

COMPANY OF MARY - MONTFORT MISSIONARIES

**WALKING TOGETHER...  
IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE POOR APOSTLES**

Formation in Montfortian Life  
Volume II: Guidelines and Norms

**Rome 2022**





CONGREGATIO  
PRO INSTITUTIS VITAE CONSECRATAE  
ET SOCIETATIBUS VITAE APOSTOLICAE

Dal Vaticano, 29 luglio 2022

Prot. n. 58787/2022

Reverendo Padre,

lo scorso 27 luglio Ella aveva premura di sottoporre all'attenzione di questo Dicastero, per la debita approvazione, il testo della *Ratio Formationis Monfortana* dal titolo *Insieme ... sulle orme degli Apostoli poveri*. La formazione alla vita monfortana. Volume II – Orientamenti e Norme, Roma 2022.

Il testo, elaborato alla luce della *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* (2016) e dei principi ispiratori della formazione monfortana contenuti nel Volume I – Lo spirito della formazione monfortana (2005), si presenta nel suo complesso ben organizzato e in grado di offrire direttive e contenuti unitari e gradualmente per la formazione monfortana iniziale e permanente e per far sì che sia i giovani candidati che i missionari monfortani possano crescere nell'adesione libera e sempre nuova alla chiamata di Dio e alla missione affidata, animati dallo spirito apostolico del Fondatore, San Luigi Maria di Montfort (cf. II, 2.1).

Pertanto, dopo attenta lettura del testo presentato, tenuto conto delle correzioni apportate a seguito dei suggerimenti indicati dalla Congregazione per il Clero con lettera prot. N. 2021-0848 del 10 maggio 2021, questo Dicastero esprime il suo beneplacito e, per quanto di sua competenza, approva il testo presentato in lingua italiana, ritenendo il contenuto conforme all'insegnamento del magistero ecclesiale e alle norme canoniche. Una volta stampato il testo, Le chiediamo, Rev. Padre, di inviarcelo copia.

L'occasione mi è gradita per porgere a Lei e a tutti i religiosi della Compagnia di Maria – Missionari Monfortani, fraterni saluti che accompagnano con l'augurio di pace e bene nel Signore.

  
P. Pierluigi Nava, S.M.M.  
Sottosegretario

✠ José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.  
Arcivescovo Segretario

(Con allegato: *testo approvato*)

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SG 43-2022

**To the Missionaries of the Company of Mary**

The undersigned Father Luiz Augusto STEFANI, Superior General of the Montfort Missionaries, with joy

**communicates**


that the Montfortian Ratio Formationis, volume II, already approved by the Ordinary General Council on 5 June 2021, received confirmation with approval from the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life with the Decree of 29 July 2022 (Prot. N. 58787/2022). Furthermore

**declares**

that from today its use comes into force and that the Italian language edition is to be considered "typica" and official for translations into other languages.

Rome, August 15, 2022

Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary



Fr. Luiz Augusto STEFANI  
Superior General

## PREFACE

In our hands the volume II of the Montfortian Ratio Formationis (Ratio II). The result of many years of research, studies and updates in the field of pedagogy for religious formation in the various stages, Ratio II succeeds in giving continuity and specifying the itinerary, the path and the inspiring principles of volume I.

Each chapter introduces us to concrete steps for the accompaniment of candidates and religious in each of the stages of formation. Without forgetting the need for the formation of the formators themselves so that candidates have a serious and quality accompaniment. Ratio II offers us step by step a long journey of personal, community and congregational integration in the Company of Mary.

Young candidates come to us, generally moved by faith, eager to have a profound experience of God. They want to deepen this experience in the Company of Mary. In many cases, especially in the international field of training, they have had to overcome cultural, social and family resistance. Hence the need for a clear proposal, guidelines and rules that allow them to identify where they are and what awaits them in the immediate future.

Certainly, throughout the formative process, young and old alike continue to feel the tension between the real desire, the motivations of religious life and the weakness of their own response: "Let us carry this treasure in clay pots" (2 Corinthians 4, 7). The process of integration in the various stages of formation,

in addition to all the efforts of the formators, must be a constant allowing oneself to be surprised by the power of God's grace.

We believe that Ratio II, as an indispensable tool for guiding the pedagogy of formation in the Company of Mary, is equally useful for understanding that the desired integration is a complex dynamic, psychological and at the same time theological, with a view to completing, attracting, creating unity, to gather and correct, but also to enlighten and warm the candidates for religious life and Montfortian religious on the path of ongoing formation.

That St. Louis-Marie de Montfort continue to inspire us to have good missionaries in the Company of Mary for the service of the Church, for the service of the Gospel.

Fr. Luiz Augusto STEFANI, SMM  
Superior General

## ABBREVIATIONS

### DOCUMENTS OF THE POPES

- AL Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*. Apostolic Exhortation, 2016.
- CV Francis, *Christus vivit*. Apostolic Exhortation, 2019.
- EE John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*. Encyclical Letter on the Eucharist in its relationship with the Church, 2003.
- EG Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*. Apostolic Exhortation, 2013.
- EN Paul VI, *Evangelii nuntiandi*. Apostolic Exhortation, 1975.
- FR John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, Encyclical Letter on the Relationship between Faith and Reason, 1998.
- FT Francis, *Fratelli tutti*. Encyclical Letter on fraternity and social friendship, 2020.
- GE Francis, *Gaudete et exultate*. Apostolic Exhortation, 2018.
- LS Francis, *Laudato si*. Encyclical Letter on the care of the common home, 2015.
- LC Paul VI, *Laudis canticum*. Apostolic Constitution on the Renewed Divine Office, 1970.
- MV Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*. Bull of indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, 2015.
- PDV John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis*. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Formation of Priests in Present Circumstances, 1992.
- RVM *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*. Apostolic Letter on the Holy Rosary, John Paul II, 2002.
- SCa Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum caritatis*. Apostolic Exhortation on the Eucharist, source and summit of the life and mission of the Church, 2007.
- VC John Paul II, *Vita Consecrata*. Apostolic Exhortation, 1996.
- VDQ Francis, *Vultum Dei Quaerere*. Apostolic Constitution, 2016.
- VG Francis, *Veritatis gaudium*. Apostolic Constitution on Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties, 2017.

## OTHER DOCUMENTS OF THE HOLY SEE

- CIC Code of Canon Law, 1983.
- CTB Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Contemplate*. To consecrated men and women on the path of beauty, 2015.
- CTV Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Proclaim*. To consecrated men and women witnesses of the Gospel among peoples, 2016.
- DC Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, *Directory for Catechesis*, 2020.
- DO Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Homiletic Directory*, 2015.
- SDC Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2004.
- FLC Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Fraternal Life in Community*, 1994.
- FLS Congregation for Catholic Education, *Instruction on liturgical formation in seminaries*, 1979.
- FP Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *The gift of fidelity and the joy of perseverance*, 2020.
- FTD Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Faciem tuam, Domine requiram*. The service of authority and obedience - Instruction, 2008.
- HP Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Letter Homosexualitatis problema*, 1986.
- IGMR *Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani*, Editio typica tertia, 2000.
- IMF Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church*, 2015.
- MMD Congregation for the Clergy, *The priest minister of divine mercy*. An aid for confessors and spiritual directors, 2011.
- OEC Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guidelines for the formation of priestly celibacy*, 1974.
- OLM Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *General Introduction to the Lectionary*, January 21, 1981<sup>2</sup>.
- PES Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guidelines on the Preparation of Educators in Seminaries*, 1993.



- PMF Congregation for Catholic Education, [Directives on the Formation of Seminarians Concerning Problems Related to Marriage and the Family](#), 1995.
- PoI Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Potissimum Institutioni*. Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes, 1990.
- PPL Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Directory of Popular Piety and Liturgy. Principles and Guidelines*, 2001.
- PTO Congregation for Catholic Education, *Instruction concerning the criteria for the discernment of vocations with regard to Persons with Homosexual Tendencies in view of their admission to the seminary and to holy orders*, 2005.
- Starting afresh Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Starting afresh from Christ*. A renewed commitment to consecrated life in the third millennium, 2002.
- RFIS Congregation for the Clergy, *The gift of the priestly vocation. Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, 2016.
- RE *Rituale Romanum*. Rite of communion outside Mass and Eucharistic worship, 1979.
- RP *Rituale Romanum*. Rite of Penance, 1973.
- SCS Congregation for Catholic Education, Guide to the Training of Future Priests concerning the Instruments of Social Communication, 1986.
- SDS Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guidelines for the study of the Church's social doctrine in priestly formation*, 1988.
- UCP Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guidelines for the use of psychology in the admission and formation of candidates for the priesthood*, 2008.
- VMF Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Virgin Mary in intellectual and spiritual formation*, 1988.
- VN Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *New wine in new wineskins*. The consecrated life and its ongoing challenges since Vatican II - Guidelines, 2017.

## WRITINGS OF SAINT LOUIS-MARIE DE MONTFORT

H	Hymns
L	Letters
LCM	Letter to the members of the Company of Mary
LEW	The love of eternal Wisdom
LFC	Letter to the Friends of the Cross
PM	Prayer for Missionaries
RM	Rule of the Missionary Priests of the Company of Mary
S	Book of Sermons
TD	True Devotion to Mary

## BIOGRAPHIES OF SAINT LOUIS-MARIE DE MONTFORT

BESNARD Besnard, Ch., *Vie de Messire Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort*, Centre international Montfortain, Rome 1981.

BLAIN Blain, J.B., *Abrégé de la vie de Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort*, Centre International Montfortain, Rome 1973.

## DOCUMENTS OF THE COMPANY OF MARY

Basic criteria	<i>Basic criteria for the treatment of cases of abuse of minors and sexual misconduct with adults</i> , Rome 2015.
C	Constitutions
DA22	<i>Administrative Directory</i> , Rome 2022.
DE22	<i>Directory for the Administration of Temporal Goods</i> , Rome 2022.
MFP	<i>The Montfortian Family in Prayer</i> , Rome 2014.
Ratio I	<i>Walking together... in the footsteps of the poor apostles. Formation in Montfortian life - Volume I: inspirational principles</i> , Rome 2005.
Ratio II	<i>Walking together... in the footsteps of the poor Apostles. Formation in Montfortian life - Volume II: general guidelines and norms</i> , Rome 2022.
RRP	<i>Rite of Religious Profession</i> , Rome 2022.
St.	General Statutes

- GL 1986 G. LEMIRE, *Montfortian prayer e availability at the service of the Church*. Circular Letter, 1986.
- GL 1989 G. LEMIRE, *The exigencies of the formation*. Circular Letter, 1989.
- GL 1990 G. LEMIRE, *Intolerance a characteristic of our age*. Circular Letter, 1990.
- GL 1991 G. LEMIRE, *Montfortian Mission*. Circular Letter, 1991.
- GL 1992 G. LEMIRE, *Ongoing formation*. Circular Letter, 1992.
- LAS 2021 L. A. STEFANI, *The participation of Lay Associates in the montfortian mission*. Circular Letter, 2021.
- SB 2007 S. BREMBILLA, *The Wisdom, depth and power of allowing ourselves to be accompanied*. Circular Letter, 2007, in: *Écho Montfortain* 528.
- SB 2008 S. BREMBILLA, *Our resources at the service of the mission*. Circular Letter, 2008, in: *Écho Montfortain* 532.
- SB 2009 S. BREMBILLA, *Fraternal International Communities at the service of the Mission*. Circular Letter, 2009, in: *Écho Montfortain* 535.
- SB 2013 S. BREMBILLA, *Mary teacher of humanity*. To be formed and to grow in the footsteps of Jesus in the school of Mary. Circular Letter, 2013, in: *Écho Montfortain* 547.
- WJC 1996 W. J. CONSIDINE, *Montfortian Apostolic Community*. Circular Letter, 1996.
- WJC 1998 W. J. CONSIDINE, *Temporary and Perpetual profession. From Novitiate to Definitive Commitment*. Circular Letter, 1998.
- WJC 2000 W. J. CONSIDINE, *The Message of Pope John Paul II and the Montfortian Missionaries of Today*. Circular Letter, 2000.



## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Genesis of the Montfortian Ratio Formationis

With the intention of founding a Company of missionaries, in 1713 Father de Montfort went to Paris at the seminary of Saint-Esprit to ask the superiors to take care of the formation of young people who have a vocation for the mission of the Company of Mary. The seal of this agreement is a wooden statue of the Virgin Mary who gathers twelve small figures of priests under her mantle who “with their hands joined and their gaze fixed on that good mother, seem to be happy to be admitted into her Company” (BESNARD, p. 128).

Montfort did not transmit anything specific about the formation of his missionaries, although he was concerned that they be well prepared, so much so that he left a rule for them in the Parisian seminary which probably corresponds to the text of the Manuscript Rule (cf. *ibidem*).

The formation process begins in the Company of Mary in 1872, following a “missionary urgency”, that is the request of the bishop of Haiti, Mons Guilloux to the Montfort missionaries to take charge of his seminary in France where to train young French people for the Haiti mission. The seminary which arose in Pont-Château was, therefore, not of the Company of Mary.

However, a few years later the Congregation questioned whether it might not be appropriate to have its own seminary for the formation of future Montfortians and from there, in just over half a century, the so-called “apostolic schools” were born. It was a concern of the General Chapters to standardize the formation of all Montfortian candidates, even if we can only speak of a real Ratio Formationis since 1987.

### **1.1. Historical overview of the Montfortian Ratio Formationis**

The Company of Mary has not always had a Ratio Formationis in the true sense of the term. In the past, for example in the Constitutions of 1949, the two parts of the same book entitled Constitutions and Customs contained elements that were used for the formation of candidates.

Like all other Congregations, the Company of Mary also used the Apostolic Constitution *Sedes Sapientiae* of Pius XII (1956), with the attached General Statutes for the religious, clerical and apostolic formation of clerics in the states of perfection, as a basis for the drafting of a formation project.

In 1959 the General Council prepared a draft in Latin and consulted all the Provinces on the contents of the text. After the amendments made, the first Montfortian Ratio Formationis was approved by the Congregation for Religious on 31 July 1961 and was officially published, also in Latin, in 1962 under the title of *Ratio Studiorum presbyterorum Societatis Mariae Montfortanae*. The title shows that it was a study program (*studiorum*) and only for priests (*presbyterorum*): a disciplinary program for formation to the priesthood, in which references to Montfortian traits were reduced to a minimum (cf. nos. 100 and 180). In fact, it was the study of the Constitutions that offered the specifically Montfortian to young candidates.

In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, and especially of the document *Perfectae Caritatis* document, the Company of Mary also renewed its Rule of life (Montfortian Today). At the same time, the General Administration undertook a serious study on Montfortian formation in the Congregation, involving the confreres directly involved in this field.

It was the Ordinary General Council with a letter of December 1982, at the invitation of the 1981 General Chapter and the Extraordinary General Council (EGC) of 1982, that asked all the Entities that had young people in formation to send the formation plan for the Novitiate and the period of temporary vows.

After a careful reading, the 1983 EGC sent a summary of the material to all the formators so that they could study it and compare their educational action with that of the other Entities. A questionnaire addressed to formators collected further data on formation and vocational pastoral programs. A Dossier on Formation began to take shape, presented to 1984 EGC, concerning the Novitiate, the period of temporary vows and ongoing formation. From there, work began that led to the drafting of the provisional text of Montfortian Ratio Formationis (1986), sent to the members of the General Chapter 1987. The motivations for the Montfortian Ratio Formationis, presented in the first three numbers: 1) to the Church's request regarding formation; 2) highlight the specific features of Montfortian formation; 3) offer guidance to all actors in the formation process. Two major parts follow the introduction: the first deals with the general principles of Montfortian formation and the second with the stages of formation.

During the General Chapter the structure and division of the document remain unchanged and, after the necessary amendments, the Ratio Formationis Montfortana is approved on

July 17, 1987. Strictly speaking it is defined as a *directoire*, that is a code annexed to the Constitutions, in which there are norms that correspond to the current time, to the physical and psychological conditions of the members and to particular circumstances.

## **1.2. Necessity of a new Montfortian Ratio Formationis**

Although the 1987 document was good, we realize that since then the world, the Church and the Congregation have changed a lot.

In the opening report of the 2005 General Chapter, The Superior General Fr. William Considine emphasized above all internationality and the new way of understanding and welcoming the riches of the charism by Montfortian Missionaries.

Furthermore, after 1987, two very important Apostolic Exhortations for formation in the priestly and religious life appeared, namely *Pastores Dabo Vobis* in 1992 and *Vita Consecrata* in 1996. Other relevant documents for Montfortian formation were the Circular letters of the then Superior General Fr. William Considine such as that of 1998 entitled “Temporary and Perpetual Profession”.

