

Echo Montfortain, No. 502, January 2000

Word of Father General

This morning I had the joy of entering as a pilgrim through the Holy Door, to celebrate Eucharist at St. Peter's Tomb with the confreres of the Italian Provincial Chapter. For the past few years it has been impossible for a resident of Rome to be unaware of the coming Jubilee. Nearly every street corner, highway, train track and basilica in the eternal city has been under construction, detour or scaffolding. However bit by bit those basilicas, piazzas and trains are coming to bright new light, adding to the wonder of the Great Jubilee. Christmas Eve, along with millions around the globe, I was able to watch the Holy Father, in all the fragility and unsteadiness of his old age, yet radiant with happiness as he welcomed representatives of every continent, and preached a witness to Jesus the Christ that was filled with energy, conviction and hope.... And now, with my confreres I came to pass through the Holy Door to honour the 2000th anniversary of the birth of the Lord of history.

Living in an ancient city like Rome, I am often moved by the sheer accumulation of civilisations, cultures, monuments; by the contrast of imperial ruins and spanking new air terminals; by the sight of the tombs of the apostles and the faces of pilgrims from the most distant and diverse countries. How not to believe that there is a God, a loving Father-Mother, the Eternal One, who has been cherishing and calling human beings for century after century, despite all the selfishness, cruelty and indifference we might hurl against heaven and one another! Love who is ever-faithful brings Life that is ever-new!

At the end of November I was in Belgium for the provincial chapter. One Sunday morning we visited a friend who has an extraordinary apartment in a 16th century Beguinage, buildings that once belonged to holy laywomen who came together in faith and charity, ready to reform the medieval church and society from an intense experience of God's presence. There we were amid the wooden beams and lead glass windows of this 500-year-old building, which the University of Louvain had just completely re-wired for Internet! Then we attended Mass at the centuries old church of the Beguinage, now the University Chapel. Here, with the northern light streaming in, in a very northern European city where probably most people could not be bothered with Sunday worship, we found a church filled with people of all ages, races and backgrounds. In the five hundred year old chapel, twenty youngsters from catechism class were preparing for their profession of faith, each one speaking a word of witness before the Eucharistic Assembly, each surrounded by parents and family. It happened to be the Solemnity of Christ the King, and I indeed felt the saving power of the Lord Jesus still alive and at work among the people of Louvain at the dawn of a new millennium. Love who is ever-faithful brings Life that is ever-new!

In almost all of our provinces we are in the midst of elections of new administrations. Of course, one is struck by the ageing or reduced personnel in many places. But one is also astounded by proofs of new life: willingness to sacrifice personal preferences in order to serve the confreres; daring to undertake new tasks and apostolates at an age when others only seek their pension; literally abandoning the people and projects held most dear into the arms of Providence and choosing to live for God Alone. If our God can work these kinds of miracles, these mighty deeds in the lives of some confreres, why could he not work them in your life? The entire Company of Mary has entered into a process of conversion and transformation which focuses on our Consecrated Life as Montfort Missionaries. No matter how old, how tired, how jaded or burned-out you might feel, no matter what successes or failures, disappointments or hurts you have experienced in the Congregation, in these coming months and years let Wisdom speak to your heart of freshness and hope and light. The God who first called you twenty or forty years ago still loves you unconditionally and has chosen you as witness and messenger of his Good News. You can still become a man completely set afire for God. Love who is ever-faithful brings Life that is ever-new!

To each of you, I assure you of my prayer as a fellow-pilgrim as you enter this Jubilee Year of the Incarnation. By the presence and the action of the Virgin Mary, may God bring to birth in you

whatever he wills, whatever will incarnate his mercy and his love in *your* flesh and *your* history. And thus may we give praise, in the words of the Liturgy of the Easter Vigil, to “Jesus Christ, yesterday and today, the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega; all time belongs to him, and all the ages; to him be glory and power, through every age and for ever. Amen.”

William Considine, smm
Superior General

Official News Items

First Professions

On 7 November 1999, in Paipa (Colombia): Gabriel Arcangel ROMERO PÉREZ (from Peru), Edwin Wiler TÁVARA VÉLIZ (from Peru), and Wilmar Steve ROLDÁN SOLANO (from Colombia).

Perpetual Professions

On 12 December 1999, in Choachí (Cundinamarca, Colombia), César GUTIÉRREZ RINCÓN.

On 6 January 2000, in Nairobi (Kenya), Andrew Ulemu KAUFÁ (from Malawi).

Ordinations to the Priesthood

On 19 May 1999, in Bandung (Indonesia), Antonius DWIRAHMANTO ARIFIN – we apologise that this was not announced in the last Echo.

On 4 November 1999, at Virajpet (Mysore, India), Rosario MENEZES.

