

In the

Footsteps

of St. Louis Marie de Montfort

Vol. 10, No. 1: Spring 2008

In This Issue

- | | |
|----|----------------------------------|
| 1 | A New Start |
| 2 | Change of Address |
| 3 | From the Provincial's Desk |
| 4 | "Until Christ be Formed in You" |
| 7 | News of the Province |
| 11 | The Poitiers Project |
| 13 | The Montfortian Family of Prayer |
| 14 | Montfort Press |
| 15 | News From Here and There |

Montfort Missionary Society.
Registered Charity Number: 241963

Editor: Fr. Paul Allerton, smm

"Footsteps"
St. Joseph's
Lyndhurst Road
Ashurst
SOUTHAMPTON
SO40 7DU

A New Start

Welcome to the new "Footsteps", which, after a long hiatus, is now being published in a new format, necessitated in part by the cost of postage. The old A4 format would now be costing almost 1½ times what it did before to post, so we have decided to print it in A5 format which will keep our postage costs about the same. We would be happy to hear what you think of the new format.

The first issue of "Footsteps" appeared just before Christmas in 1995, so it is now 12½ years since we started. In the editorial of that first issue, we said: "*Christmas is essentially for us a time of hope. In this issue of FOOTSTEPS, we would like to dwell on this theme of hope. It was a virtue dear to St. Louis Marie, as shown in his own life. And the Montfort Missionaries continue to try to give hope to our contemporaries by the work that they do.*" In twelve years, many things have changed, not least the number of members of the Montfortian religious congregations in the British Isles. Seventeen members of the British & Irish Province of the Company of Mary have died since that first issue, while others have left us for various reasons – some to enter a diocese. While we had one First Profession in that time, he did not remain with

The Bulletin of the Montfortian Associates

us, so that in all we have considerably decreased in numbers since the end of 1995 – we are now less than half as many as we were then.

But we do not give up hope! St Louis Marie always dreamed of a “small and poor band of good priests to... go in a humble and simple way to teach catechism to the poor in country places and to arouse in sinners a devotion to our Blessed Lady”, as he expressed it in a letter to his spiritual director, Fr. Leschasnier, on 6 December 1700. But he had to wait until less than a year before his death in 1716 before the first priest (Father Vatel) came to join his “small and poor band”, and at his death there were still only two of them, along with a handful of Brothers, among them Brother Mathurin, the first to attach himself permanently to him. And for many years after his death, it really was a case of a “small and poor band” – until the French Revolution in 1789, there were never more than a dozen or so members of the Company of Mary. But St Louis Marie knew that this would be the case – prophetically, in his *Prayer for Missionaries*, he addresses them as “little flock”. Yet, despite their small numbers, they were able to bring about a renewal of the Christian life in many parishes in the West of France by their missions. Smallness of numbers does not necessarily mean insignificant results. Especially when we have so many “Associates” to help us.

St. Louis Marie himself invited and attracted lay-people to help him in his work, wherever he went. We think, for example, of the Comte and Comtesse of La Garaye, in Dinan, who helped him establish a soup-kitchen and later gave

themselves completely to the service of the poor and sick. We think of the Marquis de Magnanne, who also dedicated himself, inspired by St. Louis Marie, to charitable works, and who, after the saint’s death, lived and worked with his successors in Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre. And we must not forget the thousands who collaborated with him in the building of his Calvary in Pontchâteau. And there were so many others.

St. Louis Marie’s spiritual legacy – his insight that the best way to achieve real wisdom (by which he meant the knowledge and love of the “Eternal and Incarnate Wisdom of God”, Jesus), was to go through a total consecration to Jesus through Mary – was not left just to the members of the congregations he founded. It belongs to the Church as a whole. And today we rely more and more on our lay “Associates” to carry this legacy to the people of God. ■

Change of Address

After such a long time since our last issue, it is quite possible that some of our Associates have changed address, and we may not know of this. If you have changed your address, and this issue reaches you at your new address, would you be so kind as to inform us of the change, so that we can update our database. Also, if you know that one of our Associates has changed address in the meantime, and you suspect we may not know this, would you kindly inform us, if possible, of that new address.

Thank you for your help! ■

From the Provincial’s Desk

Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight ... and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. (Hebrews 12:1)

The Company of Mary can never be complete, in its spirituality or in its mission apostolate, if it thinks and acts as if it is just a lonely group of religious. The province has indeed grown numerically small, as Fr. Paul points out, growing in age and (we hope) in wisdom and it can truly be said to reflect St Louis Marie’s image as ‘only a little flock’.

