

Casa Generalizia
MISSIONARI MONFORTANI

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SG 35-2024
Circular Letter

St. Laurent-sur-Sèvre, 28 April 2024

**“But it is not enough to be just unafraid.
God wants you to hope for great things from him
and to be filled with joy by reason of this hope.”**

(Letter to the Members of the Company of Mary, 5)

Dear Confreres,

Greetings of joy, hope and peace in this Easter season, particularly on the feast of our Founder, St. Louis-Marie de Montfort which is celebrated on April 29, 2024 for this year. It is indeed a blessing to celebrate the feast of our Founder in this season of Easter. The paschal mystery - death and resurrection together - is a mystery of transformation: from darkness into light, from fear into love and hope; from death into new life in Christ. The *Ratio Formationis I (RF I)* describes the life journey of our Founder, St. Louis-Marie de Montfort as “a participation in the Paschal Mystery” (*RF I, 3*). The *Ratio Formationis I* says:

“The path that led Montfort to (his) tomb began at another tomb: the baptismal font where Louis Grignon died with Christ so as to rise with him. This pathway led him to take seriously the promises of his baptism and to live them to the full. The years of his development led him to respond to a call to a ministry in which he read the signs of his own times and invited his brothers and sisters to renew the promises of their baptism continually and without compromise, and to allow those promises to shape their lives.” (RF I, 2)

St. Louis-Marie de Montfort gave us a beautiful example and a means to live our consecrated life faithfully with joy and hope. His invitation to make our daily consecration to Jesus through Mary, our Mother is a means to live our life in the light of the Paschal Mystery. Celebrating the feast of our Founder is celebrating his life. It is an invitation to reconnect ourselves to our source from where our Montfortian identity flows. Consequently, the pathway that our Founder took should also become our pathway. The pathway, taken by St. Montfort led him to dare to take risk for God and for humanity in creative fidelity. The question for us is: *do we dare to take the same pathway that St. Montfort took and lived?*

The *Ratio Formationis I* reminds us that “*We are not clones of Montfort; we cannot expect to simply repeat his words or mimic his actions. ... Each of us has a unique personality, a unique life history. Born in a specific time and place, in different cultures... Our specific response to Christ has drawn us on pilgrimage together.*” (*RF I, 5*) In this sense, to take the pathway of St. Louis-Marie is not just simply to repeat or mimic what he did, but to appropriate and integrate his pathway in our respective context of today. To enter into a process of appropriation and integration, we need the virtue of creative fidelity. This virtue enables us to “celebrate” our Montfortian life – mission, inspired by the life and the charism of our Founder in our very context with hope and joy.

The *Acts of the General Chapter of 2023* invites us to let ourselves to be animated by the virtue of creative fidelity. This Acts of the General Chapter gives us some inspiring insights and important practical aspects or proposals that help us to nourish our creative fidelity. In this moment of grace, **to help us to implement the Acts of the General Chapter of 2023, we share with you the Operational Plan of 2024 – 2029.** I do hope that we can do pilgrimage together as one family following the pathway that St. Louis-Marie took by implementing the Acts of the Chapter of 2023 at all levels.

Happy feast of St. Louis-Marie de Montfort, let us celebrate our Montfortian life – mission by daring to take risk for God and for humanity in the pathway of St. Louis-Marie.

May Mary, our Mother, guide, protect and form us to become her true children who offer our hearts and our entire selves to Christ Jesus without reserve.

Happy feast of St. Louis-Marie de Montfort,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yoseph Putra Dwi Darma WATUN', written over a faint, light-colored rectangular stamp or watermark.

Fr. Yoseph Putra Dwi Darma WATUN, SMM
Superior General

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTS OF GENERAL CHAPTER

* OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-2029 *

Introduction

This Operational Plan 2024-2029, drawn up by the General Administration, takes up the recommendations and guidelines contained in the *Acts of the General Chapter (GC23_Acts)* with a more planning language. For each theme and initiative, the levels of responsibility and **those in charge** are highlighted. Finally, a rough timetable (Chronogram) is offered to help and stimulate the culture of planning and the involvement of everyone in walking together.

