



L'Écho montfortain

IN THE HOUSE OF THE FATHER...

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OUR DECEASED CONFRES



Father Leopold JANSEN, S.M.M.

(1921 – 2010)

who died in Leuven (Belgium), on 20 February 2010,
at the age of 89 with 67 years of Religious Profession.

Pol (as we called him) was born in Loenhout on February 6, 1921. Most of his formation took place in Rotselaar: humanities, novitiate (1941), first vows (1942), philosophy and the first year of theology. He completed his theological formation at Oirschot, where he was ordained priest on March 7, 1948. After obtaining a degree in colonial sciences in Leuven, he was asked to join his brother Louis in the Congo.

In 1949, in full summer, he began his first voyage to the Congo, hoping to be able to begin the most important part of his life there. In fact, this time was limited to fifteen years, a time which marked the rest of his life. After a few months of language study, he was successively a missionary in the bush, a school director and a superior. He came back to Belgium at times for vacations or for health reasons, and once for the Episcopal ordination of his brother (in 1962).

As a young missionary in the Congo – these were the years after the war – he participated in the emancipation of the mission, which received the title “prefecture” in 1952, his brother Louis becoming its first prefect apostolic. Ten years later the prefecture became a diocese with his brother as bishop. During this time, the former colony sought independence, which was achieved in 1960 and was followed by a rebellion in the East Congo (where the diocese of Isangi is located), precisely during one of Pol’s vacations. The following year, Pol returned already and was named first superior of the post at Loleka, and a short time after at Oplala. It was here in October of 1964 that the long Calvary leading to Stanleyville (now Kisangani) began for him, for his confreres and for the sisters of Oplala and Wenge. No one perished from their group, but several were marked for life, including Pol.

A typical trait: scarcely a few months after their liberation, in June 1965, he wrote a short letter to the vicar provincial – “Consequently, in reference to the agreement among the missionaries in Winterslag, I declare that I am ready to return to the Congo if absolute safety is assured,” and he added in parentheses: “in fidelity to a promise made.” I’ll ignore

what he made allusion to, but it is clear that he refers to a word given. Here is a characteristic of Pol: a word given is sacred. But his life was directed otherwise. In October 1965 he was asked to be chaplain and prefect in a school in Fléron. Upon his arrival, he discovered that he was also supposed to teach religion courses. That is what he did. Then he was asked to be superior of the community in Leuven. Despite his fragile health, he tried to return to the Congo, but his doctor formally advised against it (April 1967). Previously in the Congo, he had the experience of a catastrophic rebellion; now the same thing happened before his eyes in Europe : the revolt of “May ‘68” in Paris, some disorderly novelties in the Church, some confreres who left the congregation ... Pol suffered, he for whom a word given was sacred.

The provincial, Piet Goltstein, asked him to be secretary and editor of the bulletin *Rendez-Vous* (1973). During these years, he travelled every day by foot the six kilometres from Leuven to Kessel-Lo and back. One of his principles: physical effort is essential for health. As secretary he was aware of the decisions of successive administrations, often difficult for him to take, but he accomplished this task with a remarkable fidelity until the end of Piet’s mandate (at the beginning of 1987): a word given is sacred.

From then on he was in retirement in Leuven. Still another characteristic: he carried out the stages of the day with an admirable regularity: the celebration of the Eucharist, breakfast, a coffee at 10:00, a walk, rosary in the chapel, lunch, a siesta, a walk, rosary, returning to his room, supper, a bit of TV and precisely at 9:15 retiring to his room. A hospital stay in 2005 broke this rhythm. He had a troubled spirit and no longer went on walks. He lost his sense of direction even in the house. Jos Verbelen became a valuable help. It was also Jos who discovered his lifeless body in the middle of the night

Still another detail: during a fraternal exchange, I asked him what was the secret of his life as a retired Montfortian. He was firm: daily prayer. His blue rosary used to hang on his chair in the chapel. It was not there only as a decoration; it was a tool he used every day. Pol died in his room the night of February 20. The funeral took place on February 26, followed by burial in the congregation’s cemetery in Rotselaar.



Father Gerardus SCHRAMA, S.M.M.

(1928 – 2010)

who died in Maastricht (The Netherlands), on 24 February 2010,
at the age of 81 with 57 years of Religious Profession.

Gerardus Marinus Schrama was born on 10 August 1928 in Voorschoten. He came to Ste Marie in Schimmert in 1943 and joined the Montfortians in Meerssen on 8 September 1952. He was ordained priest in Oirschot on March 16, 1958. After a pastoral year in Leuven (Belgium) he left for Malawi. He worked as a priest in the parish, as a catechist and rector of the novitiate in Mary View, Mulanje, Blantyre, Mzedi, Masanjala and Lirangwe. In 1967 he was in Gaba (Uganda) for a course. In 1974 he returned to the Netherlands and started working in the boarding school at Beresteyn in Voorschoten. Later he worked for the Movement Without a Name, as pastor in the neighbourhood, and he was responsible for the archives of the Dutch province for six years. When

Beresteyn was sold he moved to an apartment nearby. In 2006 he moved to the home for the elderly in Vroenhof Valkenburg. Slowly his health diminished. He died while he was in hospital in Maastricht.

Serious and humourous... that is significant for Gerard. He could slide easily from one into the other. Sincere sliding into the scrupulous, humorous almost cynical. What was his personality? Some professors of the major seminary doubted his capacity for the congregation; the majority thought he was a suitable candidate. Surely, in his younger years he acted like a brat, but underneath that display a serious character was hiding.

Gerard knew that he was not born a saint. Even when he was having fun with someone else, he worked on himself with a consistency he got from home. He was not the kind of person who easily made decisions or thoughts. He didn't skate on thin ice. Only after a long pondering did he made his move. Making preparations for his perpetual vows, he seriously wondered "is it good for the congregation?" A long time ago a superior made a justified remark; he said that Gerard was shy when it came to serious matters.

He reacted in a rebellious way at certain developments in the Church. He did not like authorities pretending to know it all. And whenever he had the feeling that the congregation cherished old habits just because of the habit, he refused to participate. He wanted to experience on his own what certain views, a rule or a classical virtue meant. He couldn't and wouldn't live and believe 'only on command'. Whenever he disagreed, he could make sharp remarks. In a conversation you noticed he knew what he was up against, but didn't know how to go further.

Gerard was a gentleman: a sharp crease in his trousers, hair neatly combed, very distinguished. The last time he conducted a service with the Dominican sisters in Voorschoten he said: "I have always strived for liturgical dignity." How painful it must have been for him to lose control. When he couldn't remember something he kept on searching. You could see him worrying. Everybody empathized with him.

The moment Gerard left Malawi for good, he wrote that he would miss the sun, the warmth, fresh air and the space of that country. Subtly he noticed, that climate was not the same as temperature. One of his deep ones! His last years he had to give up more and more space. In spite of that he said with all his heart that he felt at home in Vroenhof; he enjoyed his confreres nearby, even though he got more and more handicapped and saw ghosts sometimes. Hopefully he is now enjoying the space which the encounter with God 'face to face' provides, especially if it is true what they say, that in heaven beautiful music plays.



**Brother Luigi (Battista CALDARA), S.M.M.
(1929 – 2010)**

who died in Bergamo (Italy), on 13 March 2010,
at the age of 80 with 53 years of Religious Profession.

Battista Caldara was born into a large family on July 30, 1929 in Chiuduno (Bg). It was here that he learned the generous and discrete industriousness with which he undertook so many services in various Montfortian communities. He lived serenely a long vocational search. Finally he found his way to the consecrated life in the Company of Mary at the age of 25.

