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A Thrilling Moment

DARU, Papua New Guinea - The preceding week of Christmas brought forth a thrilling moment for St. Louis-Marie de Montfort Parish – Daru, when we awaited the arrival of three significant people from the Society of Mary of Montfort (SMM), who had come all the way from Rome and India. These were: Fr. Luiz Augusto Stefani, the Superior General; Fr. Michael Sagayaraj, the previous superior of the Indian Vice-Province and J Joseph the newly elected superior of the Vice-Province of India. Their visit to the parish took place from 19th to 21st of December 2018.

Upon their arrival, they were met and welcomed at the Daru Airport by the Parish Priest Fr. Robert Perianayagam SMM, the Montfort Associates and some children who proudly dressed in their traditional attires. As they arrived at the Parish, they were again welcomed by the parishioners who had been thrilled by the loving presence of these three significant men, and of course with the vivid surrounding and atmosphere of the moment. The surrounding was vividly brightened by the triangular- colourful flags flying up in the air, the bright smiles of every parishioner present, and of course as usual, the spectacular performance of the dancers.

In the evening they took time to go around to see the Daru town and visited our Catholic members. People were so happy to shake hands with the fathers and took some memorable photos as well.

Then came the second day where Mass was celebrated at 9 am in thanksgiving with six Montfort Priests, including the Fr. General who was the main celebrant. The liturgy was fully alive with much spirit of joy, unity, prayer and worship, and even with a very prominent, powerful and inspiring homily delivered by Fr. Michael Sagayaraj. The highlight of the day was the active participation of everyone at Mass and especially the three visiting priests who spontaneously join the dance at the recessional.

After the lunch Fr. Robert organized the boat (dingy) to visit the close-by village. It was three hours travel by boat. Indeed, fathers enjoyed their trip. The villagers were so happy to see them. They had a wonderful chat with the people.

The visit of these three great men depicted in time, the moment of the current season of Advent and the approaching Festive Season which was only one week away. Their loving presence among us was indeed a blessing as we entered into the Festive Season of Christmas. We sincerely enjoyed and treasured their loving presence. Thank you dear fathers for visiting us. Merry Christmas to all.

- *Fr. Robert Perianayagam, SMM*