years, with 70 of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 10 January 1933 and was ordained priest on 14 August 1938. At first he was a professor at the minor seminary. He was meticulous, a polyglot, with great musical abilities. He was also a builder of churches and a parish priest in many towns. His final years of illness and suffering were spent in the Unidad Social in Choachí, where he was greatly loved by the elderly and staff. At his funeral there was a remarkable participation of delegations from the parishes where he had worked. He was one of the great pioneers of the Church in the Eastern plains of Colombia and of our SMM missionary presence there.

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JEAN HEMERY, S.M.M. AND OTHERS : *Marie, la Mère des disciples – Vingt-cinq témoins*, Edition Pierre Téqui, Paris, 2002, 336 pages. The witnesses to Marian spirituality presented here – from the Bible to the present day, and from thirteen countries – represent various types of Christians in the Church: priests and laity, founders of religious congregations or associations, missionaries, spiritual authors, religious and children.