He began his novitiate in Castiglione (To) in March 1955, and he pronounced his first vows on March 19 of the following year, taking the name of Brother Luigi. His first obedience was to stay in the novitiate community as “Director of Brothers.” He was charged with helping the Father responsible for the formation of brothers, both postulants and novices, almost like an older brother. His serenity and his industriousness made him much appreciated. In 1960 he came to the Scholasticate in Loreto. And here, on March 19, 1961, in the shadow of the Holy House, he made his perpetual profession. When the scholasticate moved to Rome, Brother Luigi joined the missionary community of Treviglio for a brief time (1962 – 1963). Then he spent three years at the scholasticate in Rome working in the fields. For one year he was in the missionary residence of Arona (No). In 1967, Brother Luigi was once again in Treviglio, and he remained there for over thirty years, until 1999. In the chronicles of the community, one confrere noted, “When returning from preaching, from popular missions, from missionary labours, each confrere always finds the attentive and faithful presence of Brother Luigi. And on the days when the community heads out for pastoral ministry, our Brother Luigi guarantees a careful and discrete presence which enables us to breathe the air of a religious house.”

He was one of that group of brothers who put their abilities and qualities at the service of the Province. He went from the fields to the kitchen, from construction to maintenance, from the sacristy to the front door. A man of few words, he demonstrated a great ability to listen and to give advice to many who knocked on the door of the house for many different reasons. His advice was not like a missionary Father would articulate, but more like a wise man who had the right word at the right time. Simple and direct phrases: “Pray to Our Lady,” “Trust in the Lord,” “You will see that you do it with the help of God” ... Even today many people remember him for this quality.

But brother Luigi’s life did not lack times of darkness, difficulties and suffering, and not only physical ones. He lived more and more times closed within himself and in depression. In 1999 he came to the community of Villa Montfort, where he did not fail to make himself still useful, as far as possible. The service which he would never miss is that of prayer, above all the rosary, with which he filled his life night and day. His suffering in the end was considerable, but it was present in Brother Luigi in silence and in a spirit of self-offering. The Lord called him to receive the reward of a good and faithful servant on March 13, 2010. He rests in the cemetery in Bergamo, with so many other confreres.



Father André TOUBLANC, S.M.M.

(1927 – 2010)

who died in St Laurent s/S (France), on 2 April 2010,
at the age of 82 with 61 years of Religious Profession.

André was born in Saint Géréon, Loire Atlantique, in the region of Muscadet, on July 11, 1927. He was baptized the following day. He did his secondary studies in the minor seminary of Pontchâteau, in the shadow of the Calvary whose tercentenary we celebrate this year. Then, he entered the Montfortian novitiate in Celles sur Belle where he made his first profession on September 8, 1948, after which he went to Chézelles for his philosophy studies. Then, after a year of military service, he studied theology at Montfort in preparation for the priesthood and missionary life. He was ordained priest on February 7, 1954. After his studies, he saw his desire for the foreign missions fulfilled, and he left for Madagascar, where he arrived on November 3, 1954. Fifty years of missionary life followed on that island, until he returned to France definitively in December 2004. After a few months at Marillais, illness required him to join the community of Saint Laurent sur Sèvre. Thanks to the attention of our health care personnel, André, to whom doctors gave only a few months to live, showed an extraordinary resistance, since he lived a little more than four years, showing a desire to live as strong as his legendary handshake!

André experienced several missionary posts in the diocese of Tamatave: Marolambo, Tamatave, Mahanoro, but his name remains connected to Foulpointe where he stayed for 25 years. It is there that the missionary qualities which became evident in André blossomed. Father Hubert Roy, who knew him well, gives us his testimony on this point: I remember the reflection of an auxiliary nurse when seeing André arrive for the first time at Saint Laurent: “Oh! How big he is!”

Yes, André was big, not only in height, but great in everything he undertook. He had received a talent from the Lord, he had a sense of welcome and organization, and he knew how to put this talent at the service of the mission in Madagascar, as much with the Malgache as with the Europeans or the Chinese. Great for welcoming: No need to dwell on this subject, since this was known and recognized by everyone in Madagascar, as much for feasts as for meetings of catechists. Great for service: André was a good administrator. He was one of the kingpins for the creation of the promotion centre for youth at Marotsiriry, in the Mahanoro, in the south of the diocese of Tamatave. This centre, which still exists, functioned then in the style of the former J.A.C. or the JOC in France, with the famous method of See, Judge, Act.

He liked to help all those who wanted to make their talents bear fruit. He regularly sent some young families which he carefully chose, to formation centres in the north of the diocese, so that they might become the engines of development in their villages upon their return. But, he always refused to receive those who expected everything from him without doing anything, being content to cross their arms or to uncross them to extend them as beggars. In everything, he applied what a proverb so rightly said: “It is worth more to give a hook to someone and teach him to fish, than to give him a fish ...”

To close, I would also say that he was great in suffering. His temperament, his stature allowed him to take things like a good boxer, but he did not let himself be fooled. During his illness, he accepted – in faith and hope – the suffering of his long way of the cross which ended on the evening of Good Friday. Andre repeated tirelessly, even called out, and made us repeat like an echo the invitation of the Gospel: “If you want”. In this he was great ... The Lord will certainly say to him: “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord ... I will confide more to you.”



Brother Michel UGUEN, S.M.M.

(1932 – 2010)

who died in Buenos Aires (Argentina), on 8 April 2010,
at the age of 77 with 57 years of Religious Profession.

Brother Michel Uguen (in religion, Brother Yves) died on April 8, 2010 in our little house on Conésa Street in Villa Fiorito, a suburb of Buenos Aires. Born in Lannilis in 1932, he would have been 78 years old on October 19 of this year. Among his family, we especially know his sister Jeanne Leden (a widow), some of his numerous nieces and nephews, and his sister Sophie, a religious from the Daughters of the Holy Spirit and a missionary in North Cameroun (Garoua). He was baptized in his parish the day after his birth. He entered the school of the Calvary at the age of 12, and then the brothers' novitiate in Saint Laurent at the age of 19. He did fourteen months of military service in Angers.

As a brother who did manual work, he chose the profession of his father, a carpenter, which did not prevent him from serving in other ways in the congregation. So after his perpetual profession on September 19, 1958 in Saint Laurent, he did field work in the school of the Calvary. Then he lived as a carpenter in turn in Montfort-sur-Meu, in Pelousey, in Paris, on the rue du Commandeur, again in Pelousey, then in Loeches, in Spain, then in the USA, in Saint-Louis, Missouri, and finally in Argentina, in September 1969, when the mission in Argentina was beginning ...

He spent the greatest part of his life as a missionary and Montfortian religious in Argentina (40 years), and it was here that he gave the best of himself. Indeed, he did not wait for the advice and the directives of his superiors in order to take charge of his life and to give him a direction which he saw as the most appropriate. In the first place, he was oriented towards the world of work, and he found a job in a carpentry shop in the Slovenian community. Then, following our sisters, the Daughters of Wisdom, he opted to be involved among the poorest of our district. Just as with other neighbourhoods on the outskirts, Fiorito emerged from the earth as a kind of shanty town, where there were all kinds of things to do, as much on the human level as well as on the level of formation for the Christian community. The Montfortians (priests, brothers and sisters) entered by the narrow door, that of insertion. In this way, Michel was a pioneer and could show the way to his confreres ... At that time, we were in close connection with a group of students who wanted to put their abilities and their good will at the service of the poorest. So it was that one of them proposed to Michel to take up a carpenter's post in a technical college run by the Salesians. First employed in production, he later obtained a diploma which allowed

him to be an instructor in carpentry. But, more than a simple professor, we could see in him the qualities of an educator, because he knew how to transmit not only practical knowledge but also convictions, different ways of seeing things and events from the perspective of faith and Christian wisdom. He was proud to tell us about the morning remarks he addressed to the students of the college. And every year, during the summer, he participated in vacation camps organized for these young people.

