



L'Écho Montfortain

N° 523 – English Edition – December 2005

LETTER FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

To all confreres of the Congregation:

- to you, older brothers and fathers who have a great heritage to share*
- to you, brothers and fathers who are giving the best of your life to the Montfortian mission*
- to you, who find yourselves in the mission of animation, or of service, or of formation*
- to you, who are sick and offer up your weakness to give strength to the building of the Kingdom*
- to you, young people who are discovering Christ as the only reason for life and who feel called to live in community for apostolic service in the world of today to share Montfortian spirituality*

It has been a few months since the conclusion of the General Chapter, and nearly all the entities of our Congregation are preparing to have the second session of provincial chapters or delegation assemblies and community meetings, which must be a privileged space and time for discerning the paths to take in carrying out the orientations of the Chapter.

We too on the General Council are spending time with these orientations, to develop a “Plan of Action” flowing from them, which will be at the service of the mission entrusted to us.

But the paths and initiatives that can flow from a discernment in the Spirit will have depth and consistency to the extent that each one of us will take up the invitation made by Pope Benedict XVI to the young people in Cologne: “*Open wide your hearts to God! Let yourselves be surprised by Christ! ... Share your joys and pains with Christ, and let him enlighten your minds with his light and touch your hearts with his grace.*”

At this opportunity I would like to bring to your attention what is at the heart of the pathway offered to us by the confreres united at the Chapter, and which gives blood, that is, vital sap and energy, to all the other proposals: COMMUNITY – SPIRITUALITY – MISSION. These three roots, which need to be watered, must give life to that tree which will be recognized by its fruit (Mt. 12, 33).

COMMUNITY

Much is said these days about community life. I would like to speak to you about three aspects that seem very important in order to have a true experience of communion in community. While going beyond previous ways of concretizing this reality, perhaps we will succeed in drawing upon all the richness of how it was lived in the past, and be able to present the same values creatively to the world and culture of today.

- **Authentic and true personal relationships:** The person, every person, is created in the image and likeness of God. Within each of us lies the richness of a life that has been entrusted to us, and we are called to make it burst forth, and also to help one another in this task. From this comes a concern to avoid falling into an ideology which would exclude others, to avoid falling into a moralism which would sit in judgment of others, to avoid falling into a use of power which would crush others, to avoid falling into the temptation of

money which would divide us from each other, above all to avoid falling into the temptation of the self-centred "I" which would dominate the place of others.

- **A capacity for silence and for listening:** to be open to the life, the suffering, the path of every confrere. None of us is the "owner" of life and grace, neither young nor old, neither the West nor any other group. Everyone has his richness, and being attentive to this allows us to have the experience of giving and receiving in order to grow together.
- **The courage to speak and the courage to question:** the community is a place of participation, of sharing. We must not fear differences, because what is different is a contribution to the quest. In community, everyone must see himself as a co-responsible and necessary contributor to the search for ways and means to be an "apostolic body" of brothers who live for the primacy of the Kingdom.

SPIRITUALITY

When we speak about Montfortian Spirituality, we often think of the "specialists", whom we want to thank from the bottom of our hearts for their service to knowing, reflecting upon and deepening this path of holiness traced by our Founder. But I would like to reflect briefly now on what this spiritual way has meant for the missionary life of Montfort and therefore remains as a light for us who want to follow him:

- **A Spirituality for mission:** Our Founder was a deeply apostolic man. His writings – from *The Prayer for Missionaries* to *The Letter to the Friends of the Cross*, from the *True Devotion* to the *Hymns* – emerge from the fullness of his heart, from his lived missionary experience, and remain at the service of apostolic action. From this spirituality, every Montfortian must draw nourishment for mission.
- **A Spirituality of availability:** "Liberos", how many times has this word resounded in the Prayer for Missionaries! Montfort wants us to live as true sons of Mary, according to the heart of Jesus and open to the Spirit. This is an invitation to an exodus – to move out from the many certainties that we continuously manufacture and to have instead a heart that resonates with the proclamation of the Reign of Jesus through Mary in the contemporary world.
- **A Spirituality beginning with the little ones and the poor:** "Open to Jesus Christ!" This cry of Montfort in Dinan when he bore a poor man on his shoulders must lead us to an option for the poor and to make our own a personal and communal solidarity with them. The spirit of poverty, of simplicity, and of sharing, will be an evangelical response to the temptation of consumerism in today's world.

MISSION

The primitive apostolic community - "after the example of the poor apostles" - guides us on our missionary path. We are a community of sinners, full of limits and fragility, in need of mutual help, but who also want to trust in one another, and above all to trust in the One who sends us to be witnesses of his Life. For this we must live our mission following the example of the Apostles.

- **A Passion for Christ, a Passion for Humanity:** this title, chosen for the International Congress on Consecrated Life, brings us back to the commandment to love. Only a deep love allows us to experience an encounter with the Lord which brings us to an equally deep love for humanity, for every person.
- **In the midst of history today:** The ongoing formation to which we are called, urges us to be open to the concrete cultural situation of people today, in order to understand their real way of living and hoping, and to be able to respond evangelically to the questions that are posed by our contemporaries. We cannot preach "to the wind," but we must develop concrete relations with people in order to offer the beauty of the faith to each person.

- **With the heart of Mary:** Montfort points to Mary as a path of life and mission. Through her, we must bring her Son to humanity. Like her in Cana of Galilee, we must open the way for Jesus. Together with her at the foot of the Cross, we must be present to the sufferings of the world. With her at Pentecost, we must receive the Spirit which gives power and courage and opens us up to hope.

As the celebration of Christmas approaches, I would like to extend, together with my Council, the SHALOM of the Lord. We wish for each one the peace within us which unites us with the heart of God, and the peace around us which unites us in community and with all people. This will allow us to go like the apostles, "from village to village, bringing the Good News and curing diseases everywhere" (Lk. 9, 6), bringing peace, joy, freedom, reconciliation, communion, and harmony.



