



L'Écho montfortain

IN THE HOUSE OF THE FATHER...

November 2008 - N° 8

OUR DECEASED BRETHERN



Father Joseph (Jos) KEULERS, S.M.M.
(1931 – 2008)

Died in Maastricht (The Netherlands), on 3 July 2008,
at the age of 77 with 54 years of Religious Profession.

Maria Joseph Hubertus Johannes Gerardus Keulers was born on 15 February 1931 in Beek (Limburg). He joined the Montfortians in 1952 in D'Hoppe (Belgium), where he made his first vows on 8 September 1953. He made his final vows on 8 September 1958. Exactly half a year later he was ordained priest in Oirschot by Mgr. Mutsaerts.

Jos followed a pastoral year in Maastricht after his ordination, while living in Schimmert. After that he got an appointment as assistant priest in Winterslag, Belgium. In 1961 the Dutch Province asked him to take up the Montfortian Works and he moved to Berg & Dal. From 1977 til 1985 he was manager. In 1985 he returned to his native area and became parish priest of the S. Gerlach Parish in Valkenburg-Houthem. In 1992 he also became responsible for the S. Joseph Parish in Broekhem. When his health diminished he moved at the end of 2005 to the house of Vroenhof.

The life of Jos Keulers can be divided in three large periods: his study years, the Montfortian Works in Berg & Dal and being a parish priest in Houthem and Broekhem.

In Schimmert and Oirschot, Jos was an assiduous student. Because of his hard work he got good marks. He studied with pleasure and liked to participate in discussions and debate. He was especially interested in the spirituality of Montfort. Later he kept studying. In 1976 he stayed during a sabbatical year in Schimmert and attended college on the UTP in Heerlen, especially for exegesis.

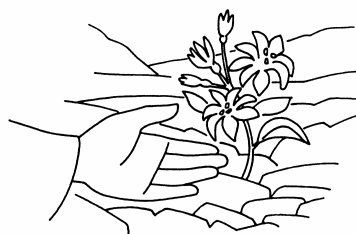
In Berg & Dal Jos became soon responsible for the technical management of the pilgrimages to Lourdes. He revealed himself as a good organiser. If Jos arranged something, than you knew it was alright. During the pilgrimages he created a collegial atmosphere, with his confreres as well with the other cooperators. Around 1970 he took the initiative for pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Soon he got some confreres enthusiastic for the work. During the winter season he travelled through the country to make propaganda. Personally he was an excellent travel agent and guide with a remarkable

pastoral empathy. Jos cared for people. He wanted to teach them how to breathe with the rhythm of the Bible. The tours to Israel - from 1971 on also to Jordan - became a great success. Later on, Rome was included. The Montfortians got a good reputation for what became 'Montfort-Tochten'. Without Jos this work never would have lifted off. He wanted to spread the wings. It irritated him, when he met within the congregation what he called 'a narrow minded grocer's mentality'. Sometimes he understood this as a motion of distrust. And that was very difficult for him. He got recognition when he became a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre in 1976. In 1984 Jos quit the Montfortian Works. He had the feeling that he couldn't spread his wings in a way he liked.

He was able again to let his pastoral heart speak, when he became parish priest in Houthem. An old place of pilgrimage! He liked it. The church and everything around it made a strong appeal on his organizing qualities. Together with some enthusiastic people he lifted Saint Gerlach entirely from the ground. He flourished. It was an undertaking with a certain dignity. And Jos enjoyed that. But as parish priest he encountered the commotion in the church. He did not just want to restore buildings, but also honoured traditions. He took his ideas for granted, was and they were not appreciated by everyone. He chose the clearness of the old and trusted above all the uncertainties of new ideas and practices. This led to conflicts in the parish and with colleagues and confreres in his neighbourhood.

The last few years were difficult for Jos. Getting on in years, his sight diminished and other organs failed. All together, there was no turning back. Jos had to take formal leave of his parish and moved to the Montfortian community in Vroenhof. He was grateful for the space that was created for him. 'Temporarily', he thought, because he hoped to move back to an apartment next to the Houthem church. It did not work out. Jos had to be taken into the nursing home in Vroenhof. A difficult time for him. He could not get his life back under control.