Decisive for a new approach to the Montfortian Ratio Formationis and a new drafting of it was the recommendation of John Paul II to the Institutes of Consecrated Life “to draw up as soon as possible a *ratio institutionis*, that is, a formation program inspired by their particular charism, presenting clearly and in all its stages the course to be followed in order to assimilate fully the spirituality of the respective Institute” (VC 68).

These premises clarify why within the General Council it was decided to begin the path for a new formation project of the Congregation. The following steps led to this new text:



*2001 Rome (February 4-25):* international meeting of formators at the scholasticate. Subsequently, the General Council constitutes a drafting committee composed of Fr. Ivo Libralato (General Assistant), Fr. Donald La Salle, Fr. Olivier Maire, Fr. Jean-Louis Courchesne and Fr. Marco Pasinato.

*2001 Rome (10-15 November):* the Committee studies the dossier containing the material of the meeting of formators and decides that the document on formation will be in two volumes: the first will present the inspirational principles of Montfortian formation, while the second, with a more juridical and normative viewpoint, will contain the specific aspects of the different stages of formation.

In addition, efforts will be made to maintain the Montfortian inspiration so that the text can be addressed more easily and directly to all the confreres, young and old, engaged in the various fields of ministry. Central to this Formation Project is the idea of “ongoing formation”: formation as a path of growth and conversion that lasts a lifetime.

The chosen title is: *Together ... in the footsteps of the poor Apostles*. A first draft is sent to the entire Congregation called: Project of a new Ratio Institutionis Montfortanae which collects the contents of the first volume. It is accompanied by a letter from the Superior General, dated 11 February 2002, which explains the new aspects of the formation project and the table of contents of the second volume.

### **1.3. First Volume (Ratio I - 2005)**

The chronological process that led to the publication of the first volume is as follows:

*2002 Rome (11-20 November):* the Committee collects the responses to the questionnaire sent to the Entities, integrating them into an amended draft that serves as the basis for a first draft in French.

*2003 Montreal (January - March):* first draft in French by Fr. Jean-Louis Courchesne, then submitted to the evaluation of a group of confreres.

*2003 Rome (November 17-21):* the Committee collects the contributions and observations of the confreres consulted. After the final revision, a definitive redaction in English is prepared by Fr. Donald La Salle.

*2004 Rome (December 8):* the Superior General Fr. William Considine promulgates the first volume of the Formation Project in Montfortian life, entitled “*Together ... in the Footsteps of the Poor Apostles*”. Formation in Montfortian life - Volume I: Inspirational Principles, Rome 2005 (Ratio I).

*2005 Rome (April - May):* the first volume is translated and published in 4 languages (French, English, Italian and Spanish) and is officially delivered to the Capitulants, during a celebration in the 2005 General Chapter. In the document of General Chapter, it is recommended to the new General Administration to apply the new Ratio. From this moment on, Ratio I is sent to all the confreres of the Congregation.

#### **1.4. Second Volume (Ratio II - 2022)**

The following chronology summarizes the process that led to the publication of the second volume:

*2002 Rome (11-20 November):* the members of the Committee subdivide the matter and by June 2003 a first draft is drawn up, sent to all the formators of the Congregation, for them to examine and present their observations.

*2003 Rome (17-21 November):* after taking into consideration the contributions of the formators, the Committee delivers the text to Fr. Josu Mirena Alday, Claretian, expert, for a contribution towards a methodological key. It was decided to await the publication and assimilation of the first volume of the Ratio before proceeding with the drafting of the second.

*2005 Rome, General Chapter:* in the Guidelines of the Chapter Acts it is recommended that the new General Administration draw up the second volume of the Montfortian Ratio Formationis. The General Administration appoints a Committee: Fr. Donald La Salle (General Assistant), Fr. Marco Pasinato, Fr. Alexandre Randriamiharisoa, Fr. Yoseph Putra Dwi Darma Watun.

*2011 Rome, General Chapter:* the second volume of the Montfortian Ratio Formationis is approved *ad experimentum* and is delivered to the Entities and houses of formation.

*2012-2016 Rome:* the General Administration organizes several international meetings for formators, making improvements and updates to the text *ad experimentum*. The application of the document takes place under the supervision of the General Commission for Formation composed of Fr. Jorge Enrique González Vásquez (General Assistant), Fr. Pierre Bonhommeau, Fr. Jos van den Bergh, Fr. Tom Poth, Fr. Luigi Gritti and Fr. Yoseph Putra Dwi Darma Watun.

*2017 Rome, General Chapter (1-21 May):* in the Acts of the Chapter the new General Administration is requested to publish the second volume of the Ratio “as soon as possible” (cf. GC 2017, Acts 9.4).

*2017 Rome (27 October):* the General Council establishes a Commission for formation, including confreres from all continents, with the task of implementing the recommendation of the General Chapter: Fr. Marco Pasinato (General Assistant), Fr. Luis Salvador Avila, Fr. Reni Joseph Punnappanal, Fr. Kristianus Jumi Ngampu and Fr. Jackson Fabius, later replaced by Fr. Louis John Nkukumila.

*2018 Rome (5-13 April):* the General Commission decides to proceed with the drafting starting from the text approved *ad experimentum* in 2011 and keeping in mind the following objectives: 1) continuity with the Montfortian inspiration and therefore with the first volume; 2) updating on the basis of new documents of the Magisterium of the Church, in particular the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* published in 2016 and the circular letters of the Superiors General; 3) consistency with the literary genre of a Ratio; 4) maintaining the general level of the document with respect to the more specific level of a local Ratio.

*2019 Rome (11 March):* at the suggestion of the Commission, the General Council appoints an Editing Committee of Fr. Marco Pasinato and Fr. Alfio Mandelli. The “typical edition” will be in Italian.

*2020 Rome (23-30 October):* the General Council examines the draft prepared by the Editing Committee. The text is translated into French and English to be submitted to expert reviewers in

various disciplines, in particular Canon law, Psychology and the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Adults.

*2021 (January):* receipt of the amendments of the various revisers.

*2021 (February-March):* revision of the text by the Congregation for the Clergy (Prot N. 0840/2021) and reception of the observations of the text made by Mgr. Jorge Carlos Patrón Wong, Secretary for Seminars at the Congregation of the Clergy.

*2021 (March-April):* sending of the text to the Superiors of the Entities for reading and observations in the Entities.

*2021 (7 May):* reception of the reactions from the Entities at the Extraordinary General Council.

*2022 (29 July):* the text is approved by the Decree of the Congregation for Consecrated Life and the Institutes of Apostolic Life (Prot. N. 58787/2022).

*2022 Rome (15 August):* the Superior General Fr. Luiz Augusto Stefani, promulgates the second volume of the Formation Project in Montfortian life (Ratio II), entitled: *Together... in the footsteps of the poor Apostles*. Formation in Montfortian Life - Volume II: Guidelines and Norms, Rome 2022, and orders its publication in six languages (English, French, Indonesian Italian, Portuguese, Spanish).

## 2. Fundamental Characteristics and Contents

### 2.1. Overall Look

In continuity with the first volume (Ratio I), this volume (Ratio II) offers unifying and gradual directives and contents for initial and ongoing Montfortian formation, to ensure that the candidate and the missionary can grow in a free and ever new commitment to God's call and in the capacity to serve the Gospel in the contemporary world, animated by the apostolic spirit of St. Louis Marie de Montfort.

The first chapter, entitled *Continuity with Montfortian Inspiration*, presents in an organic and synthetic way the specific notes, dimensions and means of Montfortian formation, drawing on what has already been indicated in Ratio I.

The second chapter, entitled *The Stages of Formation Throughout One's Life*, describes the stages of initial and ongoing formation, outlining the nature, objectives and content of the journey of growth in the different dimensions of the person and the criteria for evaluation.

The third chapter entitled *Formation of Superiors and Formators* follows, with guidelines for the specific formation of leadership at the service of mission and formation. Ratio II outlines the portrait of the formators according to the different stages in which they are called to carry out their service.

The fourth chapter, entitled *Particular Issues*, offers criteria and norms for the discernment and accompaniment of specific situations.

The fifth chapter contains the *Organization of Studies*. It does not offer a list of subjects for study, but indicates areas of study for a fruitful integration with Montfort's spirituality and charism, taking into account the need to prepare adequately for the Montfortian mission.

In the sixth and last chapter, entitled *Administrative Procedures*, Ratio II recalls the administrative practice that superiors and formators are required to follow for an effective service to formation in the Company of Mary.

## **2.2. The Montfortian Breath**

The characteristic note of this document is undoubtedly its Montfortian breath. The continuous attention to placing the formation process within the horizon of the Montfortian charism and spirituality prevents Ratio II from being generic and favors its specificity.

Montfortian inspiration is fueled by the constant reference to the experience and writings of the Founder, in particular *The Prayer for Missionaries*. In it, St. Louis Marie de Montfort brings the Montfortian vocation back to its source: the mind, the hands, the heart of the Trinity (cf. PM 1). It also offers the point of tension for the entire formative process: letting oneself be possessed, "seduced" by the love of Jesus Wisdom and becoming "*Liberos*" for a new belonging, for a service, for a donating oneself in the mission.

In the same *Prayer for Missionaries*, the Founder of the Company of Mary gives the traits of the apostolic man. Particularly suggestive and stimulating is the choice to organize the five dimensions which, taken together, outline and structure the identity of the Montfortian missionary and distinguish an apostolic

life, around the icon of the eye and of the gaze (cf. PM 21- 22). It is the common thread for a wise balance and an integral vision of initial and ongoing formation that is not identified with just one aspect, to the detriment of the others. It is surprising, for its topicality, that the first gaze to be formed for Louis-Marie de Montfort is the human one, for a maturity in the sign of a disinterested love and of authentic and free relationships. It refers to the urgency, today, of paying particular attention to formation in the human dimension, because the great challenge for the future of religious life, including that of Montfortian, is to have consecrated persons and priests profoundly human.

The Montfortian breath is also nourished by the vital reference to the Virgin Mary, in the various stages of initial and ongoing formation. “*Da Matri tuae liberos*” (PM 6): the relationship with Mary, Mother and spiritual guide, marks the path of being conformed to Christ Wisdom which lasts a lifetime, within a generative process! This project of formation for Montfortian life is nourished by the awareness that no one more than Mary realizes the full conformity of the Montfortian candidate and missionary to Christ her Son who dwells in her. By introducing Mary within the space of their own interiority, they receive the same thought and the same sentiments of Christ (cf. 1Cor 2:15-16; Phil 2:5ss) and his heart in order to be able to live and love like him. Mary is, thus, in the formative process “the perfect tree” that produces the fruit Jesus Christ (cf. SM 78); she is the perfect way to go to Jesus Christ (cf. TD 55; 139); the model (cf. TD 46) and the perfect mold to faithfully reproduce the traits of her Son (cf. SM 16).

Finally, the *Love of Eternal Wisdom* becomes a guide throughout the formation process, in particular in the discernment and evaluation of a Montfortian vocation (cf. WJC\_1998 16).



### **2.3. The Horizon: the Missionary-Disciple**

This text, drawing on the wealth of the most recent documents of the Popes, the Holy See and the Company of Mary, acknowledges the new sensitivities that have emerged in recent years regarding formation in consecrated life and the priesthood. In particular, assuming the “disciple” status of the formative journey, it clarifies that initial and ongoing formation are a single and uninterrupted disciple journey (cf. RFIS 54), which begins with baptism and is perfected with the other sacraments of Christian initiation, is considered as the center of one's life at the entrance into the Company of Mary and continues throughout one's life. In this sense, formation is one.

The vocation always arises from an encounter of love for Jesus and for the People of God. It follows that the Montfortian religious and priest is always between Jesus and the People. The other characteristic note of this document is, therefore, the perspective of a formation starting from the mission and the People of God.

To discern, welcome and accompany candidates and religious who can insert themselves today in a vision of the missionary Church and become an integral part of its “outgoing dynamism”, the formation project is inspired by the icon of the missionary-disciple (cf. EG 120). The Church, in fact, and with it and in it also the Company of Mary (cf. BLAIN, n. 80) was born “outgoing”, that is, missionary. Ratio II is proposed as an aid to the formation of missionary-disciples with a heart that burns for the Master and for the People of God, always on the way, prophets who awaken the desire for Wisdom in the depths of humanity. Certainly not religious and parlor priests, calm and settled, resting in their own well-being, lukewarm who prefer the quiet life.

## 2.4. Some Special Attention

### *Formation of Superiors and Formators*

The document dedicates an entire chapter to the formation of leadership, in which it does not limit itself to offering indications to those who directly carry out a service in the formation of candidates for religious life and for the priesthood, but also deals with the formation of Superiors.

At its basis is the awareness that formation is a process in which everyone is inserted, each in his own role and starting from his condition and the mission received. No one is exempt from the configuration to Christ and this is even more true for superiors and formators.

The quality of the service of authority and formation depends on the adequate preparation of those called to exercise it. Superiors and formators first of all must have the physiognomy of the disciple of the Lord, accompanied by their own human and spiritual traits.

Specifically for formators, Ratio II recognizes that God is the divine potter who shapes the sentiments of the Son in the Montfortian candidates, religious and presbyters, who are asked for “teachability” (*docibilitas*) before his work. Now, the hands of the Lord work through those who, in the Church, are called to be formators in religious and priestly and of those who are involved in ongoing formation.

### *Formation and protection of minors and vulnerable adults*

The Church has now made a firm commitment to the fight against the sad phenomenon of sexual abuse, but also abuse of power and of conscience for which many clerics and consecrated persons have been responsible over time. Every member of the Company

of Mary is also called to do everything possible so that abuses never happen again.

This document gives its contribution, with a series of indications to be integrated in the stages of the initial and ongoing formation process.

In particular, they concern the seriousness of discernment before entering the formative journey, the insistence on human formation in the psychosocial and psychosexual aspects of a healthy life, training in the prevention of sexual abuse which implies preparation, study and knowledge of the underlying dynamics, accompaniment of candidates who have experienced abuse.

Very valuable is the contribution of Ratio II regarding the criteria for the acceptance or dismissal from the formative path of candidates who have committed crimes or live problematic relations with minors and vulnerable adults.

### *Organization of studies*

The proposal of the Montfortian formation project aims at the growth of religious and priests who respond to the needs of the Church of our time, capable of missionary impulse and evangelizing drive, in a multi-cultural and multi-religious context.

For this reason, Ratio II has chosen to favor “ministerial” subjects and disciplines whose knowledge is more specifically connected to the needs of the ministry, evangelization and pastoral charity.

## **3. General Rules**

### **3.1. Authority of the Document**

To the extent that each Montfortian appropriates the inspiration of the Founder, he will be able to increase the value of this second volume as a guide in the process of Montfortian formation and will

welcome the rules contained therein as authoritative. In fact, in this document there are various kinds of orientations - spiritual, pedagogical, canonical - and real norms that are not rigidly separated, although the indicative or prescriptive value of each step is made explicit.

### **3.2. General Ratio and Local Ratio**

This document belongs to the general level of the Congregation. On the basis of this document, each Entity will have to draw up a Local Ratio for initial and ongoing formation, which brings back and updates in its particular context the provisions of the General Ratio. To this purpose it will contain the following elements:

- a) a syntenic description of the social, cultural and ecclesial context in which Montfortians exercise their ministry;
- b) a description and development of the strategies and means to be adopted for the care of the dimensions of formation, contextualized in the reality of the country;
- c) the organization of studies;
- d) a summary of any international collaboration agreements for initial or ongoing formation.

### **3.3. Application of the Document**

This document is fully applied in all Entities of the Company of Mary, together with the Local Ratio prepared by the Entity and approved by the Superior General. Further revisions and due approvals will have to be periodically carried out and requested, in case it seems necessary. The norms of the general Document and their particular applications must be included in the Local Ratio and in the formation programs of the Entities.

## **Chapter I - CONTINUITY WITH THE MONTFORTIAN INSPIRATION**

1. The first volume of the Montfortian Ratio Formationis (Ratio I) presented the principles and the spirit of Montfortian formation, as well as the dimensions and means that help to become more and more Missionaries of the Company of Mary.

Aware that formation is a task for everybody, Ratio I has also dealt with the aspect of organization and coordination of formation, in its agents and levels of responsibility (cf. Ratio I 180-221).

The first chapter of this second volume takes up its contents in a synthetic and systematic way.