I. IDENTITY. Let us dare to be formed like Christ in the school of Mary.

1. The General Administration entrusts the **General Commission for Spirituality** to assure what is required in GC23_Acts 8.1 is achieved in producing an official Edition of the Rite of Celebrations of Montfortian Consecration.
2. The recommendations in GC23_Acts 8.2 and 3 to organize sessions on our Montfortian identity and to discern external signs, encourage initiatives at **all levels of the Congregation**. Any initiative to assimilate and deepen our Montfortian Missionary Identity, from the general level to the personal level, is welcome.
3. **All confreres** are encouraged to make use of the documents and resources we have available to assimilate and deepen our Missionary and Montfortian Identity.

II. EVANGELIZATION. Let us dare to incarnate the Good News!

4. At the General Administration level:
 - a. the **Superior General**, assisted by the Councilor responsible of the respective Entities, accompanies the confreres and the mission of the New Foundations;
 - b. the **Commission for Evangelization** is responsible for supporting, and sharing the evangelization initiatives of the Entities;
 - c. the **J.P.I.C. Commission** is responsible for creating awareness and sharing the initiatives in these fields.
5. At Entity Level **all confreres** who are available for initiatives are encouraged:
 - a. to put into practice the recommendations in GC23_Acts 11.1 on small communities and groups;
 - b. to exercise the recommendations in GC23_Acts 11.2 on pilgrimage centers, sanctuaries and shrines;
 - c. to put into reality the recommendation in GC23_Acts 11.3 on welcoming communities;
 - d. to commit to GC23_Acts 11.5 on the use of music, images, videos and means of digital communication.
 - e. to engage according GC23_Acts 11.6 on itinerant missions in collaboration with the laity;

f. to express concern for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (cf. GC23_Acts 11.4).

6. At a personal and/or community level, **all the confreres** dare to have experiences in line with what is written in GC23_Acts 10. Authentic way of living the four constitutive and inseparable elements of Montfortian mission (Evangelization, Mary, Availability and acting together) (see Cons. 63.5b RM 65)

III. TRANSMISSION OF THE CHARISM. Let us dare to live and transmit together the fruitfulness of the Montfortian charism.

7. At General Administration level:

- a. the **General Commission for Spirituality**, in collaboration with the **Communications Office**, is in charge of the animation described in GC23_Acts 15.1;
- b. in collaboration with the provincial administration of France, a **Committee** is formed to implement a strategic plan that strengthens the Montfortian presence in France, as stated in GC23_Acts 15.2;
- c. each **General Councilor** is responsible for promoting and coordinating continental meetings for young missionaries proposed in GC23_Acts 15.3.;
- d. the **General Delegate (responsible for the Montfortian Associates)** is to develop, accompany, coordinate, and animate the Montfortian Associates in dialogue with the General Council, the Superiors of the Entities and the local spiritual Assistants.

8. Each **Administration of the Entity** is responsible to promote or to organize initiatives to deepen and to share our charism involving the confreres as resource persons (GC23_Acts 15.4).

9. Each **territory or linguistic entity** prepares a program to publish or republish documents on Montfortian spirituality and presents it to the General Administration.

IV. ONGOING FORMATION. Let us dare to encounter Christ in personal conversion and service.

10. The **General Administration** is responsible:

- a. to approve the ongoing formation program of the Entities. Before its approval, the Superior General entrusts the **General Commission for Formation** to study the program;
- b. to encourage the drafting of the Local Ratio and to approve it. The **General Commission for Formation** can provide the Entities with some Guidelines for the drafting;
- c. to promote constant attention to the protection of minors and of vulnerable adults. For this purpose:
 - o the **Safeguarding Commission** is mandated 1) to facilitate a structural change within the Congregation; 2) to foster a consistent culture of safeguarding and care and prevent all types of abuse; 3) to provide the General Council and the Superiors of the Entities with expertise and the technical support in this field; 4) to collaborate with the “*Advisory Board*” for the assessment of allegations of sexual abuse and sexual misconduct.

- The **Contact Person** for the safeguarding and the **Commission** are asked to develop a series of standards concerning four key areas of care: 1) pastoral response to victims and survivors; 2) prevention; 3) response to allegations; 4) supervision of confreres for whom the allegation of abuse is substantiated, and to submit these standards to the evaluation of the General Council.