August 15, 1979, which is a holiday in Argentina, had to be a fateful day for him – he had a work accident which led to the amputation of his left arm. We think it was the sleeve of his wool sweater which trapped his arm in a band saw ... In this very difficult trial, he knew how to show courage, serenity and even the good humour which was characteristic of him. He was known and loved for his great human qualities, to which must be added his moral rectitude, his determined will, his frankness, his sense of justice, his respect and love for poor people, his faithful friendship, his recognition of his own weaknesses, his strong spirituality ... And as they say, he had his heart in his hand (he was open handed) ... After his accident, he continued his work in the college of the Salesians, adding to his tasks as a teacher, that of a tutor and a catechist.

He had taken a course in catechesis in the diocese of Lomas de Zamora, and he perfected his knowledge of this material with the Salesians. He liked to talk to young people with simplicity and conviction, in catechetical sessions (for Confirmation) and in other discussions, whether in the college or in the neighbourhoods where we live and work. He used to prepare the lessons which he had to give to the confirmandi with other catechists. In going through the notebooks and files found among his papers, I could see the care which he put into this preparation ...

In the end, the illness which took him away revealed in him the same dispositions which we knew in him: lucidity, determination, fidelity to the choices he made a long time ago ... So it was that he preferred to stay in Argentina rather than to return to France, and to die in his humble house rather than in a hospital. He was hospitalized twice in a clinic not too far away, first on October 18, 2009, for a month, and the second time in the first weeks of March 2010. Together with the doctor, he made the decision to return to his house. It was then that people were mobilized in an extraordinary way to accompany him practically day and night, giving him the necessary care, and praying with him. In hearing their witnessing, often with tears in their eyes, I understood that some of them were affected by him in a heroic way. “He well deserved this care from us,” one of the women told me. And another good neighbour: “He died like a well born and upright man departs”...

To conclude, I translate something written by one of his students on the back of a photo during a graduation ceremony: “To Michel, a great person, as there are few in the world. I am very happy to have received this medal from your hands, because, for me, you are the person who has the most human sense.”

There is also an episode in his life that merits telling. But only he could do it well with his smile and his habitual laugh, and perhaps also his sister Sophie. On the path which led him to France, probably in December 1985, he made a detour through Africa to visit his sister who was a religious. He landed in Dakar, Senegal, then in Douala or Yaoundé, I no longer know. Then he had to make a very long train trip to the north of Cameroun, and then a trip in a bus, in torrid heat. The worst moments were when the police asked him for his papers which he, due to fatigue, could not find ... It was only after a long time of searching and reflection that he found them in the pocket of his jacket which was in the rack above his seat ...



**Brother Jacobus (Mathias MUITJENS), S.M.M.
(1933 – 2010)**

who died in Maastricht (The Netherlands), on 5 June 2010,
at the age of 77 with 59 years of Religious Profession.

On March 5th 1933, Mathias Gerardus Hubertus Muitjens was born in Nuth. In 1949 he chose to join the Montfortians. He made his first vows in Meerssen on March 19, 1951, receiving the religious name of Jacobus-Maria. Five years later he made his perpetual vows. He was trained to be a master-carpenter and foreman. His first task was the household and maintenance of the scholasticate in Oirschot. This was followed by an appointment for the mission-trade-school in Bunde, where he worked (amongst other things) as teacher of carpentry. Together with the mission-trade-school he moved in 1965 to Zevenaar. When the institution was closed - in 1969 -, he was appointed bursar for the community in Vroenhof, Valkenburg. From 1971 till 1994 he was head of the Technical Service of the home for the elderly and took care of the financial administration of the community. In 1994 his working area was officially reduced to the community, where he stayed active until his death.

The illness and death of Jacobus surprised us very much. He kept on going and therefore gave the impression he would live for ever. He was as reserved about his health as everything else he worried about. He told us instead about the many confreres he had known in Vroenhof. His memory was fabulous and he loved to share the stories he knew about the Vroenhof-convent and the home for the elderly. The house did not have any secrets for him; he knew every detail. And how he repaired it in the past!

Jacobus wanted to be a missionary. He wrote in 1960, that he would like: “to work for the formation of the young church”. His dream never came true. He was needed desperately as a teacher at the mission-trade-school in Bunde and in Zevenaar and later in our home for the elderly in Valkenburg. He was very clever with material matters. He was almost indispensable as driver and companion for confreres when they had to attend a doctor. One cannot count the hours he was waiting with great patience in the waiting rooms of hospitals. Whenever someone was hospitalized, Jacobus became his most loyal visitor. In those circumstances he surpassed everyone in care. All his stiffness fell down the moment he could help.

At other moments he looked like a closed book. He didn't easily show his inner feelings. And no one should touch the tasks that were his. He rather showed his feelings by doing the things that had to be done – in his own tempo and rhythm, daily just being late a few minutes for supper.

Jacobus was his religious-name. Actually his name was Jacobus-Maria. That name was important for him. He had a great admiration for her whom he called ‘his heavenly mother’. Also remarkable was that he did not need much. He did not long for luxury. In his room he lived like a beggar, amidst the many things and tools he needed to be the jack-of-all-trades. Probably he will have to adjust in heaven at the order of Our Sweet Lord. We trust he will soon be in place there!



**Brother Mathurin (Gerard GOMMANS), S.M.M.
(1934 – 2010)**

who died in Eindhoven (The Netherlands), on 10 June 2010,
at the age of 75 with 52 years of Religious Profession.

On 12 December 1934 Gerard Martinus Marie Gommans was born in Venray, together with his twin sister Gonnie. He joined the Montfortians in Meerssen in 1956 and made his first vows July 2, 1957. He received the name Mathurin, the first follower of Montfort. He made his perpetual vows on April 28, 1962.

From 1957 till 1963 he worked at the scholasticate in Oirschot, in maintenance and in the carpentry shop. In Bunde he prepared himself for the mission, and in 1963 he left for Malawi. His first place was Nguludi for six years, where he assisted in the construction of Pius XII Seminary. Two years later, he was in Likulezi to build the catechetical Training Centre, and from 1971 till 1985 he was based in Nantipwili from where he undertook innumerable projects of schools and churches and also the Nantipwili Pastoral Centre. In 1985 he returned to Nguludi-Maryview, and in 2002 he came back to the Netherlands, to the community of Oirschot. The circle was closed. Two weeks after an operation with many complications he died in hospital in Eindhoven.

When asked for his funeral wishes, Mathurin wrote: “a very plain service”. These few words express perfectly the kind of person he has been all his life: a common man. He did not like complexity or show-offs. Life was difficult enough as it was! That is why he felt in so well placed in Malawi. He functioned in his own rhythm as contractor and architect: not hasty, not overstrained, just doing his job. He enjoyed the relaxed way of living in Africa, without the many rules of the Netherlands.

Mathurin was popular among his confreres, in spite of his silent presence. Is that not often the case – such person presents a feeling of warmth and solidarity, much more than a show-off does. Mathurin couldn't bear tensions in the community. He could not understand why someone couldn't put water into the wine. At such difficult moments you could see him suffer. It made him unhappy. He felt very strongly about cordiality and harmony. In a report in 1957 his novice master noticed: he “fulfilled a good job being hospital-attendant”. The community of Oirschot can confirm that. In an inimitable way Mathurin was involved with the illness of Hub Muijens and afterwards Jan Beijers. He was there for them, day and night. Nothing was too much. He had a natural talent to encourage a sick person, probably because he knew how difficult it was to show emotion.

Math had a great appreciation for nature, flowers and animals. His pictures show his intense view, by heart and soul. The well-being of cats, chicken and ducks interested him. He loved them. Sadly his ‘stock’ endured a lot last winter. Looking back, it was a bad sign! For several years he knew he had to have an operation. He was afraid of it, and his feeling was confirmed; the operation became fatal. Visiting him in hospital we wanted to take him home with us so badly! It couldn't be true, that the community had to go on without him. He would say: “The Regulator above decided differently”. May the Regulator provide him a place in a house that is built on the rock of Christ!