Earthly Jerusalem was too far away for Jos. Now he is standing, rather suddenly, as a tired pilgrim before the Heavenly Gate. The porter will certainly open up for him, Christ will wash his feet and the Father will greet him with open arms. He will see more clearly than ever and sit at the eternal banquet with Mary Montfort, Gerlach and others he esteemed.





Brother Lucien FOURCHÉ, S.M.M.

(1928 – 2008)

Died in La Chartreuse d'Auray (France), on 5 August 2008,
at the age of 80 with 29 years of Religious Profession.

Brother Lucien returned to the Lord with the serenity in which he always lived. He died on the 5th of August at 12:10 in the hospital of Auray.

Lucien, Louis Marie, Fourché was born in Loyat, in le Morbihan, on June 6, 1928. He was baptized the next day and confirmed on May 15, 1941, also in Loyat. He went to the village school, but was sometimes absent for reasons of health. Father Rusquet, his cousin, made up for his absences by giving him lessons in Scripture and arithmetic in his own home.

Until the age of 34, Lucien worked on his parents' farm, but an inner call led him to another form of life. He had to experience the trial of waiting to see his plan of life realized. But in 1962, entering la Chartreuse, he was hired as the gardener. He was fortunate to find there Brothers Adrien and Luc. Men of great experience and the spiritual life, according to their own grace, they knew how to give him a glimpse of the horizon of religious life. Brother Luc in particular was not shy in expressing his joy at giving himself to God forever as a Montfortian brother. In 1963, Lucien was sent for work on the farm. In 1976, he made his request to enter the novitiate. He went to Saint Laurent-sur-Sèvre, the symbolic high place for the Montfortian family, to Chézelles (Diocese of Tours), to la Gardiolle (Diocese of Nîmes), and in 1978 we see Brother Lucien again in la Chartreuse.

Celebrating his first profession on December 8, 1978 and his perpetual profession on June 20, 1982, Lucien became a brother, but even though he had learned to cultivate his soul, he had not, however, forgotten his work as a gardener, which he assumed with love. "You should have seen how it was well done ... and how clean it was," those who knew him will tell you today. Wasn't he a good gardener!

In 1984, he was requested to conserve his physical strength but due to the interest which he had given to his work, he did everything, so that even in his absence his same care would persist. So he entrusted to Gérard, one of the workers still at work here, what he followed: "opening a notebook" Lucien then traced for him what had to be done for every day of the year: what there was to sew, to plant, to pull up. How valuable is this notebook to have been preserved even to this day!

You know the review: "Le Règne de Jésus par Marie"? He was a great promoter of it. He knew his world, and, with the simplicity which characterized him, he knew how to propose subscriptions or renewals to one or another person, while visiting them. And then, during the last months when some people thought it imprudent for him to drive a car, his first reaction was, "but how then am I going to do my work among the readers of 'Le Règne'?"

When one has given one's whole heart, when one has not conserved one's physical strength over the years, there comes a moment when the body no longer has the same vitality. It is necessary to be freed from great works in order to devote oneself to the

littlest works ... and to give more time to prayer. Lucien chose the Shrine of St. Anne as the privileged place for prolonged meditation. He went there regularly, on Sunday afternoons or during large gatherings.

He spent one month in the hospital, benefiting from the pastoral care of his confreres who brought him communion, and the day on which he received the Sacrament of the Sick, which is the anointing of the sick, as a sign of thanksgiving he gave us the hint of a sign of applauding, which could only confirm the joy hidden in his heart ...

Lucien is gone; and he awaits the time when for each of us the hour of our calling will sound.



**Brother Louis Marie (Peter ROTHWELL), S.M.M.
(1930 – 2008)**

Died in Glasgow (Scotland), on 24 August 2008,
at the age of 78 with 58 years of Religious Profession.

Born – 11 July 1930; Professed – 25th March 1950; Died – 24th August 2008

For the whole of his religious Life Bro Louis Marie was a cheerful and welcoming presence for every community in which he lived. For 45 years Brother was the cornerstone of Montfort Retreat Centre in Barrhead Scotland, which closed in 2006.

For most of that time he cooked not only for his own community but also for retreatants and guests. For him this apostolate of the pots and pans was a labour of love. He possessed the great gift hospitality. He loved to welcome people and was at his happiest making pots of tea and exchanging jokes with all who crossed the threshold of Montfort House.

