

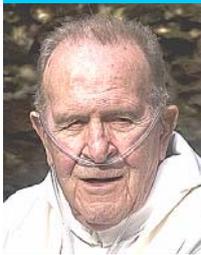


L'Écho montfortain

IN THE HOUSE OF THE FATHER...

February 2008 - N° 5

OUR DECEASED BROTHERS



Father Eugene LYNCH, S.M.M.

(1928 – 2008)

Died in Litchfield (United States), on 19 January 2008,
aged 80 with 59 years of Religious Profession.

Father Gene Lynch was a young man from Queens, New York, yet he toured the world many times over. Born on January 1, 1928 he celebrated his 80th birthday in style and grace with the Faith Community at the Litchfield Shrine, just before entering the hospital for surgery. Gene made his novitiate in Nicolet, Canada and his first profession was in 1948. Ordained in 1954, he was immediately sent to Malawi, Africa. In 1960 he was transferred to the other side of the world, to Borneo in Indonesia where he served as missionary, superior and eventually director of the Catholic Relief Services. In 1967 he was appointed Provincial Superior of the Montfort Missionaries in the United States, during the challenging times just after the Vatican Council II. Those who opposed him called him “the wild man from Borneo”!

In 1973 Father Gene became the pastor of St. Mary Gate of Heaven Parish in Ozone Park, NY. He was famous for renovating the beautiful church according to the new liturgical norms, for organizing the citizens for social concerns, for fighting with the Mayor of New York City on matters of social principals, and for standing up to the local Mafia! Always ready to risk something new for God, in 1984 he joined a new preaching team of Montforts and Daughters of Wisdom in Jacksonville, Florida. Five years later he was sent to Saint Louis, Missouri to work in the African-American parish of St. Teresa of Avila. In 1994 Father Gene went to Bay Shore as superior, but in 1996 he arrived at Lourdes in Litchfield for the ministry of the Shrine and eventually to help with the young novices from various countries who studied here.

Among his great passions in his later years was *Retrouvaille*, a movement to help people whose marriages were in great pain, seeking a path to reconciliation and healing. In some ways this summed up his life and virtues: always ready to hope and trust in others, to call forth life, joy and love to the full, to seek reconciliation, justice and peace. In these last years, as his breathing allowed him to move less and less, he spent much of his day in the Chapel, praying the Rosary or looking at the Blessed Sacrament. When he died, in immense peace, our Montfort Community was there around his bed, praying the Rosary.



**Father Wilhelmus (Wiel) VAN EUNEN, S.M.M.
(1913 – 2008)**

Died in Valkenburg (The Netherlands), on 24 January 2008,
aged 94 with 74 years of Religious Profession.

Wilhelmus Maria van Eunen was born in Vaals on 5 May 1913. He entered the novitiate in 1932, made his first vows on 8 September 1933. On 3 March 1940 he was ordained priest in Oirschot by mgr. Diepen and went to Nijmegen to study theology. In that period he lived at the *Holy Land Foundation* and worked there as a guide. In 1947 Wiel received his obedience as a teacher for the seminary in Alban, Colombia, and from 1966 till 1972 he worked at the seminary San Pio X in Restrepo. After that time he was assistant in the parish of Cucuta San Rafael and five years later in Acacías. In 1990 he returned to the Netherlands and found a new home in Vroenhof, Valkenburg, first in the community residence and later in the nursing home. It was there that he died in his room.

In the eyes of his novice master Wiel van Eunen was 'more suitable for preaching than for teaching'. In spite of that advice he worked as a teacher for a large part of his life. As scholastic he already taught for one year in our minor seminary in Schimmert and after his ordination he became professor of exegesis in the major seminary of Colombia. There he felt very soon at home. The Colombian scholasticate was at a height of 2150 m. That reminded him of the surroundings of Vaals! In the weekends he went on horseback to help out in the parishes in the neighbourhood and enjoyed nature. Wiel always thought of teaching as a pure missionary task. He was convinced that teaching and forming young people was an essential part of evangelisation. And he did very well on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Even when he worked in 1972 at the Venezuelan border in a parish, he gave many courses. Wiel was a very punctual man. Words such as 'precisely' and 'exactly' were just right for him, in every part of his body, even his hands. At the end of Rhetoric the Fathers of Schimmert wrote it in their reports: 'practical for all kinds of work'. Still in his advanced years he would repair everything that was broken with technical ingenuity. Therefore it was not difficult for him to say farewell to exegesis in 1966 and become a teacher of all kinds of practical subjects: algebra, geometry, geography, biology and - last but not least - liturgy. I suspect that he always prepared his lessons very accurately. He always wanted to know everything in detail. In Vroenhof, when a story was told and the details were not right, he corrected them with his characteristic voice.