Fortunately, like the author of Hebrews the Company of Mary is also “compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses” in the form of its Associates. So that our province too can “lay aside every weight and run with patience the race” that God has set before it. And these ‘witnesses’ are not just passive observers but they contribute in every aspect to the life, the spirituality, the apostolate and the very mission of their religious brothers, who call themselves ‘Montfort Missionaries’.

St. Louis Marie de Montfort was always very ready to welcome any person or group that could help in his chosen mission, reinforced by a command of the Holy Father, to seek to “renew the spirit of Christianity among the faithful” of France. This renewal was to come about by inviting the faithful to practice the

promises made by them or for them when they were baptised. St. Louis Marie organised men and women to continue the work he had begun when he preached; to make sure that the rosary was said, that the churches were cared for, that the poor of the area were ministered to. In his Original Rule he gives the following instruction to his missionaries “be it during the time of their missions or not, the poor are to be the especial objects of their care. They must never refuse to help them, materially when possible and spiritually, even if they say only one Hail Mary. ... They will provide a meal for the poor of the parish...and every morning and evening bring one of them to eat at their table.”

Our own province is very well blessed with what our rule describes as “‘associates’ of the Company of Mary” and even talks of structures set up to receive and support them. Wherever the confreres are living or working, there seem always to be good people ready to offer them help and support and who wish to have in return a prayer, or some spiritual help or counsel.

Apart from the formal structure of the ‘Association of Mary Queen of All Hearts’, there are at present many groups or individuals who would be more than happy to have a greater share in mission and apostolate of the Company of Mary. I think of the Montfort Family of Prayer, which gives a fantastic spiritual support to the confreres and the to the ministry of the congregation; I think also of the Friends of St Joseph’s who are so generous in its support to the community of St

Continued on page 12, col. 2

“Until Christ be Formed in You”

(Galatians 4:19)

Fr. Ronnie Mitchell, smm

Gogol, the Russian novelist, wrote: “A wonderful work is to be brought to maturity in my soul. My eyes stream with tears of gratitude. Such an inspiration cannot originate from a human being.” This is how the Blessed Mother must have felt as God chose to form Christ in her. It is her calling to form Christ in us too.



This was how St. Louis Marie de Montfort taught the secret and hidden wisdom of God. By “secret” he meant that the role

of Mary in forming Christ in us needs to be better understood. It is a grace given to help us to grow into the likeness of Christ. It is not an intellectual knowledge, but rather a way of living that expresses more and more who we are in the light of the revelation of Christ. It is a wisdom not of this age (1 Cor 2:6).

Our General Chapter (May 2005) highlighted the priority of formation for those, both Religious and Laity, who seek to walk this path of divine wisdom. The Chapter taught, “Formation is a path of transformation which makes us become more like the Lord Jesus”. It is a path that is followed continuously and holistically throughout our life.

During the General Chapter a beautiful devotional and meaningful ceremony took place in the chapel. The Superior General invited the delegates from all over the world to commit themselves to a life of ongoing growth in their Montfortian spirituality and mission. To mark the occasion each was given a copy of Volume I of the new Ratio. This is a wonderful set of inspirational principles for growth in the Montfortian way of life.

I can only try to capture something of the spirit and wisdom of these vital teachings. They opened my eyes to look up and acknowledge new horizons in following the Montfort path. The team who produced this slim yet incredibly dynamic work are to be highly commended. It is to be prayed rather than read and chewed rather than swallowed. It is my Pulitzer Prize Winning book of the year. Let us draw out some of the key insights.

1. Progressive Journey for All.

Formation is a daily process for the Montfortian. It is an everyday journey of conversion. It is for the laity and professed Religious, for the young and the old. It is for those who are initiates and for those who have borne the heat of the day. It is for all who want to enter into the dream of .our Holy Founder.

Formation is no longer to be seen just as a preparatory period for taking vows or to make the Consecration to Jesus through Mary. It is rather a lifetime and progressive growth into putting on the mind and heart of the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 13:14).

It will mean a willingness to avail of the experience and wisdom of others who have walked further than us on the road of discipleship. There are those who have inspired me in their exercise of the Montfort charism. A good spiritual director or guide is a treasure to be sought. Yet at the end of the day each person is responsible for his or her own formation.