On 18 November 1999, at Naganahalli (Mysore, India), Joseph RAYAPPA.

On 5 December 1999, in Manila (Philippines), Joseph Alan PASTORIL.

New Superiors and Councils

On 19 October 1999, the Provincial Chapter of the French Province elected **Fr. Jacques ARROUET** as the new Provincial Superior for a term of six years. Father General was present at the Chapter, and immediately confirmed the election. The four Councillors to assist Fr. Arrouet were chosen later by the Province; they are: Fr. Pierre GROSPELLIN, Fr. Emmanuel GUIL, Fr. Henri STÉVANT and Bro. Jean-Marie COCHARD.

On 15 November 1999, the new Superior of the General Delegation of Portugal was appointed and installed; he is **Fr. Antonio PEREIRA**. He will be assisted by two Councillors: Fr. Manuel VIEIRA and Fr. Rui VALÉRIO.

On 17 November 1999, the Provincial Chapter of the Dutch Province completed its election of a new Provincial and Council. **Fr. Charles VONCKEN** was re-elected Provincial for a term of office of three years. Fr. General, who was present at the Chapter, immediately confirmed the election. Fr. Voncken's Provincial Councillors will be: Fr. Peter DENNEMAN, Fr. Leo MUITJENS, Fr. Simon KUYTEN and Fr. Ben FAAS.

The Vice-Province of Belgium, meeting in Chapter 22-24 November 1999, elected its new Provincial Superior in the person of **Fr. Jo GELISSEN**. The election was immediately confirmed by Father General, who was present at the Chapter. The Chapter also elected four Councillors to assist Fr. Gelissen: Fr. Piet GOLTSTEIN, Fr. Jef MARTENS, Fr. Jos VAN DEN BERGH and Fr. Jef VAN KERCKHOVEN.

The Italian Province, meeting in Chapter 3-10 January 2000, elected its new Provincial and Council, with a term of office of 6 years. The new Provincial is **Fr. Daniele CARRARO**, whose election was immediately confirmed by Father General, who was present at the Chapter. The new Provincial

Council is made up of Frs. Marco PASINATO, Luciano NEMBRINI, Alfio MANDELLI and Antonio CORTINOVIS.

A new Superior was appointed on 1 January 2000 in the Italian Provincial Delegation of Peru: he is Fr. Francesco MARTINELLI.

On 12 January 2000, the Provincial Chapter of Canada elected **Fr. Wilfrid BERGERON** as the new Superior of the Province of Canada. Fr. General was present at the Chapter, and immediately confirmed the election. The new Provincial Council will be announced later, and the new administration will take office on 24 January 2000.

Various News Items

Comings and Goings at the General House

Father General and Fr. Jean-Louis Courchesne together attended the Provincial Chapter of the French Province, which took place at Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre 18-21 October 1999. Having returned from France, Father General was off again on 14 November, this time with Fr. Hub Louis, to attend the Chapters of the Dutch Province (15-17 November), followed by the Belgian Vice-Province (22-25 November), during which new administrations were elected. Fr. Hub Louis stayed on in Holland for a holiday. He went from there to Africa on January 2, to visit Nairobi (Kenya), Mbarara (Uganda) and Malawi, before returning to Rome about 9 February 2000.

Fr. Ivo Libralato was in Portugal 8-18 November for the consultation and General Assembly of the General Delegation, during which Fr. Antonio Pereira and his Council were appointed.

The General Finance Committee met at the General House from 2-4 December to consider the extraordinary budgets of the various entities, as well as the applications for subsidies and other aid from International Montfortian Aid.

Father Miguel Patiño left for his holiday in Colombia on 10 December, and will be returning to Rome on 14 January.

In the first week of January, beginning on 3rd, the Italian Provincial Chapter met to elect a new Provincial, as well as to discuss the assimilation of the General Chapter orientations. Fr. General and Fr. Ivo Libralato attended the Chapter.

Fr. General and Fr. Jean-Louis Courchesne left for Canada on 9 January 2000 to attend the Provincial Chapters of Canada and the United States.

A handful of visitors stayed at the General House in the past few months: Bishop Gilles Coté, s.m.m., of Daru Kiunga diocese in Papua New Guinea stayed a couple of nights before going to attend a conference of the Movement for a Better World in Rome. One of the Montfortian priests working in his diocese, Fr. Jose Jacob, from the Indian General Delegation, also spent a few days.

Fr. Fred Scragg, who had made himself available to carry on as General Bursar for a while, finally left Rome on December 16, and went to the USA on 6 January to follow at least the second semester of his planned refresher course in Canon Law at the Catholic University in Washington.

1999: Centenary of the Founding of the Confraternity of Mary, Queen of All Hearts

In this centenary year of the pastoral letter written by His Eminence Mgr, Duhamel establishing the Confraternity of Mary Queen of All Hearts, on 25 March 1899, it is interesting to read a page or two from the chronicles of the Canadian scholasticate. Here are a few details supplied by Fr. Richard himself on the founding of the confraternity.

