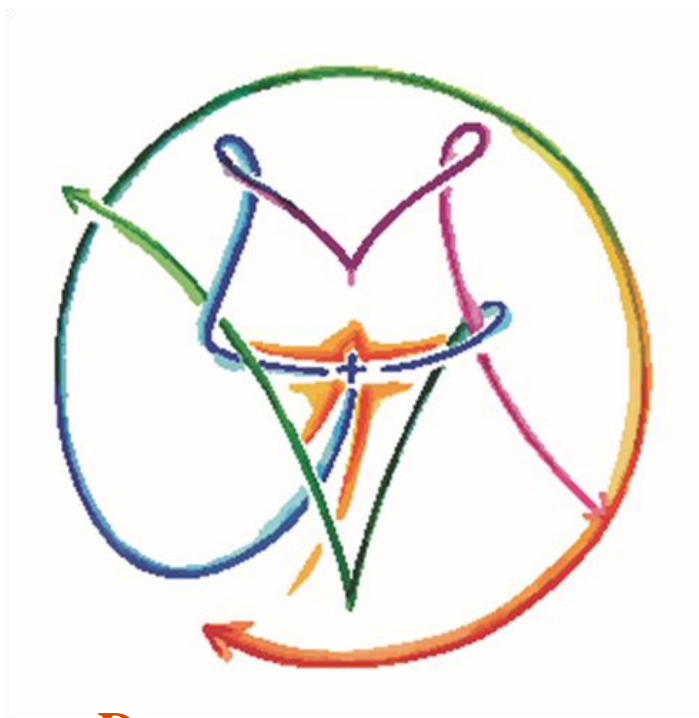


Company of Mary

ACTS OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER 2023



**DARE TO TAKE RISKS
FOR GOD AND FOR HUMANITY
OUR CREATIVE FIDELITY**

DARE TO TAKE RISKS FOR GOD AND FOR HUMANITY OUR CREATIVE FIDELITY



St. Louis of Montfort, while telling us, *“You are small, they are great ...”* (ACM 2), does not lack audacity and also tells us, *“Put all your trust in him through Mary”* (ACM 4).

In the center of the logo is a CROSS. Graphically it is the smallest but from it, through the work of the Spirit, arrows “depart” which, creatively, go to the ends of the world (circle). The power of the cross - scandalous and insignificant in the eyes of the world - is the only one that can generate creative fidelity.

The logo includes many COLORS that represent the Continents and our missionary charism. The ARROWS are a symbol of the race of the Spirit, at whose pace we are called to live.

The creative dimension and the “outgoing” dynamic are represented by the DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS AND PATHS traveled by the arrows that always narrate the work that God has accomplished in and through Mary.

***Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.***

(Proverbs 3: 5 – 6)

Dear Confreres,
Greetings of love and peace,

The 38th General Chapter, for me, was indeed a blessing. It brought together confreres from 21 countries all over the world. Looking at this reality, I recall the prayer that our Founder, St. Louis Marie de Montfort recited: *“Gather us in from every nation. Bring us together and unite us and may all the glory be given to your holy and mighty name”* (PM 18). In line with the prayer of our Founder, in the private audience with the Capitulants and the Montfortian Family on May 21, 2023, Pope Francis emphasized three important values that have marked our journey as a Congregation, namely hospitality, internationality, and tenderness. I could feel that these three values have animated this Chapter which created an ambience of fraternal union and sense of belonging.

The song *“Animés de l’amour”*, sung during the commemoration of our deceased confreres, reminded me that the very source of our fraternal union is God’s Love. This union of love goes beyond death. The love of God is a life-giving, energizing force that binds us all together as one family. Saint Paul says: *“... Neither death nor life, nor angels*

nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come ... shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8: 38 – 39).

The presence of our deceased confreres that we commemorated in our daily masses helped us to see the past with joy and pride for their fidelity to their vocation. And, the presence of the parents of Fr. Olivier Maire and his siblings on the installation of the new administration which took place in St. Bartholomeo Church, dedicated to the New Martyrs of today, deepened our fraternal union of God’s love. Their humble gesture of offering the breviary of Fr. Olivier Maire to be put in the Church reminded me of our families and siblings who have offered each one of us for God’s service. Our faith and vocation were born from this very basic Christian community, namely family. We need to be grateful for their willingness to let us work in God’s vineyard.

