



Pilgrims... with Montfort

FRANCE - The 37th Montfortian March took place in France from 21st to 28th of July 2019 with the theme, *"Le pays nantais dans le coeur du Pere de Montfort"*. We, the novices together with Father Alfio, had the grace to live this pilgrimage in preparation for the first religious profession. He immersed us in the great desire of Father de Montfort: to obtain good missionaries from God under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the gift of Wisdom. He gave us the joy of feeling ourselves as fruits of his incessant prayer.

In light of what we have experienced, we want to share some aspects of this journey. The beauty of Brittany has accompanied us to know how to contemplate, with the eyes of our hearts, the wonders that the Lord has worked in this land through the Saint of Montfort. We have touched with our hands, in a more concrete manner, his zeal for souls and the fire that burned in his heart, never extinguished by the many oppositions, refusals and crosses.

The presence of many lay people who feel deeply as members of the great Montfortian family was a cause of special joy. Some took care of the organization, bearing witness to their spirit of service. Others became pilgrims with us. Walking in pairs reminded us of the "apostolic" style which is so dear to Father de Montfort. It allowed mutual knowledge, sharing of one's faith experience and personal enrichment. On the other hand, we have also our own limitations: exhaustion or fatigue during the journey, difficulty of communication due to lack of knowledge of the language as well as the fear of opening up deeper.

We then had the opportunity to visit the most significant places to our Founder. One of them is his birthplace at Montfort-sur-Meu as we shared the day with the novices who live there. In Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre, at the tomb of St. Louie-Marie de Montfort, we prayed with emotion and joy for the gift of the Lord's call to be part of the small and poor Company of Mary. The

visit to the Montfortian places nourished our desire to continue the mission that Montfort left to his missionaries, under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the team who organized this event for encouraging our presence, to the community of Pontchâteau for the reception, to Fr. Ephrem for his availability and passion as he guided us on the steps of the Founder.

Salvatore Scalese

/English Translation: R. Jacaban, Jr.