



First Religious Profession in DR. Congo

KINSHASA, Democratic Republic of Congo - On Sunday, 27 August 2023, in the church of the Mater Dei shrine parish, the first novitiate of the General Delegation of French-speaking Africa, which opened its doors on 15 August 2022 with the entry into the novitiate of some candidates, experienced a very memorial day for the first religious profession of 7 novices.

Vincent Tabuku, Yannick Mukomo, Jofred Wemegah, Steeve Nzimbu, Guellord-Philippe Ewane, Justin Maombi and Tresor Kasereka committed themselves to following Christ through the profession of vows, in the hands of Father Balaswamy KATA, SMM, representing the most Reverend Father Yoseph Putra Dwi Darma WATUN, SMM, the Superior General of the Company of Mary.

The Mass was presided over by Father Bala and the homily was given by Father Guelord ASEME, SMM, Superior Delegate. In his three-part introduction, Father Bala, speaking on behalf of the Montfortian family present - the Daughters of Wisdom, the Brothers of Saint Gabriel and the Montfortian Missionaries - welcomed the assembly gathered for the celebration, and then explained the meaning of the event: "After having undergone formation and accompaniment, and after having undergone discernment for twelve months, the time has come for our seven young people to take their vows or to enter religious life. Today, our seven young people are committing themselves to religious life by pronouncing the three evangelical counsels: poverty, obedience and chastity". Finally, he implored the intercession of Mary, our mother, so that the new confreres may journey daily in the knowledge of Jesus, in his poverty, humility and also in fidelity, so that one day, they may reach maturity in the spiritual life and religious life.

In the light of the texts for the 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Father Guelord insisted in his homily on the depth of the relationship that must exist between God and every Christian. He went on to talk about marriage, stressing that no one makes a commitment to someone they don't know. To make a commitment, you need to have a more or less clear idea of the person you want to commit yourself to. This is why a religious who follows Christ must always ask himself who Jesus is for him. The knowledge of Christ, the knowledge of the Messiah, is wisdom. The preacher of the day quoted Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort, who said in *Love of Eternal Wisdom* no. 11: "To know Jesus is to know everything; but to pretend to know everything without Jesus is to know nothing. That's why in our lives, as long as we put Christ aside, we won't get very far. Hence, the urgent need to deepen our knowledge of the Lord every day.

After Mass, a fraternal and festive dinner brought together family members of the newly professed, guests from the various religious families in the parish, orphans from the Kimbono pediatric center and friends and acquaintances in the large hall of the regional house of the Missionaries of the Consolata.

All, in Mary, for the Glory of God alone!

Novitiate