### **1. GUIDING CRITERIA OF THE MONTFORTIAN FORMATION**

#### **1.1. Formation of the apostolic man**

2. “Montfort desired us to be missionaries” (C 8). Since mission is the vital element of the Montfortian vocation, the entire formative process is aimed at maturing the traits of the apostolic man, in all dimensions of the person, and at acquiring an apostolic spirit (cf. Ratio I 64) according to the four constitutive and inseparable elements of Montfortian mission: “Evangelization”, “Mary”, “Availability”, “Acting together” (cf. C 63b). Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort in his experience and in his foundational writings gave the characteristic traits of the apostolic man. The formative journey is inspired by them, rereading them in the light of today’s Church and world (cf. Ratio I 119-122).

## **1.2. Formation as a response to the attraction of Grace**

3. “There is a heaven that allures us”, saint Louis-Marie de Montfort loved to sing (cf. H 155,1). At the beginning of formation there is a seduction of Grace, which is intertwined with the desire of the human heart and with its longing for the fullness of life (cf. Ratio I 9). The whole formative process, both initial and ongoing, is a response of the disciple to the movement of Wisdom which “makes her rounds, seeking those worthy of her” (LEW 4; cf. Ratio I p. 18). It favors a personal encounter with eternal and incarnate Wisdom, as a vital center around which to integrate the many fragments of one's history and person into unity and find one's own identity and truth.

## **1.3. Formation “at the school of Mary”**

4. Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort, on his conformation to Jesus Christ, eternal and incarnate Wisdom, encountered the maternal role of the Virgin Mary (cf. Ratio I 146). He experienced that “we advance more in a brief period of submission to Mary and dependence on her than in whole years of self-will and self-reliance” (TD 155). Like the beloved disciple, each person in formation takes Mary with him, introduces her into his spiritual and emotional world and throws himself into her, the great mold of God (cf. SM 17), to be transformed into Jesus Christ. In his formative journey he lets himself be guided by Mary (cf. Ratio I 13.154) and remains constantly under her maternal gaze (cf. Ratio I 166).

## **1.4. Formation in the paschal dynamism**

5. To reach full maturity in Christ Jesus, it is necessary to pass through death and be reborn to new life (cf. WJC\_2000 7). The glorious cross is, therefore, the fixed point in the formation

process. In the formative journey, as “disciple of Wisdom”, one must expect to be cut, roughened and chiseled by the hammer of the cross (cf. Ratio I 17; LFC 28), in order to have the form of Jesus, which is the form of life given, delivered and offered.

### **1.5. Specific Montfortian formation**

6. The path of formation, however original, unique and unrepeatable, is always inspired by the example and intuitions of saint Louis-Marie de Montfort (cf. Ratio I 5). By valuing this charismatic heritage at every stage of life, formation helps to “grow in the image of a real Montfortian, so that Montfort would recognize in us those disciples whom he yearned, waited and ardently prayed for” (Ratio I 30).

### **1.6. Incarnated and “open” formation**

7. “Montfort desired a Company, gathered from the nations, under the guidance of Mary, ready to build the Kingdom of God [...]; he dreamed of a group of missionaries who would live together, overcoming national and cultural barriers” (Ratio I 222). The Founder's intuition commits to safeguard an open and incarnated formation in various environments and cultures where the Company of Mary is present. The formation is situated in the perspective of an open world and a heart open to the world, aiming at consciously cultivating a fraternity without borders that implies education in dialogue, discovery of reciprocity and mutual enrichment (cf. FT 103).

### **1.7. Ongoing formation**

8. The path of transformation in Jesus Christ is a process of continuous assimilation of the sentiments of eternal and incarnate Wisdom towards the Father (cf. Ratio I 33). Formation, therefore, by its nature, is a lifelong process since “the consecrated person can never claim to have completely brought to life the “new creature” who, in every circumstance of life, reflects the very mind of Christ” (VC 69). We are always disciples and formation is configured as a unique and uninterrupted path of discipleship (cf. RFIS 54), in which we let ourselves be molded by the Holy Spirit.

### **1.8. Formation to teachability (“*docibilitas*”)**

9. It is important that initial formation be balanced with ongoing formation, creating in the subject the willingness to let himself be formed by everyday life (cf. VC 69; cf. Ratio I 146). It is a question of forming a docile conscience, capable of obedient listening, a wise and intelligent heart (cf. 1 Kings 3:9.12b), which knows how to seize all the opportunities for growth hidden in situations, even in negative ones, and discern the will to God in words and events, with the desire to conform to Him in freedom (cf. Lk 2:19.51b; Ratio I 147). The attitude of “*docibilitas*” presupposes a fundamentally positive feeling towards reality, oneself and others. In the process of formation, it is expressed in a humble, flexible, receptive and enterprising attitude.

### **1.9. Gradual formation**

10. The Holy Spirit, present in the hearts, knows the times of maturation of each one. Montfort also needed time to become what he became (cf. Ratio I 28). Respect for personal rhythms is an indispensable condition for ensuring a gradual growth of the person in his various dimensions, progressively integrating attitudes and behaviors. The proposal of the formative contents is also gradual, which accentuates the specific aspects of each phase,



without neglecting the others. Each stage of formation is a continuation of the previous one and preparation for the next.

### **1.10. Personalized formation**

11. The person in his unrepeatable individuality, on the one hand characterized by gifts and riches and shaped by grace, on the other marked by limits and fragility (cf. RFIS 28), is always at the center of the formative process, as the one first responsible for his growth (cf. Ratio I 188). A personalized formation starts from the potential, the riches and the limits of each one: with the person and not in spite of the person.

### **1.11. Integral formation**

12. Completeness and harmony form the apostolic man, as a balanced person. Formation in missionary wisdom requires the integration of the various dimensions of the human person (cf. Ratio I 34), which make up and structure the identity of the Montfortian religious. Formation must therefore involve the whole person, in every aspect of his or her individuality, in behavior as well as in intentions (cf. VC 65).

### **1.12. Formation based on experience**

13. Authentic training ensures that everyone “acts according to a conscious and free choice, that is, personally moved and induced from within” (AL 267). This is why it does not simply deal with behavior, but favors the maturation of beliefs and decisions. This happens thanks to the experience that embodies the values in life and in everyday situations. For the experience to bear the fruit of a transformation and an inner freedom, it is important that it be crossed with reflection, brought in prayer, following the example

of the Virgin Mary, who “treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart” (Lk 2:19).

### **1.13. Formation in relationship**

14. Formation will be effective insofar as it gives importance to relationships that generate communion (cf. RFIS 50; cf. FT 87). The first volume of the Ratio presents a long list of actors involved in formation with which the person enters into a formative relationship: the Trinity, the Blessed Virgin, Montfort, the ecclesial community, the General Council and the Superior of the Entity, the community, the formators, the spiritual director, the laity and the poor (cf. Ratio I 184-202). A formation in relationship is opposed to an individualistic vision which, centering all interest in the progress of one's person, can fall into self-referentiality. Every authentic relationship, lived on the basis of one's deepest identity, is an opportunity to be formed and to let oneself be formed. On the contrary, any formative action that is not implemented within vital relationships risks to become disembodied and self-centered, hence sterile.

## **2. DIMENSIONS OF THE MONTFORTIAN FORMATION**

15. In the process of initial and ongoing formation, five dimensions interact simultaneously and each of them “is aimed at ‘transforming’ or ‘assimilating’ the heart in the image of the heart of Christ” (RFIS 89). The *Prayer for Missionaries* of saint Louis-Marie de Montfort, nos. 18-22, illuminates each of these dimensions.

## **2.1. Human dimension - They will have a man's eye (cf. PM 21)**

16. Our Founder asks for the gift of persons who are free of the freedom of the children of God, who have a human eye towards themselves and their neighbor (cf. PM 21; Ratio I 49). The decisive factor in the path of configuration to Jesus Christ, incarnate Wisdom, is a profound humanity. For this reason, “from the very beginning, and throughout his life, the consecrated person will have to be concerned with conquering and nurturing an authentic maturity, which makes him a profoundly human being” (cf. Ratio I 49). The care for human growth will necessarily take on different characteristics in the various seasons of life (cf. Ratio I 51).

## **2.2. Spiritual dimension - They will have an eagle's eye for you (cf. PM 21)**

17. The apostolic man will have an eagle's eye (cf. PM 21), that is, he will not be flattened on the horizon of earthly things, but will be able to penetrate the sky and keep his gaze fixed on God, without fearing the vertigo of great altitudes. For this reason, the apostles of the latter times will be “very united with God”, writes our Founder in TD 56. The whole formative process, both initial and ongoing, aims at favoring a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, cultivating the contemplative dimension of life and the loving relationship with God the Father. This implies taking care of one's interiority, allowing oneself to be drawn to the level of the heart, where Jesus first invites us to enter (cf. Mt 6:6). Formation in the spiritual dimension consolidates the experience of communion with God and of following Christ, Wisdom incarnate, known and searched with love (cf. Ratio I 55).

### **2.3. Intellectual dimension - You will give them your wisdom (cf. PM 22)**

18. Formation in the intellectual dimension is not simply reduced to the achievement of academic qualifications and professional skills, but is savory and tasteful experience of God and truth (cf. PM 22; LEW 13). It has the purpose to integrate studies into the spiritual journey in order to reach a knowledge that comes from the heart (cf. Ratio I 60). Intellectual and cultural formation develops the ability to think clearly and critically in order to be able to distinguish true from false wisdom (cf. Ratio I 59). It responds to the urgency of embodying the announcement of the good news in the complexity of history; it prepares to face the challenges involving the Church and the Company of Mary, called to account for the hope that animates it. Intellectual formation aims at the continuous development of the aptitudes and talents required by the mission of evangelization (cf. Ratio I 60).

### **2.4. Apostolic dimension - They will have a lion's eye for your enemies and an ox's eye for themselves (cf. PM 21)**

19. The apostolic man will have a lion's eye and frown for his enemies, that is, an ardent zeal and the “parrhesia” or boldness to affirm the truth and denounce evil (cf. PM 21). He will also have an ox's eye for himself, that is, the strength to bear the weight of apostolic labors with patience and constancy, renouncing comforts and conveniences, accepting the hardships of an apostolic life that is neither sedentary nor lover of quietness (cf. PM 21; RM 2).

Formation in the apostolic dimension is not reducible “to an apprenticeship of some pastoral technique. By encouraging growth in being conformed to the mind of Christ, apostle of the Father, it aims at developing an ever-deeper communion with his pastoral concern” (Ratio I 67). Furthermore, it nourishes apostolic

love and passion for the Gospel, for the Church and the evangelizing mission of the Company of Mary. In particular, it educates in the wisdom of the Montfortian missionary, which consists in the ability to always undertake something new for the Gospel, with the courage to risk for God by choosing to leave the safety of the Upper Room and move out of Jerusalem (cf. WJC\_1996 5).

**2.5. Dimension of religious life - They will be a selection of predestined men to be chosen by you from among those who are in the world (cf. PM 18)**

20. From the encounter with God's unique and all-encompassing love, the response of the Montfortian life of consecration arises. Desiring to imitate Jesus Wisdom poor, chaste and obedient (cf. Ratio I, 56), in the path of formation one becomes more and more "Liberos": people detached from the riches that pass away in order to embrace the One who is ever-lasting, with a heart free from all possessions to fully love God and others, people who choose humble obedience for themselves as their greatest freedom (cf. PM 7-10).

By consecrating himself to God alone, the apostolic man accepts to receive from Him brothers and sisters to be loved with authentic and personal love (cf. C 80). He is not, therefore, isolated or secluded; on the contrary, he recognizes himself as part of a congregation, an assembly, a company (cf. PM 18), within which he shares roots, values and mission.

The Montfortian charism nourishes initial and ongoing formation, promoting in each person an awareness of the gift received and its incarnation in an apostolic lifestyle, "following the example of the poor Apostles" (cf. RM 60.2).

Initial and ongoing formation, through a continuous assimilation of Montfortian spirituality (cf. Ratio I 36), offers the possibility of growing in the missionary identity of the Company of Mary. At

the same time, it makes the sense of belonging to our religious family grow, offering substantially the same contents to all, both priests and brothers (cf. Ratio I 44).

### **3. MEANS OF FORMATION**

21. In order to grow in conformity to Jesus Christ and achieve the formative objectives in the various dimensions of the Montfortian religious, those means which Christian tradition, the consecrated life and our religious family consider to be particularly effective are valued.

#### **3.1. General means to nourish the relationship with Jesus Christ**

22. **Spiritual reading of the Word of God (*Lectio divina*).** Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort always nourished his spiritual life with the constant reading and meditation of Sacred Scriptures (cf. Ratio I 38). The Scriptures, which are “like a letter written by a lover to win the affections of his loved one” (LEW 65), shape the heart of the Lord's disciple in the journey of formation. If read and meditated every day, both personally and in community, in an atmosphere of prayer, the Scriptures reveal in God the desire for our friendship and his promises which are fulfilled in Christ, they lead to a greater knowledge of Jesus (cf. Ratio I 83), trace the path of conversion (cf. Ratio I 84), and forward us to an authentic spirituality of communion (cf. Ratio I 86).

23. **Eucharistic celebration.** Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort contemplates in the Eucharist the other great sign that testifies to the desire that Wisdom has for us. It is “a marvelous way of dying and living at the same time, and of abiding with man until the end

of time” (LEW 71). The Eucharist is the source of ongoing formation which introduces into the paschal mystery, associates one’s own offering to that of Christ (cf. Ratio I 91.92), conforms to his total oblation (cf. VC 65) and unites everyone in a bond of communion and fraternity. For this reason, at the school of Mary, the “Eucharistic woman” and of our Founder, it is necessary to always reawaken “wonder” before the Eucharist (cf. EE 6.53-58), a mystery to be celebrated, lived, announced and offered to the world (cf. SCa; CCC 1322-1419).

**24. Eucharistic adoration.** Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort never tires of proposing the Blessed Sacrament as “a wonderful school / to learn in a short time / without expertise or words / the science of virtues / divine Wisdom!” (H 130,1). In order for the Eucharist to release all its strength, it needs a heart capable of adoring: “only in time spent before the Father, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, can this transformation take effect in us” (Ratio I 173). Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass also increases the desire to be with the Lord, opens up to prayer of intercession, thanksgiving and even reparation, and nourishes in us our oblation capacity (cf. RE 87-89).

**25. Sacrament of Reconciliation.** The regular and frequent celebration of the sacrament of Penance, both in individual and communal form, together with the daily practice of the examination of conscience (cf. GE 169), gives efficacy and continuity to the process of growth in the authenticity of life. The sacrament of Reconciliation forms a constant attitude to the conversion of the heart (cf. RP 7). It is through the grace of forgiveness that the passage from the logic of the old man to that of the new creation takes place, from false to true wisdom.

**26. Liturgical year.** The liturgical year is a precious itinerary for the progressive insertion in Christ and the gradual conformity to

Him. By celebrating with the Church, in the succession of liturgical times, the various mysteries of the person and work of the Redeemer, his unfathomable richness is deepened and evermore penetrated (cf. Eph 3:8). During the liturgical year, the devotions and forms of popular piety linked to it can strengthen spiritual growth and fraternal life (cf. PPL 1) and offer a concrete way of living centered in Christ, the only all that ought to suffice us (cf. TD 61).

**27. Liturgy of the Hours.** “Our daily pilgrimage is charged with the presence of God; the Liturgy of the Hours dictates the rhythm of our welcoming His presence” (Ratio I 15). Lived “in union with the prayer of the Church, either in community or individually, it expresses the call proper to consecrated persons to raise their hearts in praise and intercession” (VC 95). Harmonized with the other exercises of piety, it nourishes personal prayer and contemplation (cf. FLS 29). The progressive experience of the Liturgy of the Hours will help more and more to taste, understand and love the riches of the Office, which can revive, guide and express all Christian prayer (cf. LC 8).

**28. Personal prayer.** The apostolic vocation of Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort was “born out of contemplation and from there it was regenerated ceaselessly, in intense and prolonged moments of friendship, in intimate relationship, in communion with Christ” (Ratio I 87). The vocation of every Montfortian also matures in constant intimacy with Christ. Prayer – notes the Founder – “is for the soul what water is for the fish, the soul for the body, the breath for life!” (cf. S 494). The assimilation of the methods of personal prayer recommended by the Church, such as contemplative prayer (“*oraison*”), meditation, examination of conscience, and the appreciation of other models of prayer are a help to grow in intimacy with Christ (cf. Ratio I 16).



29. **Community prayer.** As a Company, a chosen group, an assembly (cf. PM 18), prayer has a community dimension. Lived together, it makes one heart and one soul, significantly expresses the identity of Montfortians and “helps us to remain faithful in the relationship with God over the years” (Ratio I 89).

