



## CLOSING REMARKS

*Dare to take risks for God and for humanity  
our creative fidelity*

*Just as Jesus depended upon Mary for his humanity,  
we depend upon her for our renewed humanity (RF I, 146)*

Dear Confreres, Superiors of the Entities and all Participants,

It is indeed a moment of grace to be together as one big family sharing our life and mission in the light of the spirit of the General Chapter of 2023 in this Extra-Ordinary General Council meeting (EGC). Though the modality of our meeting is via Zoom platform, it does not hinder us to experience the spirit of fraternal communion.

In my opening remarks, quoting the Hymn of our Founder, entitled *Tenderness of Love of Neighbor*, I emphasized the importance of living the spirit of unity and solidarity. In his Hymn, St. Louis-Marie invites us to deepen our sense of belonging to one another, by saying *whatever affects our brothers, affect us*. The Extraordinary General Council Meeting has called us to widen our perspective and our belongingness not only limited to one's own respective entity, rather to the whole body – the Congregation. In line with this, our *Ratio Formationis I* reminds us that “... we belong not simply to the local entity of a province or delegation but to the congregation as a whole...” (RF I, 43).

As a Congregation, we are one body united by the Holy Spirit who calls us, gathers us and unites us to follow Jesus: his life and mission. It is God who brings us together through the gift of religious vocation. Our Founder, in his *Prayer for Missionaries*, clearly says: “*Memento Congregationis Tuae: it is to be a Congregation, a gathering ... to be chosen by you ... bring us together and unite us...*” (PM 18). To help us to understand how to live as one body in Christ, let us listen to St. Paul's remarks: *There is one body, but it has many parts. But all its many parts make up one body. It is the same with Christ ... All of them will take care of one another. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. If one part is honored, every part shares in its joy. You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it (1Cor 12, 12, 25-27)*. The EGC of 2025 is a means that has brought us together and united us as one family: the Missionaries of the Company of Mary. The experience that we have had in this EGC still need to be nourished, cultivated and shared to all members of the Congregation.

In this moment of grace, I would like also to encourage each one of you to change the way we look at the Congregation, not only as a juridical or hierarchical structure, but more as one body. This point of view helps us to deepen and strengthen the fundamental aspect of our very identity as Christians and consecrated persons, namely fraternal life in communion. *Vita Consecrata* calls each religious congregation to become “*signum fraternitatis*” (sign of fraternal communion).



*Vita Consecrata* says: “Consecrated persons, who become of one heart and soul (Acts 4:32) through the love poured into their hearts by the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 5:5), experience an interior call to share everything in common: material goods and spiritual experiences, talents and inspirations, apostolic ideals and charitable service” (*Vita Consecrata* 42).

Looking and living the Congregation as one body is for me a manifestation of the spirit of fraternal communion called by the Father, rooted in Christ and animated by the Holy Spirit. In the light of what St. Paul mentioned in 1 Cor 12, 12, 25-27, looking the Congregation as one body is not for the sake of uniformity, but rather for the sake of unity in diversity. It helps us to transform our way of living and relating: from hierarchical approach to synodal approach; from Top-down approach to sharing and participation approach; from competition to complementarity; from non-cooperation to collaboration and co-responsibility; from exclusivity – focusing only one’s community or one’s entity to embrace inclusivity that allows us to work together respecting the uniqueness of each person, each community and each entity. We are invited to become a real big family, where each member, each community and each entity participate actively in the spirit of accountability and responsibility as members of one body. Enriched by our differences, we want to live a life that is caring, full of good will, respect, and patience for the life and mission of the Congregation. Let us listen to what our Founder says in his *Rule for the Missionaries of the Company of Mary*: “(our) charity to one another will be full of attention and good will, and (we) will look for opportunities to do one another a good turn. It will be marked by mutual respect which brings us to give precedence to others and by patience which will enable” (RM 44). *Vita Consecrata* reminds us that: *Consecrated persons are asked to be true experts of communion and to practise the spirituality of communions “witnesses and architects of the plan for unity which is the crowning point of human history in God’s design” (VC 46).*

In these past days, we have shared and listened to one another in fraternal communion. From each entity, we received some important feed backs how each entity has taken their efforts and initiatives to implement the Acts of the General Chapter of 2023. From the 2 new foundations of our presence in Mexico and Vietnam, in the midst of challenges, our confreres are able to bring hope for the life and mission of the Congregation in these 2 places. We thank to God for their availability and perseverance to carry out the entrusted mission. Our participation and support is indeed indispensable because these 2 foundations become our common mission. From the General administration, particularly from each commission which is interconnected we have been enriched by some directives and guidelines that help us to continue implementing some important aspects of our life and mission and how to live and function in the spirit of the Acts of the General Chapter of 2023. However, there are still some home works to be done in personal, community, entity level and the Congregation as a whole. It is our call and responsibility as superiors to strengthen our bond of unity as one big family and walk together by living and promoting the culture of participation, collaboration and co-responsibility in our respective entities. Regarding the role of superiors, *Vita Consecrata* reminds us that “*In the consecrated life the role of Superiors, including local Superiors, has always been of great importance for the spiritual life and for mission*” (VC 43). In line with this, I would like re-echo the conviction of the Acts of the General Chapter of 2017 that speaks of the style of governance and the role of superiors: “*A leader must be a contact person, actively involved in the life around him ... No one should play at being a “lone ranger” A leader is always a “member of”, and he will remain a member of the group.*



*A leader needs to be a team player and work with teams that share a part of his responsibilities (principle of subsidiarity)...*” (Acts of Gen. Chap. 2017, No. 17). Let us embrace this conviction together in our responsibility as superiors.

It is important also to mention that the presence and the role of Mary, our Mother is essential in our journey as Montfortians. In her womb we have been nurtured and reared, upheld by her and enriched with her love and graces (Cf. PM 11) so that her attitudes are well formed in us. In this context, our character or style of leadership should be “Marian style” or Marian in character. It is essential for us Montfortians *“to be always better acquainted with the wise humility of Mary and the freedom to learn throughout life, in every age and season, in every human ambient and context, from every person and every culture”* (RF I, 146).

In this moment of grace, I would like to express my deep gratitude to each one of you who carry out the spirit of unity in fraternal communion through your attentive presence, participation and collaboration. I thank also Fr. Joji and the communication team who have made our EGC meeting meaningful and fruitful. I thank also Brothers of Saint Gabriel who allow Brothers Remi and Sebastian to help us in translating our sharing and dialogue.

My dear brothers, let us unite ourselves with the pure faith and hope of Mary and acquire an intelligence of spirit which reflects her gentle welcome of and obedience to the will of God so that with her, in her and through her we entrust our life and mission for the Glory of God alone. I conclude my closing remarks by quoting *Ratio Formationis I*, 180: *“It is not as isolated individuals that we learn to become Montfortians. We make this journey together, united in a single company; we grow and learn together so that together we can carry out our mission”* (RF I, 180).

May the Spirit of God the Father and the Son renew our hearts so that we are able to become the sign of fraternal communion in our respective life and mission.

Rome, 21 May 2025

Fraternally in Christ and Mary,

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