



# L'Écho montfortain

IN THE HOUSE OF THE FATHER...

April 2009 - N° 9

## OUR DECEASED CONFRES



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

Died November 2, 2008, in Liverpool (England)  
at the age of 89 with 65 years of religious profession.

Fr. John Ignatius Blaney, Fr. Jack to all who knew him, was born in Belfast on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1919. He entered the Missionaries of the Company of Mary, making his first profession on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1943, and was ordained priest on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1947.

He served as a missionary in Malawi for a number of years, until he was appointed to be the second Provincial Superior of the Province of Great Britain & Ireland in 1960. In 1964 he was elected to the General Council, as an Assistant to the Superior General, Father Cornelius Heiligers. After his return to Great Britain, he exercised his priestly and religious ministry in many capacities (as assistant priest in a variety of parishes, as superior in various houses, as priest-in-charge of a parish area, as a hospital chaplain, among other apostolates). Fr. John Blaney, from the time of his ordination did practically everything that a Montfort religious could be asked to do. During his religious and priestly life he has laboured in practically every apostolate and filled almost every post in our congregation. His work has taken him from Malawi to Liverpool via Rome; he has been teacher, parish priest, Regional Superior, Provincial and General Assistant.

In 60 years of ministry, Fr. Jack lived a life full of kindness, dedication and enthusiasm in everything that he was called to do. Fr. Jack suffered from diabetes for many years. In the end, having spent his final months in Ince Blundell Hall Nursing Home, and after a prolonged struggle with his many ailments, he died peacefully on the feast of All Saints -- and we feel sure he went off to join their company. Fr. Bill Considine, a former Superior General Company of Mary wrote 'I just saw the news of Jack's passing! God bless him and rest him! What a huge swath of Montfortian history he enfolds in his life'. Fr. Miguel, Provincial of Colombia, on receiving the news of Fr. Jack's death, said: "this news touched me so very much... In Colombia we have great memories of such a brotherly confrere – easy to recognise him as a Montfort religious, very welcoming and very simple in his approach. I can still remember the

reverence he showed toward the sacred host after he had consecrated it". What more shining complement could a priest wish for?

I have known Fr. Jack for all my religious life and have always considered him a very dear friend. We loved to exchange a few words and sentences in Chichewa, the language of Malawi: it was the last thing we did last Saturday evening before I gave him a blessing, and wished him 'Tsalani Bwino' rest well! For me his greatest virtue was always his deep faith and his complete trust in Jesus Christ; it helped him make his way through any task that the Lord threw at him, and led him to love and to help all those he was to minister to in his long life. Fr. Jack himself, at his Golden Jubilee celebration said, 'The greatest and happiest life one can choose is to devote oneself to the work of Christ'. And he certainly did that. May he Rest in a very well deserved peace!



### **Brother Jean-René SIMON, S.M.M.**

**(1921 – 2008)**

Died November 27, 2008, in St Laurent s/S (France)  
at the age of 86 with 52 years of religious profession.

"I saw you under the fig tree!" It was at the beginning of the public life of Jesus. He came to the lakeshore, and there a certain young man named Nathaniel of Bethsaida was brought to him by Philip. "I saw you under the fig tree!" Jesus said to him. And just before, as he saw him approaching he had said to his followers, "Here is a good Israelite in whom there is neither deceit nor guile!"

Without necessarily speaking of the fig tree, Jesus could have said the same thing to a certain Jean-René Simon, coming toward him: "I saw you!"... And he could have said to his followers, "Here is a good young Christian in whom there is no deceit or guile!"

Our brother Jean-René was born in Ploudaniel, Finistère, on December 7, 1921. His father was already dead, as a consequence of the War of 1914 – 1918. His valiant mother, now a widow, continued to manage with her only son their little farm which had been a family heritage. After his primary studies were finished, Jean-René began to work a lot on the farm. Then he became an apprentice baker, and very quickly an excellent baker, recognized for knowing how to make very good bread. This was verified afterwards during his time in the postulancy of the Montfortians at the Calvary of Pontchâteau. He worked as a baker for ten years; then he wanted to go back to operate their little family farm... But his hearing impairment, which was already noticeable, together with his simplicity, which was not always necessarily disarming for everyone, resulted often in his being taken advantage of rather than his taking advantage of the situation...

