



Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Adults: A Day of Study at the Novitiate in Ruteng, Indonesia

RUTENG, Indonesia - In the framework of the Asia-Oceania SMM Mission Year, the Commissions of the Province of Indonesia held meetings in several places. In this context, a day of study on protection of minors and vulnerable adults took place at the Novitiate, in Ruteng-Flores, on Wednesday, July 27, 2022.

The meeting was attended by most of the confreres working in formation, namely Fr. Johan Baptista WAJA, SMM (Joan: Minor seminary), Fr. Egidius SUMARNO, SMM (Egis: Aspirancy), Fr. Kristianus Jumi NGAMPU, SMM (Tian) and Fr. Heredi SUHARTONO, SMM (Edy: Postulancy) and several serving in parishes and other ministries such as Fr. Kasimirus JUMAT, SMM (Kasmir), Fr. Nikodemus HERMIAWAN, SMM (Niko), Fr. Avelinus AMPUT, SMM (Vely), Fr. Kosmas AMBO PATAN, SMM (Kosmas), Fr. Fransiskus Borgias TRIHANDOKO, SMM (Borgias), Deacon Siklus Rikardus DEPA, SMM (Sintus), and Fr. Yosef JEHARA, SMM. This one-day meeting was facilitated by Fr. Luiz Augusto STEFANI, SMM, the Superior General and Fr. Wismick JEAN-CHARLES, SMM, the Chair of the International Commission on the Protection of minors and vulnerable adults of our Congregation.

The day began with the speech of Father Luizinho who set the stage by emphasizing that protection of minor is an ordinary priority in the church's mission. He made it clear that protection of minors is not only important but an urgent issue in the mission of the Congregation and reminded that prevention is a permanent task for each Montfortian. He ended his remarks by stressing that the general administration takes very seriously the issue of protection of minors and is strongly committed to addressing diligently every case of abuse.

The second speaker of the day was Fr. Yosef. In his presentation, he explained that sexual violence against children, especially girls, and vulnerable adults continues to increase in Indonesia from year to year. He recognized that some of the perpetrators of sexual harassment are carried out by religious leaders, religious teachers, leaders and owners of educational institutions. He presented to the attendees several laws, such as the Law on Child Protection, the Law on Pornography, the Law on Information and Electronic Transactions and the Law on the Criminal Act of Sexual Violence issued by the Indonesian government and reminded that the Montfortians must be present in society as protectors who respect and uphold the human dignity and not as predators of sexual harassment.

The third presenter was Fr. Heredi SUHARTONO. Fr. Edy did a great theological presentation on the theme of *Consecrated Celibacy: Critical Issue and a call to conversion and transformation*. Building his presentation on the Pastoral Spiral Method (Experience, Reflection and Responding),

he has helped us understand our vocation from a covenant perspective and has reminded us that we are called to conversion and transformation. He explained that Jesus is our model for living out our celibacy as covenantal love with God. He calls us (Vocation) to live with him and with other followers (communion) in order to live like him (consecration), and to extend his evangelical mission in the world (mission).

The last speaker of the day was Fr. Wismick. The Chair of the International Commission on the Protection of minors explained the importance and the steps *towards a lived spirituality of safeguarding*. Then, he called for a personal engagement and concrete actions of each Montfortian for the creation of a consistent culture of protection in the Company of Mary. He concluded his practical presentation by reminding us that the protection of minors and the vulnerable adults is not an option. It is rather the integral part of the mission of the Church.

That full day of study on safeguarding ended with a meeting of the Superior General with the Lay Associates followed by a beautiful Eucharistic celebration.

Fr. Yosef JEHARA, SMM