The General Chapter was indeed a time of humble prayer and of thanksgiving, a time of attentive listening and sharing, a time of fraternal discussion and discernment, a time of evaluation and of planning. Thanks to Fr. Jean-Claude Lavigne, O.P., our animator, who helped us to make this Chapter meaningful, and also to the interpreters who allowed us to be able to express and share during the assembly without any barriers. The presence of young confreres who participated actively created an intergenerational dialogue in this Chapter that has brought hope for the future of our Congregation. And, the constant presence of lay people through their inspiring written messages, their prayer and their support were a source of great joy for all of us.

I was reminded of the return of the seventy-two disciples narrated by the evangelist Luke. They had been sent out on a mission and now they came back to Jesus joyfully proud of what they were able to achieve. We all remember the reaction

of the Master: *“Do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”* (Lk 10:20). Jesus did not want to curb the enthusiasm of his disciples, but to help them go to what is essential. He wanted them never to forget that there is in heaven a God who loves them, who accompanies them, who takes care of them.

St. Louis-Marie de Montfort understood this lesson. Writing to his uncle in a moment of great distress he opens his heart and shares his deepest conviction: *“I have a Father in heaven who will never fail me”* (L 2). I believe it is this awareness that gave Montfort the courage and the strength to overcome opposition and obstacles and so be the great missionary he was.

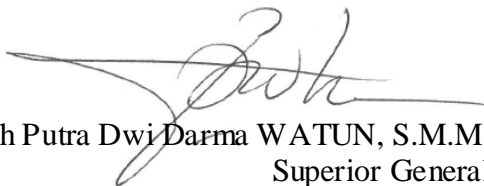
This certainty should also animate each one of us as we continue our life and mission as a Family, as a Congregation. If we feel within us the strength of the love of God and we deeply trust in him and in his Providence we will be able to take risks and so do great things for him and for our brothers and sisters.

As you will see, in the Acts of this General Chapter the Capitulants reintroduced some of the themes already present in the document of the last Chapter. We felt we all need more time to continue working on those areas of our lives and do so with greater commitment and determination.

As I begin my service for the Congregation, I am convinced more than ever that our fidelity to Christ and to St. Louis-Marie de Montfort has the power to free within ourselves and in our communities new energies and new strengths. So, as I entrust this document to each one of you, I encourage you readily to plan for its implementation at various levels. I also urge you to continue to let the Holy Spirit work in you, to be imaginative

and creative and together to look for better ways and for new ways to accomplish our mission in the church and in the world. St. Montfort continues praying for us that we be *“Liberos, men who are free but still in bondage to your love and your will; men after your own heart who without taint or impediment of self-love, will carry out your will to the full ...”* (PM 8). The Holy Spirit, who is the protagonist of our life, guides us where God wants us to be, not to where our own ideas and personal tastes would lead us.

May the Virgin Mary, Seat of Wisdom and our Mother, accompany us all. May St Louis-Marie de Montfort and the Blessed Marie Louise of Jesus be our witnesses and our intercessors.



Fr. Yoseph Putra Dwi Dharma WATUN, S.M.M.
Superior General

Rome, 19 May 2023

38th General Chapter

THE ACTS

Dare to take risks for God and for humanity Our Creative Fidelity

1. As Montfort Missionaries we are called to take risk for God and Humanity with the attitude of creative fidelity to Christ, to the Church, to our charism, and to the cries of the people today in the different continents and cultures.
2. In this General Chapter we are opening again the map of our journey as Montfortian where God challenges us with an important question: where are we now? This is the fundamental question that helps us situating ourselves to find ways to look for the future with faith and hope in the Providence of God.
3. The last General Chapter (2017) gave us guidelines and directions where we had to go. And to a certain extent we are faithful to carry on the fruits of this Chapter in our respective entities. However there are some aspects that need to be deepened and also to be articulated facing the new realities and challenges in the Church and in our society today.
4. Therefore in these present Acts, we reemphasize some important aspects that appeared in the last Chapter and try to incarnate them in the spirit of creative fidelity in our life and mission. As Montfort Missionaries we are called to read, to interiorize personally and communally, and put into practice in our respective missions and apostolates this new document.

