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Together, it's more Montfortian!

ASHURST, United Kingdom - For some time now, at the Saint-Joseph's Center, in addition to Fr. Des CONNOLLY, SMM and Bro. Anthony HANLY, SMM, other confreres have been present there: Fr. Fidelis WOTAN, SMM who studies English, Bro. Oliver ABASOLO, SMM, the scholastic who is doing his pastoral internship and Fr. Marco PASINATO, SMM who, following the canonical visitation, facilitates the journey of this entity on behalf of the General Council. The animation of the day for the anniversary of the canonization of Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort was a good opportunity to live together a missionary experience.

In fact, the day, announced in advance by a letter sent to many people including the Daughters of Wisdom, was planned and organized. Thanks to a series of exchanges and communications which also involved Fr. Kieran FLYNN, SMM and Fr. Nelson CABAÑERO, SMM who do not currently live in this community, and Mrs. Tsi-Tsi Mandiqui with her son, Tatender. Thanks to a preparatory meeting where the program for the day was confirmed. Everyone knew what to do to lead the different activities.

The course of the day offered an idea of how "acting together" makes each of our missionary initiatives more effective and more beautiful. After welcoming the guests over a cup of coffee/tea at 10:30 p.m., Fr. Marco presided over a time of prayer following a booklet entitled: "Lord, make me your missionary". Thus, all those present were able to meditate and pray from the spiritual and missionary message of Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort. Then, in the conference room, missionary testimonies from Fr. Nelson, Fr. Fidelis and Bro. Anthony illustrated Montfort's Legacy in Europe and Asia. This moment was introduced by a video on the presence of the Montfort Missionaries in Europe today.

The tasting of a good lunch/soup prepared by Fr. Des, during which Mr. Clive J. White on behalf of the municipal councilors came to greet us, prepared us for the second part of the

day, which began with a Thanksgiving Rosary in front of the Grotto located in the magnificent park of the house. This time of prayer, animated by Bro. Oliver with the help of Fr. Fidelis and Bro. Anthony, had, as soloists, people of different nationalities who recited the first part of the AVE in their mother tongue: Portuguese, Tagalog, Spanish, French, Italian, English, etc.

The Rosary introduced all those present to the celebration of the Votive Mass of Saint Louis-Marie presided by Fr. Kieran, the eldest of the priests present who celebrates this year his 50 years of priesthood, although we listened in the homily the sermon that Pope Pius XII gave on July 20, 1947. The large chapel of the house was also crowded, thanks to a group of Catholic families who lived their school camp in the house. At the end of the Mass, everyone received the image of the "Madonna della Colonna" from St. Peter's Basilica, as a souvenir of this celebration.

In the second talk of the day, the account read by Bro. Oliver of the first miracle for the canonization which took place in neighboring Romsey on April 8, 1927 and a video with the images of the day of the canonization, provoked questions and reactions of astonishment among those present. Some of them had met the miraculous Sister Gérard of Calvary in their lives.

During the sumptuous barbecue prepared by Tatender and his mother in the magnificent "patio" on a pleasant summer evening, the participants were able to get to know the Montfortians and their mission better. The group dances led by Fr. Fidelis concluded a day full of fraternity and thanksgiving, also facilitating good digestion. A day like this teaches that by putting our strengths together and involving everyone in the preparation and implementation of our activities, the mission becomes more... Montfortian.

Fr. Marco PASINATO, SMM