2. God seeks us.

God’s Wisdom seeks us. “Moved with deep compassion for the plight of humanity Wisdom set out on this journey toward us”. This torrential outpouring of God’s love finds its home in Mary. It is a Wisdom which is enfleshed in the life and ministry of Jesus. We are drawn by grace to the source of this Wisdom.

We learn there that Jesus submitted Himself totally to the young Virgin Mary. We too are invited through our Montfortian

Consecration to choose Mary as our way to fulfilling God’s divine purposes for our life.

3. Renewal of Our Baptismal Promises.

We are born again out of the waters of Baptism. Here we have to understand the meaning of our Baptism. How it is to receive not only the initial outpouring of the Spirit but to allow the Spirit to melt us and mould us more and more into the likeness of Christ over the course of our life.

The grace of our Baptism brings the grace of the Pascal Mystery to our own front door. We too are called to die and rise with Jesus. The call of conversion at the Baptismal font continues through our willingness to walk the path of ongoing formation in the footsteps of the poor disciples. There will be an ever-deepening living out of our Baptismal commitment.

4. Consecration to Jesus through Mary.

The Consecration is the ongoing fulfilment of our Baptismal promises. It is a conscious decision to respond with ever greater generosity to the excess and exuberance of the Father’s love for us manifested in the humanity of Jesus. It is to come to an interior knowledge of the self-emptying love of Christ on the Cross when He paid the debt of humanity’s sinfulness by shedding His Precious Blood.

The Ratio (N.12) has this to say. “Our Consecration influences our mission, our

way of living together, our prayer, the way we face the challenges and difficulties of life, and the way we offer a prophetic critique of that which is sinful in our world”

5. Apostolic Prayer.

Our personal and community prayer and our celebration of the Eucharist will deepen our desire to evangelise by word and example. Our apostolic prayer shaped by our Consecration will enable to be both disciple and apostle of the Lord. We are to follow Montfort by enkindling in our hearts the fire of the mystic and the zeal of the apostle.

The goal of our formation is to prepare us to enter more deeply into the Mission of Christ. This will be more easily realised as we mature in our human development and achieve that healthy balance in personality and lifestyle which enables us to be available to apostolic needs.

Our proclamation of the Reign of Jesus brings us into a struggle with the false wisdoms of the world. These will not easily yield their ground to Him who brings truth, freedom and peace. St. Paul reminds us that the weapons of our spiritual warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy the strongholds of the Evil One (2 Corinthians 10:4).

6. Together with Mary the Mother of Jesus.

We are privileged to tell the “Greatest Story Ever Told” of the offer of forgiveness from sin and the gift of eternal life through Christ. Such a story would be incomplete unless we grasped the mean-

ing of Mary’s role in God’s plan. We stand at the foot of the Cross in the company of Mary echoing her Amen to God’s redemptive plan for the salvation of the world.

We desire to remain faithful to the rich heritage of our Marian tradition. Devotion to Mary is an essential and integral part of what it means to be a Montfortian today. We can never have too much devotion to Mary. When we say Mary, she echoes Christ.

7. And with His Brothers and Sisters.

There is to be a growth in love for the Church expressed in obedience to our pastors and to those in authority. There will be a submitting to one another in love which binds everything together in perfect harmony. We are not to be strangers to one another but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God and eager to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Compassion, collaboration and communication will further community commitment. It is to live in a network of relationships – with oneself, others and God.

More and more are we able to grow to the fullness of Christ through presence in an apostolic community. We listen and are obedient to the Word of God together. We discern together what the Spirit is saying to us. We respond collaboratively.

We are not trapped in the past but ever seeking new forms of living and working together so that our Mission can be ever more attuned to that of the mind of Christ.



We are “a little flock” but ever moving into the newer and promised pastures to which our Good Shepherd leads us.

There can be patterns of community prayer and activity which strengthen us together on our faith journey. We will find these as we allow the Holy Spirit to gather us and unite us as a community for mission. We will be willing to find news ways of deepening our sense of community and readiness for mission.

The apostolic community is to be a place of conversion and nourishment for each person. Skills of communication and team-building must be developed. We need to witness to the world the value and vitality of living a way of life which shows respect and tolerance to the other.

8. In the Spirit of Montfort.

In the life and witness of Montfort we see all of these insights lived out in greater or lesser measure. He proposes to us the path of wisdom and the steps to take on it. His spirituality is for all. We respond to appropriate its sanctifying richness into our lives.