During 1897 and 1898, a good priest of the diocese of Sherbrooke in Quebec, a certain Abbé Lavallée, who, while trying his vocation in the Redemptorists' novitiate in St-Trond (?) in Belgium,

had come to know and acquire a taste for the Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin, made it his task to be its zealous propagator in Canada. At first he contented himself with spreading the edition of the True Devotion brought out by Mlle de la Rousellière, who at that time lived in Montreal, but is now a Carmelite nun in Angers. Later on, he had printed at his own expense, believing that he had a good chance of making some profit for the benefit of the Seminary of St. Charles in Sherbrooke, both the treatise on True Devotion and the manual of piety brought out by Fr. Gabriel Denis, s.m.m., called "The Reign of Jesus through Mary", which M. Lavallée changed, in a rather un-French way, to "Jesus Reigning through Mary". On top of this, the same priest re-issued also the book, "The Spirit of Blessed de Montfort", written by Abbé Quérard. Then he turned himself into a travelling salesman for these books, leaving hundreds of them in store in communities, seminaries, and even presbyteries. This truly frenetic salesmanship (which, from a material point of view, would normally have led to bankruptcy for the good priest) aroused in the Fathers of the Company of Mary a spirit of holy emulation for the spreading of the practice of True Devotion. They said that the real means to use was the reorganisation of the practice of the Holy Slavery (already approved by the very fact of the approval of the writings of Blessed de Montfort) as a confraternity to which certain indulgences and other privileges could be gradually attached.

Fr. Richard undertook therefore to suggest the idea to V. Rev. Fr. Maurille, the Superior General. And, to hasten its realisation, he did not hesitate to suggest that there were grounds for fearing that they would be outstripped by M. Lavallée or even the Bishop of Sherbrooke, who was recommending both the writings of Blessed de Montfort and the travelling salesman priest. This fear produced its effect.

The dream at that time was to establish the confraternity at the Mother House, but they were afraid (wrongly, I think) that the Bishop of Luçon would have nothing whatever to do with it. So they tried, with the same end in view, to get Mgr Renard (?), Bishop of Nantes, on their side. Pontchâteau seemed to be the most natural centre for the birth of such a project; but in the end the Pontchâteau project came to nothing.

Father Maurille therefore wrote to Fr. Richard, asking him to propose the founding of the planned Confraternity, under the title beloved of Montfort, "Mary, Queen of All Hearts", to Mgr Duhamel, Archbishop of Ottawa (letter of Fr. Maurille to Fr. Richard).

Fr. Richard, who was just waiting for this opportunity, took himself off one fine evening in mid-January to the Archbishop's palace, and made the proposal to the Archbishop, who, after a few moments of silence, asked: "Do you think Rome would approve such a confraternity?" "Certainly," replied the Father, "for the Holy Slavery is already approved; otherwise, the man who wrote a whole book setting it forth and recommending its practice in all its details, would certainly not have been beatified. Besides, your Grace, you know Fr. Jouet, our Procurator in Rome. You know that he never puts anything forward unless he is sure of it. Well, he has done everything he can to obtain from the Holy Father the approval you are looking for." "All right," said the Archbishop, "let it go ahead. I will willingly do, for the glory of Mary, what you ask of me. Besides, did you know that I have practised this devotion to Mary recommended by your Father since my earliest childhood? The Little Crown, after the Our Father and the Hail Mary, which of course are its main constituents, was the first prayer taught me by my mother... But to set up a confraternity, we must have a circular letter. What date do you suggest for its establishment?" "The 25th March, your Grace, the principal feast in the thinking of Blessed de Montfort, would seem to me to be the most appropriate." "Very well, but I do not have much time available. Look around for the best materials to help me give my priests and my people the best teaching, which will be the foundation of the moral practices demanded by the confraternity." "Certainly, your Grace, I will come back soon with all the necessary arms and baggage, so great is the joy you are going to give us."

Fr. Richard was very bold, and, so that the Archbishop would have to put into the writing of his letter as little work and time as possible, he set out his notes in such a way that they already had the turn of phrase and the form of a pastoral letter. The Archbishop found the work rather long. "Leave it with me," he said to Father Richard when he brought it along, "and I will take out what can be left out, etc., and the two pastoral letters, in French and English, will come out for the 25th March."

As it turned out, the Archbishop made no modifications at all, and made it all his own.

As the cost of printing was very high (the letter was 60 pages long), Fr. Richard offered to pay these expenses. But the Archbishop would not hear of it. "This is my work," he kindly replied. And the next time he went on a tour of Confirmation, he took one of our Fathers with him to preach, wherever he himself went, True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin. The Archbishop was anxious to pay off his debt to him, and was more than generous.