11. For the implementation of the *Ratio Formationis I* and *II*:

- a. **Each professed confrere and community** are invited to read the *Ratio Formationis*, paying attention especially to the parts that concern you most;
- b. It is recommended that the **Superiors of the Entities** prepare a program of Ongoing Formation (cf. GC23_Acts 17.3.4.6) in line with the *Ratio Formationis* (cf. C 158.2) that should include also the theme of Safeguarding and regularly communicate to the Superior General what has been done regarding Ongoing Formation (cf. C 158,3);
- c. **Formators** are recommended to promote and to implement the updating of Formation Programs in their Entity and help Superiors to follow the Guidelines and Administrative procedures regarding Formation;
- d. **Candidates** in initial formation are recommended to integrate the objectives and contents of their stages of Formation, in a spirit of docility;

12. The **Superior** of each Entity is responsible for preparing a *Local Ratio*, that “may take into account the cultural context of our Entities and the needs of local communities” (cf. GC23_Acts 17.1). This work is for all members of the Entities to carry out true discernment.

13. **Each community and/or confrere** is responsible:

- a. to create an environment of reconciliation and collaboration (cf. GC23_Acts 17.2);
- b. to read Montfort's life and writings (cf. GC23_Acts 17.5);
- c. to have an ongoing formation program according to the various dimensions of life (cf. GC23_Acts 17.7).

V. CULTURE OF PLANNING. Let us dare to work together.

14. **The General Administration** is committed:

- a. to accompany regularly each Entity, through the **General Councilors**, in its planning, monitoring and evaluation, including the agreements that regulate missionary exchanges between Entities;
- b. to promote a culture of transparency and administrative accountability. The **General Secretariat** and the **General Bursar's Office** are mandated, in dialogue with the appointed General Councilors and with the Superiors of the Entities, to promote, to coordinate and make proactive collaboration with the Entities in their respective areas of competence;
- c. to organize the Extraordinary General Council (EGC) in 2025 on line and 2027 in presence. For this purpose, a "**Facilitator**" is appointed and supported at the appropriate time by a steering committee;
- d. to appoint **Commissions at the general level** with specific tasks to assist the General Administration in implementing the Acts of the General Chapter;
- e. to coordinate the creation of the International Montfortian Aid (IMA) fund. The **Commission for Finances** is mandated to prepare the Statutes of the IMA Fund;

- f. to discern and prepare human resources for the various administrative offices at the General Curia.

15. At Entity level, **Superiors** are responsible for developing an annual activity plan.

16. CHRONOGRAM

- **2024, 29 April (the feast of our Founder):** Sending the Circular Letter: Operational Plan of 2024 – 2029
- **2025, 12-16/19-21 May:** EGC zoom, Feedback and action taken of the Operational Plan of 2024 - 2029.
- **2026:** Follow-up of the implementation of the operational Plan of the Acts of the General Chapter 2023
- **2027, 11-15 May:** EGC in presence, Evaluation at all levels.
- **2028:** Preparation for the General Chapter.
- **2029, 1-18 May:** General Chapter.

Conclusion

Receiving this Operational Plan can have different reactions. We welcome any feedback, suggestions, requests or questions that can help us to go deeper into our way of living and doing as Montfortians. We hope that 5 important themes underlined by the 2023 General Chapter will be deepened on the various occasions, such as Planning Meetings, Canonical and Fraternal Visits, Councils Meetings, Commissions, Chapters, Assemblies, etc. This operational plan implies discernment and vigilance. In line with the aforementioned, the *Ratio Formationis I* says: “*Discernment and vigilance are authentic if they are accompanied by apostolic prayer and give rise to prophetic and creative action....*” (RF I, 116) Consequently, our operational plan or our culture of planning should be accompanied by our apostolic prayer and give rise to our prophetic call. Being aware of the presence of the apostolic prayer and our prophetic call in our operational plan or our culture of planning is very essential for us as Montfortians.

It is important to be aware that to know how to take risks for God and for humanity is the characteristic of Montfortian style (see RF I, 120). In our very challenging world, with all the developments which we have lived in the Congregation in all levels, it becomes urgent to cultivate in ourselves the boldness of Montfort in order to be faithful and creative to our missionary-apostolic life.

May this Operational Plan re-ignite in each one of us the boldness of St. Louis-Marie.
Good reception and good mission to each and every one.

**“Whether you are at the very beginning of the journey
Or far along on the path,
The love which has urged you to follow Jesus lives always.
It is up to you to rediscover it and to maintain it.
That is the task of your entire life!” (RF I, p. 5)**