The good Father de Montfort wants us to walk in the footsteps of the poor disciples with our eyes ever on Christ. This will mean in God’s plan taking Mary as our Mother, Mentor, Teacher and Guide to form Christ in us. Can

‘St. Augustine speaking to our Blessed Lady says, “You are worthy to be called the mould of God.” Mary is a mould capable of forming people into the image of the God-man. Anyone who is cast into this divine mould is quickly shaped and moulded into Jesus and Jesus into him.’ (TD 219)



Montfort House, Barrhead

News of the Province

Well, it is more than two years since the last issue of “Footsteps” appeared! And in that time many changes have been taking place in our Province of Gt. Britain and Ireland. For a start, **we have had to close one of our residences: Montfort House in Barrhead, Scotland.** Montfort House was first opened about 1962 as a Mission House and, shortly afterwards, a “hostel” junior seminary—that is, a residential centre for boys wishing to enter the Company of Mary, with provision for their education in local schools. This hostel system continued for some years and provided the Province with a number of candidates, many of whom went on to make vows. But after a few years, it was decided that, at the end of the first three years of secondary schooling, the students from Barrhead would go to join their peers in Romsey at Montfort College. When Montfort College itself finally had to close in 1977, the seminary role for

Montfort House, Barrhead, also ceased. From then on, Montfort House was run as a Mission House and a Retreat Centre, for a number of years with the collaboration of the Sisters of the Christian Retreat. But towards the end of 2005, it was becoming clear that its days were numbered—fewer groups were coming to make retreats, the possibility of residential retreats no longer existed, and the decision had to be taken to close the house. So in January 2006, Father Paul Allerton, who had been resident for the previous three years along with Father Jim Murray and Brother Louis-Marie, was appointed to St. Joseph's, Ashurst (more of that in a moment), and Father Murray was left with the unenviable job of overseeing the sale of Montfort House.

While our residence in Scotland is no more, Fr Jim Murray remains there in Paisley, from where he is busy organising the Parish Mission apostolate of the Company of Mary throughout the British Isles. This aspect of our apostolate continues to be an important part of our presence in these islands, and Fr Jim is joined in this work by other members of the Province, particularly Fr. Bob Douglas, and Fr Ronnie Mitchell.



St. Joseph's, Ashurst

St. Joseph's, Ashurst

Meanwhile, St. Joseph's, Ashurst, had been run for six years or more as a Refugee Centre, catering for asylum-seekers and others from many different countries and cultures. Over the years, it had been staffed by a number of members of the Province (among them Fr Danny McAvoy, Fr Des Connolly, Bro Shaun Hassan, Bro Stan Williams and Bro Anthony Hanley) with the collaboration, for a while, of some of the Daughters of Wisdom. During that time it had cared for many refugees and had seen many of them settled in their new country. But, as the Government funding for such projects dried up, it became impossible to continue, and the decision was made to close the Centre and indeed to sell the property. It was initially to oversee this sale that Fr Paul Allerton was appointed to Ashurst in January 2006. However, when the congregation who regularly attend Sunday Mass at St Joseph's and its many friends heard of the possibility of its closing, they wrote to Father Provincial, and after further consideration it was decided to try to find another use for the house, and a new community was formed there, consisting at first of Father Ronnie Mitchell as Superior, Father Paul Allerton and Bro Anthony, with Fr Owen Cannon continuing to occupy the former Sisters' house. These were later joined by Father Bob Ellwood, Fr. Des Connolly (after he had finished a 3-year stint in charge of Andover parish) and Fr Danny McAvoy when he had finished his sabbatical leave studying psycho-therapy. So currently we are a community of seven. We are working to develop an in-house ministry as a centre

for prayer and mission, while various members of the community also have responsibilities outside: Father Mitchell giving parish missions and retreats in England, Scotland and Ireland; Father Allerton making appeals for our Missions in Malawi and Uganda in parishes around the country, as well as acting as Provincial Bursar; Father Connolly once again looking after two parishes of Portsmouth Diocese in the New Forest; and Father McAvoy acting as Senior Chaplain to an ecumenical charitable trust, the Alabare Care Services Trust. All in all, everyone is kept pretty busy.

During the past year, thanks to the enthusiasm of Fr Des Connolly, a new project has started based at St Joseph's: the **Poitiers Project**, named after the time that St Louis Marie de Montfort spent in the General Hospital (poorhouse) in Poitiers, where he gave all his energy to caring for the poorest of the poor. The aim of our project is to supply basic necessities, mainly food, to the many needy families to be found in the Southampton area. Read more about this project later in this edition of "Footsteps".

