

NU-BEL-349

23-11-17



Montfortian Formation and Meeting Day

BELGIUM - "Montfortian formation and meeting day" is one of the spiritual activities organized by the Montfortians every year in view of renewing and deepening Montfortian spirituality. This event is prepared in collaboration with the Montfortian Associates who together with the Montfortians form a faith-formation group. This year, this day was organized on Saturday 18 November, 2017. There were about thirty two persons who took part in this formation and meeting day. This day began with reception; the persons were welcomed with a warm coffee. Since the people came from the different parts of Belgium, we begun with a coffee so that each one gets enough time to greet each other and express their filial concern for each other. After the coffee we have a moment of welcome and introduction followed by a moment of prayer. Then the speaker took over and led the participants in a spiritual journey by filling the hearers with the richness of Montfortian Spirituality deeply integrated with the scripture. The speakers normally deliver two talks, one before noon and the other in the afternoon. This year, our Delegation Superior Fr. Jos van der Bergh has led the sessions while three other confreres, Frans Fabry, Jos Verbelen and Nepo partook in this spiritual event.

Fr. Jos began his reflection reiterating a sentence from the Morning Prayer, *"Live a life with trust dictated by your heart so that you will realize that there is always somebody who stands by your side lending his/her powerful support."* Montfort discerned the whisperings of God's spirit in the directions and the hurtful observations of the superiors/bishops within whose jurisdiction he served. With this remark, he shared with us 'that first moment' in which he responded to the call of God, neither realizing that it was a call from God nor knowing the full meaning of the words he expressed saying, "Yes I want to serve you." Nonetheless, things changed in the course of his life until he reached Montfort Fathers, when he realized that till that moment he has been guided by the spirit of God but which he was not aware of. Stopping there, he invited the participants to identify 'that first moment' when, knowingly or unknowingly, they responded to the call of God. After few minutes of silence the participants shared their spiritual discovery which was inspiring and enriching the others. In a method of dialogue consisted of "questions and sharing," he guided the participants to discover themselves the loving guidance of God throughout their life. His reflection culminated in the Holy Eucharist when he called the attention of the participants to the message of the Gospel. Everyone is endowed with different talents and God expects us to multiply them, no matter, where we are, who we are, what we are, instead to give the best of ourselves making use of the accompanying presence of God revealed through various persons and events. Montfort discerned in the painful moments of his life God's providence which made him strong so that he was neither discouraged by the hard treatment of the bishops nor depressed by the failures in the missions caused by wicked plots of some self-centered people. He utilized the God-given talents to the full by the work of evangelization and by serving and consoling the poor, sick, needy, rejected and the exploited. When we discern 'that first moment' in our life, we begin to appreciate the God-given talents and utilize them for transforming the world into better so that peace, joy, harmony, love and charity begin to reign in the lives of all. All this can happen provided we listen to the voice of God.

After the lunch, we recited the rosary walking together contemplating on the mysteries of Mary's participation in the saving plan of God and her accompaniment of her son Jesus. And after the Holy Eucharist we went home carrying with us the message of the event.

-Nepolean James Raj