



L'Écho Montfortain

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WORD FROM FATHER GENERAL

I write this the day after Easter, before leaving Rome for the Philippines and India. It seems that all over the world this year the celebrations of Lent and Holy Week have been strongly marked by the violence and destruction suffered by the Iraqi people and so many millions around the earth. Perhaps no one has been more passionately persistent than Pope Jean Paul II, who said that the earth had become a graveyard of innocent victims. Nevertheless, tireless witness to hope and peace that he is, the Holy Father's Easter homily called for reconciliation and the end to all aggression in the name of religion or – even worse – in the name of God.

As we continue to celebrate this Eastertide, not only nations and great powers need to learn ways of humility and justice. Our communities and personal lives can often be marred by arrogance or lack of forgiveness. Our Easter prayer for the world and for ourselves might well echo words of the Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II: *“Father... In the midst of conflict and division we know it is you who turn our minds to thoughts of peace. Your Spirit changes our hearts: enemies begin to speak to one another, those who were estranged join hands in friendship, and nations seek the way of peace together. Your Spirit is at work when understanding puts an end to strife, when hatred is quenched by mercy, and vengeance gives way to forgiveness.”*

This past October Pope John Paul II wrote a new letter on the Most Holy Rosary, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*. Around the Congregation several confreres have written articles or booklets in various languages to help the people rediscover the Rosary. I was asked to write the Preface to the English edition of Fr. Georges Madore's *Le Rosaire avec Jean-Paul II*. I would like to share a part of what I wrote, with the hope that we Montfortians might be at the vanguard of those who desire to proclaim the love of God in the secret of the Rosary.

As a teenager I used to ride the New York City subway trains everyday back and forth to high school. Often enough in those packed and swaying cars I would see ordinary people discretely holding Rosaries in their hands, silently using the time of their morning or evening commute to pray. As a teenager it struck me as a pleasant curiosity. Now I understand how those women and men, off to the drudgery of daily

work in offices and construction sites, leaving at home children and spouses and worries and dreams, how these good Christians were in fact trying to live the events of everyday in the Light of Love. The Mother of Jesus accompanied them amidst the noise and dirt of the subways; she remained at home to watch over and protect those who waited there; she went before them to teach and guide them how to witness to the Good News of her Son in the most ordinary and mundane events of the workplace.

Pope John Paul II has written a new Letter on the Most Holy Rosary, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, and he has proclaimed the year from October 2002 to October 2003 *the Year of the Rosary*. Many newspaper accounts of this Letter emphasize one of the Holy Father's suggestions to add to the traditional rosary some new mysteries, *the mysteries of Light*. But this is to miss the heart and soul of the Letter, which is a direct call to discover or rediscover the Rosary as a whole school of prayer and holiness, a true compendium of the Gospel. The Holy Father describes how, for people of all ages, in the Rosary the Christian week becomes a journey through the mysteries of Christ. He reminds us that in sickness and in health, in tranquillity and in tumult, in need and in thanksgiving, in life and at the moment of death, the Rosary bathes us in the Word of God and in the Love of Jesus in Mary.

Our founder, St. Louis-Marie de Montfort, was a master at living and teaching the secret of the Rosary, at inviting ordinary people with ordinary lives to discover how the light of the Gospel could shine into the tasks and cares of each day and transform them in the love of God. May this new work of Father Madore (and those of other confreres!) help us to hear the word of God with Mary, welcome it in our lives, and act upon it.

*William Considine, s.m.m.
Superior General*

OFFICIAL NEWS ITEMS

APPOINTMENT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

The post of Secretary General has been vacant since February 2002. Since then, the various members of the General Administration have shared the various tasks belonging to this post. But, especially as the General Chapter draws near, this is a situation which cannot continue. So, during a meeting on 15 April 2003, the Superior General and his Council elected Fr. Jean-Louis COURCHESNE, General Assistant, to the post of Secretary General of the Company of Mary. He is taking up again the duties he already carried out between 1995 and 1999.

MADAGASCAR – NEW ADMINISTRATION

During an assembly held in Antananarivo on 26 March 2003, the Superior General re-appointed Fr. Claude BOICHUT as Superior of the General Delegation of Madagascar for a second term of office. His Councillors are Frs. Jean-Baptiste RAKOTOARISOA, Paulin RAMANANDRAIBE, Pietro LIMONTA and Jean-Baptiste RALIVANIRINA.