Meanwhile, the desire to become a monk at Landévennec was growing in his soul... But the finger of God, guided by his well known compatriot of the same name (Father Joseph Simon), directed him to become a Montfortian Brother. So, after a time of postulancy at the Calvary of Pontchâteau, he spent his novitiate in Chézelles, where he made his profession on March 19, 1956. He was almost 35 years old. He stayed in

Chézelles for 14 years, completely involved in the different services of the farm. Then he went from Chézelles to la Gardiolle in October 1970. He remained there almost 33 years, giving the best of himself, above all in the vineyard and in taking care of the pigs. Then, when the piggery was stopped, he devoted himself body and soul to the good of all, in the dining room as well as by serving the members of the community and the guests, which were numerous especially in the summertime. One can think that it was there that he revealed himself even more, in his profoundly human presence, simple and intensely friendly despite the heavy cross of his deafness, attentive to everyone, with a constant good humour – and all of that combined with a profound spiritual and marian life. This beautiful bouquet of qualities in our Brother has deeply touched many friends. And it is certainly all that which we found in him after his transfer from la Gardiolle to Saint-Laurent in May 2003.

Brother Jean-René, a friend of everyone! We do not have to power to beatify you, but you have no need of that! Because, certainly the Lord is already taking care of that! Of course, your departure causes us sorrow... But we know that you are in happiness with God, and that without any delay you are our fraternal intercessor. Thank you!



**Father Angelo COMINELLI, S.M.M.**  
**(1929 – 2008)**

Died December 19, 2008, in Reggio Calabria (Italy).  
at the age of 79 with 56 years of religious profession.

Angelo Cominelli was born May 1, 1929 Cerete Basso (BG). At the threshold of his youth he entered the minor seminary of Redona, desiring to follow one of his older brothers, Giacomo, in embracing the Montfortian life. In September 1951 he began the novitiate year at Castiglione Torinese (TO). During that stage of formation he was called to a vocational discernment. He showed his willingness to enter Montfortian life, but as a lay brother and no longer as a priest. Perhaps he perceived the gap between the grandeur of ministerial priesthood and his "poverty". Finally, he decided to continue toward the priesthood while putting his trust in Mary. He wrote in his request for admission to vows, "I give myself completely to Her and I hope for everything from such a good Mother." He made his first profession September 8, 1952. He completed the course of studies in philosophy and theology in the scholasticate of Loreto.

His first destination was Arona (NO) for a pastoral course. In 1959 he was sent to Ginosa (TA) for pastoral ministry and teaching religion in the public school. Father Angelo devoted himself attentively to the sacrament of penance and to spiritual direction of young people. Some young women directed by him chose to consecrate themselves to the Lord in the Daughters of Wisdom. In 1965, the superiors chose him for the Montfortian minor seminary in Reggio Calabria, with the responsibility of being the bursar and the chaplain in a nearby nursing home. Father Angelo spent a great part of his Montfortian life in Calabria. From 1967 to 1978, the Church of the Rosary in Reggio Calabria saw him diligently busy in daily ministry as rector and helping in a parish in the city. From 1975 to 1978 he was also the superior of the community.

When he was called elsewhere for pastoral service, Father Angelo found it difficult and troubling. Several months in Arbizzano (VR), a brief period in Naples at the parish of Santa Maria d'Ogni Bene... In 1979, he began pastoral service at the parish of St. Louis de Montfort in Rome. However, he always expressed a desire to return to Reggio Calabria, either for reasons of health or for the possibility of finding a ministry more suited to his abilities. In 1983 he was again in Reggio Calabria, at the *Casa della Madonna*, and he stayed there until his final call. Father Angelo distinguished himself by an aptitude for practical work, often humble. He devoted himself to the proclamation of the Gospel through simple preaching. He loved the pastoral care of the sick. A modest person, he limited himself to the essential in relationships and he rarely spoke about himself...