30. **Marian devotion.** The Virgin Mary “is the divine mountain upon which we dwell. It is here with her that we learn to pray, to listen to Christ, and to enter into the mystery of his death and resurrection (cf. PM 25)” (Ratio I 13). Devotion to Mary, which is not reduced to external practices, but becomes a personal relationship, established in the heart (cf. TD 107; 108), opens up to a deeper awareness of God's love and to the transformation of oneself into Jesus Christ.

31. **Prayer of the Rosary.** The prayer of the Rosary, “grounded in tradition and yet at the same time open to creative expressions” (Ratio I 15), is a means of great value in the process of conformation to Jesus Christ. Through this contemplative prayer, the Virgin Mary introduces us in a natural way into the life of Christ and makes us “breathe in” his own sentiments (cf. RVM 15).

### **3.2. General means for cultivating interiority and discernment**

32. **Spiritual reading.** Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort sings: “After the Scriptures, I read / pious books / whose doctrine is orthodox / and full of charity” (H 139,56). Spiritual reading nourishes the soul, allows it to better understand the riches of faith, shows how to embody it concretely in one's life, helps to overcome routine, creates a noble and pure interior atmosphere, immerses the heart in great ideals of holiness and apostolate, broadens horizons and multiplies the joy of following Christ.

**33. Spiritual exercises and retreats.** They are an echo of “come aside”, addressed by Jesus to his disciples. They are a precious space for spiritual and vocational growth and verification (cf. RFIS 88c). Their effectiveness lies in promoting the encounter with the Lord and his will, thanks to the atmosphere of silence and reflection. The fruit of the spiritual exercises is a resolution that guides and renews our program of life. The flame lit during the annual exercises is kept alive thanks to times of spiritual recollection throughout the year.

**34. Spiritual direction.** “Our desires must be purified: we have «countless desires, or rather would-be desires» [LEW 182], that can appear to be authentic without being really so. (...) It is to this discernment that Montfort invites us in view of choosing true wisdom [cf. LEW 74-83]” (Ratio I 131). The encounter with the spiritual director, not occasional, but systematic and regular (cf. RFIS 107), favors the objectivity and truthfulness of one's desire to be lovingly faithful to Christ and one's vocation. It helps to avoid illusions in the spiritual and apostolic life. Since it is a question of listening to the Spirit, in spiritual direction it is necessary to open not only the heart, but also the conscience (cf. CIC, can. 246 § 4), with simplicity and supernatural trust.

**35. Study and courses.** Study is an intrinsic requirement of vocation and mission and as such it absorbs a significant part of the energies of every Montfortian. Indispensable for an adequate and profound understanding of God, others, and oneself, it allows us to have a wise and intelligent heart (cf. 1 Kings 3:12). It does not aim at the simple learning of notions, but wants to favor the acquisition of increasingly effective tools in order to “announce the message of the Gospel for today’s man in a credible and understandable way” (RFIS 116).

### **3.3. General means for growing in fraternity**

**36. Fraternal life in community.** “No one matures or reaches his fullness by isolating himself” (FT 95). For this reason, the community is a privileged school and laboratory of humanization, freedom, obedience and humility (cf. Ratio I 194), insofar as the way of relating to one another is in the sign of “a mystical, contemplative fraternity” (cf. EG 92). The community accompanies personal maturation when it is not just living together, but a space for deep and committed relationships, “where there is an experience of mutual help, fraternal correction, sharing of each one’s talents, support in moments of difficulty, sharing of material goods, strong breath of life through the presence of the Lord who unites hearts” (SB 2007, p. 5).

**37. Personal dialogue with the superior of the community.** In both initial and ongoing formation, it is a precious means that facilitates the religious to live more cordially his consecration to Christ in obedience; promotes better integration into fraternal life in community; supports commitment to ongoing formation. The person in charge of the community, on his part, promotes the growth of fraternal life through the service of listening, aware that it is one of his main ministries (cf. FTD 20). Mutual openness makes it possible to make more prudent decisions appropriate to his role as mediator of God's will.

**38. Fraternal conversations and sharing of life.** Communication is one of the relevant factors for growing in fraternal life. Particularly important is the sharing of spiritual goods, which values the various forms of communication in an attitude of listening and openness (cf. FLC 32; Ratio I 71). Furthermore, every formal and informal occasion is precious for sharing insights, experiences, desires and knowledge, while the exchange

between people of different generations adds richness and depth to life and mission.

**39. Community meetings.** They are a means of developing the ability to share the problems, aspirations and projects of the community, the Congregation and the Church. “They provide opportunities to listen to others, share one's own thoughts, review and evaluate past experiences, and think and plan together” (FLC 31).

**40. Fraternal correction and promotion.** Fraternal correction and promotion – where the adjective is more important than the noun – in the process towards maturity is first of all a way of being and growing together that implies intelligence and a sense of the person's value. Fraternal correction, review of life and other typical forms of the tradition pour into the community the gifts that the Spirit abundantly gives for its upbuilding and for its mission in the world (cf. FLC 32).

**41. Common meals.** Taking meals together makes us rediscover, preserve and increase the attitude of gratitude towards the Lord, giver of all good, and towards the community. It is an opportunity to know one another, listen to and appreciate one another, and overcome strangeness through friendly exchanges (cf. RFIS 88d). The exercise of self-control at the table opens up to the needs of the other, makes one careful against waste, as an expression of true poverty.

**42. Work and relaxation time.** Work, done well and in a responsible way, shared with the confreres, shapes the character, develops skills, counteracts idleness, helps to live up to evangelical poverty with authenticity and concrete attention to the poor, and manifests the person's reliability. At the same time, it strengthens the sense of belonging to the Congregation. Devoting

the right time to relaxation and rest, finding refreshment in simple things and rejoicing in small things (cf. LS 222), helps to live serene fraternal relationships, makes one more efficient in assuming and carrying out his tasks, promotes the person's harmonious growth (cf. Ratio I 50).

### 3.3. Specific means of formation

**43. The formative relationship.** The path of growth takes place slowly in daily life, in a relationship between the formator and the person, based on mutual knowledge and confidence (cf. WJC\_1998 23). Aware of the uniqueness of the person, the formator finds, through frequent encounters with him, the means “to know him better and appreciate his inner being and enlighten him in his search for the will of God in his life” (cf. SB\_2013 page 5). At the same time the person, by cultivating regular conversations with the formator, makes himself increasingly available to the action of grace (cf. RFIS 46).

**44. Accompaniment.** Accompaniment is an indispensable means of formation in the following of Christ (cf. RFIS 44) and at the same time an art that requires initiation because it is necessary to learn to take off one's sandals in front of the sacred land of the other (EG 169). In the accompaniment service, “the chief instrument of formation is personal dialogue, a practice of irreplaceable and commendable effectiveness which should take place regularly and with a certain frequency” (VC 66). Through a direct dialogue the person is helped to re-read her experience, to make contact with herself, giving a name to her emotional experience. The accompanist provides the person with the tools to discern the presence and action of the Father in the person's history, “what is most pleasing to the Lord, to his plans for the person's life. And that is seen in a deeper inclination of the heart,

beyond the surface level of their likes and feelings” (CV 294). All this in order to correspond to the grace of the call with freedom and responsibility, like Jesus the Son.

**45. Self-evaluation and faith-rereading.** The aptitude for discernment is particularly necessary today: “even though it includes reason and prudence, it goes beyond them, because it seeks to glimpse into that unique and mysterious plan that God has for each of us” (GE 170; cf. CV 280). In the process of discernment, the ability to self-evaluate is a great help to go deeper and deeper into the various dimensions of the personality. The faith-rereading of one's life, in the light of Christ's love and benevolence, leads to the recognition of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. In this regard, “spiritual autobiography” is a useful tool for self-knowledge, for making oneself known and for owning the history of one's vocation in its beginnings, in its development and its motivations, and offers the opportunity to reflect and express one's own experience of God.

**46. Evaluation by the formators.** Personal evaluation, however fundamental, is not enough. Only by relying on external instances, which help to give objectivity to one's vision, can the person form himself. Among the various kinds of evaluation, the one of the persons in charge of formation is fundamental (cf. WJC\_1998 23-24). A useful tool is the report drawn up with the greatest possible coherence and objectivity, respect, gentleness and confidentiality that every person deserves. The main evaluation criteria are found in Canon Law, in the Constitutions and in the present Ratio.

**47. Apostolic experiences.** Apostolic experiences, in line with the charism of the Company of Mary and taking into account personal attitudes and aspirations (cf. PoI 62), are a means of maturation. By letting oneself be formed by mission, one learns to make mission the criterion for discernment of personal and community

choices (cf. Ratio I 102). To be formative, apostolic experiences require discernment, preparation, and, above all, accompaniment and evaluation (cf. Ratio II 13; 305).

**48. Professional assistance in the psychological field.** The contribution of professionals in the psychological field is precious both in vocational discernment and in formative accompaniment to shed light on any problems that may emerge and to assist in growth in human maturity (cf. RFIS 147; UCP 5). Accepted with a spirit of faith, professional help confirms one's vocation (cf. VC 70), fosters a creative response in the various phases of life and nourishes fidelity on the journey.

**49. Sabbatical period.** Like the exhortation of saint Paul to his disciple Timothy (cf. 1Tim 4:14; 2Tim 1:6), it is important to rekindle the gift of God. The consecrated person needs a more or less prolonged sabbatical period, dedicated exclusively to his own spiritual renewal. It is a question of taking stock of one's life to recover the priority of being with God in prayer, to enliven one's fraternal life, to grow in the commitment of a consecrated soul and to resume the strength for the mission received. This is a time to discover and understand the action of God in the natural human changes of age (physiological, psychological, emotional) and to be able to relaunch the race by fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith (cf. Heb 12:2).

### **3.4. Means of montfortian tradition**

**50. Means for obtaining Wisdom.** In *Love of Eternal Wisdom*, saint Louis-Marie de Montfort left four privileged means to grow in the process of formation:

- Ardent desire (cf. LEW 181-183). The work on one's own desires, aimed at bringing out the true desire for Wisdom, is

the starting point in the journey of growth of every Montfortian (cf. Ratio I 124).

- Continuous prayer (cf. LEW 184-193). It is “the great channel / through which all good things come / through which a God who is generous / communicates his grace” (H 15:7). A prayer lived with pure faith – which renounces wanting to possess God and, on the contrary, allows itself to be possessed by him – and a persevering prayer (cf. Ratio I 132-137).

- Universal mortification (cf. LEW 194-202). It is a normal part of any growth process (cf. Ratio I 138), as “consequence of the radical choice which we make in deciding to follow Christ, in becoming disciples of a crucified God” (Ratio I 139). Mortification shatters earthly desires and strengthens the desire for Wisdom (cf. Ratio I 140). It contributes to disciplining the will, gradually making it capable of adhering to the demands of discipleship and expands the freedom to go beyond one's own needs (cf. Ratio I 141).

- A true and tender devotion to Mary (cf. LEW 203-227). In particular, the interior practices proposed by the Father of Montfort (cf. TD 257-265) “are a true and proper pedagogy, because they aim at making available to Mary our entire being, so that our life and mission be that of the Son of God, that of a true disciple of Christ, led by the Spirit” (Ratio I 154).

**51. The Consecration to Jesus through Mary.** The practice of the renewal of Montfortian consecration and daily self-offering is an important means of perseverance to come to know and love Jesus Christ, eternal and incarnate Wisdom and to abide in Him (cf. Ratio I 99). The Montfortian Month, proposed by the Founder to prepare for the consecration to Jesus for Mary or for its renewal (cf. VD 233), is still today a precious means, recommended in



view of First Profession and Perpetual Profession (cf. St. 148.1). It can be lived following the indications of the Father of Montfort (cf. TD 227-232) and using the subsidies available in different languages.

## **52. Celebrations and prayers of the Montfortian Family.**

During the year, the celebrations of the solemnities and memorials of the “Proper” of the Montfortian Family are privileged moments of spiritual growth. The tradition of the *Angelus*, the *Regina Coeli* and other Marian antiphons, simple pauses throughout the day, open up our daily activities with Mary in the mystery of Christ and the Church. Furthermore, prayers such as the *Little Crown*, the *Prayer for Missionaries*, nourish Marian devotion and a sense of belonging to the Company of Mary.

## **53. Assimilation of the Montfortian spirituality and charism.**

In the formative process, the example and intuitions of saint Louis-Marie occupy a central place. His life and the way in which he carried out his ministry offer an important interpretative key for understanding his spirituality (cf. Ratio I 41).

Furthermore, Formation draws inspiration from his writings. In them we discover the identity and specific mission of the Company of Mary.

The formative journey is guided, in particular, by the in-depth study of the foundation texts. The fundamental Rule (the Triptych or Trilogy) contains, in fact, the portrait of those whom saint Louis-Marie de Montfort wished to join the Company of Mary (cf. Ratio I 8).

A means for assimilating what is proper to the Institute are also the study and practice of the Constitutions (cf. Ratio I 37). Before being a code of conduct, they are the narrative for today of what the Father of Montfort believed and loved.

The history of the Congregation and of the confreres who preceded us also enlightens our inspiration. Visiting, alone or in a group, the

places of the life and ministry of saint Louis-Marie de Montfort, in France and in Italy, is a resource that, when well prepared, allows us to deepen our knowledge and spiritual bond both with our Founder and our history<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> An example is the week-long pilgrimage on foot, called "Marche Montfortaine", inspired by the rules given by Montfort in 1716 to the 33 white penitents on their way to Notre-Dame de Saumur (cf. Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, *Oeuvres Complètes* (OC), Edition du Seuil, Paris 1966, pp. 817-822). Usually the Montfortian March is proposed in France, in its classic path, or reproduced in other parts of the world with the same objective of obtaining true missionaries abandoned to Providence and the gift of Wisdom through Mary. In various Entities of the Congregation the pilgrimage is developing in the footsteps of the pioneers of the Montfortian mission.

## Chapter II - THE STAGES OF FORMATION THROUGHOUT LIFE

54. Consecrated life is a path of growth that embraces the entire span of existence, from the first steps to the final surrender of oneself. It is within this continuous process that find their place and meaning the various evolutionary phases and the formation stages, through which the Montfortian missionary will try to achieve full conformity to Christ Wisdom and the assimilation of his mind and heart in the complete gift of self to the Father” (VDQ 13), through “a patient and demanding work on the person who is open to the action of the Holy Spirit” (RFIS 55). On this journey of transformation in Christ, following the example of the Founder, he recognizes and welcomes the Virgin Mary as his teacher and guide (cf. Ratio I 146).

55. As the action of the Father who forms the heart of the Son in everyone, the path of transformation and conformity to the Lord Jesus, eternal and incarnate Wisdom, is never completed (cf. Ratio I 35). Formation therefore accompanies the whole life of the Montfortian religious and concerns his person integrally: he remains a *disciple*, always listening to the Master, a *pilgrim*, always attentive in every step to the direction to be taken and a *servant* both in the community and in the mission (cf. Ratio I 220; cf. St. 158.1).

## 1. VOCATIONAL ANIMATION

### 1.1. Nature

56. With the certainty that the Saint of Montfort still asks today for the gift of missionaries and with the conviction that the Holy Spirit continues to arouse vocations to religious life and priesthood, it is possible once more “to cast out the nets” in the name of the Lord, with full trust (cf. CV 274).

The ministry of vocational animation is a fundamental element of evangelization and pastoral action of the Church. It finds its most adequate “humus” in youth ministry which is dynamic, complete, effective and truly formative in the measure in which it helps adolescents and young people to re-read their own life in a vocational and missionary key. In the context of youth ministry, vocation promotion is the action of the Church that guides persons to discern their vocation.

### 1.2. Objectives

57. **General objective.** The purpose of vocational animation is not to recruit vocations, but rather to favor vocational research, serious discernment and the specific vocational choice.

#### 58. **Specific objectives.**

a) To awaken and accompany the person in the process of spiritual discernment of his vocation (cf. CV 286; 297), so that he may recognize how he can better fulfill the mission entrusted to him through Baptism (cf. GE 174).

b) To verify that in the person there are the minimal dispositions for growth at human and spiritual level and for life as a Montfort missionary.

c) To solicit in every confrere and community the responsibility of “awakening and nurturing Montfortian vocations” (C 132), “by ceaseless and bold prayer, as Montfort did, and by the witness of their lives and missionary work” (C 133).

### 1.3. Duration

59. The duration is flexible since it must take into account the age and level of human and Christian maturity of the prospective candidate, it must allow him to know the Montfortian life proposal and the person responsible for accompaniment to grasp the signs of vocational consistency. It ends with the application for admission to the Pre-novitiate.

### 1.4. Path of growth

60. **Human dimension.** The prospective candidate takes care of self-knowledge in his qualities, inclinations, gifts and charisms, in the serene awareness of his own limits.