5. We identify five important topics that really touch the following questions:

- *Who are we as Montfortian?* (Identity)
- *What do we want to achieve?* (Evangelization and Transmission)
- *What are the means to put into practice the responses to these questions?* (Ongoing Formation and Culture of Planning together).

We encourage all the confreres to commit with us once more in the ongoing work of deepening these themes and for their implementation.

I. IDENTITY

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

6. Father de Montfort reminds us that our identity is to be missionaries in the path of the Incarnate Wisdom (cf. Constitution 2). To embrace the desire of our founder expressed in his Prayer for Missionaries, we commit ourselves, during the next six years, to work together in creative fidelity in order to respond to the call of the Church and to the signs of time in a spirit of synodality.

7. It is also a call to offer the way of consecration to Jesus incarnate Wisdom through Mary as the chosen mean to live the baptismal promises.

8. In order to put into reality, the above objectives we need to:

8.1 Set up a team at the level of Congregation to gather the various practices and rites of celebration of the consecration in order to unify the essential elements of it and produce an official edition.

8.2 Organize several sessions on our Montfortian identity at all levels (general, entity and local).

8.3 Concerning the external sign of our identity (Constitution number 76), each entity will discern according to its context.

II. EVANGELIZATION

Let us dare to incarnate the Good News!

9. As Montfort Missionaries we are called to take risks bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to the poor, by living out authentically the four aspects of Montfortian mission: evangelization, Mary, availability, acting together.

10. As a Congregation with a spirituality of Incarnation, we are called to go out to meet the people, to be with them, to learn from them. It is an invitation to make an analysis of their concrete reality so that we are able to recognize the needs of different groups. It is also an invitation to make networking teams among ourselves, with collaborators, local churches and with other entities.

11. In order to put into reality the aforementioned objectives, we need to:

11.1 Create and accompany small Christian communities by offering catechesis for the renewal of Church.

11.2 Go to places where people already come together like sanctuaries, shrines, pilgrimage centers, etc and paying special attention to hospitality.

11.3 Create welcoming communities by opening our doors to all, especially to those on the existential peripheries.

11.4 Get involved in social pastoral activities and social organizations and then give new life to the Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation in each entity.

11.5 Learn how to evangelize by using music, images, films, and all means of digital communication.

11.6 Carry out with laity itinerant missions.

The General Chapter has decided to give a mandate to the Superior General and his council to continue to accompany the confreres present in Vietnam towards a foundation of Montfortian Mission in this country.

It also decided that if candidates from Vietnam and Mexico come forward, a process of dialogue be undertaken in view of their formation between the General Administration and the Entities in the region.

III. TRANSMISSION OF CHARISM

Let us dare to live and transmit together the fruitfulness of the Montfortian charism.

12. As Montfort Missionaries we have to be aware that our charism is a gift of the Holy Spirit and a commitment to respond in the constant need for a renewal in the Church and in the society.

13. It is a call to appropriate our charism in a typical lifestyle (in a personal and communitarian ways), inter-cultural and inter-generational witness so vivid that impacts the life of people.

14. It is also a call to dare new experiences of transmission, in a spirit of constant listening to Montfort, to the cries and hope of people to whom we are sent. This will lead us

to find a new language adapted to the contexts and cultures of those we wish to serve.

15. In order to implement these objectives we propose to:

15.1 Entrust to the commission of spirituality, the responsibility to animate the transmission of our charism in the Congregation. This commission will seek the collaboration of the whole Montfortian family and where it is possible will use the modern means of communication.

15.2 Set up a strategic plan to strengthen the Montfortian presence in the vice-province of France, with the accompaniment of the General Administration, in order to deepen and spread our charism (cf. *Letter of the Chapter to all Confreres*).

15.3 Organize, under the leadership of the General Administration, continental meetings of young missionaries to share their experiences and develop vocational animation projects and a transmission of the charism to the youth.