St Joseph's, Ashurst, is now the oldest residence we have in the Province. It was bought in 1942, when the members of the Province had to return to England at the fall of France in the Second World War. It served then, and for many years afterwards, as the Province's Novitiate house, and many of the members of the Province made their Novitiate there.

Montfort House, Liverpool



Montfort House, Liverpool

In the past year, major renovations have been carried out in Montfort House, Liverpool, with the aim of making it a more congenial dwelling place for our elderly confreres, most of whom are now living there. This has involved the installation of a lift serving all floors of the house, from the basement (where the community chapel has always been located) to the second floor or attic. All the rooms have been converted to provide en-suite toilet facilities, very necessary for the elderly, and an external ramp has been provided to enable wheelchair access. All this work entailed a major disruption for the community, which had to move out and install itself temporarily in "Sandymount" next door. Happily, with the exception of a few loose ends, the work is now finished, and the confreres are enjoying their new comfortable quarters.

Fr Bob Douglas, as the Superior of this community, is unstinting in his efforts to care for our "senior citizens", ably supported by the ancillary staff of Montfort House. He is also much involved with the "Montfortian Family of Prayer", which, through its prayers, provides invaluable support for the various ministries of the

Company of Mary in the British Isles (see page 13). Those of our “senior citizens” who are still able to do so, also lend their support to various parishes and communities in the Crosby area in various ways.

To keep our friends up to date with our confreres, the community in Liverpool now consists of: Father Fred Scragg (Provincial), Fr Bob Douglas (Superior), Fr Dan Hogan, Fr Louis Catterall, Bro Anselm and Fr James Cree. Fr Jack Blaney is being cared for in Ince Blundell Hall, but is attached to the Liverpool community, as are Fr Fred Matthews (living in Formby) and Fr Gerard Mackrell (chaplain to Nazareth House, Cardiff).

Sandymount

As many of you will know, next door to Montfort House in Liverpool is our Retreat House or House of Prayer, “Sandymount”. After being run for many years on our behalf by the Emmaeus Family of Prayer, Sandymount is now (as they say) “under new management”. A Southport couple, Tony and Myra Dyson, have taken on the management of the house, assisted by others (including Mary McDermott, who lives in at Sandymount and takes care of most of the domestic arrangements). The Montfort Missionaries will be taking a more active role in the ministry of the house than has perhaps been the case in the past few years, but many of the familiar names will still be ministering there. We would like to express our gratitude to Archie and Cath Cameron and their associates in the Emmaeus Family of Prayer for their dedicated service of the Church in Sandy-



Sandymount House of Prayer

Sandymount will be undergoing renovations in the coming year, with the aim of making it more friendly to disabled persons. We hope that the various works to be carried out will not interrupt too much the programme of activities there. We will try to keep those interested informed of any changes to the programme that need to be made.

Tony & Myra Dyson write:

“Since 1964 Sandymount has been a House of Prayer.

“The Emmaus Family of Prayer used Sandymount for their work. When it became apparent that they were unable to continue, Tony and I felt that the wonderful tradition of prayer at Sandymount should continue and we approached Fr Scragg with a view to continuing this tradition under the umbrella of the Company of Mary. Thankfully the Company of Mary approved our offer and from February 2007 our small, but enthusiastic, team became lay associates of the Company of Mary to re-establish Sandymount as a House of Prayer.

“The most important word in our vision for Sandymount is Prayer: to support the whole

Continued on page 13

Cricklewood

The former Provincial House (and Student House) in Cricklewood is occupied today by Fr. Kieran Flynn and Bro. Shaun Hassan, both of whom are attached to the community at St Joseph's, Ashurst. Fr Flynn does a lot of work among alcoholics and others with addictive conditions, while Bro. Shaun (who is nearing 84 years of age!) keeps himself busy with various jobs around the house and garden.

Africa (Malawi & Uganda)

To complete our round-up of the personnel of the Province, we must not forget our three Missionaries who are working overseas. The oldest member of our Province, Fr. Frank Loughran, who will be 93 in August this year, continues to do his share of the work in Namitembo in Malawi. He first went to Malawi (then known as Nyasaland) in 1942, and has no desire to retire back home! He is accompanied in Namitembo by Fr. Owen O'Donnell. Both of them are seconded to what is known as the "English-speaking African General Delegation", of which Fr. O'Donnell is the current Superior.