Santino BREMBILLA, s.m.m.,
Superior General

OFFICIAL NEWS ITEMS

FIRST PROFESSIONS

31/05/2005 in Kanathi (India)
KONGANAVAR Deepak Joseph and RAJAN Soundhar

29/06/2005 in Ruteng (Indonesia)

BAMBANG Herianus
BEONG Zakarias
HARYANTO MITAN Eusebius
JEKIA Vabianus
LAWE DANGA Fransiskus
LUDOK KELORE Robertus
MUSANAI Stefanus
OLA RUING Laurensius

PALUS Godefridus
REA Albertus Magnus
SAMBUT Marselinus
SERANI ATAWOLO Gabriel
SUKUR Hermanus
SUMARNO Egidius
YUDA Yohanes
YUSUF Bonevasius

ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE

03/07/2005 Port au Prince (Haiti) SAINT JEAN Zacharie

ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

03/05/2005	Bangalore (India)	CHOWRI MUTHU Ravi Joseph
07/05/2005	Nirmalapuram (India)	ELAVUNKAL Roy John
11/05/2005	Mananthavady (India)	THUMULLIL Shibi Jose
13/05/2005	Sivagangai (India)	JESURAJ Arokia Prabhakar
18/05/2005	Mysore (India)	NICHOLAS John Marie
26/05/2005	Nalgonda (India)	KATA Balaswamy

SUPERIOR OF THE GENERAL HOUSE: Fr. Ivo LIBRALATO

GENERAL CHAPTER 2005 ORIENTATIONS: THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

As the General Council began their work to carry out the orientations of the General Chapter, they spent several days reflecting together on the Chapter Documents. Here is a summary of some reflections shared by the General Council in their discussions. This is just a beginning. More specific plans will be developed in dialogue with superiors of the entities and with confreres.

I. To strengthen the bonds of an international communion for mission.

The theme of internationality runs through all the chapter orientations.

Now it's a matter of continuing in the spirit of the Chapter and to help this perspective to become part of the daily life of each entity by engaging this "spirit of internationality" directly in structures; this will give rise to a new reality.

The desire and the will to have an experience of a "religious family" can bring about a conversion to a sense of belonging to the Congregation in a family spirit which is proper to it. A balance is to be found between the extremes of centralisation and of decentralisation.

For a better mutual acquaintance among the confreres, following the success of the EGC in India, we noted the possibility of other EGC's taking place by turns in other entities. We also noted the importance of a system of communication. *The Echo* which has helped us to know the deceased confreres could help us to know also those who are living.

II. Walking Together ... Towards a More International Communion: International Bonds - Structures

We feel a call to open new paths, without changing much the present structures, which remain valuable, but rather by changing a mentality of communion and belonging (cf. No 11), at the level of the entities as well as the level of the Generalate, by fraternal visits and by staying more or less longer among the confreres, with transparency. The canonical visits can allow for a time of ongoing formation in which we listen together to the call of God.

Having the Generalate coordinate international projects could help them to succeed (cf. no. 28 and 29), provided that we know how to look at and evaluate real situations. The EGC lends itself to such an evaluation. Reflection should continue with different entities in order to advance together toward a common plan.

We must not hesitate to use new technologies (teleconferencing, Internet ...) to encourage mutual acquaintance among the confreres, and not to be limited only to international experiences of formation, but to begin other international experiences in and for the mission. It is a witness to offer to our divided world, by skilfully taking account of cultural and other kinds of diversity.

III. Walking Together ... Towards an Evangelical Sharing of Goods: *International Bonds – Finances*

The area of finances is the test and the proof which tells if our life is led by the Gospel or by the mentality of society or by the ambient culture.

We are not the proprietors of our financial goods but rather we are their stewards in the service of the mission. If each entity knew better the needs of other entities, and not only their own needs, that could avoid some frustration when certain requests are not satisfied. If individualism places our finances in danger, a true spirit of communion and mutual belonging will give rise to solidarity and sharing. A General Assistant charged with the area of "finances – communion" can animate this perspective.

Some regional meetings of bursars will be well inspired to begin with a time of spiritual reflection on the sense of "sharing – communion," in order to avoid only focussing on numbers. To escape the

economic logic of the world, they will be invited to cultivate a missionary spirit and a spirit of service. Some competent lay persons can bring their assistance in this area. Superiors will gain from raising the question of finances with certain confreres who are more directly concerned.

It is healthy to cultivate a financial security for formation, but a total financial guarantee can do harm to creativity and mission, which is too often evaluated in light of what it costs and what it brings in. There is a balance to be made between a financial prudence which is too great and an excessive carelessness under the pretext of trust in providence.

IV. Walking Together ... Towards a New Missionary Thrust for the World of Today: Mission

Three areas can help make our mission dynamic:

- 1- Mission and Community
- 2- Mission and Spirituality
- 3- Mission and the Challenges of the World Today

The link which unites spirituality, community life and mission makes them inseparable. It is a matter of “spirituality-community-mission” and not “spirituality or community or mission;” if they are placed in opposition, these three terms become the source of confusion and conflicts. For example: community life can be changed into a monastic life, or prayer and community life are sometimes sacrificed for missionary action. The time of formation must instil these elements which are indispensable for the flourishing of each person and for his integration for mission in a complementary way which develops an ability to “work together.”

It is in this spirit that a common plan will promote a missionary spirit, in fidelity with the orientations of the General Chapters of 1993 and 1999, with a concern for ongoing conversion. An international missionary experience which integrates spirituality and mission could be energizing, whether it is a short experience (a few months) with some young confreres together with some more experienced confreres, or a long experience (two or three years), desirable for the greatest number of confreres, with a time for language study and deepening our spirituality along with lay persons, and for missionary work. International experiences call us to collaborate with a laity completely engaged in the mission.

V. Walking Together ... Towards the Fullness of the Age of Jesus Christ: Formation

We speak of an integrated human formation because some deficiencies on this level bring all kinds of difficulties afterwards. Integrating all the dimensions of the person in formation brings some challenges. The new Ratio, which views the process of formation from the angle of ongoing formation, brings about a truly Copernican revolution.

We know that practically each decade of life brings challenges and that a specific preparation for each stage of life is indispensable. It is here where ongoing formation requires a certain creativity. It is a daily undertaking (Nos. 76 and 77) and not only periodic like a sabbatical year or the SIM (Stage International Montfortain).

Vocation efforts and our Mission are linked together (No 79); so are Formation and Mission.

A harmony between them will attract new vocations; some opposition between them will drive them away. An integrated formation in spirituality and mission (No 75), among other things, allows older confreres to share the witness of their experience with younger confreres. The missionary on the ground brings his contribution to the formation of young confreres.

VI. Walking Together ... Towards a Spiritual Heritage Shared with the People of God: Laity

The personal and communal formation often requested by lay people themselves will integrate Spirituality and Mission (No 98). The creation of an Institute of Montfortian Spirituality was recommended (No 111), which would suggest an “itinerant” approach, with formators going out to meet with lay people.

Who are those whom we call “laity,” “associates,” “confraternity members,” “Lay Montfortians”? Do Numbers 96 and 98 refer to the same persons?

Father de Montfort created different kinds of lay groups. This diversity is a richness (cf. No 100 -101: respect for different vocations), and formation will be different depending on the different kinds of groups. There is no universal mould.