**Brother Simon (Jozef STRAATEN), S.M.M.
(1916 – 2010)**

who died in Valkenburg (The Netherlands), on 17 June 2010,
at the age of 93 with 62 years of Religious Profession.

Jozef Hubertus Straaten was born on July 31, 1916 in Gulpen. He joined the Montfortians in Meerssen in 1946. He made his first vows on October 7, 1947, and his perpetual vows five years later in Bunde.

Before he entered, he had already learned a trade at his father's cobbler shop. In Meerssen he took care of the garden and the household. In 1949 he became a member of the staff at the mission-trade-school. The moment the institution moved to Zevenaar, Simon stayed in Bunde and worked for the boarding school of the child welfare. Two years later he moved to Vroenhof, where he worked as a jack-of-all-trades. The last few years he needed more care, first in his room in the convent and finally in the home of the elderly. The nursing staff took devotedly care of him. In a short time a pneumonia became fatal. He died in his room.

When Jozef joined the Montfortians he got a new name: Simon, possibly in remembrance to Simon the Tanner, whose name is mentioned three times in the Acts of the Apostles (9-10). That name suited our Jozef well. He was a capable cobbler; his whole life he liked working with leather. As a Montfortian he learned the trade of blacksmith and fitter. He became a good teacher. We still find his craftsmanship in many Montfortian houses.

Even so, the technical capacities of Simon were not the most striking. He was a serious and pious man. The first years of his religious life he was rather scrupulous and insecure; little by little he grew beyond it. In the same way he got over his stuttering, with patience and diligence. He prayed and meditated a lot. His great trust in God's closeness gave him the energy to develop his spirituality. The shyness he had as young man was changed into an intense friendliness. You felt safe and unthreatened in his presence. Probably there is no one he quarrelled with.

In the provincial archives, there is hardly any of his correspondence present. In fact, there is only one letter in which he writes about his unhappiness, because he feels a fierce aversion for a person. That worried him a lot. He did not want to be like that. It didn't strike with his religious ideals. He wanted to treat people with respect and honour. If that didn't work by nature, it had to be through the supernatural way. It made him a loveable man.

Simon experienced the ailments of old age. For years he suffered the consequences of a failed operation on his hip. First he had to walk with a stick, then with a rollator, and finally he had to sit in a wheelchair. In spite of all that, he almost reached his father's age, but unfortunately his sudden death was one and a half month's short of his becoming 94. Hopefully he smiles in heaven for not winning.



**Father Wilhelmus (Wiel) VERHOEVEN, S.M.M.
(1920 – 2010)**

who died in Maastricht (The Netherlands), on 6 July 2010,
at the age of 90 with 68 years of Religious Profession.

Johannes Wilhelmus Verhoeven was born on May 6, 1920 in Klimmen. In 1940, he came to Meerssen and made his first vows on September 8, 1941. He was ordained priest in Oirschot on March 16, 1947. In 1948, he left for Rome to study canon law. He got his appointment for Malawi in 1952, where he worked in the dioceses of Blantyre and Chikwawa. He returned to the Netherlands in 1999 and became a member of the community in Vroenhof. When his physical condition required more attention he moved to the home of the elderly. He died in the hospital in Maastricht, where he was admitted last Saturday.

After his ordination, Wiel studied canon law in Rome - a study he could not finish while he became ill. In spite of that, his study came in handy for the young church in Malawi. It had to fit within the order of the World Church, and match the traditions and culture of the country. Being vicar-general of Bishop Vroemen in the diocese of Chikwawa made Wiel able to practice his wisdom. During those years, he read psalm 119 every Sunday from his breviary, the verse at the top of the obituary (Ps. 119, 96). God's gift is never final and cannot be captured in a structure or order. God's people are always on the road for an even bigger space.

Wiel was wrestling with an inner restlessness his entire life. He noticed problems in every situation, in rules and structures. To surrender to light-footed joy was not always easy for him. In his letters, even from sixty years ago, he complains about insomnia, because he is worrying about everything. The moment he made a decision he wondered already if it was the right one. In Malawi he used to replace his confreres when they went on holiday. It was easy to take over the parish someone else started, although he always grumbled about something that was not right in his eyes.

In Vroenhof we got to know Wiel as a person who lived his steady rhythm. It made him feel comfortable. Loyal as he was, he sent his homemade birthday-cards to confreres, family and friends. When that was not possible anymore, he grabbed for the telephone. The last few years, his sight diminished, his lungs needed oxygen to continue their work and he needed help getting dressed. He tried to live his life as he was used too as long as possible. It was not easy for him to depend on the mercy of others.

Two months ago Wiel became ninety years of age. He lived up to this milestone. Typical for him, he hoped many would come for a visit, and at the same time he was scared some would stay too long. Apparently the celebration of this special birthday took away a lot of his energy. His health deteriorated fast. In spite of that he tried to move as much as possible, even during the broiling days last week. Now he is suddenly gone. Silence surrounds him. As Wiel believed we assume that it is not the silence of emptiness, but the silence due to God and God's activity amongst us. We pray that he will be happy for ever in that silence.



Father Joseph ALLAIN, S.M.M.

(1923 – 2010)

who died in Toulouse (France), on 13 July 2010,
at the age of 87 with 63 years of Religious Profession.

Joseph was born in Monterfil on June 30, 1923; he just celebrated his 87th birthday. Monterfil is located 10 kms from Montfort sur Meu. Without a doubt this proximity to the birthplace of Saint Louis Marie had an influence on his choice of a Montfortian vocation. But it is certainly the missionary dimension of Father de Montfort and his willingness to live in poverty which marked Father Allain most profoundly.

He was born to a family of poor farmers, and he ended up emigrating to land which was more vast and more according to Joseph's life-style for his entire missionary life, a choice which went hand in hand with a great generosity and a sense of sharing which our house in Saint Laurent benefitted from several times. Perhaps it is also this kind of anti-establishment attitude which led him to refuse military service as a non-violent conscientious objector. It is true that we had scarcely emerged from the Second World War.

Joseph underwent the Montfortian formation typical for the time: minor seminary at the foot of the Calvary of Pontchâteau, novitiate in Celles sur Belle, philosophical studies in Chézelles and theology in Montfort sur Meu – quite serious studies which continued for his entire life, witnessed to by the richness of his biblical and pastoral library as well as by his well crafted homilies, always written and proclaimed with conviction.

He was ordained priest on February 17, 1953. After a year which was called the "year of eloquence" he was an itinerant missionary in Notre Dame d'Obezine for six years, then in Poitiers for eight years, with an interruption of two years as vicar in the parish of Saint Laurent sur Sèvre.

In 1969, he began a new period in his life, which lasted 40 years, marked by an involvement in the Diocese of Toulouse, first in Lanta (13 years), then Bouloc (27 years), until he left pastoral ministry, for scarcely a year, in order to retire to the community of Saint Augustin for elderly priests of the Diocese of Toulouse.

When he left the parish of Bouloc which he loved so much, he found himself in a dilemma: either to go the mother house in Saint Laurent, because, as he wrote, "my heart leans toward the community of Saint Esprit," or to stay in Toulouse close to the Pasteur Clinic where he was cared for since 1986 for Kahler's disease, a bone marrow cancer, which required a difficult treatment. He opted for the security of the medical treatment, while keeping his missionary heart open to the dimensions of the Montfortian world.

Without a doubt he is being welcomed into eternal life with the words of the Beatitudes: "Happy are you who are poor in spirit, the Kingdom of God is yours." "Happy are you, a peacemaker, you will be called a child of God forever." Faithful servant of the Gospel, enter into the joy of Jesus – the Son of God par excellence – in company with Mary to whom you so often prayed "now and at the hour of our death."



Father Jean LE FEUNTEUN, S.M.M.