For many people Montfort House Barrhead was synonymous with Brother Louis Marie; he filled it with his cheerful presence. His readiness to listen and to offer advice and spiritual consolation to many a poor soul endeared him to the people of Barrhead and beyond. His visits to the sick, to the elderly and to the households of St John's Parish Barrhead brightened the lives of many. He was a regular caller at local nursing homes and hospitals, where he became a firm favourite.

Brother Louis Marie was born in Dublin Ireland in 1930 and later, as a young engineer worker, he entered the congregation of the Company of Mary and was professed on 25th March 1950. He chose a Marian congregation because as a member of the Legion of Mary, founded by his fellow Dubliner Frank Duff, he wanted to spread the 'Reign of Jesus through Mary'.

For the last two years, as his health deteriorated, he was looked after lovingly by the Sisters and by many devoted carers at Nazareth House, Cardonald.

He died peacefully on Sunday 24th August. Present at his funeral Mass were fellow Montfort Religious, Priests from surrounding parishes, Brothers and Sisters, his own family and very many people who knew and loved him. In fact everyone who knew him loved him! May he rest in peace.

Father Alexander HOFF, S.M.M.

(1921 – 2008)

Died in Trier (Germany), on 26 September 2008,
at the age of 87 with 50 years of Religious Profession.

Our confrere, Father Alexander Hoff, died on Friday 26 September 2008 in the retirement house Mutter Rosa in Trier.

Father Alexander Hoff was born the 24th of September, 1921, in Monschau / Eifel, the eldest child in a family of nine children. His father was a printer. After primary school, in April 1936, he entered the Franciscan Brothers in Waldbreitbach. He was an aspirant, then a postulant, and then a novice. He stayed with the Brothers until August 1941, and there he learned the skills of a baker.

In 1941, he was drafted for a work detail, and, several months later, for military service on the Eastern front. During the retreat through Silesia and Czechoslovakia, toward the end of the war, he was captured by the Americans and then was handed over to the Russians. For ten long years he remained in captivity, suffering from hunger, subject to forced labor and many other problems. He was forced to work in the forest of Belorus, and then in 1947 he was sent to the East, to western Siberia, to work in construction and digging wells. His belief that fascism and communism had the same atheistic foundation was the reason for his being condemned to 25 years of forced labor.

He was able to endure this hard fate only by his deep faith in the power of God and through the intercession of the Mother of God. An exhausting service then followed for him during the reconstruction of Stalingrad. His companions told about his discussions on faith which gave them strength and encouragement. During his visit to Moscow in the autumn of 1955, Konrad Adenauer insisted on the liberation of all the German prisoners of war. It was thus that, in December 1955, Alexander Hoff was able to go back to his native country.

The numerous and painful experiences of these difficult years influenced and motivated him to become a missionary. He then entered the school of Rheydt, the school of the Montfortians which welcomed those who had a delayed vocation. He prepared for the novitiate in Meesen, Holland, where he pronounced his first vows in the Congregation of the Montfort Missionaries in 1958.

Alexander Hoff studied philosophy and theology with the Dutch, Belgian and German confreres in the major seminary of the Congregation in Oirschot. On March 8, 1964, his desire to become a priest was realized. At the age of 43, he began his work as a priest, first in Marienheide and Waldbröl. He knew extraordinarily well how to communicate the message of faith to soldiers. However, at the end of 1965, he was called to the Montfortian mission procure in Salzburg. From then on he worked in a germanophone context, which extended from South Tyrol to northern Germany. During his first years, his sermons were filled with experiences and examples from the years of war and captivity.

Days spent with his old comrades and the later repatriated soldiers were important to him, and it was equally important for him to help them to overcome the past. As a student, he drew a great enthusiasm for his faith from the Council. It was his great desire to transmit

information about the faith in the time after the Council. Often he had to rent the largest hall in the village for gatherings during which he spoke about and discussed the faith.

During the many years of his life as a priest, he accompanied pilgrimages, gave seminars on faith, animated retreat days for groups of women, for the families of Kolping, and above all for the benefactors of our mission work magazine "In the Service of the Queen / Mother of the Church." His diverse activities for the work of the missions and beyond took a toll on his health. Thus, in 1992, he was given a less demanding task as chaplain in the house of the Brothers of Mercy in Schönfelderhof.

