



Perpetual Profession and Diaconal Ordination in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti - "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few, so pray to the Lord of the harvest to send workers into his harvest" (Mt 9, 37-38). These words of Christ are topical and still resonate today within the Church. In a world where the truth is more and more fearful, where some people tend to flee or make the Church flee, the bearer of the truth, the Spirit of truth is at work. God, in his great love, continues to choose and call men and women of this world to bring his Word of truth to the nations in order to establish his reign of justice, peace and love. It is in this context that the Montfortian family never ceases to sow the Word of God in the hearts of the men and women of this world while welcoming into its bosom new sowers in the mission and for the mission. Thus, the month of September 2022 is a special month for the Montfortian family that is in Haiti. On September 8, two sisters committed themselves definitively to the Congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom through perpetual profession; four Montfortian brothers also gave their definitive yes to the Lord in consecrated life before being ordained deacons a week later, on September 15. Let's give thanks to God.

As we can discover in the mind of Father de Montfort, he wanted us to be a family, a "Company". It is in this spirit that the provincial administrations, the Daughters of Wisdom and the Montfortian Missionaries, had agreed to have a common celebration for the perpetual profession of our two sisters and our four brothers, which is not an event unpublished; the preparation was also done in common. On Wednesday, August 31, our two sisters and a dozen other sisters, our four brothers and eight scholastics (who were preparing for renewal) were welcomed into the provincial house of the Daughters of Wisdom in Pacot, Port-au-Prince, for a special retreat experience. For a week, they were accompanied by the Reverend Father Louis-Marie Montfort Vladymir SOUFFRANT, smm, around a theme that was simple in its

construction and extremely rich in its depth: "Consecrate oneself to God". It was a week of prayer, meditation and reflection guided by the salutary advice of the retreat facilitator.

On Thursday, September 8, in the parish church of Saint Louis Roi de France in Turgeau, Port-au-Prince, the celebration began at 8:30 a.m., presided over by the Reverend Father Wismick JEAN-CHARLES, smm, Vicar General of the Montfort Missionaries, in the presence of Reverend Father Jean Jacques SAINT-LOUIS, smm, Provincial Superior of the Montfort Missionaries in Haiti, and Reverend Sister Nadige JEAN-CHARLES, fdl, Provincial Superior of the Daughters of Wisdom in Haiti. Several members of the two congregations were present, religious, parents of the professed, friends and other faithful of the parish had come to pray for and with the professed. In a particular way, we noticed with great satisfaction the presence of our two brothers from Saint Gabriel: Faniel PICARD and Wagler ELTIMÉ who have recently returned for the mission in Haiti. So, the Montfortian family was complete!

In his homily, Father Wismick invited the perpetually professed to fidelity in their commitment, to perseverance in charity and in goodness above all in the face of the multiple challenges of today's world and to joy in order to be able to bring Christ, source of all joy, to others. Here are three pillars of a successful religious life, according to the structure of Father Wismick's homily; and all this must be done in perfect harmony with our Lord who calls us and who sends us, according to the spirit of Father de Montfort. After the homily, sisters Lise-Manie STANIS and Migline LAMOUR, brothers Gilo MOÏSE, John PHILIPPE, Alex JEAN-PIERRE and Ekenley JEAN-NOËL pronounced definitively their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience to Almighty God. Powerful in the presence of their legitimate superiors. And the Eucharistic celebration continued in thanksgiving.

Immediately after the celebration, the Montfortian missionaries proceeded to the blessing and inauguration of a newly built multipurpose hall to serve the community of Turgeau. It is in this space, to close the morning, that the participants in the celebration were received for a fraternal and warm agape.

Thursday, September 15, the day after the feast of the Glorious Cross, in memory of the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows, our four brothers who made profession the week before received the first degree of the sacrament of order, the diaconate, by the laying on of the hands of His Excellency Monsignor Quesnel Alphonse, smm, bishop of Fort-Liberté, in the parish of Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort in Delmas, Port-au-Prince. The diaconal ordination took place under extremely difficult conditions. Several days before the date, tensions, demonstrations, acts of looting and barricades were erected at almost every crossroads in the capital as well as in provincial towns. The bishop, Mgr. Alphonse, had to make enormous sacrifices and take great risks in order to be able to leave his diocese which is located in the North-East department and arrive two days in advance at the place of the ceremony. It was the same for the ordinands who were obliged to arrive a day in advance, braving barricades and dangers. On the morning of the celebration, several people had to walk dozens of kilometers to be present, this is the case of the scholastics and their leader, Reverend Father Lanès PHANOR. More fear than harm, around 9:15 a.m., in the presence of some Montfortian confreres, some relatives and friends, the ceremony began and took place in a serene and prayerful atmosphere. And in his message, the bishop recalled the role of the deacon who is at the service of the Word, at the service of the Table (eucharistic) and at the service of the Church. He ended by emphasizing the need for us to have recourse to the intercession of Our Lady of Sorrows to offer her our worries and our pains, the worries and pains of the Haitian people and of the world. "Be holy deacons," he concludes. And, after the celebration, the deacons, accompanied by their scholastic brothers, set off on foot, covering the few kilometers with great confidence and hope, a Montfort-like experience, following Christ in the footsteps of the poor apostles.

The two congregations are happy to count forever on Sisters Lise-Manie STANIS and Migline LAMOUR sent on mission respectively to the provincial house of the Daughters of Wisdom in Pacot and to the Regina Mundi community in Saint Laurent-sur-Sèvre; and on the new deacons Gilo MOÏSE, John PHILIPPE, Alex JEAN-PIERRE and Ekenley JEAN-NOËL sent on mission respectively to Gros-Morne, Jean-Rabel, Saint Louis du Nord (waiting to reach France) and Saint Louis King of France by Turgeau. The challenges are great, the future seems unclear, but our sisters and brothers want to move forward in confidence knowing that they are not alone. They commend themselves to the prayer of the whole Montfortian family to be able to stay on the path with their eyes fixed on God, and God alone.

Bro. Ekenley JEAN-NOËL, SMM