Most of us got to know Wiel only when for health reasons he returned to the Netherlands in 1990. After a few years his diabetes troubled him so much that he lost more and more of his left leg and took to a wheelchair in 1999. That was not easy for him. Constantly sitting in the same position was very painful. On top of that he had other old men's problems. Nevertheless he was no moaner. Only if things did not happen on time, he could be grumpy. But luckily there was always the helping hand of Brother Leo (Brosens), who took him with clock-like regularity to the places he could not reach on his own. Wiel owes Leo eternal gratitude! In a letter of 1983 he wrote at the end of his report about the death of Father Joep Ramakers: "We pray for him. With such a long life - 81 years - and so many merits in the service of God, Mary and our fellow human beings, he will wait for us in eternal happiness." Wiel was fourteen years older even than him. In heaven he will probably wait for us, as he usually waited in the doorway of his room or on the lookout in the bay of our community corridor.



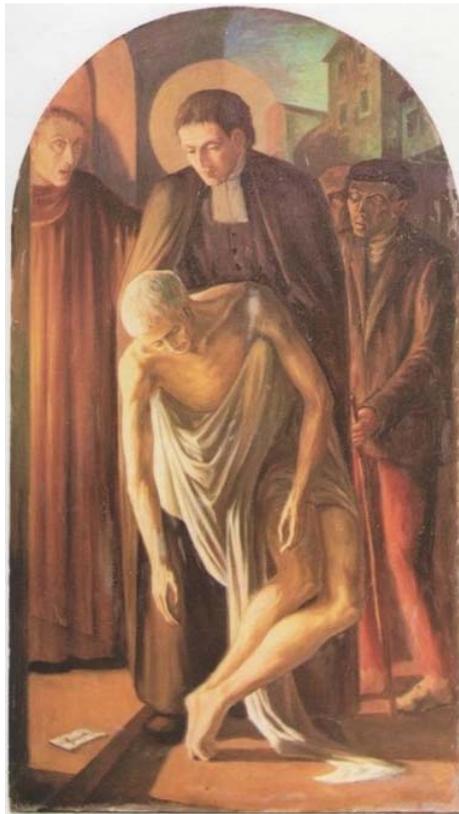
FROM THE MONTFORTIAN FAMILY

BROTHERS OF SAINT GABRIEL

December 2007			<u>years old</u>	<u>profession</u>
24	Br. Sébastien (Armand MONNERON)	La Hillière (France)	85	68
28	Br. Antony FRANCISCO	Yercaud (India)	81	59
January 2008				
1	Br. Donatien MENET	La Hillière (France)	93	77
February 2008				
3	Br. Gérard RAMBAUD	La Hillière (France)	80	61

DAUGHTERS OF WISDOM

January 2008			<u>years old</u>	<u>profession</u>
16	Sr. Christian Mary of the Cross (Sheila COSTELLOE)	Romsey (England)	86	49
20	Sr. Marie Jeanne d'Arc (Thérèse LEMIRE)	Ottawa (Canada)	87	66
22	Sr. Suzanne de Montfort (Emilienne MOREAU)	St Laurent sur Sévre (France)	89	60
23	Sr. Maria di San Luigi (Giovanna GATTI)	Clusone (Italy)	91	69
29	Sr. Sidonie dell'Annonciation (Johanna FROESCH)	Wijchen (The Netherlands)	92	70
31	Sr. Saint Louis-Marie (Paulette GAUTREAU)	St Laurent sur Sévre (France)	93	58
February 2008				
1	Sr. Jean de Jésus (Simone GUILLOTEAU)	St Laurent sur Sévre (France)	95	65
1	Sr. Jacques-Marie du Sacré-Cœur (Georgette ANGOT)	St Laurent sur Sévre (France)	97	74
4	Sr. Marguerite-Marie DUPONT (Marguerite de l'Incarnation)	St Laurent sur Sévre (France)	88	63
11	Sr. Henriette-Cécile (Marie RABAUD)	Layrac (France)	83	59
11	Sr. Lucie de Saint Jean (Christiane COTILLON)	St Laurent sur Sévre (France)	83	49
13	Sr. Valentine du Sacré-Cœur (Marie-Adèle BRUNEEL)	St Laurent sur Sévre (France)	99	77



« Open the door for Jesus Christ ! »