"Now the circle begins to complete itself," he said. As a young man he began with the Brothers, and now, during the last years of his life, he found himself again with the Brothers, where he was with handicapped youth. It was a blessed time because he knew perfectly how to find the right word for each one there, and people came from far to hear his sermons on Sunday.

In 2004, when his health weakened, he was welcomed into the retirement home Mutter Rosa, where the sisters of Waldbreitbach and our confrere Father Rüss took care of him. During our days of retreat three weeks ago, he was able to celebrate the golden anniversary of his profession in the midst of his German, Dutch, and Belgian confreres, who had been ordained in the same year as he was. It was a particularly happy event for him.

Being still in good humor the day before his death, he was surprised by a heart attack on Friday 26 September 2008, around six o'clock in the morning. So he was called back to God suddenly, exactly as he always desired.

His final resting place is near the house of his sister, Helga Esch, in Gondenbrett, near Prüm / Eifel.

Father John Ignatius BLANEY, S.M.M.
(1919 – 2008)

Died in Liverpool (England), on 2nd November 2008,
at the age of 89 with 65 years of Religious Profession.



FROM THE MONTFORTIAN FAMILY

BROTHERS OF SAINT GABRIEL

August 2008			<u>age</u>	<u>Profession</u>
29	Br. Jules Renaudin	Nantes (France)	92	75

DAUGHTERS OF WISDOM

July 2008			<u>age</u>	<u>Profession</u>
25	Sr. Lorette Chamberland Marie Olivier	Brentwood, NY (United States)	91	71
27	Sr. Ignatia van Jezus (Henrica, Catharina, Wilhelmina Tervoort)	Wijchen (The Netherlands)	86	65
28	Sr. Louise Thérèse de l'Incarnation (Louise Léger)	Ottawa (Canada)	86	65

August 2008				
8	Sr. Guy du Sacré-Coeur (Lucie Normandeau)	Montréal (Canada)	84	64
8	Sr. Lucia Maria van Montfort (Elise Saxtorff Nielsen)	Wijchen (The Netherlands)	81	51
9	Sr. Solange de Jésus (Rachelle Pietquin)	Tournai (Belgium)	88	69
9	Sr. Dominique des Anges (Thérèse Robin)	La Chartreuse (France)	94	67
21	Sr. Yvonis-Marie (Augustine Le Vern)	La Chartreuse (France)	96	76
27	Sr. Elisa María de los Angeles (Ana Virginia Pardo Pardo)	Bogotá (Colombia)	69	48
28	Sr. Agnès-Marie du Sacré-Cœur (Marie-Rose Monnier)	La Chartreuse (France)	83	60
29	Sr. Bede of Our Lady (Edith Hudson)	Romsey (GB/I)	79	47
31	Sr. Marie-Jeanne de Saint Joseph (Madeleine Lescop)	St Laurent (France)	90	69

September 2008				
7	Sr. Marie Dolores of the Cross (Dolores Schroeder)	Winnipeg (Canada)	78	58
14	Sr. Helena de Montfort (María Luisa Pedraza)	Bogotá (Colombia)	98	64
26	Sr. Anne de l'Enfant Jésus (Anne-Marie Demange)	St Laurent (France)	90	61

October 2008

6	Sr. Montfort (Eugénie Follain)	St Laurent (France)	102	72
14	Sr. Marie-Cécile de Jésus (Aline Coache)	Montréal (Canada)	78	59
14	Sr. Marie-Romain du Christ (Jacqueline Labat-Labourdette)	St Laurent (France)	76	49
15	Sr. Marie-Antoine de Montfort (Louise Girardot)	Mirebeau (France)	82	61
20	Sr. Agnès de la Sainte Face (Angèle Fleury)	St Laurent (France)	90	67
24	Sr. Ste-Catherine de Sienne (Rita Collins)	Ottawa (Canada)	89	70
27	Sr. Hélène des Anges (Mollie Parsons)	St Anne's (GB/I)	89	65
28	Sr. Theresia Maria (Francine Timmermans)	Tournai (Belgium)	90	69
30	Sr. Maria Camilla (Rosina Guerinoni)	Valperga (Italy)	87	65
31	Sr. Cecilia de María (Ana Cecilia Parrado Céspedes)	Villavicencio (Colombia)	65	44



« Open the door for Jesus Christ ! »