To have an overall vision of the different groups of lay persons and a sense of what is being done for them and with them, an inventory should be made and that information be shared. This pertains to groups of lay persons and those connected to our corporate mission and not individual persons connected to one confrere or to one house.

VII. Walking Together ... Towards a Witness of Fraternal Charity: Ageing Confreres

Do we dare to have new experiences involving confreres of the same age group, respecting the possibilities and the limits of each person? In becoming open to internationality, a change in mentality is possible for everyone, and a sharing of experiences between “young entities” and “ageing entities” is possible as well.

Older confreres are like “grandfathers” responsible for the transmission of the collective family memory to the younger generations. We should ask older members to share their stories. We should offer the possibility of “twinning” with a sharing of prayer and communication between the younger and older entities.



BROTHERS IN OUR MIDST

The General Chapter of 2005 has called us to strengthen our bonds of communion as an international community of confreres. One of the ways we can move in this direction is to improve the lines of communication which unite us. Communication can help us to get to know one another despite the distances of geography and divisions imposed by national boundaries. It is ironic that we often first read about a confrere’s life when we receive a notice of his death. Can we get to know one another better while confreres are still living and participating in the life and mission of the Congregation? In this issue, we are beginning a new feature of *The Montfortian Echo*, in which we present profiles of some confreres, in order to provide a glimpse into their ministry and the role they play in a local community.

As we celebrate the beginnings of our congregation in the vocation of Brother Mathurin Rangedard and in his response to Montfort’s invitation to join him, we would like to feature the presence of some of our brothers in the Company of Mary. For the next few issues, we will include profiles of two brothers. We have asked each one to share some reflections on his ministry and how he sees his role in the Congregation. For each brother we have also asked a confrere from the brother’s local entity to share some impressions from his perspective.

In this issue we feature **BROTHER ABILIO VEGA**, from the Peru-Brazil Delegation, and **BROTHER GILLES PAQUETTE** from the Province of Canada.

A Montfort Brother in Peru



There was a word which I heard continually buzzing in my head: “missionary,” and I wondered: “What does a missionary do?” This question, which is at the origin of my vocation, came to me after a mission preached by some Jesuits in my neighbourhood in 1960. After the mission, in order to preserve the good fruits of the mission, I enrolled in a Marian group led by a Jesuit. I asked him if he was a priest, and he responded no: “I am a missionary brother.” I asked him what that meant, and he answered me by describing his pastoral and apostolic work.

My neighbourhood was close to Visitation Parish where some new priests had recently arrived. I used to pass by the church each morning due to my work, and I would go in to attend Mass. Seeing the Fathers, with their long black cassocks, cord and rosary, I asked who they were. “We are the Montfort Missionaries of the Company of Mary.” One morning I asked one of them if he was a priest. “No,” he told me, “I am simply a brother, Brother Maurice.” And he went on to describe to me his great work in social action, in catechesis, etc. And he ended by saying to me: “Why don’t you become a brother too? Couldn’t you come lend me a hand?”

Several years passed. From time to time I went on retreats, participated in the Legion of Mary, etc. ... Five years later, in 1965, I decided to become a Montfortian. I spoke about it at work and my colleagues told me I was crazy. I went to Fr. Pasquale Buondonno, who received me with several reservations because of the serious illness that I had. I entered the group of aspirants on April 28, 1966. In 1967 I made my novitiate, and on February 2, 1968, made my profession as a religious. My Montfortian adventure had begun.

With the accompaniment of my confreres, especially my novice master, Fr. Pasquale Buondonno, I learned a lot of things about religious life: to be available, to work with joy, above all the typical work of a brother – helping in the apostolate, in social ministry and in catechesis. I prepared for perpetual profession in Rome, where I had an experience of internationality, getting to know and sharing life with many confreres from different nations.

Back in Peru, I was able to have some very beautiful experiences in different communities and places at the service of the Montfortian mission: in formation houses, with the itinerant missionary team of the southern Andes, in parishes on the coast and in the “sierra,” and in the forest of Uchiza where I work now.

It seems to me that up till now I have made a practical response to my initial question: “To be a missionary in the midst of the poor and the marginalized, following the experience of Father de Montfort.” Mary’s maternal love has always supported me, and has helped me to overcome my weaknesses. I am happy to be a Montfort Brother. The years have gone by, and, as my doctor says: “They call me a “seed” because the ground is calling me.”

But my heart always remains happy. As Father Felice Riva says, “Life is the colour with which one paints oneself.” Discouragement and sadness must not crush us. On the contrary, joy must always conquer. I thank God for the example of confreres, who are a cause of comfort and hope for the poor, and who help me remain faithful on the chosen path. I always pray to Mary, our Good Mother, that she may help us stay faithful to the mission which the Lord has confided to us. May Father de Montfort and Brother Mathurin continue to inspire our missionary service until our last breath.

Brother Abilio Vega, s.m.m.

Brother Abilio, The Brother (El hermano)

“Preach always,” St. Francis told his Brothers, “and when it is necessary, use words also.” To see and think about Brother Abilio, it seems to me, is to really see these words of St. Francis of Assisi in practice. It was in 1973, at the novitiate in Santeramo, that I met this man for the first time. I never imagined then that this same Abilio would sow in my heart and in those of my other confreres a piece of Peru and Latin America – blessed be God for his gift of people!

When you come in contact with Abilio, you are already at ease; he makes you understand that you are important for him and that you are not bothering him. His smile is contagious. He always has time, and above all time to give to the poor. A poor person, we know, is poor ... and for him there is no daily schedule. He rings the bell when you are in the church or in the chapel for community prayer, or when you are seated at table for the community meal, or even worse, when you are taking a well deserved little siesta. When you least expect him, the bell rings, interrupting your community activities, and the poor person is there at the door. It's not that he doesn't care about your prayers or your schedule, but he has a particular need at that precise moment. You, you may get impatient or quite angry, but Abilio – never. And he tells stories ... of the difficulty and the poverty of his life and the life of his family, of his tuberculosis and the piece of lung that he still has ... He is so present in his story that it all seems to have happened yesterday ... But in truth, it happened years ago, many years ... Abilio loves to tell and to listen to stories, because he learned very well from Jesus who spoke in parables. If we should write everything which he lived in Lima, Ñaña, in Huánuco, in Pruno, Ayaviri, Juliaca and today in Uchiza... we would come up with a beautiful book of Missionary Life. Yes, Brother Abilio is a real Missionary. He never stops, and the content of his message is only Good News, because he knows that the bad news is already known by everyone. He is a good 70 years old, but he seems like a young man: he always has something to learn, and he marvels like a child before certain new pastoral and Montfortian situations. Instead of thinking about what is missing, Abilio thinks above all about what we have. He knows very well that the most beautiful events are not those which cause a sensation, but those which fill the heart. And he lets his heart be filled by a smile, a hug, a look, a “grace” ... but he also fills yours. In community it is a man like Abilio who fills us with the joy of living and loving. In short, Abilio is just himself, and I am happy to have known him and to have him as a confrere. Father de Montfort can smile and be at ease when his “Company” finds people like him. Brother Mathurin must also be bursting with joy for having found some good successors.