(1922 – 2010)

who died in St Laurent s/S (France), on 11 August 2010,
at the age of 88 with 66 years of Religious Profession.

The death of Father Jean took us all by surprise Wednesday morning, leaving us stunned by the announcement of his passing during the night. The previous evening he was quite well, speaking with joy about his next visit to his nieces and his family, and then he was taken away despite the extraordinary care given by the night guardian and our nurse who received the emergency call. The ambulance did not have time to arrive before Father Jean was dead.

Jean Le Feunteun was born January 5, 1922 in Kerfeunteun, in the suburbs of Quimper. His middle name at baptism – Corentin – recalls that he was also under the patronage of this holy Breton, who was the founder of the church in the Diocese of Quimper. Jean was a little more than 13 years old when he went to the Montfortian minor seminary at the Calvary of Pontchâteau. After the novitiate, which lasted almost two years due to the STO (obligatory work detail in Germany), and which was carried out in secret in France, he made his first profession on March 31, 1944. After theological studies in Montfort sur Meu, he was ordained a priest on February 19, 1950. He celebrated his 60th jubilee of priesthood last February 20 at La Chartreuse. It was then that his health problems began, which brought him to the hospital in Auray, and then here to Saint Laurent where he finished recovering and where he asked to remain.

A little after his ordination to the priesthood, Jean left for Malawi (together with Father Jean Marie Peuzet). It was there that he lived a missionary life for 52 years in a succession of posts in the Diocese of Zomba: Utale, Nsipe, as pastor of the cathedral of Zomba, founding the mission of Mlombozi, then Magomero, Mayaka, Matiya, Pirimiti (19 years) (always as the one in charge). Everywhere he showed himself to be welcoming, wise and good, a man of few words, but a good listener, who knew how to say the right thing when it was necessary.

He mastered the language of Malawi, and he was equally gifted for entering into the African mentality. Endowed with a rare memory for names and the complexities of genealogical and family relations, he was able to use this gift to get to know his parishioners better, and to win their hearts in order to transmit the essential message of the gospel and the spirituality of Father de Montfort. After returning to France in 2002, Jean lived for four years in Rody, until this community closed. With his friend and long time companion, Brother André Chapon, he became part of the community in La Chartreuse, always with the same availability for service, in the garden as well as in animating community prayer. It was from La Chartreuse that Jean arrived among us at the end of March of this year. He lived only a few months with us at Saint Laurent, but he knew how to make himself feel appreciated by everyone for his kindness, his sense of service and the very simple depth of his religious life.

Jean Le Feunteun, whose name means “fountain” or “spring” has now joined the Source of all light and love. Without a doubt, he will know how to help us drink of the same Source of Life.



Father Marcello BARALDO, S.M.M.

(1935 – 2010)

who died in Bergamo (Italy), on 26 August 2010,
at the age of 75 with 55 years of Religious Profession.

Marcello Baraldo was born in Maserà (Padova) on April 21, 1935. At the age of 12 he went to the Montfort Seminary in Bergamo to begin the path of formation “not without much difficulties, in which he always had the help and support of his parents who felt honoured by this call. In September 1953 he went to Castiglione Torinese for the novitiate. He made his first profession on September 8, 1953. After completing his theological studies in Loreto, he was ordained a priest in the Basilica of the Holy House in Loreto on March 12, 1960.

Father Marcello’s first destination was the seminary in Bergamo as a teacher, and after a brief stay in the seminary in Reggio Calabria, he was invited to Rome to complete his academic studies at the Pontifical Lateran University, where he earned a License in Theology. At the Catholic University in Milan, he then earned a doctorate from the Faculty of Languages and Modern Literature (French and English). With a lively enthusiasm, he dedicated a long period to teaching in the Montfort Seminary in Bergamo and in the state school. When circumstances required the closing of the state school, there opened for Fr. Marcello “a new horizon in the apostolate, no less fascinating and fruitful than the one taken from his shoulders.” He involved himself in Montfortian apostolic experiences: popular missions, itinerant preaching, and above all the Marian apostolate. From 1986 to 1989 he lived in a particular pastoral project in the hinterlands of Milan: a kind of popular mission of prolonged duration. He was named superior of the community. He willingly accepted the invitation to take up work in Malawi as a teacher of French in English in Balaka for a semester. “The experience among my missionary confreres in Malawi was the most enriching experience of my priesthood. I lived among every kind of poverty and in the midst of so much joy” The community of Redona saw him present again at the end of 1995, dividing his time between formation and preaching.

Fr. Marcello was an enthusiastic person, open to new things, attached to the Montfortian charism. He loved to speak with simplicity and warmth. In 1995, the Diocese of Padua entrusted to the Montfortians the spirituality centre “Casa La Madonnina” in Fiesso d’Artico (Ve), and Fr. Marcello was among the initiators. He was superior from 1996 until 2002. They guided Marian groups and helped neighbouring parishes. The community became a centre for gatherings, for prayer and for meetings. In 2006 he was named vicar provincial and provincial counsellor.

In the summer of 2009 Fr. Marcello began to have trouble with his leg. It was the first symptoms of ALS (Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or Lou Gehrig’s Disease). At the end of 2009 he went to Redona-Villa Montfort. He celebrated his priestly jubilee on March 12, 2010. In a homily tracing the various stages of his life, he concluded: “And now I am on Calvary with Him ... This is now my most important field of apostolate.” Almost unexpectedly, Fr. Marcello ended his earthly pilgrimage on August 26, 2010. He rests in the cemetery of Maserà (Pd), the town of his birth.



Father Luciano DUCA, S.M.M.
(1939 – 2010)

who died in Pompeiana (Italy), on 10 September 2010,
at the age of 71 with 53 years of Religious Profession.

Luciano Duca was born on March 3, 1939 in Ponte San Pietro (Bg). He moved with his family to Carvico (Bg), the home town of Fr. Remigio Villa, one of the first Montfortians to leave for the missions. He entered the Minor Seminary of Bergamo in August 1949, and here he applied himself to studies and to initial formation. At the end of the novitiate in Castiglione (To), he made his first profession on September 8, 1957. He began his studies in philosophy and theology in Loreto, and continued them in Rome, when the scholasticate was transferred there at the end of 1961. On March 7, 1963, he was ordained a priest by Bishop Remy Augustin, the Montfortian bishop from Haiti.

The first destination for Fr. Luciano was the minor seminary in Bergamo as a teacher. He was in the outskirts of Rome in 1964 for a brief experience in the parish of S. Maria Mediatrix in Borgata Gordiani, where he was involved in youth ministry. In the meantime, he went to the Lateran University for a license in theology and a diploma in pastoral theology. In 1966 his hopes to be a missionary were fulfilled and he left for Malawi. He stayed there until 1975. Recalling this experience later, he called it “the most alive and unforgettable time of my life.” Africa brought out the jovial and open character of Fr. Luciano, as well as his greatness of heart.

After returning to Italy, he joined the community of Treviglio in the ministry of preaching. But he did not feel at ease there, and he chose to return to parish life in Scandale (Cz), apart from the community (1976-1979). Treviglio welcomed him again from 1979 to 1981, when he decided to move to the diocese of Ventimiglia and Sanremo. He was parish priest here, first in Isolabona-Apricale (Im) until 1994 and then in Pompeiana (Im).

He loved to stop and talk with his parishioners. He worked with the popular religiosity, which the people greatly appreciated: sung Masses, processions in various areas, patronal feasts. He did his utmost to restore places of worship to their former splendour, especially parish churches, with the support of the local authorities. Fr. Luciano was an extroverted person, gifted with enthusiasm and creativity, but not always cut out for confrontation and the demands of community life. Perhaps this is the reason for his pastoral choices. He was generous to the point of neglecting himself and of not giving attention to the health problems which appeared with the passing years.

