



General Assembly in preparation for the General Chapter

GENK, Belgium - On Friday 28th April, the day the entire montfortian congregation celebrated their founder Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort, the Belgian confreres gathered in Genk to discuss the lineamenta that were sent by the general administration to each entity in view of the General Chapter.

Nearly all confreres were present, except a few who couldn't make it because of old age or disease. On the agenda 3 items: celebration of Montfort, reading and commenting the lineamenta, celebrating Math Thijssens and Jos Van den Bergh who respectively are 60 and 40 years priest.

Our delegation superior Jos Van den Bergh proceeded the assembly and after remembering Montfort in songs and prayers, he invited the confreres to read the lineamenta, aloud, slowly and meditatively. After some time to reflect, they formulated their reactions and ideas, which Jos and Frans, our capitulants, will bear in mind when attending the General Chapter. Just a few thoughts they brought forward: being conscious of silence, making it useful, integrating silence in your daily way of living; talking about Montfort as much as possible, making him better known to a larger public; always in search of a good balance between working, praying and visiting confreres; spreading the Good News, bringing people in touch again with God;

having an open mind for lay-people and their contribution, having spontaneous conversations on all sorts of themes from a religious point of view; reflecting upon our Christology, interculturality; ... Jos gave a short summary of what already has been achieved as for the future international community in Leuven. He referred to the text of general counsellor Dwi considering the goals: bringing young people from the South together do live, work, pray and study in brotherhood, sharing experiences and taking new initiatives to evangelize. But he also mentioned the practical problems which will have to be overcome.

Last but not least Math and Jos were celebrated by Frans Fabry for their priest jubilee. He mentioned the qualities of both on several levels such as chaplain, priest, formation, itinerant missions, counsellor, superior, and much more. They were offered a bottle of Portuguese wine, symbolically called 'Spirito Santo'. May the Holy Spirit bless them with still lots of inspired years as montfortian priests.

The assembly ended in a wonderful meal and a nice cup of coffee. It was good to see the old confreres having a pleasant time meeting each other, sharing and listening.

- *Magda Van Goidsenhoven*