Thank you, Abilio, because you exist ... if not, we would have had to invent you ...

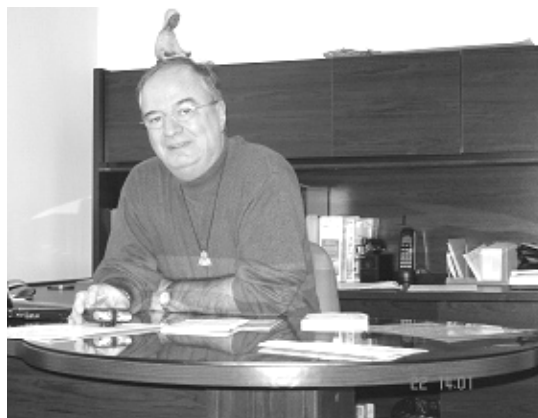
Fr. Luciano Andreol, s.m.m.

A Collaborator for the Reign of Jesus through Mary

The first reaction to the request of the Generalate to write something about my work and my mission was first of all: “why me?”, and secondly, my pride is going to suffer a blow. But I am so happy to be a Montfortian, I am so grateful to God for choosing me to work in his vineyard as a brother that, anyway, I cannot stop telling the people around me.

Due to my limits in expressing myself clearly, I thought I would take some quotes from the famous book of the Ratio to speak for me.

“This Spirit plants within us a desire to evangelise by word and example” (Ratio no. 14). I believe very strongly that I have been chosen by God. It is first of all from a burning desire to do good, to want to love and to be loved, that the urge to share the message with others arises. But how to do it? By words, of course, but also by example. It is quite a responsibility to evangelise by word. It requires much



knowledge, competence, and the gift of words. One doesn't say just anything or in any old way. Because of that, Montfort wanted men already formed to proclaim the Gospel well. And it's not everyone who can do it. I admire and pray for my confreres who are priests and who have received this gift. Personally, I don't feel I have the vocation to do that. But I can be a "collaborator."

"Are we not travellers and pilgrims seeking to read the signs of our own time, and to respond to those needs with our own gifts and limitations?" (Ratio, no. 4). This is my way of being a collaborator in spreading the Reign of Jesus through Mary. It is through the gifts and talents which God has given me and by the responsibilities which my superiors give me. To be the director of Marie-Reine-des-Coeurs House is an honour I don't deserve. A retreat house for groups of up to 100 people. Along with the team from the house I work hard to establish a Marian atmosphere. To welcome people to Mary's house, what a joy! By the musical talents which God has given me, I enjoy animating our celebrations and recollections.

"An icon of hope. Our experience of God, our living the consecration, and our participation in the mission of the congregation call us to form a small band who have put aside fear and live in great hope (LCM 1-3, 5). This hope impels us to face the ambiguities and difficulties of our age and to take risks in order to do great things for God" (Ratio, no. 23). My work with young people is primarily a work of action. Every year, we organize a Marian pilgrimage on foot to the Shrine of Notre-Dame du Cap. My goal is to allow them to live the gospel. Nine days of walking, that brings all kinds of unexpected things: pain, sadness, discoveries, joys, etc. ... In our world of easy and false happiness which the media presents to us, I want to have them discover that life is a completely different reality, where true happiness is in a person – who is Jesus Christ, and that the easiest path by which to reach him is the path of Mary. We discover that through the obstacles of a nine day walk.

The brothers who have lived before me have given me a beautiful example of a life of prayer and service to the Church by their manual work in community. They have been collaborators of evangelization by their talents as builders. It is along the same lines, following their example, that I want to continue in a different world and with a different kind of work.

To organise, sing, pray, do a little catechesis, give the young people the chance to be fulfilled and to have confidence – there are so many ways to be a Montfortian today. Brother Mathurin is my model.

To be a brother, to be a collaborator in spreading the Reign of Jesus through Mary, what a wonderful vocation!

"For Mary to be able to do her work, we must abandon ourselves completely; we must allow Jesus to act in complete freedom, Jesus whom Mary presents to us and to whom she leads us. She allowed Jesus to be formed in her; she will help form us in the image of her Son! She taught Jesus how to walk; she will teach us how to walk together in the footsteps of the poor apostles!" (Ratio, no. 247).

Gilles Paquette, s.m.m.

A Man of Many Talents Working Together with Others

Brother Gilles, after returning from Papua New Guinea, was earnestly seeking ways to draw youth to Jesus and help Montfortian vocations. With God's grace he enrolled at the Guindon Institute, to further his communication skills and uplift his spiritual needs. His personal obsession is that young people may live in Christ. With confidence he visited schools, parishes and enticed ministers in pastoral activities, to bring young hearts to listen and participate in his animation of sacred songs. Armed with his 2 blood brothers as musicians and Father Ronald Beaulne as vocational councillor and musician, they hit the road many a time, bringing youth to our doorstep for week-end retreats. His dedication draws attention of The Daughters of Wisdom, St.Gabriel Brothers and Brothers of Charity (Drummond) and others to support youth activities, while our confreres give thanks to the Lord for his presence amongst us.

As a good communicator, Brother Gilles draws youth in prayer and song, to Jesus and His Blessed Virgin Mother Mary. Resolute in his objective, he recruited and encouraged youth to join the

World Youth Day festivals, he himself animating music in Mexico, Toronto, Montreal and Rome. Unassuming, he presents himself as a Montfort Brother everywhere...

Besides being the administrator of the computer networking system and coordinating the stay of general retreatants, his interest in youth does not fade. He engaged some Associates and students to take up reception duties after office hours and weekends, thus relieving our confreres of this chore.

Through his initiative the youth pray and sing Taize songs every Monday evening for an hour in our chapel, which he and Fr. Ronald Beaulne animate. Evangelizing youth is predominant on his mind. This summer he organized and participated in a walking pilgrimage of 135 miles from St Nicolas to Our Lady's Shrine at Trois Rivières. Our local confreres admire his courage and fortitude. As a regular cyclist and skater, keeps fit in health and is much admired by the youth he presently directs.

Hard working, he spearheaded the activities of celebration of the 50th anniversary of this house with support mustered from young and old. Devoted to prayer and his active confidence in Divine Providence, he also brought joy to over 150 participants of boys and girls in a meeting of Youth Day this last summer. The whole house was involved with this sweet adventure.