Also seconded to the African Delegation (of which he is the Bursar) is Fr. Charlie Beirne, who is still working in Mbarara, Uganda, where he is also the Novice-Master. Many of the readers of "Footsteps" know of (and contribute regularly to) his fund for the education of Ugandan children affected by the AIDS/HIV epidemic in that country. We know that he is very grateful for all the help you give him in this project. ■

The Poitiers Project

From 1701 until 1705, St Louis Marie worked in what was known as the "General Hospital" in Poitiers, looking after the very poor, the outcasts of society. In fact, the term "General Hospital" was a bit of a misnomer, since, far from being a real hospital as we know it, it resembled much more the old Workhouse of Victorian England. It was a place where the very poor, who would otherwise have been begging on the streets,



St Louis Marie caring for the poor

were more or less imprisoned to keep them out from under the feet of the respectable people. And as usual in such circumstances it was a case of "out of sight: out of mind" - once in the General Hospital, it seemed that everyone forgot about these unfortunate people—except for a few choice souls like St. Louis Marie and Blessed Marie-Louise Trichet, who both did their utmost to care for them in the name of God.

It was this example that inspired Fr. Des Connolly, in Ashurst, to set up what is called the "Poitiers Project". It acts as a kind of food delivery service with the

object of supplying the necessities of life to some of the many homeless or desperately poor people of Southampton and the surrounding area. Food and other articles are collected from various agencies—parishes, companies, individuals, and are then distributed to those who are most in need. In fact, the need is so great that it cannot be met fully at present by the goods collected, so money is also donated by individuals, groups or companies, and the province has adopted and supported the project as a genuine and practical reflection of St Louis Marie's own caring for the poor.

The amount of work involved is such that the project needs a full-time manager, Mr Paul Penfold (who previously spent some time working in Uganda with Fr Charlie Beirne and others); he is often assisted by members of his own family and other volunteers.

The Poitiers Project is currently providing one thousand two hundred meals to one hundred and sixty people every week with a further one hundred and forty meals to twenty-two destitute asylum seekers once a month (five thousand three hundred and sixty meals a month). This includes providing one hundred and thirteen children, two meals a day; seven days a week. It is supported in this by a number of Catholic Parishes in Southampton and the local area, by some Catholic schools and various Catholic groups of men and women. Members of these communities are asked to bring a 'tin of food' each week and place it in the containers provided within their parish church or school foyer. But the task is immense, as the need is so great. ■

From the Provincial's Desk *(from pg 3)*

Joseph's Ashurst; I call to mind, among many other individuals, Marie who has practically adopted Bro Louis Marie in Nazareth House Cardonald; then there are John and Michelle whose musical talents and insights are so valued by the Mission Team and the Family of Prayer; there are also all those who give up time and their talent to come to the aid of those helped by the Poitiers Project – especially Paul Penfold; Tom is only one of many with special ties to the community at Montfort House in Liverpool. There are really so many others that I could use up pages just writing lists of names. However I must mention Tony and Myra, who asked me more than a year ago if they could take on the management of the House of Prayer called Sandymount and who wished to do so specifically as **Associates of the Company of Mary**, without expecting or wanting any remuneration except our prayers and whatever treasures the spirituality of St Louis Marie offers. How could we refuse such generosity? They and the team, who all show such complete dedication, have made the Sandymount House of Prayer a place where members of the Company of Mary find more than ever that they are somewhere that St Louis Marie would have valued. We feel that we are invited, indeed urged to participate: that Sandymount must become an expression of the mission of the congregation and a real opportunity to deepen the spiritual commitment of all those who go there to spend time in prayer and reflection.

All who, by their prayer or the help or witness they offer to the congregation,

can be listed under the broad term of ‘Associates of the Company of Mary’- but especially those who find consolation in the commitment and rejoice to be known as associates. They should in turn be assured the spiritual nourishment that this commitment deserves. Indeed our rule of life, ‘Montfortian Today’ tells the confreres; “On their part, Montfort Missionaries will strive to present, with appropriate means, the spirituality of their Founder to those whom it might interest ... and support them according to the inspiration of Montfort and the many ways which he himself opened.” (MTD 60-61.) On your part, dear Associates, remember you have the right to this spiritual nourishment! You should ask for it, even demand it of the Company of Mary. Together may we “*run with patience the race that is set before us*” and together bring closer the Reign of Jesus through Mary.

