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### **Meeting of the Three General Councils of the Montfortian Family**

**ROME, Italy** - The feast of the Epiphany, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2019, was an important day for the Montfortian family. This is so because the General Councils of the Daughters of Wisdom, Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel and the Missionaries of the Company of Mary met to a common meeting at the generalate of the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel in Rome. The day began with mass at 8:30 hours in the morning presided by Fr. Arnold Suhardi, assistant to the Superior General of the Montfort Missionaries, who focused his homily on the star that the Magi followed to seek Jesus, the Word Incarnate. This star sometimes disappeared and the Magi would have yielded to the temptation of just going back to their original lives before they were interrupted by the star. However, they continued the journey of seeking Jesus amidst the feeling of hopelessness when the star disappears and hopefulness when it appears. He encouraged the three councils that sometimes the star will disappear and the temptation to give in to the feeling of failure will certainly come but what is needed is to keep on the search like the Magi. Calling upon the words of Father de Montfort he encouraged the members of the three councils to continue the search for Jesus, the Eternal and Incarnate Wisdom who waits for hearts that seek him. He concluded his sermon by naming the three kings as Balthazar, Melchior and Gaspar in order to call on the congregations to the search of the baby Jesus, find him and to make him known and loved by the whole universe. The new Magi from now on will not be Balthazar,

Melchior and Gaspar, but the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, the Daughters of Wisdom and the Missionaries of the Company of Mary.

The mass was followed by a common meeting in which each congregation presented and shared their plans for this year and in some cases for the years to come. The Daughters of Wisdom shared the orientations of their just ended General Chapter that envisioned the territorial reconfiguration of the congregation by clustering entities into continental groupings. While the Montfort Missionaries spoke about the continental assemblies, the visitations the General and his councilors are undertaking, and the possibility of the whole Montfortian family to take up a common project, historical nature, such as the "Maison Longue" in France. The other project for such communion of the congregations is already underway through the FIM to take place in St. Laurent Sur Sevre in France. On the other hand, the brothers also shared their project of restructuring of provinces and the inauguration of a new province of East Africa, and they also shared their work in education and justice and peace.

The meeting offered an opportunity to the members of the varied councils to know each other and share a few things informally during break times. The brothers prepared a sumptuous lunch which was shared by all the participants and the meeting ended around 15:30 with a prayer through the intercessions of Louis Marie de Montfort, Marie Louise of Jesus and Gabriel Deshayes.

- *Fr. Felix Mabvuto PHIRI, SMM*