As an ex-pilot, Brother Gilles has always enjoyed the front seat, and has not relinquished that position as the 'front man' at his desk. He renews contracts with new and old participants or retreatants, thus ensuring some financial return to defray the expenses of this house. His knowledge, leadership, capacity and age, plus his warmth of personality merited his nomination as a capitulant and subsequent election to the Provincial Council.

His music talents continue to serve our local community and associates at liturgical celebrations, rendering voice and melodious notes on the flute and guitar. His knowledge of computers and electronics benefits us, as we enjoy our security from intruders, due to video surveillance installed by him. With simplicity, sincerity and frankness he wins our hearts and friends. Since 'Ensemble' is his positive motive, many associates and his friends help us with projects like the annual 'Marche du Pardon,' with Taize songs, or with planning a pilgrimage and other activities. With much admiration I wish our brother the fruitful culmination of his Montfort dream, for 'God Alone'.

Brother Philip Abranches, S.M.M.

TESTIMONY – LOUIS-MARIE GRIGNION DE MONTFORT: “A DOCTOR OF THE FAITH?”

(Reprinted from *Le Règne de Jésus par Marie*, October 2005)

In 1990, I knew nothing about Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort. Arriving in the Vendée from Bourgogne as a brand new bishop, I had only some vague images of him – that of an itinerant preacher who put pious words to popular melodies, and who quickly made himself unbearable to bishops whose dioceses he travelled up and down like a free electron, upsetting the priests... Ten years later, it was October 13, 2000, I had the very great joy of asking John Paul II to give the « doctorate » to St. Louis Marie.

I did this in the name of the three Montfortian Families, whom, in the intervening time, I have come to discover and love. Their Superiors General were there,¹ surrounded by those who crowded the audience hall where we were received at the Vatican, clearly ordinary baptised people, coming from France and Italy, but also from the United States, Canada, Argentina, India, the Philippines, Brazil, Madagascar, Haiti ... **Why this request for the “doctorate”?**

¹ Fr. William Considine for the Montfort Missionaries, Sr Barbara O'Dea for the Daughters of Wisdom, and Bro. René Delorme for the Brothers of St Gabriel.

First of all, it was not simply to please the Holy Father, whose affection for this missionary giant we knew – he had adopted his motto: “Totus tuus”; he had wanted to kneel before his tomb at Saint-Laurent-sur-Sevre before undertaking his seventh journey in France, September 19, 1996. Not for all those reasons, but because we knew the originality, the fruitfulness and the contemporary pertinence of his spiritual doctrine. If we had to summarise it in a few brief statements, illustrated by several amazing quotes, I would venture to list five of them:

1. Compared to God, Mary is nothing at all:

“With the whole Church I acknowledge that Mary, being a mere creature fashioned by the hand of God is, compared to his infinite majesty, less than an atom, or rather is simply nothing, since he alone can say, ‘I am he who is’” (TD 14).² Here is a way to cure all forms of “Mariolatry.”

2. But, with Mary, we go more quickly to Christ:

“If devotion to Our Lady distracted us from Our Lord, we would have to reject it as an illusion of the devil ... this devotion is necessary, simply and solely because it is a way of reaching Jesus perfectly, loving him tenderly, and serving him faithfully” (TD 62). Here is a way to verify the Christocentrism of the Marian doctrine of St. Louis Marie.

3. With Mary and through Christ, we go straight to the heart of the mystery of the Trinity:

“God the Father gave his only Son to the world only through Mary ... The Son of God become man for our salvation but only in Mary and through Mary. God the Holy Spirit formed Jesus Christ in Mary but only after having asked her consent” (TD 16). Here is a way to get to the heart of our faith: God is revealed as One in Three Persons who want to teach us how to love as they love.

4. With Mary, and thanks to the Trinity, we reawaken our baptism:

To consecrate oneself to Mary – this is how all the missions preached by Louis-Marie ended – is really nothing other than a “perfect renewal of the vows and promises of holy baptism” (TD 126). It’s a matter of “shaking off by baptism the tyrannical slavery of the devil.” (SM 34). Here is a way to stir up our baptism.

5. Finally, with Mary, the truly baptised serve the truly poor:

By placing themselves at their service, of course. It is enough to see the way the Daughters of Wisdom, not to mention others, live this throughout the world today. They have not forgotten the call addressed to them by the one who, with Sr. Marie Louise of Jesus, was their founder.

*O Daughters of Wisdom,
Succor poor invalids,
Those overwhelmed by sorrow,
The disabled, the outcasts,
Those whom the world rejects
Ought to touch you the most.
I must love, I must love
God hidden in my neighbour.*³

John Paul II once wrote that Louis Marie was an “outstanding theologian.” I truly believe him. He wrote on the occasion of his 50th anniversary of his priestly ordination,⁴ while sharing, furthermore, an astonishing confidence: “At one point I began to question any devotion to Mary, believing that, if it became too great, it might end up compromising the supremacy of the worship owed Christ.

² *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary*, in *God Alone*, Bay Shore: Montfort Publications, 1987.

³ Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort - Hymn 149.

⁴ *Dono e Mistero*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1996; English edition: *Gift and Mystery*, Pauline Publications, Africa, p. 42.

*At that time, I was greatly helped by a book by Saint Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort entitled 'Treatise of True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin.' There I found the answers to my questions. Yes, Mary does bring us closer to Christ; she does lead us to him, provided that we live her mystery in Christ. This treatise by **Saint Louis Marie de Montfort** can be a bit disconcerting, given its rather florid and baroque style, but the essential theological truths which it contains are undeniable. The author was an outstanding theologian."*

At this time when Marian piety is not always balanced, when Christ is not always recognized as the Only Son who reveals to us all the beauty of God and of humanity, when the Trinity is not received as the great treasure of our faith, when baptism is often forgotten as leading to, among other things, a preferential service to the "*poor whom God loves,*" **the theological synthesis of St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort**, so accessible to the greatest number of people, **is more useful and timely than ever.**

M^{gr} François Garnier
Archbishop of Cambrai

MONTFORTIAN YOUTH GATHERING

Forty young Montfortians from all over the world took part in the 20th World Youth Day in Cologne followed by a week of Montfortian gatherings and meetings attended by our new Superior General, Fr. Santino Brembilla.

The Mission Procurator and "Missionswerk Germany" had issued an invitation ... and many followed! The fact that World Youth Day was going to be held in Cologne seemed reason enough to invite Montfortian youth, all the more since the Province House is situated in nearby Bonn. Forty young Montfort Fathers and seminarians from India, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Colombia, Nicaragua, Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, Canada, Italy and from the Philippines followed the invitation and came to Bonn, where they stayed in the parish house and with families of St. Elisabeth Parish, where Montfort Fathers have worked since 1954.

