

NU-AFA-744  
2021-10-04



### **The Vicar General visits the International Scholasticate Community in Nairobi: A Moment of Joy, Learning and Gratitude**

**NAIROBI, Kenya** – The Vicar General, Fr. Wismick JEAN-CHARLES, SMM, arrived in Nairobi at our International Scholasticate community on 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, in the morning hours. He was received at Jomo-Kenyatta International Airport by Fr. Jacob Ombidi, SMM, the superior of International Scholasticate community.

It was a joyful moment to meet our Vicar General in the community, a man full of joy who radiates the light of joy wherever he goes.

During his 3-day stay, the Vicar visited a few places in Nairobi and most importantly, he visited Hekima University College run by the Jesuits, where the Montfortian scholastics pursue their theological studies.

In addition, as the head of the Commission for the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Adults, the Vicar General also gave a 2-day workshop to the scholastics regarding the protection of minors and vulnerable adults.

He introduced the workshop on the protection of minors and vulnerable adults outlining main topics, namely understanding the reality of sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and the human condition; preventing future abuse and living the beauty of the consecrated life.

In his introduction, he made an informed analysis of sexual abuse statistics at a global level, and showed that the problem is not merely Western, but rather extends to the whole world. He introduced us to recent documents by the Holy see that treat the scandal of the abuse of minors and vulnerable adults.

He further explained at length, recent developments in these documents and recent considerations of the Montfortian commission on the protection of minors and vulnerable adults. In addition, he discussed the reality of the human condition and tackled questions of intimacy, interpersonal relations, friendships and the need to observe boundaries as religious.

On the second day, he tackled the topic of preventing future abuses. He repeated quite often that the goal of the commission is to do more of prevention than intervention. In his view, when abuses have already occurred, intervention is painful, costly and time wasting. Thus, it is of cardinal importance that we focus more on prevention within the congregation. He showed the need for rigorous screening and embracing and managing chastity during formation. He emphasised that there is a need to build and to live in healthy friendships.

Fr. Wismick reconsidered the recommendations of the new Montfortian Ratio II, and how it has taken the issue of safeguarding minors and vulnerable adults with the seriousness it deserves. He explained Ratio II, numbers 219-233, that clearly make a mention of the subject matter.

He encouraged us to stay spiritually engaged and nurtured by engaging in spiritual direction regularly, having retreats and remaining close to Jesus and Mary through prayer. He reminded us that safeguarding minors and vulnerable adults is not an option but rather an integral part of the mission of the church by its Lord.

In his final consideration, he noted that as religious, we must be glad and continuously bring God's consolation to all. *Do not grieve like others who have no hope*, wrote St. Paul (1Thess 4:13). Thus, he said that we should strive in grace each day to live the beauty of our consecrated life in the Montfortian family with joy, hope, passion, and gratitude.

Fr. Wismick left Nairobi on Saturday morning, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2021, on his way to Malawi, where he will lead a retreat, ahead of the Anglophone Delegation Assembly.

We thank God for the visit of our Vicar General. And may the Lord and our Lady - Mother of pilgrim humanity - enable us to live this beauty of consecrated life. As we continue being guided by the star of hope, may we joyfully remain on the genuine spiritual path of *Totus Tuus* that was proposed by St. Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort.

*Bro. Alex Muhwezi, SMM  
International Scholasticate Community - Nairobi*