



Rise and Shine Followers of Saint Montfort: The Province of Indonesia launches Continental Mission Year in 3 regions

LAWANG, Indonesia - On January 16, 2022, the echo of the song *Rise and Shine* as the theme song of the Asia-Oceania Continental Mission Year accompanied the journey of Fathers, Brothers, Sisters, members of the Association of Mary Queen of All Hearts (AMQAH) in Bandung, Jakarta, Malang, Solo and so on, as well as other members of the community in Indonesia. Members of the Montfort Youth headed to Lawang as the venue for the Eucharistic Celebration of the opening of the Asia-Oceania Continental Mission Year for the Java Region.

This Eucharistic celebration took place at the retreat house of the SPM Sisters, and was led by the Assistant General, Fr. Arnold SUHARDI, SMM. He was accompanied by Fr. Antonius TENSI, SMM, the Provincial of the Province of Indonesia. In his foreword, Fr. Arnold emphasized:

"Despite not being attended by all Montfortians from the Province of Indonesia, the Philippine Delegation, the Delegation of Papua New Guinea and the Vice-province of India, this celebration was still a joint celebration because all the confreres and followers from these four countries direct themselves and their prayers towards the smooth running of the ceremony. Thus, in this celebration, we are not alone but in unity with the followers of Montfort in these four countries and throughout the world."

Fr. Arnold's statement was supported by the raising of the flags of the Philippines, Indonesia, PNG and India in the opening procession and throughout the ceremony and the message of the Superior General, Fr. Luiz Augusto STEFANI, SMM which was broadcasted on January 15, 2022. In his homily, Father Arnold emphasized that the center of our lives as Montfortians (SMM, AMQAH and Montfort Youth) is Jesus Christ himself. He attributed that to the Divine spirituality which focuses on the event of the Incarnation, on Christ, and lives to shine His light on others. He said that in the sixteenth to early seventeenth centuries, there was a prominent spiritual teacher in France and also a spiritual teacher of Saint Montfort named

Cardinal Berule. Inspired by Copernicus who called the Sun as the center of the universe around the planets (heliocentrism), Berule developed the spiritual view of "spiritual heliocentrism" which asserts that Christ is the center of our soul's solar system. He is the Sun of our souls, and we are like the planets that revolve around Him.

"Our lives are centered on Jesus Christ and not on ourselves; we must unite with Christ -- to be separated from Jesus is a lack of grace. For it is from Christ that we receive the grace, light, and influence that we must pass on to our neighbors. However, in Christ we are not only spined like the planets but we are also lifted (elevation) to become more and more united and like Christ as contained in our baptismal vows.

Furthermore, the light of Christ that we receive in baptism must be shared with others. We need to radiate Christ to others and be small lights. If Jesus is our light, then we who have become light must also illuminate those around us. We must "flood" the world with the light that comes from Jesus Christ."

He highlighted that the mission to be the light is our responsibility as followers of Montfort in Asia-Oceania (Philippines, PNG, Indonesia, and India) and specifically in the Java region. We must be a shining light of Christ in our respective contexts, whether as priests, brothers, members of AMQAH or Montfort Youth. In this year of mission, a concrete step that we can take to realize our mission as a light is to die for ourselves and transform ourselves so that we can contribute to others, especially in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. In this way, we will become the Montfort of today who work according to our context in the synergistic cooperation among us as followers of Montfort especially with Jesus and Mary.

The celebration of the Eucharist which was accompanied by a choir from the brothers and sisters as well as dances (in the opening rites and offerings) from the Young People of Montfort Malang was solemn. The Holy Mass began at 8.00 WIB and ended at 9.30 WIB. After the closing song, a group photo was taken.

After the Eucharistic Celebration, the event continued with a friendly gathering. The event, which was hosted by Brother Aran, SMM was filled with events prepared by the brothers as well as dances performed by members of Montfort Youth Malang (Maggarai and Sumba regional dances). In addition, the event was also enlivened with prizes on themes related to Saint Montfort and Montfortians in Indonesia.

Also in that event, Fr. Anton, accompanied by Fr. Arnold and Fr. Arif, SMM who is in the committee for the implementation of the Asia-Oceania Continental Mission Year activities in Indonesia, specifically in the Java region, launched the Asian-Oceania Continental Mission Year which was marked by beating the gong three times. Previously, Father Anton gave a brief speech explaining that the mission year was a blessing from God that we should be grateful for. In that speech, he invited all the confreres, PMRSH members and OMM to truly become Montfortians filled with the fire of mission and reflect on how far we have become light and how to make it happen through a continuous process of self-transformation. The Provincial expressed his gratitude to the committee for holding this event and for the involvement of all parties who facilitated the activity. He also said that in the Indonesian entity, the opening ceremony of the Continental Mission Year was held in 3 different regions (Java, Flores and Kalimantan), with different schedules.

At the end of the event, Fr. Arif gave an explanation regarding the agenda of activities during the mission year, from January to December 2022. The Pastor Chaplain at the Santo Antonius Parish in Padua Pasuruan also did not forget to thank the priests, brothers, sisters, AMQAH

members and CSOs involved in holding the opening ceremony of the Asia-Oceania Continental Mission Year today.

The event ended with lunch at 12.30 WIB. After that, the participants returned to their respective places with the hope that all of them would become small lights that illuminate and expand the hopes of others who are in the 'darkness' and lead them to have a more perfect knowledge of Jesus through the Virgin Mary in order to become fully conformed to Him.

Rise and Shine, be the good missionary to proclaim Jesus around the world, especially in Asia and Oceania.

Fr. Yanto, SMM