Full of enthusiasm

The meetings with German youth preceding the 20th World Youth Day in Cologne were spent in the Diocese of Limburg where our young Montfortians were cordially welcomed in the cathedral parish. They returned to Bonn for the main events of World Youth Day. The hardships, walking long distances, the crowds of people, the long times of waiting, did not weaken their enthusiasm. After the Vigil and Concluding Mass with Pope Benedict XVI on the Marienfeld near Cologne, the last of our young Montfortians returned to Bonn only after midnight.

Father Santino Brembilla, arrived just in time for the Concluding Mass with the Pope. For him, as for the newly elected Holy Father, it was the first journey abroad in his new office and a welcome opportunity to meet so many young Montfortians.

Reunion with elder missionaries

Following World Youth Day, the young people stayed in Bonn for another week for what was soon called the "Montfortian Youth Gathering".

After a day's rest (Monday) we all went for a pilgrimage to Kevelaer, a well-known place of pilgrimage of the Virgin Mary near the Dutch frontier. During Holy Mass and prayer, we remained conscious of the big concerns of the worldwide Montfortian community, as we sought the intercession of the Comforter of the Afflicted. We especially prayed for vocations. There is a portrait of St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort in the central nave of the Basilica.

In the evening the group was expected in the Netherlands. The Montfortians from the Provincial House in Oirschot gave us a warm welcome. The Dutch Province of the Congregation has sent a large number of missionaries abroad in the past. Thus, the young Montfortians met again some aged fathers who

had worked in their home countries. And for the old fathers it was a joy to see that their work had been fruitful.

300 Years of Existence for the Company of Mary: Celebration in Banneux

The next morning, we went from Oirschot to Banneux, the well known place of pilgrimage of the Virgin Mary in Belgium. Montfortians from the three Provinces Belgium, Netherlands and Germany met there to celebrate the tricentenary of the Congregation's foundation. More than 300 people, feeling bound to the Congregation and its founder, attended the solemn Mass. Among those was a group of pilgrims from the "Missionswerk" in Luxemburg. During the afternoon Prayer a memorial tablet was unveiled next to the statue of St. Louis Marie. The Celebration ended with an impressive renewal of baptismal promises.

The internationality of the group provided the subject for the following day of reflection. Divided into small groups, the young Montfortians were supposed to reflect on the importance of internationality for the entire Congregation and what it demands from each one among them. The difficulties of communication within the mixed groups proved to be a practical experience of what internationality involves.

At the end of the "Montfortian week" we visited the Montfort Fathers in Marienheide near Cologne and the Benedictine Abbey of Maria Laach (about 40 km to the south of Bonn). On Saturday evening of our "Montfortian week" we celebrated a solemn Mass in St. Elisabeth parish church in remembrance of the tricentenary of our Congregation. On Sunday we all took part in the Marian celebration organized by "Missionswerk Germany" in Maria Rosenberg near Pirmasens.

Enriched by the manifold impressions, our young Montfortians left for their home countries during the following days. The groups from India and from the Philippines went to France to visit Lourdes, Montfort-sur-Meu and Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre before travelling home.

The "Montfortian Youth Gathering" has revealed to us that the Congregation is alive and has prospects even though it seems to age more and more in Europe.

Fr. H. J. Jünemann, SMM

An Experience of World Youth Day 2005 in Cologne

I could summarize in three fundamental points my beautiful experience of World Youth Day in Cologne, Germany this year.

The first was a striking moment for my spiritual life: **the encounter with Christ**: "We are here to adore You." I experienced this personal encounter with Jesus in the presence of Mary in different ways: in the catechetical sessions, meeting different young people from all over the world, times of sharing, the message of the Pope, and above all during the vigil at Marienfeld (the vigil of prayer, despite fatigue, hunger and cold). The Lord was present with me together with all those enthusiastic young people during this wonderful encounter with him. I experienced that in the Eucharist with the Pope on the last day.

The second point is without doubt a **moment of communion, of fraternity, of sharing, of joy** during that week: a youthful week full of liveliness and hope. The welcoming attitude of the Protestant community who willingly received us with love touched me greatly. It was a service motivated by a profound faith in the spirit of the Gospel: "You are all brothers" (Mt 23,8b). I noticed this aspect also during the meeting with Montfortians in Bonn after World Youth Day. There was a fraternity springing from the spirituality of our Founder, Father de Montfort: to be together, to work together. We felt like brothers there, despite the difficulty of communicating during times of sharing and personal conversation.

The third was a particular moment of vocational discernment: **falling in love with Christ** on this path of formation in religious life. The Lord used our Pope Benedict XVI to convey this message to me and to make it rise up within me, when he addressed the seminarians.

I can say that this beautiful experience left its mark on my life story, thanks to the Love of Christ.

Jean Marie Helpa
Rakotondravao, S.M.M.

NEWS FROM THE GENERAL HOUSE

The past several months at the General House have been times of transition as the new Superior General and his assistants took up residence here and began to plan and to work together. By the month of September all the General Assistants were on hand, and, together with Fr. Santino, they began planning their ministry of animating the Congregation. Much time was spent reflecting on ways to promote the orientations of the General Chapter. They also spent time looking at ways to continue the community life of the Generalate.

Fr. Ivo Libralato has accepted a mandate as Superior of the General House. His presence and his experience from the last General Administration has been a great help in the transition to a new Administration. The community of the General House met to organize their prayer schedule and to plan monthly days of prayer and reflection.

We bade farewell to Fr. Wim Peeters, who has spent the last year in the General House serving as secretary for the General Chapter, as well as being a welcome presence here in the community. The Generalate community marked the occasion of Fr. Wim's departure by joining with him in a pilgrimage of thanksgiving to the Shrine of The Madonna of Divino Amore outside of Rome. After leading a group of Indonesian pilgrims to various shrines in Europe and in the Holy Land, and after a visit to Holland, Fr. Wim will return to Indonesia at the beginning of the new year.

Fr. Santino and the General Council are continuing plans for building up the local community at the Generalate with other confreres who will serve in the General Secretariat and in promoting communications throughout the Congregation. We hope to increase the international diversity of the General House community in the process.

Several responsibilities have been divided up among the General Assistants. These include serving as contact persons for particular entities and being responsible for animating particular aspects of our life and mission. The following is a list of those responsibilities.