To all associates this issue of the Footsteps is dedicated.

Fr. Fred Scragg smm Provincial ■

Sandymount (from pg 10)

community (and therefore the church) in prayer; in one place and with one objective; seeking to promote the greater glory of God – through PRAYER.

“Today more and more churches are locked for longer periods each day. Sandymount is much more flexible. In the next few months Sandymount is having a ‘face-lift’, in order to have the facilities to offer more opportunities for prayer and peace. To become a place where people can feel safe, secure and supported on their spiritual journey. More and more it will become a venue for Prayer Groups of every type and variety. And it

will become a safe place for particular people or groups to come together. The emphasis will be on Prayer, with teaching seminars, opportunity for Spiritual direction, courses in every aspect of prayer, led by people with the necessary experience and expertise.

“It already is a place where people want to come to recharge their batteries.

“We try to run it efficiently, with integrity, with loving hospitality and all the while with prayer at the centre of everything. We feel it will become a ‘Powerhouse of Prayer’ – building the Kingdom by focusing on the Lord.”

Myra and Tony Dyson ■

The Montfortian Family of Prayer

We have been thrilled with the development of ‘The Montfortian Family of Prayer’. Last week I received a letter from a lady who wrote to me tell me that through our prayers she had been miraculously healed of cancer. This is not an isolated case. The Family of Prayer began when Fr. Provincial, Fr. Scragg, asked us to start a Mission Team to go round preaching. We realised very quickly that we were desperately in need of prayer because we were often faced with very difficult situations. We took to heart the passage in St. Matthew’s Gospel (10.41) where Jesus says, “Whoever welcomes God’s messenger because he is God’s messenger will share in his reward.” In other words those who pray for us will share the reward of God’s messengers wherever we may be sent.

The next development was when people who were praying for us asked if we would pray for them so that we could all pray for each other. Great idea! So the idea of a 'Family of Prayer' arose. We say Masses on a regular basis for the members of the 'Family of Prayer'. We are all so grateful for prayers. I know I pray that those who pray for us will receive a hundredfold reward. Thank you.

Fr. Bob Douglas, smm

Montfort Press

Montfort Press is the place to buy all your books on "True Devotion" and Montfortian Spirituality in general.

Price List

The Writings of St Louis Marie de Montfort

"God Alone - The Collected Writings of St. Louis Marie de Montfort"

Contains all the main writings of St. Louis Marie, with just a few of his hymns.

£18.00 + £3.50 p&p

"God Alone II - The Hymns of St. Louis Marie de Montfort"

Contains all the hymns written by St. Louis Marie, translated into English.

£18.00 + £3.50 p&p

"The Love of Eternal Wisdom"

The essential context for all the other writings of St. Louis Marie. **£2.50**

"True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin"

The best-known work of St. Louis Marie de Montfort, describing "Total Consecration to

Jesus through Mary". **£3.50**

"The Secret of Mary"

A short account of "True Devotion" to Mary, given in the form of a letter. **£1.50**

"The Secret of the Rosary"

A simple account of the nature and power of the Rosary, the miracles attributed to it, and some methods of saying it. **£2.50**

"Letter to the Friends of the Cross"

A little booklet on the importance of the crosses that adorn our daily lives. **£1.50**

Books to help you to understand and live Montfortian Spirituality

"Jesus Living in Mary - Handbook of the Spirituality of St. Louis Marie de Montfort"

88 articles by experts on almost every aspect of Montfort's spirituality. An ideal companion to "God Alone"

£24.00 + £6.00 p&p

"Alive to God" by Donald Macdonald, S.M.M.

A four-weeks' preparation for those about to make or renew their Consecration as recommended by St. Louis Marie de Montfort.

£2.50

"The Reign of Jesus through Mary"

A handbook for those who have made their Consecration, with spiritual exercises and various prayers. **£7.50**

"Catechism of True Devotion to Mary"

This booklet gives the answers to many of the common difficulties concerning the Consecration. **£1.00**

Biographies

"The Man Called Montfort" by E. C.

Bolger, S.M.M.