He unexpectedly ended his earthly pilgrimage on September 10, 2010. His funeral, concelebrated by the local bishop, the bishop emeritus and the Montfortian bishop from Malawi Bishop Alessandro Pagani, took place in his parish church with the participation of numerous priests and so many people. The mayor expressed his desire to bury him in the cemetery of Pompeiana. And Fr. Luciano rests there, a cordial man and a generous priest, surrounded by the remembrance, the gratitude and the prayers of his people who loved him so much and whom he loved so much.



**Brother Antonin-Marie (Louis DORVAL), S.M.M.
(1925 – 2010)**

who died in Trois-Rivières (Canada), on 14 September 2010,
at the age of 85 with 67 years of Religious Profession.

He was born on May 10, 1925 in Val-Gagné, Ontario, in the Diocese of Timmins. He was the son of Monsieur Alphonse Dorval and Madame Alma Castonguay.

He made his first vows in Montfort, a small place in the Laurentians, on March 19, 1943, on the Feast of St. Joseph. He devoted 67 years to the Montfortian consecrated religious life. He made his perpetual profession on March 19, 1951 in Nicolet.

As a first obedience, our confrere was assigned to Nicolet, to our Sainte Marie novitiate, from 1943 to 1950 as a cabinet maker, and from 1950 to 1967 he was part of a travelling team as plumber, electrician and painter, all the while maintaining residence in Nicolet.

From 1967 until recently, during a period of 43 years, he dedicated himself with much devotion and competence above all to the general maintenance of the residence and the Shrine of Marie-Reine-des-Cœurs in Montréal.

Our dear confrere was a living copy of the ideal of a brother, just as Montfort desired in his Manuscript Rule of the Missionaries of the Company of Mary. "Lay Brothers are admitted into the Company to take care of temporal affairs provided they are detached, robust and obedient and ready to do all they are told to do" (MR 4).

He was a man with a great generosity for work, without counting the hours, with a great patience and very competent in his different skills. He liked work that was done very well.

He was a faithful religious and a great man of prayer. He was easy to approach and he liked to be good to his friends. I cite a typical example: he made it a duty to obtain for his friends honey of great quality, by making a circuit of more than two hundred kilometres going and returning in order to get this fruit of the bees.

He died peacefully in Pointe-du-Lac, Trois-Rivières, surrounded by his confreres and supported by their prayers. As Montfort sang in one of his Hymns, "O Jesus, then I must go there, Your love too strong, too tender. Shelter me in your Heart. ... May your Heart alone be my Paradise" (Hymn 131, 10).

Let us say again with our dear Louis, who suffered much from bone cancer, the communion antiphon proposed for the liturgy of the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows: "If you share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice. When his glory is revealed, this joy will know no limits."



Father Frans DIEDEREN, S.M.M.
(1934 – 2010)

who died in Kerkrade (The Netherlands), on 28 September 2010,
at the age of 76 with 55 years of Religious Profession.

Frans was born in Oirsbeek on April 4, 1934. After he finished grammar school in Schimmert, he entered the novitiate in 1954 in Meerssen. He made his first vows on September 8, 1955, and on March 12, 1961, he was ordained priest in Oirschot. For his pastoral year in Leuven, Frans moved to Rotselaar in Belgium. Later on he became assistant parish priest in Kontich till 1964, when he was appointed for the Malawi mission. In 1966 he taught at the Pius XII Seminary in Nguludi, and for a year he was there the rector. In Blantyre, his next mission, he was parish-priest from 1969 till 1977. After replacing Father Peters in Thyolo Frans returned to the Netherlands for one year. He became teacher at the minor-seminary of Beresteyn in Voorschoten. He was also for some years superior of that community and a member of the provincial council. In 1984, he had a brain haemorrhage. Luckily he recovered well enough to work as priest in a nursing home for the elderly in 'Fireschat'. Some weeks ago he was diagnosed with stomach cancer. After a short period in hospital he returned to Fireschat, where he died peacefully on September 28, 2010.

Almost everyone gets confronted in his life with moments in which it becomes totally clear to him what kind of person he is or what lives in the deepest part of his heart. Frans experienced such a moment, when in 1976, the Goans - his most loyal Catholics - were exiled from Malawi. This act was so unjust in his eyes that he decided to leave the country immediately. Frans was not the person to walk in protest marshes, but that moment he felt the urge to protest. He considered justice to be of paramount importance. Hub Somers, the then provincial superior, wrote to Frans that justice is not cheap: "Living with and for people brings joy and pain to every priest with a heart." And what a heart Frans had! And he let it speak.

Maybe that was the reason his heart was worn out in 1984. It was not the only misfortune. More serious was the cerebral embolism he had while waiting to get a new heart valve. Finally, the heart surgery took place, followed afterwards by a long rehabilitation in the community of the Holy-Land-Foundation. He did not recover completely. His eyes were damaged; he needed several operations, before -as he said it- "he could be steady on his feet with both eyes". It made him walk even more carefully and straight up than he did before. A mirror-image of his character!

Frans could not be denied a sense of humour. From March 19, 1986 onwards, he celebrated the anniversary of his synthetic heart valve. He needed that humour, because of his meticulous character. Every step he made was planned as much as possible. This did not prevent him from being a good pastor in all possible and impossible moments for the residents of Fireschat, where he was chaplain for almost twenty years. Frans was loyal to everyone who found the way to his heart. He wanted to help them and to stand on their side as much as he could. His friendship was whole-hearted, like his ties with family and confreres.

He has borne his last illness manfully. Of course, it was hard for him to hear on September 8th that the cancer was incurable. "I had expected it, but it is not easy to accept", he told me a few hours after the doctor had told him the sad news. His trust in God helped him to accept the inevitability of his approaching death. He didn't want any abracadabra performed on his body anymore. May he find a new home in the house of the Father!



Father Auguste BROUARD, S.M.M.

(1923 – 2010)

who died in Cholet (France), on 1st October 2010,
at the age of 87 with 52 years of Religious Profession.

What would be more natural than to give the floor to Father August who, for months, has been constrained to silence due to the state of his health? But he knew how to come back to his journey through acts of thanksgiving:

"Yes, thank you Lord, for this life which comes to us from you. You have given it to me through the intermediary of Christian parents, poor in temporal goods, but so rich of heart – parents who loved each other, loved their children, loved others, at work and through all the things of daily life, aware that goodness is not found in ease or in selfish satisfactions, but in the gift of oneself to another and to others, and that true goodness consists in the love which we live and which we share.

Thank you, Lord, for allowing me to be born on January 11, 1923, in the heart of this family with six children – brothers and sisters – we grew up together. We loved each other, through the trials of life, with the premature departure of our father, at 49 years of age, leaving the heavy responsibility for the family on our lamented and impoverished mother, but who never said a word of protest, and who knew how to inculcate the true sense of life "to love and be loved," to find goodness in living in peace and joy of heart: the peace and joy of God.

Thanks you for those years in which you chased after me since I was twelve: the day of my profession of faith, in the church of Tourlandry, where, after receiving you in communion, this idea, this suggestion, came to me: 'you will be a priest!' With my spontaneous reaction: 'Oh no! Not me! That is for others who are leaving for college. As for myself, I do not like to study! I love the soil, manual work! I love to live in a family! And besides, I have my mother, my brothers, my sisters – in order to live we all have to work together!' And with all these objections, I slipped away, hoping that you would leave me alone ... But ceaselessly you insisted, for example through stories or witnesses of vocations, calls to the priesthood, like that of Father de Foucauld: they were signposts for me pointing in the direction of the path you were asking me to take ... But that made me catch a glimpse of the enormous sacrifice to make: work, family ... all the human love which I dreamed of receiving and giving. And I stopped up my ears: 'No, it is not possible! It's too much to ask!' Days and years passed. I was thirty years old! I was not happy ... the only way to find peace was to say 'Yes' to you, and to set out on the path which you did not cease to point out.