Fr. Donald LaSalle: USA, Canada, Great Britain and Ireland, Indonesia, Papua, Philippines,
Responsible for Formation

Fr. Mathieu Jenniskens: Holland, Belgium, Germany, Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Malawi-Zambia, Congo),
Responsible for Finances

Fr. Joseph Philor: Haiti-Nassau, Nicaragua, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru-Brazil, Argentina, Portugal,
Responsible for Justice and Peace

Fr. Olivier Maire: France, Italy-Croatia, Madagascar, India,
Responsible for Spirituality and Mission

The travels of Fr. General and his Assistants have already begun. Fr. Santino spent time in Germany for World Youth Day, where he met with the Montfortians who gathered there for the occasion. Fr. Olivier Maire led a retreat for the Province of France in October. He and Fr. Santino returned to France in November for the Provincial Chapter. While Fr. Don LaSalle and Fr. Joseph Philor stayed in Rome to take courses in Italian, Fr. Mathieu Jenniskens went to Angiers to improve his French. Fr. Mathieu will join Fr. Santino for the Chapter of the Belgium Vice-Province at the end of November. Further travels to visit all the entities have been planned for the remainder of the year and for the first five months of 2006.

OUR DECEASED BRETHERN

Father Emilio PICCOLI (1923 -2005)

Father Emilio died unexpectedly from heart failure on 21 June 2005, at the age of 82, at the Villa Montfort in Redona (Bergamo). He had 63 years of religious profession and 58 years of priesthood.

His early apostolic activity took place in various preaching communities: Belgirate, Treviglio, Gassino, and, after a period at the scholasticate in Rome, in the parish of Croce di Mennaggio. As far as his health would allow, he was an indefatigable preacher of true devotion to Mary, and a worthy messenger of the Gospel, by his words and by the example of his life.

He was a shy man, limiting his speech to essential matters; but that did not prevent him from living a fraternal life of sharing the missionary ideal and thrust. His former parishioners, among others, still remember him with admiration. His confreres also remember him for his artistic streak.

Father François LE ROUX (1912 - 2005)

Died 26 June 2005, in St-Laurent-sur-Sèvre (France), at the age of 92, with 72 years of religious profession and 66 years of priesthood.

The itinerant mission particularly mobilised his energies, with the teams of Poitiers, Saint Paul-les-Dax, Tourcoing, Brest, Paris, Le Calvaire de Pontchâteau, Angoulême. We should add that he was always the animator of these missionary teams and Superior of these communities. Then he knew a relatively sedentary period with 7 years as the one responsible for the community of La Gardiolle, followed by 8 years as chaplain of the house of the Brothers of Saint Gabriel at La Hillière, a service which he prolonged at Saint-Laurent as chaplain to the motherhouse of the Daughters of Wisdom for 3 years, until the age when his health forced him to retire.

In the middle of these missionary activities in France, he had one interruption that greatly marked Father François: 4 years at Ephesus in Turkey, from 1962 till 1966, in the house where, according to tradition, the Virgin Mary lived after the Ascension of Jesus. As superior of this international Montfortian community, with an American, a Dutch and an Italian father, he was able to deploy in a Muslim environment his qualities for welcoming. He greatly regretted that local administrative harassment put an end to this Montfortian presence in Turkey.

We must also mention the commitment of Father Le Roux to the Montfortian Pilgrimage to Lourdes. He participated in its beginnings and remained faithful, at different levels of responsibility, as long as his strength allowed.

Father Francis Joseph ALLEN (1924 -2005)

Died 16 July 2005, in Bay Shore, New York (USA), at the age of 80, with 59 years of religious profession and 54 years of priesthood.

His love for and fidelity to the church and his service to God's people marked Father Frank's life. Those of us who knew Frank will remember his infectious, boisterous laugh, and his intensity of personality, when it came to defending what he believed was the right thing to do. Throughout his life, his energy was always directed to the service of the Church and the Mission of the Congregation.

His generous service was carried out in many apostolates: as teacher in the Minor Seminary at Bay Shore and the Major Seminary in Litchfield, as shrine director at Lourdes-in-Litchfield, Our Lady of the Island in Eastport and Mary's House in Ephesus, Turkey, as chaplain to the Daughters of Wisdom in Portsmouth Virginia and Sound Beach, NY, as parish priest at Our Lady of Grace in Indiana, St Peter's in Massachusetts, St Mary Gate of Heaven in New York and Founding Pastor of St Louis De Montfort in Indiana. He was general bursar at the Generalate in Rome and province archivist for the US Province.

Father William VIGLIOTTA (1927 - 2005)

Died 8 August 2005, in Port Jefferson, New York (USA), at the age of 77, with 56 years of religious profession and 51 years of priesthood.

The first 18 years of priesthood were spent teaching seminarians, first as Socius in the Novitiate in Hartford City, Indiana and then for 17 years teaching Latin to students in the Minor Seminary at Bay Shore, NY and Pacific, MO. In 1972 he was named the first Director of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Island. He continued to minister at the Shrine until his death. He worked to develop the Shrine from its beginnings to its present state as a place of pilgrimage for many.

Fr. Bill had a tender and loving devotion to Mary, the Mother of God and he died as he had lived, uniting himself to the Virgin in her 'FIAT', Mary's "YES" to God's will. All his life he remained servant of Christ and son of Mary; he lived simply in a direct and uncomplicated manner. Shy by nature, he was seldom at ease in the public position thrust upon him; his preference would be to remain quietly in the background. He was at his best with simple people, serving the sick and speaking with small groups. In his private relationships he was warm and caring, having come from a large and close family. He was 1 of 15 children and has 243 nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews and few great-great nieces and nephews.

Father Jérôme LOSAC'HMEUR (1925 - 2005)

Died 30 August 2005, in Saint Laurent sur Sèvre (France), at the age of 80, with 59 years of religious profession, and 54 years of priesthood.

Several months after his ordination, he left for the Shiré mission in Malawi. He worked there for 22 years, almost as long as the time he worked in the area of Saint Jean du Gard, in France, where he remained for 28 years. Three years ago, he had to retire to the community at La Gardiolle, because his health no longer allowed him to carry out his parish ministry. Only six months after his arrival in the community of Saint Laurent, he returned to the house of the Father.

In Malawi, Father Jérôme worked in different mission posts: Zomba, Namitembo, Balaka, Pirimiti. He was readily given responsibilities in parishes, in the diocese and in the group of Montfortians working in Zomba, proof that we esteemed his judgment in missionary work, as well as his fraternal and Montfortian spirit.

Upon his return to France, he carried out his missionary zeal in the Diocese of Nimes. We salute him as a missionary who was so able to adapt himself in France, after 22 years in Malawi, that he had a profound impact on the area of St. Jean du Gard during the 28 years of his ministry there. He was particularly active in ecumenism in this region strongly influenced by Protestantism.