He suffered a stroke, and he died a few days afterwards on December 19, 2008, the year during which he celebrated his 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a priest. After the funeral in Reggio Calabria, following the desires of his family, he was brought to his place of origin, and he rests in the local cemetery next to his parents and his brother, Father Giacomo.



### **Father Olivier LE BORGNE, S.M.M.**

**(1911 – 2008)**

Died December 28, 2008, in Cholet (France)  
at the age of 97 with 77 years of religious profession.

Olivier was born and baptised in Cléder (Nord-Finistère) on September 2, 1911. Little by little he became a member of a numerous family of 12 children, one of whom was called to God at a very young age, and five of whom consecrated themselves to the Lord in the Montfortian Family – they are, along with him, his two sisters, Sister Alain and Sister Françoise (who died a short time ago), and his two brothers – Yves, better known by the name “Brother Paul,” and Jean-Claude, the youngest, a missionary in Colombia for almost sixty years.

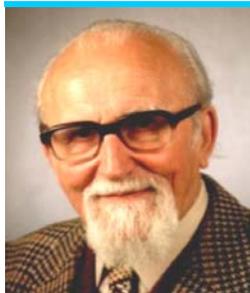
Olivier entered the minor seminary of Pontchâteau in 1923. He made his religious profession at the end of his novitiate in Celles sur Belle, on September 5, 1931. Then, after his scholasticate and his priestly ordination in Montfort sur Meu on March 12, 1938, he was professor at the School of Calvary, where he already taught for one year in 1933, after being recognized as incapable of military service due to an “irremedial weakness” (a written comment in his military record!). Then came the war, and he had to replace as best he could the confreres who were mobilized. He straightaway became professor of dogma in Montfort from 1940 to 1951, while experiencing two cases of pleurisy with a few months of rest for each one. From 1951 to 1955 he was superior of the Minor Seminary in Pelousey. Then he was named Provincial in 1955. That lasted three years. But after the brutal death of Fr. Josselin, the superior general, on October 1, 1957, the Chapter which followed elected him the First Assistant, a role which he exercised from 1958 to 1964. After his mandate was over, he went to la Chartreuse for the pastoral care of priests and women religious in the Diocese of Vannes. He then became the superior of the Community of Saint-Esprit, in Saint

Laurent sur Sèvre, from 1970 to 1979. After a brief time at Tourcoing, he found himself again at la Chartreuse, as the chaplain of the Sisters for 18 years, until 1997. Then came a well merited real retirement, but all the while he lived in the community at la Chartreuse until his last move to Saint-Laurent in April 2004.

This was an astonishing and rich apostolic journey for a man dispensed from military service for “irremedial weakness”! Here is a weakness carried well and surpassed! The fruit, surely, of a mysterious and strong complicity between nature and the grace of the Lord, and with the very effective protection of Mary, the Mother of the Lord, whose First Vespers we are already celebrating... So, blessed be the Lord for this long and beautiful Montfortian life of our Father Olivier. We want to believe very simply that you have already been welcomed into the eternal wedding feast.

I end with a few lines of a poem which was addressed to him on the occasion of his platinum jubilee (70 years) of religious profession in 2001:

*Nothing is tenderness without being wounded!  
No one pardons if he has not seen his weakness  
which he hands over to the hands of One who was pierced!  
Nothing is seed without there being a sower:  
Nothing is harvested without the time of silence,  
Because every apostle becomes the grain which dies!*



**Father Johannes (Jan) BEIJERS, S.M.M.**  
**(1925 – 2009)**

Died January 13, 2009, in Valkenburg a/d Geul (The Netherlands)  
at the age of 83 with 60 years of religious profession.

On the third of August 1925 Jan was born in Rotterdam (the Netherlands). After WWII he joined the montfortians in Meerssen, where he made his first vows on September 8<sup>th</sup> 1948. On 28<sup>th</sup> March 1954 he was ordained priest in Oirschot. The same year he left as a missionary for Mozambique, Namuno. One year later he got an appointment for Balama where he worked for eleven years. In 1967 he went to Lins in Brasil. Because of problems with his health he returned to the Netherlands the same year. Until 1970 he worked as a propagandist, from the community in Oirschot. After his appointment as a mission procurator he moved to Voorschoten. In 1978 he returned to Oirschot as provincial bursar. At the beginning of January 2008 he moved to the home of the elderly ‘Vroenhof’ in Valkenburg, where he died.