PHILIPPINES – NEW ADMINISTRATION

During an assembly held in Manila on 28 April 2003, the Superior General appointed a new Superior and a new Council for the General Delegation of the Philippines. The new Superior is Fr. Richard MAGARARU, and his Councillors are Frs. Joseph PASTORIL and Paul Arnel LUCERO.

INDIA – NEW ADMINISTRATION

During an assembly held in Bangalore on 1 May 2003, the Superior General appointed a new Superior and a new Council for the General Delegation of India. The new Superior is Fr. Peter MASCARENHAS, and his Councillors are Frs. Norbert LOBO, Peter SWAMY and Vincent Augustine KOMBARAKARAN.

FIRST PROFESSIONS

On 28 April 2003, in Ruteng (Indonesia): Heredi (Edy) SUHARTONO, Petrus (Peter) KANDIL, Fidelis (Delis) BOLO WOTAN, Agustinus (Gusty) BALAPIRA KOLIN, Laurentius (Yono) SUYONO LABI, Heribertus (Herry) LESEK, Kristianus Pantaleon (Rispan) JOGO, Willibrordus Krista (Ordy) SELMAN, Christoforus (Christo) DA SANTO, Yohanes (Yanto) SURIANTO ASMAN, Wilfridus Marianus (Frid) KAKO NONO, Willfridus Demetrius (Will) SIGA.

PERPETUAL PROFESSION

On 27 April 2003, in Antananarivo (Madagascar): Armand RANAIVOSON.

ORDINATION TO THE DEACONATE

On 1 March 2003, in Nairobi (Kenya): Ernest AKHONYA MUKAVANA.

PRIESTLY ORDINATIONS

On 25 March, in Plaisance (Haiti): Ronald JEANNITE.

On 26 April 2003, in Bangalore (India): Ronald DHASON.

SOME CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The six-monthly meeting of the **General Finance Committee** took place at the General House from 8 to 10 May. Among other things they studied the financial reports of the various Entities for last year and the budgets for this year. The members of the Committee at present are Frs. Francesco Agliardi, General Bursar, Piet Goltstein, in charge of the Montfort General Fund, Paul Allerton, Matthew Considine and Gerd Euteneuer.

Stage International Montfortain : The SIM 2003 will take place during the months of July and August, largely in Montfortian locations: Saint-Laurent (one month) and Montfort (one week). The concluding Retreat will be held at the house of the Dominican Sisters in Beaufort, near Dinan (3 weeks). It seems that all available places have been taken. We recall that those in charge of the SIM are Frs. Gilles Dallaire, René Paul, Tom Poth and Olivier Maire. Thank you for your prayers for all those taking part!

COMING AND GOINGS

In January, the Superior General went to the USA, on the occasion of his visits to Canada and Ecuador, where he took part in the meeting of Latin American Superiors. After a short visit to France, he was in Madagascar from 21 March until 4 April, for the installation of the Delegation Superior and Council. After two weeks in Rome, he left again for the Philippines and India, where he also presided over the installation of the new Administrations in these two places. He came back to Rome on 4 May. He will leave again on 17 May for a short rest in the USA, until 4 June. On 7 June he will fly to Bandung for the installation of the new Administration in the General Delegation of Indonesia. He should be back on 18 June. He is due to spend the whole of the Summer in Rome, except for a visit of a few days to see the SIM participants in France, around 7 August.

Fr. Ivo Libralato, the Vicar General, went to Malawi in January for a week of renewal with the confreres of the Italian Delegation there. Afterwards he went to Peru, in February, principally to preach a retreat for the Daughters of Wisdom.

Fr. Hub Louis made a five-week visit (2 March – 6 April) to the Delegation of Africa. He spent a good deal of time in Nairobi (Kenya), where the residence of the Superior of the Delegation and the scholasticate are situated. With the Superior of the Delegation, he visited the confreres in Malawi, met with those from Uganda, and even succeeded in getting to Kisangani in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which is often quite a feat. Fr. Hub will take part in the SIM in July/August.

Fr. Jean-Louis Courchesne spent a fair amount of time in Canada, working on the dossier concerning Montfortian Formation. He returned to Rome on 17 March. He will leave again on 16 May for the USA to make the Canonical Visitation there. Afterwards he will preach the retreats for the Canadian confreres and some of their Associates. Then he will work for a while at the Shrine of Our Lady Queen of All Hearts in Montreal, replacing Fr. Gilles Dallaire, who will be in charge of the SIM in France. He will return to the General House on 3 September.

