



## The Inauguration of the Continental Mission Year - Asia and Oceania

**BANGALORE, India-** The Church in Asia, seeks to walk with all brothers and sisters in faithfulness to her Lord, united through different cultures, traditions and spiritualities. St. John Paul speaking of his experience of Asian Church says: *"Church in Asia needs a true missionary spirituality of prayer and contemplation"*. Indeed, the religious wins the respect in Asia because of the integrity in prayer and mission showed through their consecrated life. Keeping in line with the necessity for communion and mission as reflected by St. Louis de Montfort, the General administration has called us to strengthen the bond of Union, Communion and Communication through the continental gathering of entities around the globe.

*"Governance is not simply a way of managing, but a way of being present, of entering into relationships. A leader must be a contact person, actively involved in the life around him, loving humanity."* (General Chapter 2017). So it is certainly a joy for us in Asia-Oceania and Indian entity in particular to prepare and to celebrate the Continental year. It has enabled us to come together, to re-live the bond of communion in mission. It is time of grace to trace the face of the human race with the divine space as we live in time and space.

"The Continental Year calls us to evaluate and celebrate our Montfortian Missionary presence in the Continent, especially to strengthen the sense of belongingness and unity, to seek valuable means to arrive at a hopeful future. In this year, all the members of SMM, from the General Administration, are invited to create in themselves an atmosphere of listening, to help the Confreres who live and work in Asia and Oceania to be faithful to the Montfortian Charism today (cf. *Superior General, Brochure after the General Council of Saint Laurent-sur-Sèvre, October 2017*)."

This is also an occasion where Asia–Oceania are open to other entities and missionary collaboration. To meet the challenges in terms of formation in building up the true, dynamic Montfortians through community spirit and missionary life. It is a call to orient all the programs of the year in order to inculcate the true spirit of Montfort. The formulation of the theme song, logo, prayer and daily prayer book bring about the inner dynamics of Continent with the sense of zeal, enthusiasm. We in India are in the process of organizing various other activities for this purpose in our communities and dioceses. Since we are in the midst of the pandemic, we are slow to begin but we move forward with courage and good will to strengthen our communion and communication of the Spirit of St. Louis de Montfort.

We had our first program in the Novitiate in Chikmagalur diocese and followed by in Gurumandir, Mysore our minor seminary. The celebration in Guru Mandir began by hoisting the continental mission year Logo flag at the entrance to the venue of the celebration. The Perpetual Profession and the Deaconate Ordination added meaning to this continental year as there were 22 Montfortian priests, 45 lay faithful, 16 seminarians, Montfort associates and religious sisters who were part of the celebration. The celebration began at 11 am with rosary procession during which the continental flags were carried with lighted candle symbolizing the unity and communion of the Montfortians in Asia and Oceania. The Continental mission year was inaugurated by lighting the Indian Lamp by five representatives from the different age groups. After the inauguration, Fr. Peter MASCARENHAS SMM, the Provincial Superior, gave message and the continental prayer was recited by all. The theme song of *'Rise and Shine'* was beautifully sung by the minor seminarians. We plan to organize the same in other places in the days to come.

*Fr. Peter Mascarenhas SMM  
Provincial Superior*