



## **Bishop Rui Manuel Sousa VALÉRIO, SMM, Patriarch of Lisbon**

**LISBON, Portugal** - September 3, 2023, Msgr. Rui Manuel Sousa VALÉRIO, SMM presided over the ceremony for his official entry into the Patriarchate of Lisbon into the church of "Santa Maria de Belém" at the Monastery "dos Jeronimos". Already ordinary military of Portugal, Bishop Rui VALÉRIO succeeds Card. Manual CLEMENTE.

### **Biographical notes**

Msgr. Rui Valério was born on December 24, 1964, in the parish of Urqueira, municipality of Ourém, in the diocese of Leiria-Fátima. The biographical note which accompanies the announcement of the appointment, published by the Portuguese episcopal conference, indicates that after having attended primary school, he entered the Montfortian seminary in 1976 to carry out his secondary studies at the Center of Studies of Fatima, where he stayed until the end of his secondary studies. In 1984, he was sent to the novitiate in Santeramo in Colle (Bari), Italy.

A year later, he went to Rome to take the philosophy course at the Pontifical University of Lateran where he obtained a license. The new Patriarch continued his theology studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University, concluding this academic phase by a diploma in dogmatic theology. From 1995 to 1996 in Louvain, Belgium, he followed a postgraduate course in missionary spirituality at the CIM (Center International Montfortain). In 1996, returning to Portugal, he frequented the faculty of theology of the Portuguese Catholic University in Lisbon for his doctorate in theology, with the thesis "Christology Sapiential and Christological Wisdom in Saint Louis de Montfort", which "for pastoral reasons", he was not able to conclude. He made his perpetual profession in October 1990 and received priestly ordination on March 23, 1991. From 1992 to 1993, he was a military chaplain at the Marine Hospital and between 2008 and 2011, he served as a military chaplain at the Naval Academy. For two periods (2000-

2008 and 2012-2018), he was a member of the Council of the Portuguese delegation of the Montfort Missionaries.

From a pastoral point of view, he exercised his ministry, first as coadjutor (1993-1995) then as priest (2001-2007), in the parishes of the municipality of Castro Verde, diocese of Beja by devoting himself to young people and the teaching of the discipline of Catholic moral and religious education in the schools of the first cycle. From 2004 to 2007, he was also responsible for the “*Archiprestado*” (Group of parishes) of Almodôvar. From 1996 to 2001, he was vicar in Póvoa de Santo Adrião parish, patriarchy of Lisbon. From 2011 to 2018, he was priest of the same community. In 2016, the year of mercy, he was one of the 1071 priests in Portugal that Pope Francis sent as "missionary of mercy", during the extraordinary jubilee.

On October 27, 2018, Pope Francis appointed him as Bishop of the Armed Forces and the Security Forces of Portugal. He was ordained bishop on November 25, 2018 at the Monastery “dos Jeronimos” in Lisbon with the late Msgr. Daniel Batalha HENRIQUES, during a ceremony presided over by Cardinal-Patriarche de Lisbon, Msgr. Manuel CLEMENTE. On December 3, 2018, he took office as chief chaplain of the Catholic church, in the noble room of the Ministry of National Defense, and on December 11 at the Castrese Cathedral. Currently, Msgr. Rui VALÉRIO is a delegate of the Portuguese episcopal conference for the bishop/consecrated life relations and member of the Mission Episcopal Commission and New Evangelization. Appointed on August 10, 2023 by Pope Francis, Msgr. Rui VALÉRIO is the 18<sup>th</sup> Patriarch of Lisbon in history, the first from a religious congregation.

### **Official entrance ceremony**

The new Patriarch took possession of the patriarchal seat on September 2 and the ceremony of its official entry into the Patriarchate of Lisbon took place in the afternoon of September 3 at the "dos Jeronimos" monastery surrounded by a large crowd of faithful who also followed even outside the church. At the start of the Eucharist, Msgr. Rui thanked the President of the Portuguese Republic, Marcelo Rebelo DE SOUSA who was present for the occasion as well as several civil, military and ecclesiastical authorities and all the participants from his native village and the places where he had exercised his ministry as a Montfort Missionary. The colleagues of the Portuguese Delegation were among the concelebrants, accompanied by Father Marco PASINATO, SMM, vicar general.

In his homily, the new Patriarch clarified his pastoral priorities: the continuity of the spirit of the World Youth Day (WYD), the struggle to clericalism, the promotion of a local church and the construction of paths of peace in time of war.

By leaving a message to the priests of the diocese of Lisbon, Msgr. Rui said that he doesn't want that the churches and parishes are a kind of "shopping centers", but to be centers of life and hope. *"If we really aspire to parishes and Christian communities which are not only service establishments, such as a shopping center with religious offerings, but a source of life and hope, affection and proximity, then all of these depend largely on the way in which the priest interprets and realizes his existence, his preaching and his action. Be what you say and do. Do what you are and say. And to say who you are and what you do, in the spirit of Jesus Christ, is a promise for the communities that give life by giving of themselves,"* he said.

At the end, Msgr. Rui promised to be the voice of the most needy and excluded in society. He devoted part of his homily to the scourge of sexual abuses with words of proximity to the

victims of abuse in the church: *"Some children of the Church have defiled the purity of the Church, doing exactly the opposite of what Christ did and determined when he said, 'That small children come to me, for the kingdom of heaven is their own'. The victims knew that it was not that of heaven, but that of the abyss, of suffocation, of trauma. I promise everyone, with guarantee, proximity and commitment in the hope of a total healing".*

After the Mass, the Montfortian parish of "Povoa S. Adrião" offered a snack to people who had come from afar to take part in this event.

*Montfort Communications*