Fr. Miguel Patiño made the canonical visitation in Ecuador from 20 January to 3 February. He also took part there in the meeting of Latin American superiors and that concerning ongoing Formation. He will leave Rome on 14 June for Colombia, for a meeting on spirituality with the Latin American Montfortian family, and to help with the Montfortian Thirty Days. He should be back around 15 August.

Fr. Francesco Agliardi accompanied the Superior General on his visit to Madagascar. He has already perfected his French with a stay at La Chartreuse in France when he was appointed General Bursar; he will be going to the USA at the end of June for an intense course in English. He too should be back about 15 August.

CLAUDE & MARGUERITE DE LA GARAYE

Friends of Montfort and Marie-Louise of Jesus

This is an extract from a communication from Father Marcel Gendrot, s.m.m., on the occasion of the publication of Volume XV of the collection Documents et Recherches (cf. Bibliography).

After his pilgrimage to the tombs of our Founders on 19 September 1996, John Paul II cited, as exemplary models of the Christian life, the Martins, parents of Thérèse of Lisieux, and the husband and wife de La Garaye. This is what he said of them:

“Today, I have come to invite you to make the hope that is in you and around you grow... Among men and women who are faithful to the calls made by God in everyday life, each one gives his or her own personal response of faith to the Word. This is what so many families in your area have done. So you keep alive the remembrance of that married couple, Claude and Marguerite de La Garaye.”

When a group of Montfortians makes a pilgrimage in the footsteps of Montfort, they stop in the Rue de la Croix in Dinan and remember the famous incident of “Open up for Jesus Christ”. They might continue their pilgrimage as far as the ruins of the Chateau of La Garaye. It was there that Father de Montfort preached a retreat to the poor people on the occasion of the mission in 1706.

They might also recall the visit made there by Marie-Louise of Jesus in 1724. The Count and Countess had for a long time been inspired by a sentiment of deep veneration in her regard. This was no doubt the genesis of the request they made later for a charitable house to perpetuate, after their own deaths, their dedication with regard to the poorest of the poor.

In 1750, three Daughters of Wisdom arrived in Dinan and began, the following year, their charitable work under the benevolent eye of the Count and Countess de La Garaye. For 225 years, the Sisters kept up and developed this service which lasted until 1975. More than two centuries of service very much appreciated by the whole region of Dinan.

In this book you will find details of these years of collaboration in charity, as well as the documents concerning the obtaining of Letters Patent from King Louis XV for the Daughters of Wisdom.

OUR DEPARTED BRETHREN

Brother IGNATIUS (Obe Kuipers) (1921-2003)

Died on 9 March 2003 in Maastricht (Netherlands), aged 81, with 54 years of Religious Profession. A boatman on the canals and rivers of the Netherlands, he entered the Company of Mary, making his first vows on 19 March 1948. He left immediately for Mozambique, a country which remained his first love. It was there that he made his perpetual profession on 19 March 1953. As in his native land, there also his precious technical abilities were much appreciated. Having been recalled for a stay of seven years in Holland, he returned to Mozambique in 1962. Finally he had to go back to his own country, due to the political situation in Mozambique, but this was a great trial for him. Later he was a member of the Vroenhof community. Being subject to depression, he was at his best when working alone in a stable environment, where confidence was placed in him. He found the various changes in society and the religious life difficult to cope with, and this rendered his later years rather sad.

Brother Richard POLITTE (1934-2003)

Died on 20 March 2003 in Ozone Park (NY – USA), aged 69, with 47 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 10 April 1955 and his perpetual profession on 17 April 1960. Until 1981, apart from one year in Litchfield (1960-61), he lived in Bay Shore, where he worked at Montfort Publications, including the magazine *Queen of All Hearts*. In 1981, he was appointed to the student house in Washington, where he lived for more than 10 years. He profited by his stay there to study Scripture and Theology, and offered his services to a parish comprising people from 30 nationalities. He collaborated in a programme for children after school hours. This led him to helping recent immigrants to get to know one another and to develop various contacts. Finding that some of those he was helping were asking for baptism, he became involved in the RCIA programmes. For the past ten years, he was working in the Montfortian parish in Ozone Park. Richard was an affable man, a man of transparent goodness. His natural warmth drew people to him, and allowed him to lead them to Christ.