A popular biography of St. Louis Marie de Montfort, written in an easy style, yet very informative. First published in 1952, it is now offered in a new (slightly revised) edition. **£6.95**

"Montfort, A Prophet for Our Times" by Benedetta Papàsogli

A well-researched biography of St. Louis Marie de Montfort, translated from Italian. **£7.95**

"Wisdom of the Heart" by Benedetta Papàsogli

The inspiring life of Blessed Marie-Louise Trichet, the first disciple of St. Louis de Montfort and co-foundress of the Daughters of Wisdom. **£7.95**

Audio-Visual media

Video: "The Life of St. Louis Marie de Montfort"

A 1½ hour documentary on the Saint's life, largely filmed in the places in France associated with him, with many interviews with Montfortians. An excellent introduction to his thought and spirituality. **£3.00 + £1.50 p&p**

DVD: "The Spirituality of St. Louis Marie de Montfort"

A 1 hour, 40 min documentary on the Saint's spirituality, to accompany the Video above. **£6.00 + £1 p&p**

AUDIO CD: "The Secret of Mary"

The text of the book read in its entirety by Fr. Paul Allerton, SMM. **£3.00**

**Montfort Press
28 Burbo Bank Road
Blundellsands
LIVERPOOL
L23 6TH.**

Tel: (0151) 287 6862 Fax: (0151) 287 0410

Online Store:

<http://www.montfort.org.uk/osc>

Email:

montfort_press@montfort.org.uk

News from Here and There

Because it is such a long time since the last issue of "Footsteps", it is difficult to know what news of our Associates to report in this issue. If any of you have any news which you think it is important for us to share, please write to Father Allerton at the address on the front cover.

Deaths among the SMM...

Since our last issue, several members of our Province have died: Fr Philip Wilson (28 April 2006); Fr Danny Keenan (7 February 2007); and Bro. Stan Williams (23 February 2007).

...and among the Daughters of Wisdom

The Sisters have suffered several deaths in the past two years or more: Sr Marie Agnes Dawson (31 December 2005); Sr Brigid McEvoy (23 February 2006); Sr Gerard Clancy (29 May 2006); Sr Jean Hickey (8 August 2006); Sr Mildred Coburne (15 August 2006); Sr Marie Patricia Allen (16 October 2006); Sr Mary Barbara Pope (10 December 2006);

Sr Aidan Marie Brown (14 June 2007); Sr Christian Mary Costelloe (16 January 2008); and Sr Mary Peter Loftus (13 March 2008).

We pray that all of these Fathers, Brothers and Sisters, and any of our Associates and friends who have died, may rest in peace!

Bro Daniel (Brother of St Gabriel)

Brother Daniel Faivre, one of the Brothers of St Gabriel (who share our Montfortian spirit and spirituality), died in Southall, London, on 10 September 2007. Back in the 1960s he had been one of the Brothers who came to work with the Montfort Missionaries in Montfort College, Romsey. In 1984 he founded Westminster Interfaith, and was a leading light in that movement and a very familiar figure around Southall (often wearing a Sikh turban) for the next 25 years and more. His funeral was attended by many of other faiths. His passing leaves only one Brother of St Gabriel (Bro. John Hegarty) in England. May he rest in peace.

News of the Daughters of Wisdom

Following a ceiling collapse in Abbey House, Romsey (the first convent of the Daughters of Wisdom in England), a structural survey showed that the building was unsafe and would have to be demolished and rebuilt. This caused a certain degree of consternation among the Sisters of course, particularly as it would seem to involve the destruction of the “Miracle Room”, where Sr. Gerard was miraculously cured of consumption on 8 April

1927 by the intercession of St. Louis Marie de Montfort—a miracle which counted towards his canonisation in 1947.

The Sisters who were living in Abbey House have been found alternative accommodation—some in Marie Louise House, the new Nursing Home the Sisters built adjoining the site, and others in two houses in Romsey. The structural examination of Abbey House continues, and a decision will soon be made as to how to proceed with its replacement. In the meantime, please pray for all our sisters in Romsey, for whom, clearly, this is a difficult time.

The Daughters of Wisdom also had to withdraw recently (because of diminished numbers) from their old convent at Jesmond in Newcastle, a well-known school for many, many years. A small community of sisters remains in the area.

Your Prayers are Requested for...

Fr. Jack Blaney, SMM (who is in Ince Blundell Hall Nursing Home); Sr Roseanne, DW (Romsey); and all the sick members of our Congregations and Associates and Friends.

If you have intentions you wish us to pray for, please write and we will try to include them in the next issue.

We thank those who have donated monies towards the publication of this Newsletter. We are truly grateful. Please continue to support it. If you wish to make a donation by cheque, please make it payable to the Montfort Missionaries and send it to the address on the front page. ■