It was only later, in retrospect, that I understood that you had never stopped your love and your presence from dwelling within me, by making me feel the best sense which you wanted to give to my life, the sense of “giving all” in order to receive a hundredfold. Going out from Montfort at the age of 41, after being ordained on February 9, 1964, after four years of secondary school, an year of novitiate, six years in the major seminary, Father Camille Brevet, the provincial at the time, gave me an obedience for the itinerant mission, telling me: “anyway, you will have ten good years.” Ten years ...! With an average of four to five interventions, each one four weeks long every year, plus seven to eight retreats for the profession of faith from May 1 to June 15, this fascinating missionary work left a margin of time which each one, in coordination with those in charge and with the community, managed according to one’s ability, either for one’s formation or for other activities.

For me, this was being a “hospital chaplain.” Nothing prepared me for it except for the simple contact I acquired in my past and during the itinerant missions. Residing in Portereau de Vertou from 1964 until 1973, the nearness of the hospitals of Nantes lent itself to requests to fill in, which I willingly accepted. In 1974 – 1975, the Itinerant Mission no longer had as much impact ... In brief, I was no longer cut out for evening meetings. The chaplain at the hospital in Cholet asked for a replacement. I began part time, while being able to honour the commitments I made elsewhere. In 1976, with the consent of the superior of the Calvary, I became involved full time as the chaplain of the hospital in Cholet ...

Thanks to all of you, members of my human and religious families. Thanks to all my friends, those of my age. Thanks to my congregation, to all the Montfortian confreres, the priests, the men and women religious whom I met, all the militant Christians involved in the life of the Church and in the world, all with whom we are trying hard to bring about and promote the Kingdom of God, this Reign of Love.

My life has been beautiful. I leave my passage here below happy, happy to enter into the hereafter, into your light and your peace, Lord. Into your hands I place myself with complete trust: October 1, 2010.”



Father Charles LAJOIE, S.M.M.

(1913 – 2010)

who died in Trois-Rivières (Canada), on 20 October 2010,
at the age of 97 with 74 years of Religious Profession.

He was born October 1, 1913 in Saint-Maurice, Comté de Champlain, in the Diocese of Trois-Rivières. He was the son of Monsieur Edmond Lajoie and Madame Laura Demontigny.

He pronounced his first religious vows on March 22, 1936 in our novitiate in Nicolet, and he was ordained priest at the hands of Bishop Alexandre Vachon in the cathedral of Ottawa on February 28, 1942.

As a first obedience, our confrere was appointed to our review Le Messager Marie-Reine-des-Cœurs, with residence at the rectory of Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes, in Eastview, near Ottawa.

From 1984 for a period of more than 20 years, he carried out his ministry with great devotion at our parish of Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes as parish vicar. He was the parish priest and superior of the Montfortian community from 1965 to 1968.

Following that, for more than 40 years, he exercised his priestly ministry at the Shrine of Marie-Reine-des-Cœurs, in Montréal.

In 2009 he retired to the Cénacle St-Pierre, in Pointe-du-Lac, (Trois-Rivières).

Our confrere bore his name well; he was a man who was always joyful. He was welcoming, friendly, and smiling, always ready to help out. We can easily apply to him this strophe of a Hymn of Father de Montfort on gentleness: “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, 17).

He was very good with his hands, as a cabinet maker and a watch repairer. He had a remarkable precision. The houses of his birthplace, which he had reproduced in wood with all the details, adorned the decorations of the Christmas village at the Shrine. How many watches and clocks did he get working again!

He was very attached to his natural family and was loved by his relatives. He left behind the witness of a good religious – faithful, devoted and well loved by people who came into contact with him.

May the Queen of All Hearts, whom he served so well and whom he led others to love in her Shrine for so many years, lead him to her Son in eternal glory.

Father Alexis LE MOING, S.M.M.
(1925 – 2010)

who died in Villefranche-de-Lonchat (France), on 22 October 2010,
at the age of 84 with 65 years of Religious Profession.

Born in Crédin – Morbihan on April 25, 1925, Father Alexis Le Moing benefitted from Montfortian formation beginning with the apostolic school of Ponchâteau in 1937 until his priestly ordination on February 18, 1951. After 17 years in Madagascar, he came back to France permanently in 1968.

Attached to his ministry as a missionary priest, whether in Madagascar or in France, attached also to his congregation – that is what characterizes Father Alexis. Even if he was at a distance from the community of Saint Laurent to which he belonged, he passed by there every year as long as he was able to drive to his native Brittany. Then his range was reduced with age and ill health, although he made it a point of honour to receive graciously his Montfortian visitors.

He was above all attached to Montfortian values which characterize the congregation, namely

- evangelization, by his parish ministry carried out as long as he had strength. These last months his memory was sometimes defective, but happily his circle of friends looked after him and thanks to these people associated with his ministry, Fr. Alexis was able to carry out his priestly and missionary service right to the end.

With regard to evangelization, it is good to point out also that he had a team of Montfort Missionaries preach a mission in his area several years ago. These confreres have since become a part of the community of Saint Laurent, elderly or sick, but they keep a very lively memory of this mission in Villefranche de Lonchat.

- the second Montfortian characteristic is to live the consecration to Jesus through the hands of Mary, to give to Mary her place in prayer and in all the dimensions of life. We could say that Father Alexis showed a great love for Mary, to whom he prayed and of whom he spoke, naturally for him, saying that Mary's role is to lead us to Jesus. Without a doubt, all those Hail Marys, prayed throughout his life, have found their end in Mary's presence next to him, at the moment of his death, as he so often said: "pray for us ... now and at the hour of our death."

Father Alexis showed himself to be faithful in the service which was asked of him. The Lord will know how to welcome him in his love, joy and peace forever.



Father René DION, S.M.M.

(1927 – 2010)

who died in Trois-Rivières (Canada), on 10 November 2010,
at the age of 83 with 63 years of Religious Profession.

Our confrere was born on January 29, 1927 in Pont-Rouge. He was the oldest in a family of 17 children. He professed his first religious vows on August 15, 1947, in the chapel of Blessed Mary Novitiate in Nicolet. He was ordained on February 28, 1953, in his native parish, in Pont-Rouge, at the hands of Bishop Lionel Audet, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Quebec.

As a first obedience, he was named professor of mathematics in our scholasticate of St-Jean, in Eastview, what is Vanier (Ottawa) today. Following that, he was professor at Montfort Seminary in Papineauville for a period of 17 years.

From 1973 to 1979, he was the superior and parish priest of our parish Ste Marie, in Jonquière. Afterwards, he was named to our parish St-Vincent-de-Paul, in North Bay, for a period of two years and as parish priest for a term of three years.

For a period of 20 years, we find our confrere in residence at the rectory of Notre Dame-de-Lourdes, (Ottawa), where he took on diverse functions, as vicar, as the one in charge of the Grotto, as the provincial bursar, as the parish priest of the parish St-Louis-Marie-de-Montfort, in Vanier, (Ottawa), for seven years.

From 2002 to 2004, he was chaplain for the Daughters of Wisdom in Ottawa. Then his fragile health forced him to retire to our infirmary in Nicolet, and in 2009 to the Cénacle St-Pierre, in Pointe-du-Lac (Trois-Rivières).

Our confrere has left a memory of a discrete man, with a certain timidity but a great intelligence with a fine sense of humour. He always liked to deepen his knowledge in different areas, above all that of theology.

Confined to an infirmary room for a number of years, he was a witness to a great patience in his sickness and his suffering. He was really a “friend of the Cross” as Saint Louis Marie de Montfort described in his Letter to the Friends of the Cross. He possessed this knowledge of the cross, the wisdom of the cross which makes a soul participate in the friendship of God.

May the Virgin Mary, “who dips all the crosses she prepares for them in the honey of her maternal sweetness and the unction of pure love” (TD 154), lead our dear confrere into the joys of eternity.