Jan was a man with a great sense of justice. It was no coincidence that he had good grades in Oirschot for moral theology! When he started to work in Mozambique as a young priest he certainly had a sharp eye for the suppression of the people by the Portugese regime. Courageously he stood up for his people. Even though, being a white man, he felt like a stranger in their African midst, he used his position to be their spokesman. He was extremely annoyed by the cowardly behaviour of some bishops.

Later, in an interview with a newspaper, he said: “Shepherds are not allowed to keep silent, when their sheep are beaten.” Because they made his work practically impossible, he left Mozambique. In no way he wanted to serve the Portugese. In his own figurative language, he expressed it as follows: “I am not prepared to fight against windmills for years and years, like Don Quichotte.”

Being a mission procurator Jan saw a lot of the world. He was grateful for it. People and nature appealed to him. And wherever he was capable, he reached out with a helping hand. He loved to visit others. Jan was a gentleman. By his charm, his interest, his humour and his stories many doors were easily opened. Mild and discrete he handled the information someone confided to him. He acted in the same way for his confreres during his job as provincial bursar.

Jan did not care about scholarly theology. His interest was in normal life. That is how he read the Gospel. It was his conviction that ingenious theological subtleties drove people apart instead of uniting them. He dreamed of the moment “when the entire world would be joined in one religion, and all the problems we have now will be solved.”

Some five years ago Jan noticed that something was changing in his mental condition. He became forgetful. Slowly he discovered that he had Alzheimer disease. That was a heavy blow for him. He loved decency and feared he would loose his dignity. He would rather die! As long as possible he remained mobile. He still wanted to visit his friends. The confreres kept him in their midst as long as possible. We know Jan appreciated that, though he couldn't express it. The last year he stayed on floor 2 in the home for the elderly in Vroenhof, where the staff took care of him with great regard and respect. One week ago Jan didn't look well. It was difficult to make contact with him. His body showed severe failures. An hour after he had received the last rites from Hub Louis, he died silently. May he now rest in the joy and peace of the risen Lord!



**Father Mario POULIN, S.M.M.**

**(1926 – 2009)**

Died Febraury 13, 2009, in Pointe-du-Lac, Trois-Rivières (Canada)  
at the age of 82 with 58 years of religious profession.

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Father Mario was born in Montreal on July 23, 1926. After his classical studies at our seminary in Papineauville, he made his temporary vows at our Novitiate Sainte Marie in Nicolet on August 15, 1950. He was ordained by Cardinal Paul-Émile Léger on February 11, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, in 1956, in the parish of Saint Eugène, in Montreal.

After eight years as the director of our guesthouse at the Montfortian Marian Center, during the years 1967 to 1975, our confrere distinguished himself as the parish priest of our parish of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary in Dorval for 12 years. He continued after that as the parish priest and superior of the parish of Mary Queen of All Hearts in Montréal for eight years. From 1996 to 2001, he was superior and bursar

of the residence of the Shrine of Mary Queen of All Hearts. During the following years, from 2001 to 2005, even though Mario was retired, he helped a lot in parish ministry.

More and more, the sickness of Alzheimer's made its mark, and required Mario to go to our infirmary in Nicolet and then to the Cénacle St- Pierre, in Pointe-du-Lac, Trois-Rivières.

In one of his hymns, Father de Montfort gives a kind of spiritual biography of our dear Mario: "A saint is very gracious, gentle, upright, winsome, amiable and obliging, without any agitation. It is by this sweet means that he wins over and beguiles, that he does so much good, at times without a word" (Hymn 9).

May the Virgin Mary, whom he loved and prayed to so much, lead our dear confrere into the joys of eternity face-to-face with the risen Christ.



**Father Henricus (Harry) HAMELEERS, S.M.M.**  
**(1920 – 2009)**

Died February 19, 2009, in Valkenburg a/d Geul (The Netherlands)  
at the age of 88 with 68 years of religious profession.

