



The Message for the Golden Jubilee Year of India

BANGALORE, India - *“It is through the most Blessed Virgin Mary that Jesus Christ came into the world, and it is also through her that he will reign in the world,”* says St. Louis-Marie de Montfort, our founder, and it’s through the blessing of Mother Mary that the Montfort Missionaries were led to India in 1973. It’s a land, where one experiences the divine milieu in cities and villages alike. It is a land of temples, churches, mosques, gurudwaras, pagodas and so on. The prayer of our founder, St. Louis-Marie de Montfort is realized in India with the establishment of SMM communities. Now, we are completing fifty years of our presence in India, the land of different spiritualities and cultures.

Today, we thank God for the establishment of SMM in India. In gratitude, we fondly remember the hard work of the then Superior General and Italian Missionaries. They sowed the seed of the Montfortian Spirituality in the year 1973 and today, it has grown into a sturdy tree with its roots deep into the Indian soil. It is good to remember that the missionary legacy of our Congregation is still playing an important role in forming the identity of Indian Montfortian Missionaries.

We are grateful to God for the pioneers, who responded to God’s call with the words ‘Here I am.’ We can hear an echo of Abraham’s response as ‘father of Faith’. They left their motherland and moved to a strange land to spread the Gospel with specific vision laid down by our founder St. Louis-Marie de Montfort. It was a herculean task to spread the Good News in the land of gods and goddesses, saints and sages, myths and legends, more so with diversity and ethnicity.

Since its inception in 1973 to date, Indian Montfort Missionary Foundation has grown by leap and bounds. During the last five decades, we have experienced the providential hand of God in various initiatives. It is by the grace of God that the Vice Province has grown from strength to strength through the selfless service of our pioneers and our confreres. The Indian Foundation now occupies a place of pride at the global level. It has 2 Bishops and 70 priests and many aspiring young men which is a sign of God's gracious blessings on our province. Our entity stands tall and proud, with our students under formation, trained to venture into the mission of the SMM. We are involved in different ministries such as pastoral, social and educational. Besides these ministries, our members are also working in the remote areas of South India and other parts of the world.

The Jubilee Theme: "Gratitude to God Alone" brings us together with the diversity of our cultures. This attitude of gratitude has helped us in our commitment to the Lord and to the Society. The Jubilee celebration is the right occasion for us to evaluate, how deeply our Montfortian spirituality is rooted in Indian soil as response to the needs of the Indian Church. It also invites us to reflect whether it witnesses the Wisdom incarnate and the Blessed Mother.

The key elements of our Montfortian Missionary Journey are: a) It is **Spiritual**; therefore, it involves seeking the Will of God and integrating our life of faith and walking in the footsteps of St. Louis-Marie de Montfort and in the spirit of Mary our Mother. b) It is **Contextual**, which exhorts us to be at the service of the poor and the tribal with unconditional love. c) It is **Transformational**, in which we are called to live as apostles and as prophets through our apostolate and commitment to bring about transformation in society.

To celebrate 50 glorious years of achievements, we have planned various events:

- **Jubilee Prayer** and a **Logo** to guide us through this whole year and a **Jubilee Calendar** to display the pictures of various activities done through the years in our Vice Province.
- To have **Montfortian Retreat** to continue our spiritual journey with the whole Montfortian Family.
- An **International Level Symposium** inviting eminent speakers to enlighten and enrich our spirituality and mission.
- An **Audiovisual Presentation of the History of the Montfortian** presence in India and the publication of the Souvenir to mark the Golden Jubilee year.
- We also plan to organize **The Marian Pilgrimages** to mark the Jubilee year with the spirit of Mother Mary.
- And finally, we planned to have a simple, yet solemn **Golden Jubilee Celebration in the month of November 2023.**

'When we honour the past, we energize the future and the present becomes a celebration.' The Golden Jubilee could well be called the Year of Gratitude because we have so much to be thankful for. Through the powerful intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the blessings of St. Louis-Marie de Montfort, let us march towards the future. Mission continues...

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