He matures the experience of authentic freedom, as the ability to always choose what makes him grow and to focus his desire on the reality that is truly important for a committed lifestyle choice. In his psycho-sexual maturity the person evaluates whether he is capable of living in celibacy.

In this stage, in which particular attention is paid to information and knowledge, the goal is openness on the part of the person to his own history and knowledge on the part of the Congregation about his resources, but also about possible impediments to a vocational journey.

61. **Spiritual dimension.** In order for the candidate's decision to be the result of an authentic act of faith and to translate into a response that is as free and generous as possible, it is important to

propose a true spiritual itinerary that leads to a personal encounter with Christ through Mary.

Recognizing that one's own experience is the space in which to exercise discernment, the person will be helped to listen to the voice of God that resounds in concrete life in view of grasping his will and the direction to be given to one's existence.

With docility, he allows himself to be formed in the mind and sentiments of Christ, learning "to cultivate the very sentiments of Jesus Christ, by adopting both the criteria of his choices and the intentions of his actions" (CV 281).

**62. Intellectual dimension.** During this stage the prospective candidate will be helped to understand life as a vocation, to appreciate all the specific vocations and in particular the choice of consecrating oneself for the mission.

**63. Apostolic dimension.** In this stage it is important that the attraction for God should not be intimistic and self-referential, but open to love, service and attention to others.

We are also careful to nurture in the prospective candidate a real and sufficient interest in some traits of the mission "*à la Montfort*".

**64. Dimension of religious life.** The possible candidate must be placed before the demands of the Gospel so as to responsibly accept the consequences of both his faith and his following Christ. For this reason, he is urged to mature some choices in discontinuity with the mentality of the world. It is also important to encourage an initial approach to the Montfortian charism, spirituality and lifestyle.

## **1.5. Evaluation**

**65.** During this stage, it is necessary to ensure that the person enjoys a healthy and well-balanced psychophysical condition

(evaluating if there's any hereditary pathology<sup>2</sup>, addiction to alcohol, drugs, etc.), shows adequate maturity particularly having emotional and relational balance. In this regard, care should be taken to verify that there are no precedents that contradict the protection of minors or vulnerable adults (cf. Ratio II 224).

66. In addition, what needs to be carefully evaluated is the age-appropriate ability to adapt to the concrete needs of life, such as seriousness at work, studies and human relationships, and flexibility in changes.

67. With regard to motivation and vocational rectitude, it is important to verify in the person the readiness to grow in the spiritual life, to follow cordially the path of vocational discernment with a guide, to open up joyfully to the prospect of consecrated life.

68. Finally, already in this first phase, there should stand out signs of esteem for Father de Montfort and an attraction toward some dimensions of his spirituality and mission, particularly his sensitivity to the proclamation of the Word of God and his passion for the poor.

69. For admission to the Pre-novitiate (cf. C 141), it is required that the person:

- ☐ enjoys good physical and psychological health;
- ☐ is of the appropriate age according to the criteria established in each Entity (at least 16 years old);

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<sup>2</sup> A bio-psychosocial approach is often used in hereditary conditions (e.g. bipolar, schizophrenia) as they are risk factors that interact with psychosocial factors. For example, identical twins, with one twin having schizophrenia, the other twin has just a 50% chance of getting schizophrenia. It should be thus noted that the risk factors to be considered should not be limited to genetics.

- ☐ has completed basic education (secondary school);
- ☐ has received the sacraments of Christian initiation;
- ☐ guarantees a healthy autonomy from his family;
- ☐ is sufficiently involved in social and ecclesial life;
- ☐ has completed the period of discernment of his vocation as an aspirant;
- ☐ has made a written request to the legitimate superior to be admitted to the Pre-novitiate.

70. In addition, the prospective candidate must demonstrate:

- ☐ a maturity appropriate to his age: self-knowledge and self-acceptance; recognition of his sexuality and emotional balance; sincerity, respect and acceptance of others, responsibility and ability to share, to change and evolve; consistency with the choice made; ability to engage in the formation process, collaborating with formators;
- ☐ a sincere desire to follow Christ; an aptitude for prayer; the willingness to follow a path of conversion;
- ☐ adequate cultural and intellectual preparation to undertake studies and to gradually assume the obligations of his choice;
- ☐ interest in the Montfortian vocation, Montfortian spirituality and the mission of the Congregation; openness to community life;
- ☐ for those who aspire to become religious brothers, a sufficient and objective knowledge of this specific vocation is necessary; a positive motivation in harmony with the choice of this form of consecration.

## **1.6. Other formative indications**

**71. Vocational animation plan.** The Entities, while taking charge of vocational animation (cf. St. 138.1), are to draw up a plan that



takes into account the phases in which pastoral action at the service of vocations is articulated.

a) *Proposal*. The goal is “to re-propose the call to holiness in a practical way for our own time, with all its risks, challenges and opportunities” (GE 2). Attention is addressed to solicit, with courage, in all young people the vocational quest, in particular on the possibility of consecrating oneself to God in religious life (cf. CV 274).

b) *Accompaniment*. This step is particularly offered, although not exclusively, to persons who show interest in embracing the Montfortian consecrated life.

c) *Choice*. The point of arrival of the process is the choice for a life of consecration. This choice translates into action and initiates a process of progressive involvement with the Company of Mary.

**72. Age limit.** It is up to each Entity to establish the age limit for accepting a candidate. If an Entity chooses to set a maximum age limit, this will be based on criteria derived from the local mentality, according to the ability to integrate older candidates and taking into account the specific conditions of the Montfortian mission.

**73. Evaluation of psychosexual development.** During the process of discernment, it will be necessary to begin an assessment of the psychosexual development of the aspirant. In an atmosphere of mutual trust and open heart, the person is required to make known any previous psychological problems. In any case, it will be convenient to carry out a psychological evaluation (cf. RFIS 193).

**74. The aspirancy.** The experience of aspirancy, present in some Entities, takes place during the phase of vocational animation. The

aspirant can live in a house of the congregation for particular circumstances and reasons. During this period, he enters an explicit process of discernment to verify the call to be a Montfortian missionary. This experience is supervised by those responsible for vocational animation or by other confreres appointed by the competent superior. The length of this period is determined by the situation of each candidate. For those who have yet to complete basic studies, this period can extend over several years. The objectives of this experience are: to facilitate the contact of young people with the vocational animator or formator, to provide the conditions for a first experience of life in community, to evaluate and provide a basic human, intellectual and Christian formation.

**75. Preparation for entry into the Pre-novitiate.** As the aspirant approaches the time to enter the Pre-novitiate, it is advisable to discuss with him the practical points related to the lifestyle and status of a candidate not yet religious with vows, regarding membership in the congregation, financial autonomy, relationship with the family. The candidate's financial situation must be clarified from the beginning. If necessary, appropriate arrangements must be made so that others can take care of his financial affairs (cf. Ratio II 263).

## 2. PRENOVICIATE

### 2.1. Nature

76. The Pre-novitiate is a time of discernment, during which the candidate, vis-à-vis the Montfortian charism, evaluates the authenticity of his vocation to consecrated life in the Company of Mary.

By becoming more aware of what the following of Jesus implies, the candidate verifies his will to respond to the call and lays solid foundations for the assimilation of the values of consecrated life.

### 2.2. Objectives

77. **General objective.** The purpose of the Pre-novitiate is to promote adequate human and Christian maturity in the candidate for a free and responsible choice of consecrated life in the Company of Mary.

#### 78. **Specific objectives.**

- a) To verify God's call to Montfortian religious life, consolidating one's personal relationship with the Lord.
- b) To discern the motivations and the ability to respond to the call to religious life, distancing oneself from the previous lifestyle.
- c) To gradually experience what fraternal life implies, testing the aptitude to live in community.
- d) To ensure adequate preparation for the Novitiate and verify the suitability of the candidate to enter this stage.

### 2.3. Duration

79. The Pre-novitiate begins when the candidate is admitted to it and enters a community environment to continue the journey of

discernment of his own vocation. The duration may vary to favor the adequate discernment and growth in human and Christian maturity required of candidate. Taking care not to hasten the time for this admission, nor to defer it unduly, but arriving at a sure judgment on the guarantees offered by the candidate (cf. PoI 43; cf. GL\_1989 3.3.3), each Entity will determine the duration of this stage which will end with the entry to the Novitiate.

## 2.4. Path of growth

80. **Human dimension.** During the stage of the Pre-novitiate in which particular attention is paid to discernment, the goal is affective maturation, which makes it possible to live in an adult way the freedom to give and receive.

It is about the ability to recognize and name one's inconsistencies in all areas of personality especially the affective-sexual area, to be capable of controlling these weaknesses in view of overcoming them.

At the same time, growing in the capacity for solitude and peaceful relationships, the candidate will have to show a sufficient level of confidence and autonomy in making meaningful decisions for his life.

81. **Spiritual dimension.** During this stage, the goal is a greater integration and maturation in the faith, which allows one to re-read his life and reconcile himself with his past in the light of God's paternal love: with his inevitable negative, assuming an attitude that is not self-pitying, but responsible; with his positive, to be acknowledged with gratitude to God; and with the significant figures of his personal history, with their riches and weaknesses. The candidate, by rediscovering his own Baptism, gradually accepts the death-life dynamism and experiences the fruitfulness of the Cross in his own history.

By appreciating the value of the interior life, in silence and listening, he grows in a personal relationship with the Lord through a life of prayer, a sacramental and liturgical life, under the guidance of Mary, Mother of God and model of fidelity to the Father's project.

**82. Intellectual dimension.** During this stage, the goal is a careful and critical mental openness to face the Novitiate with a trained and informed judgment, with a coherent and thoughtful vision of reality. Furthermore, it is the time to verify the basic cultural preparation and possibly complete the studies.

**83. Apostolic dimension.** During this stage, attention is paid to the experiential contact with the Montfortian mission lived by the Founder and embodied today by his missionaries. The candidate, becoming aware that the call to consecrated life always implies the will to be sent, will be able to have sufficient elements to ask to be part of the Company of Mary.

**84. Dimension of religious life.** During the Pre-novitiate, attention is focused on the discovery and the decision in favor of a project of Montfortian life which is a gift, but also a demanding appeal to be lived for others and with others, in a specific “*sequela Christi*” within the Church. By grasping and appreciating the diversity and complementarity of the charisms, the candidate opens up to a sufficient knowledge of the Montfortian vocation, comparing his ideals with the values proposed by the charism and spirituality of saint Louis-Marie de Montfort. Montfortian spirituality, into which the candidate is introduced, begins to shape his personality in view of psychological, affective and faith-living maturation.

## 2.5. Evaluation

85. For admission to the Novitiate, the candidate must have the requisites indicated by the Canon Law (cf. PoI 43; cf. CIC, cann. 641-645), namely:

- ☐ a sufficient degree of human and Christian maturity;
- ☐ a basic general culture and an intellectual level sufficient to understand the values and needs of Montfortian consecrated life;
- ☐ a balanced affectivity;
- ☐ the ability to live serene relationships in community, including with those who carry out the service of authority.

86. Furthermore, it is necessary that the candidate for the Novitiate:

- ☐ has received adequate preparation for the Novitiate;
- ☐ has come to a free and responsible decision, honest in motivation and joyful, to live for God Alone and to follow Jesus Christ Wisdom in poverty, obedience and chastity;
- ☐ has significantly renounced some dimensions of his previous lifestyle;
- ☐ shows an affinity with the Montfortian charism and spirituality and an initial ability to participate in the mission in the style of the Company of Mary.

## 2.5. Other Formative indications

87. **Different modalities of Pre-novitiate.** The forms of Pre-novitiate can be different: reception in a community, without however sharing its entire life; periods of contact with the congregation or with any of its representatives; common life in a home for candidates. Beyond the modalities of reception what's important is to ensure that the candidate be personally accompanied during the Pre-novitiate (cf. PoI 44).

**88. Formative dimension of the Pre-novitiate house.** The Pre-novitiate lived in a specific house offers the possibility of a group journey and the accompaniment of a consistent team. If the Pre-novitiate is inserted in a Montfortian apostolic house, while sharing the life of the community, it should have its own spaces and should follow a specific formation program, under the guidance of a person in charge.

**89. Experience of poor life-style.** During the time of the Pre-novitiate it is important to help the candidate to appreciate work as a grace and opportunity, by encouraging willingness to carry out simple and domestic services. It is also useful to introduce the prenovice to the principles of Montfortian poverty and economic praxis.

**90. Means of communication and new technologies.** It is necessary to train the prenovice into a conscious, safe and reasonable use of digital means. It is advisable that he shouldn't hold his own social profiles on the fringes of the community.

**91. Training in respect for minors and vulnerable adults.** For this indication, see the fourth chapter of this document (cf. Ratio II 228-233).

**92. Academic studies.** It is preferable that institutional courses in philosophy and theology should not be attended during the Pre-novitiate. Rather, some preparatory materials should be studied (cf. RFIS 157) and priority is to be given to completing basic studies and other in-depth courses in line with the objectives of this stage.

**93. Memberships.** The Pre-novitiate is the time for the candidate to clarify his other possible affiliations (e.g. family of origin,

groups of friends, ecclesial movements), in relation to the Montfortian family to which he wishes to belong (cf. RFIS 148).

**94. Consultation of a psychologist.** If necessary, the person in charge of the Pre-novitiate motivates the candidate to avail of the opportunity to consult a psychologist. If the candidate refuses or shows too much reluctance, there are reasons to question his full willingness to discern God's will (cf. RFIS 192-193).

**95. Preparation for entry into the Novitiate.** In proximity to the entrance to the Novitiate it is advisable to discuss with the candidate the practical aspects related to the lifestyle of the new stage so that he can understand and respect its expectations. In particular, he will be made aware of the criteria regarding the use of the Internet, e-mail, mobile phone, as well as regarding contacts with family and friends. If the Novitiate takes place in a country other than that of his origin, the prenovice should start learning the language of that country.



### 3. NOVITIATE

#### 3.1. Nature

96. The Novitiate is an intense period of initiation to the apostolic Montfortian religious life (cf. C 138b) in the radical “sequela” of Jesus Christ, eternal and incarnate Wisdom. As such, it is designed to ensure that the novice should become better aware of his divine vocation, experience the lifestyle of the Company of Mary and allow himself to be permeated with its spirit in his mind and heart. It is also the time when his motivations and real abilities to become a member of the Institute are tested.

#### 3.2. Objectives

97. **General objective.** The general purpose of the Novitiate is to strengthen an authentic experience of God, initiating the novice into the kind of life which the Son of God, eternal and incarnate Wisdom, embraced and which he proposed in the Gospel (cf. PoI 45) and guiding his personal identity toward a progressive integration with the spiritual and missionary charism of the Company of Mary.

#### 98. **Specific objectives.**

- a) To facilitate a profound experience of prayer and listening to God, following the spiritual path proposed by saint Louis-Marie de Montfort.
- b) To help grow in interior freedom, that the offering to Jesus Christ be motivated by a generous love.
- c) To enable understanding and assimilation of the demands of religious life, the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

- d) To offer an experience of fraternal life in community.
- e) To discern the authenticity of the vocation and the real suitability to live the demands of consecration in the Company of Mary.

### 3.3. Duration

99. For the duration, see C 146. The Novitiate begins with a rite on the day established by the superior who admits to the Novitiate and ends with a liturgical celebration during which, with the formula of profession, the candidate contracts a temporary commitment through vows.

### 3.4. Path of growth

100. **Human dimension.** During this stage of initiation, the novice will continue to deepen his knowledge and acceptance of himself. At the same time, he will measure his attitude to live the Montfortian consecrated life style, paying particular attention to his growth in the ability to relate in a mature way with others in the light of the dynamics of community life. He will pay attention to the psychological and ethical aspects of the human virtues of chastity, poverty and obedience. He will try to discover and experience in them a real possibility of realizing his own humanity, gradually shaping his way of living and loving on that of the Lord.

101. **Spiritual dimension.** As for the spiritual dimension, the novice will dedicate himself to a strong experience of the primacy of God as a unique and all-encompassing love and to the sapiential knowledge of Christ who calls to follow him and to continue his mission of salvation. In particular, he will tend towards the progressive assimilation of the sentiments of Jesus Christ,

deepening his faith and personal relationship with him, with intense daily prayer. By cultivating the contemplative dimension, he will try to integrate the evangelical criteria by frequenting the Word of God. He will let his spirituality be shaped by a true devotion to Mary and the path of consecration to Jesus through her hands.

102. **Intellectual dimension.** As regards the intellectual dimension, during this stage attention is paid to in-depth knowledge of the consecrated life, of the Montfortian charism and spirituality. In particular, the novice will know the original inspiration of saint Louis-Marie, as expressed in the Triptych, but also the contemporary articulations of the mission, in the light of the Documents of the Church and the Congregation.