The following August, "*ni fallor*", the Archbishop sent another letter to his clergy, urging them to promote the confraternity and announcing the (*here there is word which is difficult to decipher – it could be "lères" – first*) indulgences. (*Chronicles of the Scholasticate, vol. 1, pg. 233*).

On the page before this, the chronicler (Father Guinefoleau) enjoyed adding a comical extra note:

"This pastoral letter is a veritable theological masterpiece, worthy of one of the Fathers of the Church," said a good religious to Mgr Duhamel in the course of a banquet. The Archbishop was clearly unable to reveal who the Father of the Church was who had written the letter; but we can take pride in the fact that it was our Superior.

N.B. The three parentheses in small characters are not part of the original text written by Fr. Guinefoleau; they express a certain hesitation and uncertainty as to the reading and the transcription of these three words.

Our Departed Brethren

Fr. Ronald LLOYD (1919-1999)

Died on 31 October 1999 in Bay Shore (USA), aged 80, with 61 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 8 September 1938, and was ordained a priest on 24 October 1943. After editing the magazine "Queen and Mother" for five years, he spent almost the whole of the rest of his life preaching parish missions and retreats, first of all in his native England, and from 1959 onwards in the United States of America until his retirement in 1996, when he went to live in Bay Shore.

Fr. Johan Jozef JONGEN (1916-1999)

Died on 21 November 1999 in Vroenhof (Netherlands), aged 83, with 62 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 8 September 1937 and was ordained priest on 19 June 1943. He taught German in the Apostolic School in Schimmert for twelve years before going to Germany as superior of the Mission School in Rheydt. In 1962 he became bursar in Schimmert, then Provincial Bursar, a post he held for eleven years until 1975. This was followed by twenty years of parish ministry in Germany until his retirement to Vroenhof in 1996.

Bro. Aloïs Wilhelmus Maria BASTEN (1944-1999)

Died on 30 November 1999 in Voorschoten (Netherlands), aged 55, with 36 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 19 March 1963. Although he had asked to go to the Foreign Missions, he spent the whole of his life in Holland and Belgium, working on the farm and garden in a number of communities, in particular giving invaluable service to the Formation Houses when these were still in existence.

Fr. Jean-Marie LIGEN (1919-1999)

Died on 13 December 1999 in Brest (France), aged 79, with 54 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 17 October 1945, and was ordained priest on 29 June 1950. He spent almost the whole of his active life as a missionary in Haiti, being a curate, and later administrator in Môle St. Nicolas, parish-priest in Bassin Bleu, and later bursar or assistant bursar in Port-de-Paix, as well as

being chaplain to the Collège St. Louis de Gonzague. After a final two or three years in the Provincial House in Port-au-Prince, he returned to France and retired to Le Rody in Brest in 1992.

Fr. Jean-Marc CARTIER (1936-2000)

Died on 3 January 2000 in Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea), aged 63, with 43 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 15 August 1956, and was ordained priest on 17 March 1962. After spending one year in pastoral studies, then five years as a teacher (and for one year prefect of discipline) in Papineauville, he went as a missionary to Papua New Guinea, where he spent the rest of his life, apart from a spell of four years as Mission Procurator and organiser of missionary awareness in Canada (1981-1985). Latterly he was Vicar General in the diocese of Daru-Kiunga.

Fr. Irvine LECLERC (1918-2000)

Died on 3 January 2000 in Nicolet (Canada), aged 81, with 62 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 22 August 1937, and was ordained priest on 20 February 1943. After two years teaching in Papineauville, he spent 14 years working in the mission on Vancouver Island in Western Canada. He then helped to set up the Canadian Mission Procure, and was parish-priest in Mary, Queen of All Hearts parish in Montreal (1961-1972) In 1973 he founded (along with two members of the GB&I Province) the Montfortian parish in Woodridge, Brisbane, Australia. Elected General Assistant at the 1975 General Chapter, he was Vicar General and General Bursar of the Congregation. Even after returning to Canada, where he was Provincial Bursar, he was recalled to Rome to serve as local bursar in the General House. Since 1993 he lived in the Provincial House in Montreal, until he took sick and was finally taken to Nicolet.

Fr. Willem HERBERIGHS (1922-2000)

Died on 5 January 2000 in Weert (Netherlands), aged 77, with 56 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 8 September 1943 and was ordained priest on 28 March 1950. He spent the first twenty years of his priestly life as a missionary in Malawi, where he worked in Molere, Nsanja, Ngabu and Misomali. Returning to Europe in 1971, he was curate in the Voerendaal parish, then parish priest in Weert from 1974 until shortly before his death. He had just retired from this task when he was taken ill in November 1999, and died just a few weeks later.