



## **350<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of St. Montfort in the Philippines**

**QUEZON CITY, Philippines** - The Philippine Delegation of the Montfort Missionaries celebrated the 350th birth anniversary of St. Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort, in a unique way, with utmost gratitude to the Triune God.

On the 28th, 29th, and 30th of January, each community held Triduum Masses. On the first day of the triduum, January 28, a feeding and gift-giving program was held at the Aeta Community in Brgy. Diaz and Villa Maria in the town of Porac, Pampanga province.

The feeding and gift-giving event were co-organized by the Association Mary Queen of All Hearts (AMQAH), St. Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort Chaplaincy in Dagupan, Pangasinan, and the Montfort-Philippine Delegation.

There were two locations for the feeding and gift-giving program. The group went first in Brgy. Diaz and began at 9 A.M. with a catechism on St. Louis-Marie de Montfort's life given by Sch. Harold Anthony Montoya, SMM. It was followed by the Holy Eucharist celebrated by Rev. Fr. Federick YUMANG, SMM. Rev. Arnel COLLANTES, SMM, assisted him. Following the Eucharistic celebration, gifts were distributed. Adults were given food packs, groceries, and bread by the group. Meanwhile, children were given candy, slippers, and food.

The group traveled to Villa Maria in the afternoon to continue the gift-giving program. The catechism on St. Louis-Marie de Montfort's life began at 1:30 P.M., facilitated by Sch. Harold Anthony MONTOYA, SMM and Mrs. Criselda CRUZ. Following that, food packs, groceries, used clothing, and bread were distributed evenly. The tasty *arroz caldo* was enjoyed by both adults and children. The gifts were received by 250 families, including 150 children. The program was concluded with a prayer and the singing of St. Louis-Marie de Montfort's hymn.

On the day of birthday anniversary of St. Montfort, January 31, there were lively celebrations. At 7 A.M., the Montfort Center of Spirituality held its Eucharistic celebration. Fr. Nelson CABANERO, SMM, presided, with Fr. Federick YUMANG, SMM, serving as a concelebrant. A casual gathering followed it.

In Cebu Mission Areas, 300 kindergarten and elementary students were fed at Kabankalan Elementary School in Tuburan. The Holy Eucharist for the 350th birth anniversary began at 11 A.M., with Rev. Fr. Ronald BARUELA, SMM officiating. TTJ-AMQAH Cebu prepared the gifts. Around 21 people showed up to assist with animating and food distribution. The AMQAH Nazareth group prepared and cooked the food. The celebration was in remembrance of Montfort's way of celebrating his birthday - inviting the poor. Thanksgiving Mass and meal were held inside the Brgy gym in the presence of Kabangcalan school teachers, the Brgy. Captain and lay volunteers.

Meanwhile, a feeding program for 100 students was also carried out in Brgy. Hagdan in Kinatarran Island, Sta. Fe. Cebu. The Association of Mary Queen of All Hearts organized the feeding program. The program started at 4 P.M.

The Holy Eucharist for the 350th birth anniversary began at 5 P.M. at Sta. Teresita Parish in West Rembo, Makati, with Rev. Fr. Norwyn V. Baydo, SMM, as the main presider. Some Montfortian priests joined the celebration, as did deacons Armel and Samuel. The lay faithful had an opportunity to venerate and touch the St. Louis-Marie de Montfort's relic after the mass.

The 350th birth anniversary here in the Philippines was truly unique because, after the dark times brought about by the pandemic, seeing them, being with them, and especially sharing with them simple gifts is just as much as shedding and sharing the light of God's goodness brought forth by the birth of this fiery missionary, a friend of the poor and the sick, and loving slave of Jesus in Mary, St. Louis-Marie de Montfort.

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