103. **Apostolic dimension.** With regard to the apostolic dimension, the novice is asked to assimilate both the founder's wishes to make Jesus and his holy Mother known and loved and the style of his apostolic service. Furthermore, the possibility is offered to live some significant apostolic experiences for a discovery and a vital encounter with the missionary spirit of the Company of Mary.

104. **Dimension of religious life.** The novice is initiated into the poor, obedient and chaste form of life of Christ by accepting the necessary closure with the worldly wisdom that this entails. In particular, he verifies his own call to gradually live the religious vows that expand the freedom of his gift to God and others. For this he welcomes Father de Montfort as a privileged guide, to whom the novice entrusts himself as an interested and faithful disciple, eager to reproduce his features and relive in a personal way the aspirations of his heart. In depth he discovers the Montfortian identity and the distinctive notes of the charism,

growing in the sense of belonging, esteem and gratitude for the gift of the Company of Mary.

### **3.5. Evaluation**

105. For the admission of the candidate to temporary profession, in addition to the principles provided for by Canon Law (cf. CIC, can. 656), the following criteria are to be considered:

- ☐ A constant commitment to overcome immaturity, by accepting one's limits and a sufficient ability to manage them.
- ☐ A capacity for free and responsible choice, in the progressive harmonization between the ideal and the real.
- ☐ A constant search for the will of the Father, through prayer and familiarity with the Scriptures, and an aptitude for solitude to experience "God Alone" and intimacy with him through the appreciation of silence and interiority.
- ☐ An awareness of the value of following Jesus Christ Wisdom and a constant commitment to live up to it, manifested in a humble, gratuitous love, open to all, especially the poor.
- ☐ An ability to live serene and balanced relationships in community with the confreres and with the authorities, accepting differences, taking care of others, serving, collaborating and contributing to fraternal life in concrete and practical ways.
- ☐ The aptitude for sincere dialogue and transparent openness of one's conscience before the Lord, the formators and himself.
- ☐ Sufficient internalization and personal re-elaboration of the values of Montfortian consecrated life and clear signs that the person is ready to commit himself seriously and unconditionally to living up to chastity, poverty and obedience, even though the first vows are legally temporary.
- ☐ An adequate personal knowledge and integration of the charism and mission of the Company of Mary and a growing sense of belonging to the community and the Congregation.

### 3.6. Other Formative indications

106. **Program of Formation.** With regard to the organization and development of the program, each Local Ratio should take C 139 as a reference (cf. CIC 652 § 2).

107. **The place of the Novitiate.** It is necessary to ensure that the Novitiate be in an environment favorable to prayer, silence and a certain solitude that helps the novice to become deeply rooted in the experience of God (cf. PoI 50). For the location of the Novitiate, see C 142-144.

108. **The Novitiate house.** The Novitiate house, inserted in an environment familiar to the culture and language of the novices, facilitates the relationship with the novice Master and their reciprocal integration with all the nuances required by an initial and intensive spiritual journey (cf. PoI 47). The demands of formation and a climate propitiating a life deeply rooted in Christ discourage from doing the Novitiate process in a community involved with other activities (cf. PoI 50).

109. **International Novitiate.** In the case of an international Novitiate, it is important to make sure that there is sufficient time to allow the novice to adapt to the new environment and to enter the new community. For this reason, an integration period can be planned before the official start of the canonical year. The canonical year can also be extended beyond twelve months, according to the needs of a particular statute of international Novitiate.

110. **Periodic evaluation.** The novice Master will periodically evaluate the novice's journey, in particular at the end of the sessions on the various formative themes and the main periods of the Novitiate, after particularly significant experiences, for

example the apostolic ones and at the end of the canonical year, in view of the religious profession. Through open and respectful dialogue, the Master and the novice will operate a common discernment regarding suitability for temporary profession.

**111. Admission to Temporary Profession.** For the procedures for admission to temporary profession, see the sixth chapter of this document (cf. Ratio II 281-284).

**112. Rite of Temporary Profession.** For the rite of temporary profession, see the Ritual of Religious Profession, nos. 31-51.

**113. Abandonment during the Novitiate.** From the beginning of the experience, the candidate must be made aware that if he leaves the Novitiate before temporary profession (on his own initiative or otherwise) he will not be entitled to any financial compensation; however, it goes without saying that he will be treated according to justice and charity.

## 4. PERIOD OF TEMPORARY PROFESSION

### 4.1. Nature

114. The period of temporary vows is a time of growth and consolidation of the vocation, in which the person is called to internalize and integrate the values learned in the Novitiate into a new vital synthesis, by deepening and verifying his decision to consecrate himself to the Lord forever. Furthermore, it is a time to verify the aptitude to live fully the life and mission of the Company of Mary.

### 4.2. Objectives

115. **General objective.** The formative process aims at helping the religious in temporary vows to become more and more a Missionary of the Company of Mary, that is, a free person, ready for any undertaking and disposed to collaborate (cf. C 135).

#### 116. **Specific objectives.**

- a) To deepen and verify the decision to consecrate oneself to the Lord forever.
- b) To grow in the experience of religious life, embodying the evangelical counsels in the concreteness of daily life.
- c) To promote a full immersion in the charism, where the Montfortian ideal becomes more and more a reason for life and gives shape to the way of relating with the Lord and with others.
- d) To develop the apostolic dimension of the vocation, in view of a progressive insertion into the mission of the Company of Mary.

e) To acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out the mission of the Congregation, both for religious brothers and for candidates to priesthood.

### 4.3. Duration

117. For the duration of the period of temporary profession, see C 154.

### 4.4. Path of growth

118. **Human dimension.** Human formation is a determining factor on the way to a definitive commitment to religious life. During the period of temporary vows, the religious continues his journey of growth in order to be profoundly human, to love disinterestedly and to benefit his neighbor (cf. PM 21).

He progresses in an authentic life, which implies awareness and acceptance of one's limits, discovering in them the possibilities for growth, and a fair evaluation of one's talents, without lingering in egocentric exaltations.

He grows into the wisdom of taking care of his own person in a life project, not losing himself into passing things, but recognizing and respecting priorities.

He grows in the art of governing his life by means of a discipline that, through daily renunciations, creates the space for greater fruitfulness.

He becomes an increasingly transparent person, who assertively expresses his intentions and accepts confrontation and criticism.

Furthermore, the path towards an ever-greater affective maturity implies the ability to manage any weaknesses within the emotional sphere, to integrate loneliness and relationships.

119. **Spiritual dimension.** In an attitude of constant conversion and docility to the action of the Spirit, spiritual formation aims at



consolidating the experience of "God Alone", in a deeper intimacy with him, nourished by assiduous prayer.

It also encourages to make the contemplation of Jesus Christ Wisdom, known, sought and loved, the center of one's life, around which to unify one's interiority.

The religious with temporary vows, conforming to the heart of Christ, apostle of the Father, grows through daily listening to the Word of God which he loves and tastes more and more, by meditating on it in his heart, like Mary.

Moreover, he assimilates the sentiments of Christ through the Eucharistic celebration, allowing it to give his life the form of service.

He lives up to humiliations as a paschal place of growth, where he experiences the power of God who, in his Providence, can draw good from evil (cf. LFC 46). Hence, even in moments of desolation he knows how to find reasons in his heart to continue the journey.

Love for Jesus Wisdom is inseparable from love for the Virgin Mary. The religious with temporary vows cultivates a filial love for her, makes himself docile to her maternal action by entrusting himself to her with the consecration, assimilates her evangelical attitudes, nourishes his bond with Mary by reciting the Holy Rosary and the prayers of the Montfortian tradition.

**120. Intellectual dimension.** Called to make Jesus Wisdom and his holy Mother known and loved, the religious with temporary vows prepares himself in an adequate way for the task of proclaiming the Gospel, acquiring the skills and competences necessary for the mandate of evangelization that the Church has entrusted to the Company of Mary.

In particular, through regular attendance to academic courses and dedication to study and personal reflection, he ensures a solid philosophical and theological preparation and a complete and unified knowledge of the content of faith.

Furthermore, he fosters a vital synthesis that harmonizes faith understood and faith lived, in order to be able to proclaim Jesus Wisdom with truth both in preaching and in life.

Besides, he develops the ability to respond to the challenges of the inculturation of faith in the current context, by paying attention to the changes in progress and by studying cultures and languages.

In his intellectual training, the deepening of the charism occupies a prominent place, by integrating academic achievements with the richness of Montfortian spirituality.

For the organization of studies during this stage, see the fifth chapter of this document (cf. Ratio II 237-258).

**121. Apostolic dimension.** The apostolate is the specific characteristic of the Montfortian vocation (cf. C 6). The whole formative process aims at forming in Mary "the apostles of the latter times" and prepares to assume the Montfortian mission in all its breadth.

Formation in the apostolic dimension aims at developing an apostolic sensitivity in the religious with temporary vows. In particular, the religious with temporary vows nourishes and increases "the sweet and comforting joy of evangelizing" (EN 80; cf. EG 9), overcoming what can mortify it (cf. EG 76ff); he fosters love for the Church and the ability to "feel with the Church", in the light of the Magisterium, of the ecclesial journeys and the challenges of today's world (cf. EG 52ff).

Moreover, reflecting himself in the heart of Jesus Wisdom and drawing on the experience of the Founder, he assimilates the attitudes of the Montfortian missionary: a Marian "style" (cf. EG 288); a heart that intercedes with an apostolic prayer; the dynamism of "going out"; the ability to take initiative; sensitivity to the urgent needs of the Church and the world; the ability to be close to people; the willingness to accompany the processes of growth in faith (cf. EG 24); audacity and creativity (cf. EG 33); freedom from the desire for gratification, personal recognition,

self-complacency with one's own gifts, learning to "work together" in communion and collaboration, with a capacity for dialogue.

Again, he enters into the missionary dynamism that, if on the one hand it pushes towards everyone, on the other hand, among the recipients of the Gospel, it privileges the poor and the little ones (cf. EG 48).

During the stage of temporary vows, the religious is, therefore, accompanied into the direct experience and the gradual exercise of the various forms of apostolate, making sure that they favor the process of growth of all the dimensions of formation.

The exercise of ministries disposes the candidate to the priesthood for future services of the Word and the Altar, letting himself be transformed by the Word of God and participating more deeply in the mystery of Christ who offers himself and is present in the Eucharist, in the assembly and in the neighbor (cf. RFIS 72).

**122. Dimension of religious life.** The formative process consists in the free decision to conform in everything to Jesus Eternal and incarnate Wisdom. In this journey of freedom, religious vows are of particular value, lived in a deeper way, according to the modalities proper to the Company of Mary.

**123. *Vow of poverty.*** The religious with temporary vows is called to exercise faithfully in the way of detachment, in order to make himself free with regard to things and available for the gift of himself in community and in the mission. He recognizes himself poor before God, following the example of the Virgin Mary, choosing to abandon himself to Providence and finding his only wealth in Jesus Christ.

He experiences poverty more as participation than deprivation, as a movement towards the other and as a reminder of the gift that others are. In community he learns to share what he is and what he

receives in gifts, to live in a simple and sober way, grateful for what is made available.

He also educates himself to be co-responsible in the use of common goods and to manage money depending on the superior, with transparency and regular reporting. He grows into taking part in the good running of the house, avoiding being merely served, but voluntarily offering help for domestic services and manual work.

He opens up to the needs of the poorest, living in active solidarity with them, sharing concern for justice, respect for human rights, and care for creation.

124. *Vow of obedience.* The religious with temporary vows grows in freedom, learning, on the example of Christ, to make a gift of his will through obedience, trying to fulfill what the Father wishes, in a spirit of dependence. For this reason, he curbs his claim to make himself the only reference, refuses to walk alone, and lets himself be taken “by hand” by the Lord.

Every day he embraces obedience as the greatest freedom and exercises himself in seeking God's will, in an atmosphere of prayer and dialogue with the community and the formators, expressing his thoughts with frankness and sincerity. He chooses to collaborate cordially with others in implementing the decisions taken by the community or by the superior (cf. C 105), even if this requires renunciation and sacrifice. He learns to cordially move beyond personal preferences, seeking the good of the community and the mission.

125. *Vow of chastity.* The religious in temporary vows faithfully exercises himself in the way of chastity which makes his heart ever more capable of total dedication to Christ and to the mission (cf. C 106).

He cultivates a heart which is pure because undivided, not shared with idols, in which love for Jesus Christ catalyzes the whole

world of his thoughts, feelings and affections. His concern will be to please the Lord (cf. 1Cor 7:33), not himself and others. He will not seek appreciation, praise, gratification. He will not fall victim to an excessive care for his self-image, which compromises with worldliness. He will consolidate prudence to express all the beauty of chastity even in the experience of fragility and temptation. Aware of the demands of consecrated chastity, he becomes capable of living relationships in a free and serene way, without expecting that his affective “Ego” be always at the center.

The religious with temporary vows finds in fraternal life, in community, the space for daily conversion from possessive love to generous and self-giving love. With his capacity to love, he helps to create a welcoming and family-like community.

126. *Fraternal life in community.* Montfort wanted an apostolic community (cf. C 71), closely united to Jesus Christ, in the image of the apostles gathered with Mary in the Upper Room wherein all “pursue the same ideal” (C 73).

Formation, in the stage of temporary vows, promotes the growth of the religious in the experience of fraternal life in community, in the sign both of an active participation in every moment of life together and of an ability to live authentic relationships with all.

It educates to value gifts, to see diversity as an opportunity to grow in humanity, to accept the limits of the community, the Entity and the Congregation, exercising with the heart of Christ patience and benevolence, even in the presence of difficulties and tensions.

Finally, the professed is helped to grow in the sense of belonging to the Company of Mary, in the awareness of sharing the same charism with his confreres.

## 4.5. Evaluation

127. For admission to the renewal of vows it is important to verify the gradual growth of the person in his various dimensions (cf. Ratio II 218; 220).

In particular, the religious in temporary vows should give proof of being able to persevere in fidelity and to live his daily difficulties and inconsistencies as opportunities for growth. Signs of emotional stability and self-control, of freedom and respect, of positive relationships with those in authority should appear in him.

Being constantly open to conversion, he has cultivated his own interiority and nourished the desire to “be in the house of the Father” (Lk 2:49) through personal prayer and listening to the Word of God.

He has not failed in achieving a healthy tension and balance between action and contemplation in his daily life. By joyfully involving himself in the pastoral experiences planned for the year, he has shown a growing openness to the apostolic dimension of his vocation.

With regard to consecrated life, he has tried to live the vows with coherence and responsibility, tending towards a positive synthesis between affection and consecrated chastity, between freedom in the use of material goods and religious poverty, between the ability to take initiatives and responsible obedience.

He has shown appreciation for the gift of living in community, without expecting any perfection. He has chosen to serve, sharing difficulties and joys, helping to build a climate of fraternity, appreciating the diversity and complementarity of gifts, collaborating both inside and outside the community.

The sense of belonging to the Congregation has grown as well as the appreciation for the Montfortian charism and the spontaneous reference to the experience and writings of the Founder which he holds as a key to understanding the Gospel and his own identity.

128. To admit to perpetual profession, in addition to the conditions required by common law (cf. CIC, cann. 657-658), it is necessary that particular attitudes be recognized in the confrere.

First of all, adherence to the charism of the Company of Mary in its characteristic notes and the ability to live the life and mission of the Congregation, experiencing the joy of being a living part of it.

Then, “the taste for God and his truth” (LEW 13), cultivated in a constant and loving contemplation of Jesus Wisdom and translated into daily life.

Again, fidelity to the choice of consecrated life, which is expressed in the ability to renounce the wisdom of the world that distracts and distances from the Wisdom of God.

In order to love with a generous heart, it is necessary to have a good knowledge of oneself and a sufficient interior freedom, even with regard to one's own immaturity, and an adequate level of affective maturity, without giving into comparison with others and concern for their judgment.

The assimilation of the apostolic spirit of the Company of Mary, which is manifested in the will to fulfill the Founder's desire to make Jesus Christ Wisdom known, loved, followed and served through Mary (cf. L 5).

The attitude of living open and transparent relationships in community, where the person is capable of passionately giving and receiving with gratitude, of sensitivity and attention, of collaboration and service, without giving into the temptation of individualism.

An intellectual maturity that is expressed in a continuous thirst for knowledge, in a constant attitude of discipleship at the school of Wisdom and in the capacity for a balanced judgment, neither dogmatic nor rigid, on situations and people.

#### **4.6. Other formative indications**

**129. Program of formation.** With regard to the organization and development of the formation program, each local Ratio refers to St. 155.1-4.