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Harry was born on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1920 in Maastricht. He joined the montfortians in 1939 and made his first vows on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1940 in Meerssen. On 17<sup>th</sup> February 1946 he was ordained priest by mgr. Mutsaerts in Oirschot. His first appointment was to be a curate in Leenhof. In 1950 he was needed as an itinerant missionary, stationed in Egmond on Sea. After six years he left for Malawi. The first two years he stayed in Blantyre before he went to Mulanje until 1965. After his appointment as regional superior in 1965 he moved to Nantipwili, till 1972. The next twelve years he worked in Blantyre and after a transition year in Thyolo he was appointed for the Pastoral Centre in Nantipwili. In 1990 he returned to the Netherlands and found a new home in the convent of Vroenhof. Last year he needed more care, so he had to move to the nursing home adjoining the convent, where he died after a short sickbed.

An accurate and caring man... probably the image many of us have of Harry. With a sense of responsibility and righteousness as tall as his stature and the size of his shoes. And, not to forget his typical voice, coloured by the melodious accent of 'Wolder'. If you asked Harry where he would like to be, he would have stayed on in Leenhof as a curate. Being close to people, where his humour and the twinkle in his eyes would be useful. He learned what grief meant by the early death of his father and his eldest sister. Nobody had to point out to him, that life is not always easy. When he was appointed for the team of itinerant missionaries, the Leenhof branch of the Catholic Workers Movement wrote a long letter to the provincial superior and begged him not to take away 'their energetic curate': "The leaving of a priest from our rectory never before hurt us so much as now." Nevertheless, the appointment took place. Harry took the experience from Leenhof with him as an itinerant missionary. This work did not last long either. Together with Martin Budé he had to leave for Malawi to form a kind of 'itinerant team'. In spite of the plans, he entered soon enough the usual pastoral work,

with everything that belonged to it, like taking care of the diseased in Blantyre hospital. Just after the Second Vatican Council he became superior of the region. With wisdom, human knowledge and tact he managed his confreres through this difficult period. In spite of his profound faith, he sympathized with his confreres who had become searchers and wanderers.

Harry was a steady worker. He did not believe in running, but in a slow and undisturbed rhythm of life he cleared one job after another. Due to his motto: "Gods mill turns slowly, but it keeps on turning". In the beginning it was difficult for him that he could not handle the language Chichewa. Being a man of the word he enjoyed expressing himself precisely. Even though he could not speak it, he managed to survive thanks to his humour. A few years ago, at his diamond priest-jubilee, he said: "When I was trying to learn the native language, a tough job started. It took a lot of patience. Finally, thirty years later (!) young frizzy heads at the age of ten till twelve, sitting round the altar, were listening silently to my Sunday-sermon and dared to ask questions".

After his retirement he kept on working. He was the accurate bursar of the community, until his pace diminished more en more due to his age and health. The moment when he remained as the only member of his family, he knew that his life would soon be over. He was resigned to it. From a profound faith he knew that God would take care of him. Now he started his last journey. How long it will take him to reach the highest heaven, we do not know. He will take his time. May he reach the house of the Father with a heart full of joy and enjoy the peace there!

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**Father Ferdi PHILIPPI, S.M.M.**

**(1932 – 2009)**

Died April 15, 2009, in Siegburg (Germany).  
at the age of 76 with 49 years of religious profession.

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## FROM THE MONTFORTIAN FAMILY

### BROTHERS OF SAINT GABRIEL

<b>November 2008</b>			<u>age</u>	<u>Profession</u>
15	Br. Félix	Trichur (India)	80	57
<b>December 2008</b>				
13	Br. Montfort of the Cross	Gannavaram (India)	80	60
<b>January 2009</b>				
09	Br. Jacques Louis	La Hillière (France)	89	71
14	Br. Dominic Savio	Kerala (India)	70	49
23	Br. Pierre Moulic	La Hillière (France)	88	71
<b>February 2009</b>				
24	Br. David Royer	Laval (Canada)	92	76
<b>March 2009</b>				
01	Br. Louis Couteller	La Hillière (France)	87	70
02	Br. Paul Barré	La Hillière (France)	82	66
08	F. Gérard Raimbault	La Hillière (France)	75	56
26	Br. Auguste Fournel	La Hillière (France)	85	68
26	Br. Henri Sauvètre	La Hillière (France)	70	48