Brother Paul SAVIGNAC (1924-2003)

Died on 27 March 2003 in Nicolet (Canada), aged 78 with 44 years of Religious Profession. At the age of 16, he lost his father and so became the one, along with his mother, to support his family. It was for this reason that he was in his thirties when he entered Religious Life. He made his first vows on 19 March 1959 and his perpetual profession six years later. Having been part of the “flying squad” of Brothers who went from house to house doing various jobs (1959-1964), he was attached to the farm of the minor seminary in Papineauville (1964-1972). Then, after barely a year as doorkeeper in Montreal (1972-1973), he was appointed to Nicolet, where he spent the last thirty years of his life, sharing in the maintenance of the house and the work on the farm and in the garden. His health deteriorated badly in the latter years, forcing him to slow down and even to undergo dialysis treatment for the past three years. He died peacefully on 27 March 2003, united in prayer with his confreres.

Father Vittorio BERTON (1913-2003)

Died on 16 April 2003 in Redona di Bergamo (Italy), aged 90, with 70 years of Religious Profession. He made his first vows on 20 September 1932 and was ordained priest on 4 March 1939. He divided the most intense years of his ministry between Reggio Calabria (the Rosary Church) and Rome (the Marian Centre), with breaks in Menaggio and Valperga, as chaplain to the Daughters of Wisdom, and in Naples and Treviglio, as a member of a preaching team and the *Peregrinatio Mariae*. The whole of his ministry was characterised by his love for Mary and the desire he had to spread devotion to her according to the teaching of Father de Montfort. It was this that led him to work in various fields of missionary apostolate, and to devote his apostolic life to the good of all those he encountered. On the occasion of his Diamond Jubilee of priesthood, he wrote to his Provincial: "Help me to thank the Lord and the Blessed Virgin... I am convinced that, for sixty years, it was not I, but they, who were working in me; so to them goes all the glory; for myself, I am but a poor instrument in their hands."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Documents et Recherches - XV : *La Garaye – Au paradis des pauvres*, Centre International Montfortain, 2003, 142 pages. Introduction by Fr. Marcel Gendrot, s.m.m. After a biography of Claude and Marguerite de La Garaye, various documents are included concerning the installation of the Daughters of Wisdom in Dinan, and then the witness of two experts: La Garaye the Chemist (Dr. Marc Jehanno) and La Garaye the Doctor and Surgeon (Dr. Joseph Gastar).

Spiritualità Monfortana I : Centre International Montfortain, 2003, 160 pages. In Italian. Introduction by Battista Cortinovis, s.m.m. Summary : St. Louis Marie de Montfort in the Church of today and tomorrow. – Singing of the beauty of the Christian calling (Paolo Martinelli, OFMCap), Theology of the Mission in the Prayer for Missionaries (Pier Luigi Nava, s.m.m.), The Soul's Desire (Olivier Maire, s.m.m.), Bibliography.

Georges Madore, s.m.m., *Le Rosaire avec Jean-Paul II*, Médiaspaul, Montréal – Paris, 2003, 87 pages. Preface by Cardinal J.-C. Turcotte, Archbishop of Montreal. This little book, with its very practical content and format, introduces the apostolic letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, then offers very concrete suggestions for praying the Rosary. Of course, the Mysteries of Light are included, as well as suggestions for the various high points of the liturgical year. An excellent tool for praying the Rosary and for helping others to pray it.

Georges Madore, s.m.m., *The Rosary with Jean Paul II*, Médiaspaul, Sherbrooke, Canada, 2003, 87 pages. English translation of the previous work. Preface by Fr. William Considine, s.m.m., Superior General.

Louis Pérouas, s.m.m., *Gabriel Deshayes – Un grand pionnier de la restauration catholique dans l'Ouest de la France (1767-1841)*, Éditions Dom Bosco, Paris, 2003, 171 pages. The very active life of the man who was Superior General of the Company of Mary from 1821 to 1841. We are familiar with his providential mission with regard to the Montfortian congregations. As a founder and re-founder of congregations wounded by the revolutionary torment in France, Gabriel Deshayes tried to bring comfort in the miseries he encountered, paying special attention to deaf-mutes.