**130. Formative milieu.** It is important to ensure the insertion into a joyful community, where one grows day after day in maturity and inner freedom, in mutual giving and receiving (cf. SB\_2009 page 2). The educational environment is to offer the necessary stimulations for a balanced growth of the person (cf. SB-2013 page 4) and is to be sufficiently open “to welcoming and sharing with various groups, such as families, consecrated persons, young people, students and the poor” (RFIS 52) and to the international dimension of the Montfortian mission. Such openness will also allow a confrontation between the values of the Church and those of the world and a concrete approach to social and cultural problems.

**131. The house in the period of temporary vows.** The choice of a house for the scholasticate must take into account the ecclesial context, the need for a sufficient number of vocations and formators to guarantee a formative community, the conditions for a proposal of intellectual quality and, of course, an economic sustainability of the structure.

**132. Deepening of the charism and mission of the Company of Mary.** The Founder's charism is a dynamic reality: transmitted to



his disciples, it asks to be lived, preserved, deepened and constantly developed (cf. Ratio II 240).

**133. Training in economic management.** During the period of temporary profession, the religious develops the practice of reporting the movement of money, in terms of income and outcome, periodically checking with the formators the personal use he makes of it. In addition, he practices discussing and verifying with the community the annual budget of the house, in the light of the criteria of apostolic poverty. He then receives information on the organization of finances within the local community, the Entity and the Congregation, and learns some notions of accountancy and asset management (cf. SB\_2008 page 8).

**134. Training in respect for minors and vulnerable adults.** For this topic, see the indications offered in the fourth chapter of this document (cf. Ratio II 230-233).

**135. The apostolic training.** The formators identify a field of apostolic apprenticeship to which the young religious will be assigned on weekends and / or holidays, so he can test his skills in a living apostolic experience. The place of training is not to be always the same, to allow confrontation with different realities and ways of doing mission before perpetual profession.

The experience of common life, with missionaries or pastoral agents, with their charisms and limitations, is important in order to move from an ideal vision to a real understanding of the mission. The trainee tests his apostolic zeal and his desire to generously bring the love of Christ to others, especially the poorest.

**136. Admission to the Renewal of Vows.** For the procedures for admission to the renewal of temporary vows, see the sixth chapter of this document (cf. Ratio II 293-296; 301).

**137. Rite of the Renewal of Vows.** For the rite of renewal of vows, see the Ritual of Religious Profession (cf. RRP 85-96).

**138. Preparation for the Ministries of Lector, Acolyte and Orders.** The candidate for ministries and Holy Orders needs a suitable preparation, mainly of spiritual nature, in order to interiorize the implied attitudes. In this regard, it is of great use to meditate assiduously on the rites of conferring ministries and ordination, which, in the prayers and liturgical gestures, synthesize and express their profound meaning (cf. RFIS 77). In addition to spiritual preparation, there is the biblical-theological deepening of the Ministry or Holy Order, as well as the practical-liturgical one, which develops the skills required for the exercise of the Ministry or Holy Order, with reference both to liturgy and to apostolic action.

**139. Admission to the ministries.** For the procedures for admission to the ministries, see the sixth chapter of this document (cf. Ratio II 302-304).

**140. Admission to perpetual profession.** For the procedures for admission to perpetual profession, see the sixth chapter of this document (cf. Ratio II 307-312; 314).

**141. Immediate preparation for perpetual profession.** Although the whole formative journey is already oriented towards perpetual profession, nevertheless the year leading to the definitive commitment in the Company of Mary will be lived with particular intensity. It is essential to guarantee the candidate an

adequate period, exclusively dedicated to immediate preparation, in an environment that favors prayer and recollection.

In such particular time, accompanied by a guide, the candidate for perpetual profession will be able to retrace his own life. With the help of Mary, woman of the Spirit, he will recognize the good thread of God's love that has constantly "woven" and "embroidered" him into a story of predilection that culminates in the decision to belong totally and forever to Him. Furthermore, he will have the opportunity to review the essential elements of religious consecration, for a renewed awareness and assimilation of values. He can do the same with the Constitutions of the Company of Mary and the contents of Montfortian spirituality. Particularly useful for this immediate preparation are the experience of the "*Montfortian Month*" possibly lived in the places of the Founder, the Spiritual Exercises and the deepening of the Montfortian Rite of Perpetual Profession. To strengthen the sense of belonging to an international Congregation, the immediate preparation can be lived together with candidates from different Entities.

**142. Rite of perpetual Profession.** For the rite of perpetual profession, see the Ritual of Religious Profession (cf. RRP 52-84).

## 5. ONGOING FORMATION

### 5.1. Nature

143. Ongoing formation is not resolved in some sporadic initiative of cultural updating, but it is a work that requires the courage to let oneself be shaped every day by the Lord that he may transform one's heart and life. It is by entrusting oneself to the wise hands of the Divine Potter (cf. Jer 18: 1-10) that one preserves the enthusiasm of the heart over time, welcomes with joy the freshness of the Gospel, receives the gift of words capable of touching people's lives and hands capable of anointing the wounds of the People of God (cf. Francis, Audience to the participants in the international conference on the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, October 7<sup>th</sup> 2017).

Ongoing formation makes it possible to adequately face the forms of uneasiness, discomfort and crises that can occur in religious life (cf. FP 11).

Ongoing formation is always the fruit of the decision of the individual. Nothing can replace his responsible commitment, just as no one will ever be able to travel for him the itinerary of growth in Christ and the renewal to which he is called (cf. Ratio I 219).

### 5.2. General objective

144. Ongoing formation has the purpose of fostering the growth of the religious in the fullness of maturity in Christ, in the completeness and harmony of the *apostolic man*, according to the Montfortian charism (cf. Ratio I 34).

It also tends to ensure fidelity to consecrated and apostolic life in a journey of continuous conversion, in order to keep alive the gift

received with perpetual profession and priestly ordination (cf. RFIS 81).

### 5.3. Path of growth

145. **Human dimension.** The Montfortian religious, in order to consolidate the capacity to love with a truly free heart, will take care, first of all, of his own human maturity in the light of the new needs that accompany the different passages of life.

He grows in the integration of his own qualities and limitations, personal aspirations and the choice of a life of consecration. He learns from Jesus, Wisdom incarnate, how to welcome and weave ties with others, especially if they are different, of another culture and other generation, expressing love in a concrete way (cf. Francis, *Address to the participants in the General Chapter of the Brothers of Saint Gabriel and members of the Montfortian Family*, April 27<sup>th</sup> 2018).

146. **Spiritual dimension.** It is the privileged aspect of ongoing formation, since spiritual life is the atmosphere in which one lives the path of conformation to the sentiments of Christ Wisdom, apostle of the Father, in a constant conversion to Him.

Ongoing formation is a question of interior life, that is, of relationship with Wisdom, which leads back to the deeper reason for the call to apostolic religious life (cf. Mk 3:14a). It is therefore a question of relishing in one's heart, along the different stages of life, the intimacy with Wisdom, of always nourishing the desire that drives the search, of experiencing the bliss of obedient listening and wise keeping of his Word, in which one may read every life event and find the paths to walk through (cf. LEW 10; 30).

Such journey of constant deepening of intimacy with the eternal and incarnate Wisdom, will introduce into the dynamism of the

Trinity up to the experience of "God alone" (cf. Ratio I 57), will increasingly share his love for Mary, obtaining true devotion to her (cf. TD 66-67).

**147. Intellectual dimension.** As Montfortian missionaries "we cannot stop asking ourselves questions about who is God today and about the opportunities and challenges presented to the Church's mission by the time we live in and by the changes that characterize it" (P 4). For this reason, study accompanies life as a precious tool "in a constant quest for the presence and activity of God in the complex reality of today's world" (VC 98; cf. P 21).

If "nothing is more consoling than to know divine Wisdom" (LEW 10), then such Wisdom must be deepened, from such Wisdom one must learn and re-learn what it means to live the sense of belonging to Jesus every day through Mary (cf. GL\_1992 2.2.2 page 5). It is a question of learning the art of discernment, in order to come to love and choose in an enlightened way the true wisdom of Jesus Christ (cf. Ratio I 62).

In particular, the Father of Montfort invites his missionaries to feel the responsibility for the Word of God which urges them to constantly progress in the understanding of the Mystery (cf. GL\_1992 page 6) "to obtain from God the gift of wisdom, so necessary to a true preacher for knowing and relish the truth and getting others to relish it" (RM 60; cf. LEW 30; RM 35.78).

**148. Apostolic dimension.** From the contemplation and a strong relationship of friendship with eternal and incarnate Wisdom, which introduces into the same dynamism of divine love, there springs forth the ability to live and bring God's love to others.

The Montfort missionary commits himself fully to grow in the apostolic spirit (cf. Ratio I 64), by living the mission in the various phases of his life. He constantly renews the passion to make

known and relished the eternal and incarnate Wisdom in order to kindle in others the desire to love it (cf. LEW 2).

**149. Dimension of religious life.** The Montfort missionary is committed to integrating the various aspects of his consecrated and priestly life.

It is a matter of engaging with generosity in active and responsible participation in community initiatives, in order to be a builder of fraternity; of living in a dynamic sense the tension that can arise at a certain moment between “the apostolic man” and “the community man”, reaching the balance “of the Montfortian man” (cf. WJC\_1996 6).

Furthermore, ongoing formation is a help to welcome with ever greater awareness the precious heritage of saint Louis Marie, to draw in an ever new way from the source of the charism, in the awareness that it is a treasure entrusted to the responsibility of all that it may not remain hidden, but bear much fruit (cf. John Paul II, Letter on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the canonization of saint Louis-Marie de Montfort, June 21<sup>st</sup> 1997, n. 5).

Again, it is a matter of keeping the spirit of the Company of Mary alive and growing in it, by relishing the joy of belonging to this picked group of chosen men, whom the Holy Spirit has gathered in the world and from the world (cf. PM 18), and by appreciating one's own Entity and community.

#### **5.4. Times of on-going formation**

**150.** Ongoing formation is marked by passages and changes of life that involve every Montfortian in his path of conformation to Jesus Christ Wisdom.

## **A. FIRST YEARS AFTER PERPETUAL PROFESSION**

### **1. Description**

151. The first stage of ongoing formation embraces the period from the first years after perpetual profession to an age more mature.

They mark the passage from a guided life to a situation of full personal responsibility in the various dimensions of consecrated life (cf. VC 70). These are the years of full insertion into apostolic activity where new challenges can arise that affect life and the ministry. Contradictions emerge which still linger in the personality and which must necessarily be addressed (cf. RFIS 84); there is the risk of doing things by mere habit or the anxiety of arriving at immediate results, hence contradictions, apparent failures, criticism, crosses (cf. EG 83) are not easily tolerated and one gives in to the temptation of delusion (cf. VC 70). One's generative capacity and spiritual fatherhood in self-giving may wane: one focuses on oneself and in selfish relationships with other people. Attraction to power and wealth, attachment to a position, aspiration for a career, can extinguish one's availability to God's will, to the needs of the Church and the People of God (cf. RIFS, 84).

### **2. Specific objectives**

152. Ongoing formation accompanies the confrere that he may understand the richness of the gift received and experience fully the youth of his love and enthusiasm for Christ (cf. VC 70).

153. Furthermore, it favors in the confrere the full investment of his potentialities in the ministry, lived in accordance with his own



personal imprint, through the deepening of his motivations, the care for a unified life, which fights fragmentation and avoids isolation, being vigilant over the risk of letting the initial fervor fade away.

### **3. Specific contents**

154. The confrere will pay attention to those aspects of himself, identified at the end of the initial formation process, which need to be further developed.

It is important that he comes to harmonize the spiritual life, community and the ministry, avoiding activism that ends up being dispersive.

In addition, he will learn to manage in ministry both successes and inevitable disappointments, staying true to daily commitments even when they are not so gratifying.

The apostolic community is the place where the confrere grows in the capacity to give himself with enthusiasm, in the sincere desire to serve the Congregation and the Church. In the community he has the opportunity to share his own experience, to learn from that of the others, finding in them solidarity and support in facing and overcoming difficulties in apostolic activities. For this reason, he steadily cultivates the encounter with his confreres and strengthens his sense of belonging.

In the first years of insertion into the apostolate of the Company of Mary, the confrere finds in spiritual guidance encouragement, support and help in his discernment.

The Entity follows with particular attention the religious who live their first years of perpetual profession (cf. Ratio II 234). The superiors will guarantee them a certain stability, thanks to which they will be able to find the points of reference necessary to live their service in a positive way.

## **B. MIDDLE AGE**

### **1. Description**

155. It is the period of life in which the person perceives that he is at the peak of his human maturity, experiences the fruitfulness of spiritual fatherhood and knows the full development of his gifts for the good of the Kingdom. It is also the time of changes, on a physical and psychological level, and of self-evaluations.

The person, in this phase, may experience moments of trial and crisis. Routine in fraternal life generates a certain depreciation of the community. The feeling of having obtained results in ministry that were inferior to one's expectations weakens the apostolic passion. It can be an authentic identity crisis, with different manifestations ranging from accommodation and acceptance of a mediocre life, to new forms of unbalanced activism, to the extreme cases of forms of double life. An inner void is formed which one tries to fill with compensations of various kinds. There may be the danger of a certain individualism, accompanied by the fear of not being up to the times, or by phenomena of stiffening, closure or decline in spiritual fervor (cf. VC 70).

However, this life phase, precisely in its difficulties, reveals itself as a propitious time for a transformation that reorients one's heart and will towards a joyful and definitive choice of the Lord.

### **2. Specific objectives**

156. Ongoing formation helps to discover the specificity of this life phase which is that of purifying some aspects of the personality, so that the offering of oneself to God is more authentic and generous.

Ongoing formation supports the path towards a deeper commitment and involvement, through a radical confrontation with the reasons for choosing to be Montfortian, in order to renew in a more mature way the total gift of oneself to God and to others.

### **3. Specific contents**

157. The person discovers his authentic fecundity precisely in a time of pruning. He welcomes the experience of human limitations and physical and psychological changes as a stimulus to grow in love, freedom and self-giving.

In the awareness that it is out of pure mercy that the Lord calls to serve him, the religious re-reads his own history in the light of God's gratuitousness, as an antidote to distrust and the worldly gaze that shrinks the heart (cf. Francis, *Homily*, February 2, 2020). Therefore, he develops a magnanimous, compassionate and tolerant heart towards himself and others.

By integrating idealism and enthusiasm into a healthy realism, he lives the various aspects of his days in a balanced way, not giving up taking care of himself, cultivating a more contemplative and less frenetic pace of life, not dictated by the pursuit for results, but by gratuitousness.

He cultivates a life of deeper prayer, made of stillness, of listening and abandonment, developing an interior climate of reliance and trust in the Lord. The certainty of having a Father who "never fails" is a source of inner balance.

In this phase of life, the person purifies the gift of self from personal vanity, from pride, from the desire to be better than others

and from confrontation with them, offering his life to the Lord with simplicity.

He also learns to "take his leave", stripping himself of the desire for power and the claim to be indispensable.

In relationships, he favors quality over quantity, taking care of positive and constructive bonds, in the sign of self-giving and gratuitous love. In particular, he rekindles the taste for fraternal life, overcoming the dichotomy between the way of being outside and the way of being in one's own religious community; he renews the joy of belonging to one's own Entity and to the Company of Mary, accepting its limits and appreciating its positive aspects.

He integrates the experience of life and ministry into a deeper assimilation of Montfortian spirituality and charism.

At this stage of life, spiritual direction that fosters spiritual knowledge, maturation and progress, and open communication with superiors, become particularly important.

The Montfortian religious takes advantage of the possibilities of accompaniment that are offered (cf. SB\_2007 page 9). If necessary, he resorts to professional advice, benefits from a sabbatical period, from participation in the *Montfortian Month*, or from periods of theological, spiritual and pastoral updating and spiritual renewal. These moments reinvigorate the enthusiasm and commitment, integrating the experience of years of life and ministry and a deeper assimilation of Montfortian spirituality.

## **C.     ADVANCED AGE**

### **1.     Description**

158. Along with getting older, new challenges arise. The confrere experiences the gradual abandonment of apostolic activity. He is called to adapt to the changes that aging requires and to accept having to depend on and receive from others, after a life of autonomy and self-giving. For those who for years have identified themselves with a role, believing that the fullness of their vocation lied in its exercise, when they are deprived of it, can feel being placed on the margins of their own religious family.

The response to the new evolutionary tasks may vary. Some tend to "reject" aging, ignoring the limitations and handicaps of their age, for fear of feeling useless or giving into isolation and fear. For others, advancing age is a gift from God to deepen knowledge and intimacy with Him. It is the time to prepare to hand over one's spirit to Him, definitively, with the trust of children, but also of a renewed fecundity.