### DAUGHTERS OF WISDOM

<b>November 2008</b>			<u>age</u>	<u>Profession</u>
13	Sr. Mary Pieta (Margaret White)	Ruskin, FL (USA)	81	62
26	Sr. Carmen de Montfort (Herminia Reyes Gutiérrez)	Bogotá (Colombia)	85	61
27	Sr. Louise-Germaine (Georgette Plouffe)	Ottawa (Canada)	89	70
27	Sr. Margaretha van Jezus (Elisabeth Meuleners)	Wijchen (Netherlands)	91	69
27	Sr. Jean-Marie de la Crèche (Paulette Troissant)	La Chartreuse (France)	85	60
27	Sr. Jean-François de l'Immaculée (Janine Kerouerts)	St Laurent (France)	83	54
28	Sr. Clemencia de San Martín (Alba Alvarado Lopez)	Bogotá (Colombia)	63	44
<b>December 2008</b>				
07	Sr. François de la Croix (Germaine Roudaut)	La Chartreuse (France)	91	69
10	Sr. Antoinette de la Nativité (Marie-Antoinette Toitot)	St Laurent (France)	88	63

11	Sr. Irène de l'Assomption (Irène O'Beirne)	Terryville, CT (USA)	89	57
14	Sr. Alfred de Jésus (Henriette Cordelois)	St Laurent (France)	101	77
22	Sr. Emma del Sagrado Corazón (María Adela Agatón Peña)	Villavicencio (Colombia)	84	62

### January 2009

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09	Sr. Michel de la Passion (Émile Crano)	St Laurent (France)	87	65
11	Sr. Daniel du Sacré-Coeur (Clotilde Chauvière)	Bréhan (France)	86	63
15	Sr. Denise du Sacré-Coeur (Denise Pichon)	St Laurent (France)	85	56
16	Sr. Gertrude du Coeur Immaculé (Gertrude Fortin)	Montréal (Canada)	84	59
24	Sr. Jean-Marie du Rédempteur (Ernestine D'Amours)	Montréal (Canada)	94	62
30	Sr. Madeleine du Christ (Madeleine Ripoché)	St Laurent (France)	95	63
30	Sr. Marie-Edith de la Trinité (Alice Franck)	Brentwood, NY (USA)	85	65

### February 2009

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03	Sr. Michel de Notre-Dame (Thérèse Tourillon)	Ottawa (Canada)	88	65
03	Sr. Carmela della Croce (Rosa Muceli)	Valperga (Italy)	92	61
19	Sr. Fidèle du Sacré-Coeur (Françoise Séguin)	Ottawa (Canada)	88	69
22	Sr. Rita de l'Enfant-Jésus (Noella Péladeau)	Ottawa (Canada)	94	76

### March 2009

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08	Sr. Odile de la Sainte Famille (Odile Serot)	St Laurent (France)	88	64
09	Sr. Montfort del Cuore Immacolato (Albina Perin)	Valperga (Italy)	88	61
20	Sr. Flore de Marie (Fernande Gougeon)	Ottawa (Canada)	90	67
21	Sr. Alicia María (Ana Rosa Agatón Peña)	Bogotá (Colombia)	87	63
21	Sr. Roger-Marie de Jésus (Marie-Alexandrine Tapon)	St Laurent (France)	94	68
21	Sr. Agnès de la Providence (Conceptia Saint-Gerard)	Carrefour (Haïti)	86	65

### April 2009

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06	Sr. Marie du Roncier (Bernadette Jarno)	St Laurent (France)	84	61
13	Sr. Gabrielle-Marie du Christ (Pierrette Brunet)	St Laurent (France)	80	48
15	Sr. Maria de St Clément (Rolande Boyer)	Ottawa (Canada)	99	80