Father Paulino VARGAS SASTOQUE (1928 - 2005)

Died 30 August 2005, in Bogotá (Colombia), at the age of 77, with 59 years of religious profession, and 53 years of priesthood.

Father Paulino is remembered in a special way for his work in the Marian Center with Father Pío Suárez, where he helped above all in the organization, distribution and finances of the review "El Heraldo de la Reina". Another admirable work which he carried out for more than 25 years, was the organization and accompaniment of national and international pilgrimages to different shrines and places of prayer.

Father Paulino spent the last two years in our house for older confreres in Choachí. He had a simple, fraternal and very obliging nature, even if he was a bit quick-tempered, and in these last years Fr. Paulino suffered from a difficult disease, Alzheimer's, which considerably reduced his energy, leaving him in a state of profound silence. May the Lord reward this pilgrim of the Virgin for all that he has done for extending the Reign of Christ through Mary.

Father Louis CORRE (1921 - 2005)

Died 5 September 2005 in Saint-Laurent sur Sevre, (France) at the age of 83, with 63 years of religious profession, and 58 years of priesthood.

Louis came to us like a witness of a “courageous yes” in everyday life. From his entrance at the Calvary at Pontchâteau from 1934 to 1941, followed by his commitment to religious and priestly life in 1947, and after four years in the itinerant mission in Tourcoing, Louis became a teacher capable of developing in his students an interest in mathematics. A professor at the Calvary of Pontchâteau from July 1954 until September 1964, he was known for his readiness to care for students. Everyday living called Louis to this “yes” given in the simplicity and spontaneity of a caring relationship with humanity.

Louis came to be known as a happy servant and collaborator without seeking any power at all, which he would by no means want to claim for himself. From 1964 to 1990: 26 years of service in the provincial secretariat, 10 years of service in the CAVIMAC and the Mutuelle St. Martin, and secretary for a long time of the Montfortian Pilgrimages in the centre of Paris. Louis remained at the crossroads of much information which he never used for his personal advantage to place himself in the foreground. The fact that five provincials asked him to carry out these different services of trust is proof of his discretion and his esteem for each person he encountered.

Louis fostered unity and reconciliation. This attitude led him to be committed to the ministry of the sacrament of reconciliation in welcome centres in Paris: at Notre Dame des Victoires and at Saint-Louis d’Antin in Paris. Louis also knew how to accept his age while being in solidarity with elderly persons. Chaplain at the retreat house of Brunoy and helping occasionally in the retreat house of Maintenon, he placed his creativity at the service of preparing celebrations and meetings for others. In being himself, with his richness and his limits, Louis has sewn goodness all around him.

Brother DAMIAAN (Hub MUITJENS) (1934 - 2005)

Died 21 September 2005, in Eindhoven (The Netherlands), at the age of 70, with 51 years of Religious Profession.

After his education in Bunde he worked in most of our communities, as gardener and cook. He helped in the dining room and took care of his confrères and others in Schimmert, Meerssen, Leuven (Belgium), Hoensbroek, Vroenhof, Kerkrade en Voorschoten. When he retired he came to Oirschot, where he still took a lot of tasks. Even when he became seriously ill, he stayed active. Except the last few weeks, it was very difficult for him to let go.

Hub's life was not easy since he heard he did not have much lifetime left. Over the years he took care of many sick and dying confrères and therefore he knew very well how badly his body was injured. Hub could become very emotional, talking about his disease and the little time doctors gave him. He was angry at the beginning, to have to die reasonably young. Later he could accept it and even make a joke about it, but sometimes it was difficult.

Often Hub went during his last years to our churchyard. He had already reserved his grave. He did not fear death. His largest fear was a long sickbed, without being able to help the community. He wanted desperately to be active and take care of his tasks around the house. Hub wanted to be appreciated and seen. Sometimes he suffered not getting the respect he deserved. Being a brother made him feel inferior towards the fathers. This large man with his rather scrawny body couldn't handle his emotions or thoughts. Later he learned to cope with them, especially since he got a job as a nurse in a clinic for disturbed people. He lived at that time in a small community in Leenhof.

From his family Hub inherited a firm piety. Theology and church renewal wasn't his kind of work. He prayed to Mary and liked to go for a pilgrimage to Lourdes. His desire to pray once more at the Grotto couldn't be fulfilled. Regular as clockwork, he kept hold on his religious duties. Therefore it was very

difficult for him that he couldn't go to Mass in the morning. May he be fulfilled with deep joy, now that his name is written in heaven.

Father Joseph KELLY (1921 – 2005)

Died 26 October 2005, in Liverpool (England), at the age of 84, with 62 years of religious profession and 57 years of priesthood.

Fr. Kelly was professed as religious of the Company of Mary in September 1943 and ordained priest in 1948. Fr. Joseph Kelly, or Fr. Joe, as he was universally known, was a priest and religious of great availability and many talents. This is evident from the many ministries he was able to fill during his 57 years of priesthood. He was, among other things, Manager and Editor of the province magazine *Queen and Mother*, a post he held for 14 years; during some of these years he taught in the minor seminary at Romsey and was assistant novice master; he served as chaplain to the 'Novices and Juniors' of the Daughters of Wisdom Congregation in North Berwick for five years from 1962. He spent some time as bursar and teacher in the major seminary; some time as provincial secretary and provincial bursar; for many years he was in charge of Montfort Press. In his later years Fr. Kelly accepted the task of Superior of the Community at Montfort House, Liverpool.

From 1955 to 1959, he was the Chaplain to the Sisters and those living in Nazareth House, Crosby. Father Joe was evidently extremely well suited for this, since he twice took up the chaplaincy again: in 1969 and 1976. He returned to serve his beloved sisters at Nazareth House Crosby in 1986 and remained their chaplain until he was too ill to continue. However, his association with the sisters and community at Nazareth House was to continue, for it was there that he spent the last ten months until he died peacefully, surrounded by the Sisters saying the Divine Office as Fr. Joe slipped away to the Lord.

Endearing gentleness and kindness were the special characteristics of Fr. Joe Kelly, perhaps this is what we remember most in him. Did he ever make any enemies? It would have been extremely difficult to become his enemy. He was known by all he met as a lovely man, a gentleman, a kind person and a man of great understanding, with a wry sense of humour and a twinkle in his eye. But he was above all a man of deep religious devotion and prayer. We his confreres had no hesitation in seeking his advice and his direction in our own lives, of valuing his closeness to God and cherishing the insight and understanding he offered when we needed him. There can be no doubt that when he was called to the Lord he could echo the words of Ecclesiasticus: "*My very core yearned to discover Wisdom ... I have now acquired a good possession.*"

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