



Seminar on the Blessed Virgin Mary and Ecumenism

BANGALORE, India - A seminar was organized at the Marian Center on August 25, 2019 at Maria Bhavan in Bangalore. During the seminar, many of our Montfortian Priests were present together with the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, Montfort Sisters, Montfortian Lay Associates, many religious and lay people as well. We were happy about the reception of our invitation to transmit the spirituality of Mary.

Rev. Dr. Gilbert Arahna was the resource person who shared with us the following insights. It was in fact a very scholarly and informative presentation. He began his talk with the quotation of our founder Father de Montfort from True Devotion No. 1: "It was through the Blessed Virgin Mary that Jesus Christ came into this world and it is also through her that He must reign in the world".

Herein, I penned down a few points. Is Mary a uniting force or a stumbling block? Mary has never been a cause of separation among the churches. Some of the reformers like Martin Luther, Huldrych Zwingli and Calvins' views on Mary were well dealt and in-depth. Likewise, the Protestant theologian, Beverly R. Gaventa also said that "The absence of Mary not only cuts Protestants off from Catholic and Orthodox Christians but it also cuts us off from the fullness of our own tradition. We have neither Blessed Mary nor allowed her to bless us". Moreover, he also dealt about the inclusion of Mary in Second Vatican Council in Lumen Gentium Chapter 8. Finally, he ended it on how we have to march towards Ecumenism.

For Christ and His Body, the Church cannot be separated. Hence, whatever brings us closer to the mystery of the Church must bear us towards a more profound unity with Christ. Our devotion to Mary

based upon the Marian dogmas makes her “the bearer of Christian unity”. Mary is presented as the type of image of the Church, a Pre-eminent member of the Church and as the Mother of the Church.

The seminar began with a Holy Mass at 09:00 AM and was concluded around 01:00 PM with some interactions. All the participants who came to the seminar were very happy and enthusiastic. May our Blessed Mother continue to bless us.

*Fr. Peter Mascarenhas, SMM
Marian Centre*