15.4 Each entity promotes meetings to deepen and to share our charism involving the confreres as resource persons.

15.5 Each linguistic entity or territory is responsible for publishing or republishing documents on Montfortian spirituality.

IV. ONGOING FORMATION

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

16. God calls us, as Montfort Missionaries, to an ongoing process of personal growth and conversion. The invitation is to live an authentic religious life daily by taking a personal responsibility in incarnating the Gospel in the spirit of Montfort.

17. In order to put into practice the above objectives, we need to:

17.1 Further our commitment in the areas of ongoing formation by working to the implementation of the newly released Ratio II. An important part of this will be the creation of a local Ratio that may take into account the cultural context of our entities and the needs of local communities.

17.2 Create in our communities an environment of reconciliation and collaboration. Resources are available to help us (eg. Ratio I and II; writings of Father de Montfort, Church documents...).

17.3 Encourage superiors to value the talents and skills confreres are endowed with, and cultivate them by offering specific programs of training and formation in view of a more effective service to the community itself and to the Church.

17.4 Plan an accompaniment of young confreres during their first five years in ministry. The support and the life experience of older confreres will prove as precious treasure.

17.5 Confront the life experience and the writings of Montfort in a regular and systematic way.

17.6 We give special attention to safeguarding of minors and vulnerable persons, by adopting a compassionate attitude towards those who suffered any forms of abuses. The superior makes sure that each confrere appointed for this ministry within the entity receive an appropriate training and give awareness to the confrere.

17.7 Ensure, in each entity, that each confrere could take time for his own spiritual renewal. Each confrere is invited to invest in community prayer and take at least 1 hour of personal prayer each day.

The General Chapter has decided to create a physical office for the protection of minors and vulnerable persons in the Generalate. And authorize the Superior General and his council to hire a person who would be a secretary to work in this office according to their discernment of the needs. All the entities of the Congregation will share the cost according to their income.

V. CULTURE OF PLANNING

Let us dare to work together.

18. “Without planning, we plan to fail”. We are invited to create a culture of planning, monitoring and evaluation on the level of the individual, the community, the entity and the Congregation as a whole. Planning will allow us to better manage our resources such as human, material, spiritual for a better response to the needs of the Church and the humanity for God alone.

19. To reach this target, we propose to:

19.1 Read and implement the “Administrative Directory” and the “Directory of Administration of Temporal Goods” of the Congregation.

19.2 Have a regular accompaniment of the entities by the General administration (including Extraordinary General Council – EGC – every 2 years) face to face or by video-conference.

19.3 Have a culture of transparency and accountability in all dimensions of our life, at all levels: individual, communities, entities and General Administration.

19.4 Develop plan of activities on the level of personal, community, entity and Congregation including seeking advice from lay experts if needed.

19.5 Monitor the commissions and evaluate their effectiveness for the mission of all the entities.

19.6 Evaluate and review the convention dealing with exchange of missionaries between entities.

The General Chapter has decided to create the International Montfortian Aid Fund – IMAF- to reach financial security of the Congregation and mandate the General Administration for its implementation.

***“If you don’t take risks for God,
you won’t give anything worthwhile”***
(Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort, Letter 27)

DARE TO TAKE RISKS FOR GOD AND FOR HUMANITY OUR CREATIVE FIDELITY

*God our Father,
remember your Congregation
that you possessed in your heart and
that your Son entrusted to Mary, his mother.*

*Look at us in our poverty and limitations.
Receive and transform them with your own power
so that your kingdom comes in us and through us.*

*May your Spirit of love make us true promoters
of communion and participation
in the mission of the Church,
following the example of your servant,
Louis-Marie de Montfort.*

*May your light guide our steps
to be faithful to our missionary heritage within the Church:
to establish the reign of Jesus through Mary.*

*May this divine fire give us the audacity to take risks,
without fear, so that we can respond effectively
with new missionary initiatives to the needs
of the most fragile of humanity.*

*Through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.*

*Mary, Queen of the Apostles, pray for us.
Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort, pray for us.
Blessed Marie-Louise of Jesus, pray for us.*

