



The Montfortian Family in Malawi celebrates the Feast of their Founder

MANGOCHI, Malawi – On the occasion of the 305th death anniversary of St. Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort on the 28th of April 2021, Fr. Paul Lonely Mashonga, SMM, the Superior Delegate, called upon the Montfortian family members to celebrate the gift of being Montfortians.

The Montfortian family which includes the Daughters of Wisdom, the Montfort Missionaries and the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel commemorated the feast day at the Montfort Pastoral Centre, Namiyasi in Mangochi district. The Eucharistic celebration was streamed live on Luntha TV, the only Catholic television in the country.

In an interview with Luntha TV, Fr. Paul Lonely Mashonga, SMM hinted that the feast is significant as the three congregations gathered as one family.

"We are celebrating the gift that St. Louis-Marie de Montfort received and how we are spreading this gift to the rest of humankind. There is still a need to serve the marginalized, to catechize, to respond to the needs of the church and the world. And we do this through the Blessed Virgin Mary. As a family, we renew and re-energise ourselves to go and serve the people. In togetherness, there is strength," he said.

Likewise, Fr. Joseph Kudzala, SMM re-echoed in his homily the emotional scene at Dinan when St. Louis de Montfort was embracing a dying leper on his shoulder and knocked *"Open the door for Jesus! Open the door for Jesus!"*. Fr. Joseph weaved the Scripture passage of the feast day with the vision and mission of the Montfortians today.

"Standing on the cross means witness and in Greek it means 'martyr' and it also helps us reflect about the suffering of Jesus Christ. It is where Wisdom lies. As Montfortians, brothers and sisters, lay associates, and friends of Wisdom, we are really true witnesses of Christ in emulating the example of St. Montfort by opening our hearts in the school of Mary!" he said.

He observed that the General Chapter which the Montfortian family had in 2017 is similar in nature as far as the spirituality and charism of St. Montfort is concerned. *"The motto of the Montfort Missionaries is 'Pilgrims without borders'; for the Daughters of Wisdom, it is 'Love without borders'; for the Brothers of St. Gabriel, it is 'Fraternal living and community dimension of Montfort Missionaries'."*

Among those present during the celebration were the Montfortian Missionaries, the Daughters of Wisdom, the Brothers of St. Gabriel, the Lay Associates, the Friends of Wisdom, the parish priest of Koche Parish, Fr. Paul Rappozo and various people from different denominations. The main celebrant was Emeritus Bishop Alessandro Pagani.

St. Louis-Marie de Montfort founded the Daughters of Wisdom who are dedicated to the sick in hospitals and the education of poor girls, and the Montfort Missionaries who are devoted to preaching and spreading devotion to Mary. St. Louis-Marie de Montfort is most famously known for his prayer of entrustment to Our Lady, *"Totus Tuus ego sum"*.

*Fr. Jailos Mpina, SMM
Luntha TV, Lilongwe*