Brother François BERGERON, S.M.M.
(1926 – 2010)

who died in Trois-Rivières (Canada), on 15 November 2010,
at the age of 83 with 57 years of Religious Profession.

Our confrere was born on November 24, 1926 in Sainte Eulalie, in the Diocese of Nicolet. He made his first religious profession March 19, 1953, in the brothers' novitiate in Upper Melbourne and his perpetual profession in 1959 in the novitiate of Ste Marie, in Nicolet.

He was known at that time by the name of Brother André-Marie. We also remember his brother Julien, a Montfortian brother also, who died in 2001.

As a first obedience, we find Brother François for a year in our scholasticate St-Jean, situated in the past in Eastview, in the Archdiocese of Ottawa. He was the concierge and assigned to maintenance work in the house.

For a period of almost 20 years, he carried out the same functions with the same devotion in Montfort Minor Seminary in Papineauville.

Following that, for a period of 37 years, he was assigned to Nicolet in different maintenance services on the property and in the house.

In 2009 he retired to the Cénacle St-Pierre, in Pointe-du-Lac (Trois-Rivières). Brother François was a confrere very willing to help in humble but necessary tasks. A verse from a Hymn of Montfort applies well to our confrere: "God alone is my tenderness, God alone is my support, God alone is all I have, my life and my wealth" (Hymn 52, 11).

May the Virgin Mary lead her faithful servant, Brother François, into the joys of eternity.



Father Paolo COSTANTINO, S.M.M.

(1940 – 2010)

who died in Reggio Calabria (Italy), on 16 November 2010,
at the age of 70 with 35 years of Religious Profession.

Paolo Costantino was born in Ginosa (Ta) on March 27, 1940. At the age of 18 he enrolled in the Navy, and for 16 years he sailed the seas in all latitudes. He needed a few more years to receive and make use of his pension, when, in 1974, he decided to leave everything to rethink his life and perhaps dust off a project cultivated for a long time. The Montfortians were present in Ginosa since 1957, at first for pastoral work among the country people and then in parish ministry. Paolo met with his parish priest for vocational discernment, and he decided to enter the Company of Mary.

He entered the novitiate of Santeramo in Colle (Ba) where he pronounced his first religious vows on October 5, 1975. He began the journey of preparing for the priesthood and was ordained a priest in Rome on March 21, 1981.

Father Paolo felt called to evangelize the poor. A year after his ordination, he wrote: "In view of my future apostolic activity, I desire to be sent to a mission territory, in particular in places where the gospel has not yet been proclaimed. I want to spend my life so that the mercy of the Lord, experienced in the love of Christ, can be shared by those who do not yet know it ...". In 1982 he was sent to Zambia, where he remained until 1990, when he then went to the mission in Lesotho. After he just arrived in Zambia, he wrote: "I find myself here in Africa for ten days ... this place makes different demands on my apostolic commitment: the house, located in the middle of the forest, leads me to contemplation, to reflection and to prayer; but at the same time there is the commitment to evangelize, to a first proclamation in a situation that is very poor. I believe that Providence was generous with me, and I hope to respond to so much trust." In another letter from Lesotho he wrote simply: "I am really happy to be able to serve the Congregation and the Church in this mission post."

In 1997 he returned to Italy and then maintained a lively attention to the poor in a new field of labour: Reggio Calabria. The mission to which Father Paolo was called did not involve great journeys or preaching, but rather long hours in confession in the cathedral, to offer a sign of grace and the forgiveness of God. He left only for the briefest of visits, of only one day, to his family. Father Paolo was shy and did not like to talk about himself or what was said about him. A priest of few words but much prayer, and Marian prayer, and so much capacity for listening, above all to simple and poor people. He was austere, demanding with himself, and at times mysterious and inflexible in community life.

He died almost unexpectedly on November 16, 2010. His funeral was celebrated by the Bishop in the Cathedral of Reggio Calabria with a good participation of priests and faithful. His family brought him back to Ginosa, his birthplace, for a final salute presided over by the Bishop of Castellaneta (Ta). Father Paolo rests in peace in the local cemetery.



**Brother Dominique Savio (Daniel MAGNIEN), S.M.M.
(1930 – 2010)**

who died in Saint Laurent sur Sèvre (France), on 2 December 2010,
at the age of 80 with 48 years of Religious Profession.

Daniel Magnien was born on June 16, 1930 in Rançonnières, a small community in Haute Marne. He was raised in a family that worked with iron and wood. In fact, his father was a blacksmith, and a wheelwright. He also set up a sawmill. So, it is not surprising that young Daniel developed his manual talents in this context and that he became the carpenter that we knew. He also liked working in metal. He was 32 years old when he made profession with the Montfortians in Chézelles. He chose the name Dominique Savio, a name he always wanted to keep because he liked very much the young Italian saint, a disciple of Don Bosco, who died at the age of only 15. I do not know what attracted him more to Dominic Savio: a joy of living, a sense of prayer, the Marian colours of his love for Jesus, a care for others ...? Our Brother Dominique always allowed himself to be inspired by his patron saint in order to keep his freshness of soul, his taste for work well done, his creativity, his openness to others, and even perhaps his sports-minded side, all touched with the sense of the presence of Jesus and Mary, so that he made his entire life a prayer.

His first obedience was to La Gardiolle; he stayed there two years. Then it was Spain which called him to Loeches, where many knew him and appreciated him for 16 years – from 1964 until 1980. When he came back to France it was to La Gardiolle once again. This time he stayed there for 27 years, until sickness caused him to lose his memory and his point of reference. So he came to Saint Laurent in June of 2007. His Alzheimer's continued to worsen. Our caregivers accompanied him admirably because he became more and more dependant, to the point of being confined to bed and to a wheelchair for a good part of this year. Nothing can measure the degree of suffering he experienced under the weight of the yoke of this illness. On the other hand, it was the quality of his prayer which continued in the midst of the apparent shipwreck of his mental faculties. We remember that since his arrival in Saint-Laurent in June of 2007, he quickly learned the way to the basilica, and he spent long periods of time there. When he could participate in our community prayer, we sensed that he felt good in the oratory with us. Even recently, in front of the television which was showing the chanting of Vespers from Notre Dame of Paris, he followed intently with his eyes. We could not say more about it, but it was significant. In these last days, when he no longer left his bed, a "Hail Mary" prayed loudly near him provoked a movement of his head and a look which seemed to search for the invisible presence of Jesus and Mary. Yes, Lord Jesus, as you said in this very Gospel: "what you have hidden from the wise and learned, you have revealed to the little ones."

He left us on Thursday December 2, as we just entered into the season of Advent. The Lord whom we are awaiting has come personally to meet him and to take him to himself. Those who knew Dominique well and who lived with him in Spain and in La Gardiolle speak of him as a pleasant confrere, always in a good mood, an excellent religious and a competent and creative artisan; athletic as well, with a preference for roller skating and for biking. He was a man who was sociable, good, generous and unselfish. I am sure that the Lord has welcomed him with these words: "Good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord."



**His Excellency Archbishop François GAYOT, S.M.M.
Archbishop Emeritus of Cap-Haïtien
(1927 – 2010)**

who died in Rome (Italy), on 16 December 2010,
at the age of 83 with 61 years of Religious Profession.

**Father Constantinus (Coen) RAES, S.M.M.
(1931 – 2010)**

who died in Sittard (The Netherlands), on 19 December 2010,
at the age of 79 with 59 years of Religious Profession.

**Father Magella LAROCHE, S.M.M.
(1917 – 2010)**

who died in Trois-Rivières (Canada), on 23 December 2010,
at the age of 93 with 71 years of Religious Profession.



« ... I am not ashamed,
for I know him in whom I have believed
and am confident that he is able
to guard what has been entrusted to me
until that day. »
(2 Tm 1, 12)

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