



Celebration within the Montfortian Family in Colombia

CUMARAL, Colombia- At the Villa Montfort retreat house in the municipality of Cumaral, Meta, run by the Company of Mary, the Montfort Missionaries of the Province of Colombia have completed the first session of their Provincial Chapter. The Superior General of the Congregation, Father Luiz Augusto STEFANI, SMM and the lay brothers and sisters took the opportunity to celebrate, as a Montfortian family, the gift of life of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort.

The development of the day began with the reception of the various delegations. After the prayer led by the Provincial Superior, Father Jorge ENRIQUE SMM, the participants introduced themselves. Were present: The Friends of Wisdom of Acacías and Villavicencio, the teachers of the College of Wisdom, the Parishioners of the Sacred Heart (Acacías), the Parishioners of San José Obrero (Puerto Gaitán), the Parishioners of Saint Bénito (Villavicencio), and the Parishioners of Nuestra Señora del Carmen (Acacías).

Each delegation presented a memory of its history under the direction of the Montfortian missionaries, as well as a description of its missionary services within the Church and the initiatives underway during this year. The great inspiration of the Holy Spirit is brought out to creatively reach the people of God, thinking of their needs, their context, their culture, their pains and their hopes.

For those who were not well imbued with the General Chapter, scheduled on May 1-22, 2023, Ángela María HERNÁNDEZ, the National Coordinator of Lay Montfortians explained what it consists of, presented the logo and the prayer and some topics which will be covered in that

chapter. Her presentation was followed by a reflection by Father General, in which he underlined the importance of the Incarnation, as the result of a dialogue of love, which leads to action. He also mentioned the recent missionary presence in Mexico where there are Father José Luis SANDOVAL (Colombia) and Joseph LOVE (Haiti), and the grace of the presence of the Montfortian missionaries on the 4 continents with a general councillor responsible for each one, working hand in hand with the laity.

The Eucharist was presided over by the Superior General, surrounded by 17 Montfortian missionaries who attended the chapter. Also present at this Eucharistic celebration were Father Luis VIVÓ, from the Missionary Fraternity Verbum Dei who accompanied the development of the chapter during the week and Father Fernando Nieto Hernández, diocesan priest and parish priest of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish who knows and loves the Montfortian spirituality. During the homily, Father Luizinho tenderly recalled that he had done his novitiate here in Colombia. Then he spoke of the missionary mandate to make disciples, in a path of spirituality where we renew our baptismal promises. He urged us to move from false devotions to true devotion so that if our devotion to the Virgin Mary does not make us disciples of Jesus, we must recognize that something is wrong.

Finally, there was a fraternal sharing at lunch, to consolidate these bonds of friendship and fraternity that the Lord allows us to live with great joy, the joy of the Gospel.

Angela Maria HERNANDEZ

National Coordinator Lay Montfortians - Colombia