

Montfort_EurHope: Saint Louis-Marie, companion and guide for the youth

CARPI, Italy - *During a private audience with Pope Francis, the Italian writer Elisabetta RONCHETTI (54) had the opportunity to speak about Montfort. This enthusiasm for Montfort recently materialized in a book for teens: "The Love of Wisdom. A boy seeks the secret of life", Edition Messaggero Padova, 2019.*

Elisabetta, what are you talking about in your book?

The novel (114 pages) is aimed at adolescents aged 13 to 17, but also offers food for thought for adults, especially parents, teachers and educators. The young protagonist, in fact, after the death of his father, stops going to school and closes at home with his computer, to which he gives the name of Solomon, like the famous biblical king to whom God has given the Wisdom, hanging out with only two trusted friends, Tino and Tina, and sharing his thoughts with a pigeon who, from time to time, looks out the window. Wisdom will be the key to understanding "the secret of life", and Gigi will come to discover it through the investigation of the meaning of wisdom and the understanding of certain messages taken from the life of Jesus and taken up by Louis-Marie de Montfort. To serve as a "soundtrack" for the inner research of the protagonist, a few lyrics of classic and modern songs.



How was this book born?

It was born from the synthesis of various activities: the most recent and decisive was the reading of *Love of Eternal Wisdom* by Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort to which my novel aims to lead; another element was to have followed the activities proposed by my diocese on the transmission of the faith today; it also comes from my past as a scout educator in which I found myself designing catechetical activities, in which you have to pay attention to language, how to capture attention using the imagination while remaining faithful to the message.

Why did you decide to write a book for teens?

In his passionate and excited way of expressing himself that drags and ignites the reader, Montfort, despite having written his text as an adult, brought me back to the experience of a teenager who deeply loves what he believes and what he does. In fact, Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort was a great communicator during his life, and this is still felt today in his writings which are affected, in form, by the passage of time having been written in 700, but who are actually alive and they have a lot to say. Moreover, Montfort has an "outside the group" point of view, not approved by the society of his time, which he spared no wise observation. Striving for sincerity and truth is typical of any teenager. In adolescence, decisive choices remain to be made, we observe a lot, we weigh ourselves before adapting, maturing, to the rules and culture of the environment to which we belong. In emotions, in passion, in freedom of

conscience and expression, in the search for sincerity and truth, I find that Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort can be a light for every adolescent of any era, even for those of today.

Gigi, your character, is a boy who refuses to go to school after the death of his father, has only two friends and begins to search the Internet for the "secret of life". How many Gigi are there among young people today?

The story and the character of Gigi are only one expedient to transmit the search for truth and for what can give depth to life, a search already covered and described by Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort, in his text. As surely few know this author and have read him, I wanted to create a character and a story that could propose the path of the saint with a simple language adapted to the young people of today, imagining and creating a situation of necessity, which motivated the search path.

Through Gigi's inner adventure, you wanted to offer again the message of Montfort, a saint that everyone perhaps does not know. What is this message and why do you think it may still be relevant?

"Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort is known to initiate and its message is rich in many contents. I quote for example his Marian theology: today, anyone who wants to deepen the figure of Mary goes through her writings. Saint John Paul II himself, during his pontificate, designated Saint Louis-Marie as "a class theologian". While reading Montfort, I saw many links with the current situation, and which can be the answer to certain excesses of today, of which the New Age. Montfort speaks of the return to Baptism as a starting point to meet again. I find Montfort's teachings current because they speak of freedom and are not closed to a rule and a discipline. I had two very difficult families (mine and my husband's) which I found described in the famous chapter 7 of LEW. Montfort's teaching "authorized" me to think what I already thought, but which I dared not say out of respectability, for facade, and now I feel free.

I therefore have no doubts about the depth and relevance of Montfort's teaching, to such an extent that in my brief interview with Pope Francis, I took the liberty of wishing the resumption of the cause of the doctorate of Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort. If an educator one day wanted to talk to young people about Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort, he could use my book with its simplified content and the songs mentioned, as tools for group work and reflections.

Fr. Marco Pasinato, SMM