### **2.     Specific objectives**

159. Ongoing formation in this phase of life helps to recognize the first signs of limitations and weaknesses related to aging.

It makes grow in the wisdom of the cross, to accept the aging process.

It helps the religious to identify and to own the ways of responding to the challenges that aging brings with it and to adapt his life and apostolate to his new situation.

### 3. Specific contents

160. In this last stage of life the person discovers the importance of doing only what is possible. In ministry he can mainly live up to an amiable welcome, intercession, listening, closeness and paternal compassion.

In community he can practice a generous availability for small services, joy in relationship with the younger confreres, with whom he shares wisdom and advice with a paternal spirit.

The ability to relativize things in God, fruit of experience accumulated in life, makes the person a witness of joy, with a healthy sense of humor.

He relates to time in a wise way, appreciating without regret what he has lived, embracing the present, enjoying what he receives and what surrounds him, entrusting his tomorrow to the hands of God who is faithful to his children.

By accepting his gradual detachment from roles, activities, pastoral ministry, he grows in the awareness that the value of life does not lie in doing, but in being a consecrated Montfortian.

“Wisdom does not let those who enjoy his friendship to languish in mediocrity and negligence” (LEW 100). The Lord, even with a religious in advanced age, can and wants to write new pages of holiness, service, and prayer. For the person, it is a matter of setting small goals to reach, discovering the possibilities hidden in the new condition of life, creatively reorganizing his time, spaces and interests.

For its part, the community expresses gratitude to the elderly confrere for his loyal, generous and often discreet service to the Company of Mary and to the Church. In addition, it shows concrete solidarity for his conditions (cf. PDV 77), in particular by means of listening to and welcoming his experiences and wisdom, and by involving him in the reality and dynamics of community life.

## D. THE EXPERIENCE OF ILLNESS

### 1. Description

161. The experience of illness, in which one becomes aware of the finitude of life, belongs to human condition and can be an important moment in the journey of ongoing formation. Integrated in the light of faith, it unites the person with the passion of Jesus and serves as means to become more authentic "friends of the Cross".

The experience of illness in life may differ: *transient illness* that interrupts normal activity; *severe illness* that absorbs strength and tests the sense of well-being, peace of mind and faith; *chronic illness or disability* that affects life for long periods of time; *terminal illness*, which leads to face our mortal condition and to react to it with the light of our faith and consecration.

### 2. Specific objectives

162. Ongoing formation ensures that the experience of illness become a school of patience, bearing the pains and difficulties that derive from it; a school of prayer, contemplating the face of Christ crucified; a school of humility, accepting one's weaknesses and having to depend on the help of others; a school of purification, when trust in divine Providence is put to the test by the uncertainties that arise; a school of self-denial that models in the wisdom of the Cross and offers the opportunity to place oneself entirely in the hands of the Father; a school of solidarity that unites to all humanity, especially to those who suffer.

### 3. Specific contents

163. **Transient illness**, if on the one hand can represent a threat to the integrity of life and interrupt one's apostolic commitment, on the other hand it is a possibility to realize that one is vulnerable and that not everything depends on one's own efforts.

In these situations, the person is called to take care of himself and his health, benefiting from adequate medical assistance. Thus, he recognizes the preciousness of his own life which is a gift from God to be preserved.

Illness can also be a time to deepen one's prayerful union with God, and the recovery times offer the opportunity to develop healthier and more balanced ways of life.

164. **Severe illness** has a strong impact on one's life and on those living around, and brings with it questions that dig deep into the soul. The person finds in faith a key to open the deeper meaning of what he is experiencing and to experience the disease as a way to reach a closer closeness with Jesus Christ.

Feeling the need for loving presences, he welcomes Christ into himself as a doctor who gives relief through the grace of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, and finds in Mary the strength to lay down his pain at the foot of the Cross, rediscovering with her a new fruitfulness.

He learns the art of pouring "the water of suffering" into the jars of his daily living so that it may be transformed into the "good wine of self-offering".

When, in serious situations of illness, his prayer becomes difficult, the confrere accepts to depend on that of the community and of other people.

165. **Chronic illness** is a trial that "offers the possibility of being shaped by the Easter experience, by a configuration with the



Crucified Christ, who fulfilled the Father's will in all things" (VC 70).

Forced inactivity may require a change of ministry or cause one to withdraw from active apostolate. For this reason, the confrere must learn new ways of living his physical and psychological condition.

During this change the person needs encouragement to overcome feelings of isolation and apparent worthlessness. Those Responsible must accompany in a special way the confrere who is living this delicate period, providing him with all the necessary forms of support including the medical, spiritual and psychological ones, as well as a fraternal personal presence.

**166. Terminal illness.** In many ways, formation leads to the moment of death as the culmination of a pilgrimage of faith, as the ultimate means of one's conformation to Christ, and as the fruit of a life consecrated to Jesus through the hands of Mary.

Death represents the highest vocational experience for the person who has responded to the call to follow Christ (cf. Jn 21:19). It is the time when all the previous life calls and answers are summed up. Hence, the death process can be viewed as a supreme act of loving response to God.

For the community too, the passage of a confrere to the Father's House is a formative experience, as it renews the awareness of our personal mortal condition and leads to confess that life is a gift, nourished by the choice to die to oneself daily in order to live the Montfortian consecration.



## **Chapter III - FORMATION OF SUPERIORS AND FORMATORS**

167. The present Ratio outlines the guidelines and norms for the specific formation of superiors and formators, that in the Company of Mary leadership be at the service of the mission and formators be motivated and prepared.

### **1. LEADERSHIP AT THE SERVICE OF MISSION.**

#### **1.1. Description**

168. In the Company of Mary “the superior’s role is one of service to the Congregation, assisting one and all to be faithful to vocation and mission in the Church and the world” (St. 161.7).

The task of authority is to accompany the people entrusted to it along the path of life, paying attention to the growth of each one in every phase and season of existence (cf. FTD 13g).

The service of authority therefore requires a constant presence, capable of animating and proposing, of recalling the reasons for being in consecrated life. No superior can renounce his mission of animation that the community may find itself united in full fraternity and in apostolic service (cf. Starting afresh 14).

Nowadays the service of leadership reveals itself particularly difficult. The person in authority can fall into discouragement and disenchantment in the face of resistance from people or communities; he may be tempted to simply manage situations, resigning himself to mediocrity; he may lose the courage to indicate the goals of authentic consecrated life and run the risk of missing the love of the origins and the desire to bear witness to it (cf. FTD 28). Hence the need for on-going formation and support.

## 1.2. Objectives

169. **General objective.** It is a question of ensuring a specific formation for the confrere called to lead an Entity or a community. Considering that the exercise of authority “remains no stranger to the ongoing crisis affecting the consecrated life” (VN 19), formation of leaders can never be improvised.

### 170. Specific objectives

- a) To develop a vision of authority which, being characterized by the spirit of Christ the Servant, is at the service of personal and community growth and the achievement of the purpose of the mission.
- b) To help to assume leadership at the service of the Entity or the community, overcoming obsolete and harmful models (cf. VN 19-22).
- c) To strengthen natural gifts and develop the skills necessary for the exercise of leadership, which is a true ministry of accompaniment of brothers towards conscious and responsible fidelity (cf. VN 41).

### 1.3. Path of growth

171. **Human dimension.** The superior takes care of his physical, psychological and spiritual health, in order to cope adequately with the stress that accompanies the exercise of authority.

The choice of placing at the center not so much the role of authority as the dynamics of fraternity requires in the superior an open and patient heart, the ability to listen to individuals and to confront their expectations, the everyday reality and the values that are lived and shared in community (cf. VN 41).

That the service of authority be evangelical, the superior needs to cultivate attention to all the confreres who are entrusted to him and to their path of growth, awarding each one with his own esteem and positive consideration, nourishing sincere affection, guarding with professional secrecy the confidences received (cf. FTD 13c) and learning to recognize forms of discomfort or more serious and critical issues (cf. FP 6).

He develops the spirit of collaboration, guarding himself from the risk of being too protagonist and self-referential (cf. VN 44) and from the temptation of being self-sufficient (cf. FTD 25b).

172. **Spiritual dimension.** The superior nourishes his personal spiritual life “through daily and praying familiarity with the Word of God, with the Rule and the other norms of life” (FTD 13a). Prayer, reflection and the advice of others will help to grow in the attitude of discernment (cf. FTD 12).

Furthermore, the superior becomes capable of solitude, especially in moments of inner labor and misunderstanding that always accompany fidelity to one's task (cf. FTD 28).

173. **Intellectual dimension.** The superior cultivates an adequate knowledge of the charism of the Institute, integrating it first in his own personal experience in order to be able to interpret it in

relation to fraternal community life and to his place in ecclesial and social context (cf. FTD 13e).

He deepens his knowledge of the Constitutions, in particular in what concerns the functioning of his own Entity or community. He knows the administrative procedures in the Congregation, collected in the Administrative Directory, in the Economic Directory and in the Ratio Formationis. To foster communication, he endeavors to learn the international languages of the Congregation.

**174. Apostolic dimension.** The superior animates the confreres of the Entity or the community to live the mission in fidelity to the charism and spirituality of the Company of Mary and to respond to the needs of the local Church and society (cf. C 98).

He matures and cultivates an authentic spirituality of ecclesial communion, that is, “an effective and affective relationship with the Bishops, primarily with the Pope, the center of the unity of the Church” (FTD 13f).

**175. Dimension of the religious life.** The superior is careful to value the projects and orientations offered by the General and Entity Chapters as a means of preserving and updating the charism in the local community or in the Entity or in the entire Institute (cf. FTD 13e).

He becomes capable of keeping alive the vision and the dream of the Founder, so as not to fall into the temptation of mere survival that leads to “taming” the charism, depriving it of its original creative strength (cf. Francis, *Homily*, 2 February 2017).

#### **1.4. Other formative indications**

**176. Formation of Superiors of Entities.** At the beginning of the mandate, the programmatic meetings with the General Administration are an important moment of formation that cannot be ignored. It is the responsibility of the General Administration to promote this training.

The Extraordinary General Council meeting may also include spaces dedicated to topics related to leadership training.

**177. Formation of local superiors.** At the beginning of the mandate of a local superior, of his first mandate in particular, the superior of the Entity takes care to introduce him into this service.

The assemblies of local superiors, regularly organized by the superior of the Entity, are a precious moment of ongoing formation to share situations and concerns and to provide mutual help in matter of service.

**178. Updating.** To effectively exercise the leadership ministry, it will be important for the superior to update himself through a continuing formation program. In particular, he will take advantage of the courses and sessions on leadership in consecrated life, promoted by the Conferences of Major Superiors and other institutions.

## 2. FORMATORS MOTIVATED AND WELL PREPARED

### 2.1. Description

179. God is the patient and merciful craftsman of formation to consecrated life and to the priesthood. His hands work through the care of those who, in the Church and in the Institute, are called to be formators. Their service is a grace, that is, a specific call, and at the same time a true ministry, part of the unique mission of the Company of Mary.

They are mainly required to be experts in the journey of seeking God, capable of disclosing to the people entrusted to them “the beauty of following Christ and the value of the charism by which it is accomplished” (VC 66; cf. VN 16), through the testimony of one's own life (cf. SB\_2013 3.2).

The importance of having well-trained religious and priests convinces all the more that it is necessary to invest a great deal in the remote and continuous preparation of confreres for this ministry. Indeed, the art of accompanying candidates or confreres requires constant formation. Therefore, it must be always kept in mind that formation cannot be improvised and that, without a solid formation of formators, a real and promising accompaniment would not be possible (cf. VN 16).

### 2.2. Objectives

180. **General objective.** Training in this area is the response to the urgency of having formators who are motivated and up to their task (cf. SB\_2007 page 1), who experience not the burden but the beauty of doing it.



### 181. **Specific objectives.**

- a) To sustain in formators the continuous process of configuration to Christ, in the human and spiritual traits proper to the missionary disciple.
- b) To promote the acquisition of the necessary skills, including the ability for collaboration and communion and a practical knowledge of Montfortian life (cf. WJC\_1998 7).
- c) To ensure constant accompaniment, in particular of the younger formators, engaged in the first stages of formation.

### 2.3. **Path of growth**

182. The formator offers his service with simplicity and without pretensions, with truth, without false declarations or dissimulations, with courage and authority without fear or human respect, without offending anyone, with charity, holiness, centered on God alone. The glory of God must be his only concern and he must first practice what he preaches (cf. RM 62).

183. **Human dimension.** Formation strengthens a balanced human maturity that knows how to reread one's own experience and face with responsibility one's own frailties and limitations, assuming the "solitude" that accompanies the service of formator.

At the same time, he cultivates a good critical distance from himself, a willingness to learn, to accept observations, to correct himself (cf. PES 34).

He consolidates a good emotional maturity. The formator is not only a friend and companion of those entrusted to him, but a true father and mother, called to generate and give birth to a religious life. And this is possible only through love (cf. Francis, *To*

*formators*, April 11<sup>st</sup> 2015). The trait of generativity is that attitude of spiritual fatherhood that is expressed in the oblique attentiveness to the other.

Expert in humanity, the formator becomes capable of a respectful knowledge of the human heart, of cultivating relationships based on trust and dialogue, of creating spaces of freedom in which everyone can express themselves and assume their responsibilities, of ensuring an earnest accompaniment, with the intention of clearly perceiving the true good of the person. He promotes the ability to work collaboratively, to interact with other formation agents, appreciating the contribution of the laity (cf. LAS page. 4).

**184. Spiritual dimension.** The formator is not only a teacher: he is above all a witness to the following of Christ. Formation in the spiritual dimension helps to rediscover every day the joy of being disciples of Jesus, beginning with a strong friendship with the only one Master.

Furthermore, it urges the formator not to place trust in his own action, but in the provident creativity of the Spirit, who is the only one to shape hearts. This is why the spiritual dimension encourages humility and prudence in the formator, helping him to avoid replacing the Spirit or the person he accompanies. It also supports in moments of failure, so as not to break down when the results do not correspond to expectations.

It makes one grow in spiritual wisdom which helps to discern the actions and signs of God's will, and enables to be sensitive to the motions of grace.

**185. Intellectual dimension.** Formation in this dimension ensures specific, spiritual, theological and pedagogical preparation.

Furthermore, it aims at cultivating a systematic and practical knowledge of Montfortian spirituality and charism. In this way, the formator will be able to transmit the traditions of the Company of Mary in general and of the Entity in particular.

It takes care of the deepening of the Constitutions and of the universal law of the Church, especially in the part concerning the formation in religious and priestly life, as well as of the Ratio Formationis of the Institute, of the Order of Studies, of the administrative procedures in the Congregation, collected in the Administrative Directory and Economic Directory.

Furthermore, it promotes familiarity with the rituals of Profession, the conferral of ministries and ordination and the subsidy "The Montfortian Family in Prayer" to grasp and enhance their richness. It increases practical skills in communication, group dynamics, planning, implementation and evaluation of the formative projects.

Finally, it encourages the resumption of the international languages of the Congregation.

**186. Apostolic dimension.** Formation in this dimension nourishes the pastoral sense of formators and helps to enhance the important baggage of their previous apostolic experience, that they may know how to transmit the passion for the Kingdom of God and how to initiate others to the mission.

It makes one attentive to the signs of the times in the Church and in the world, and it consolidates an incarnated spirituality, open to confrontation with the contemporary culture.

**187. Dimension of the religious life.** Formation in this dimension nourishes in the formator the ability to bear witness to the beauty of the consecration and the following of Christ who is poor, obedient and chaste.

In addition, it cultivates an interest in Montfortian spirituality and charism and a passion for communicating and transmitting this treasure.

It nourishes the sense of belonging to the Congregation, by participating with enthusiasm and fidelity in its life and that of one's own Entity.

## **2.4. Profile of formators according to stages**

**188. Vocational animator.** Convinced and passionate about his own vocation to religious life, he does not allow himself to be "robbed" of the joy of following Jesus Christ and of the courage to propose him to others as the way, the truth and the life (cf. Jn 14: 6). For this reason, the pastoral action of the vocational animator is, first of all, a narrative of what fills one's life with meaning (cf. SB\_2007 page 2).

Moved by trust in the Lord and in the person, he knows how to awaken without shyness the desire to follow Jesus Christ, through "a courageous, evangelically demanding and at the same time deeply human proposal, without discounts and without rigidity" (Francis, *Message to the participants in the international conference on the theme: "Vocational promotion and consecrated life. Horizons and hopes"*, Rome, 1 - 3 December 2017).

Thanks to the eye drops of faith, he has a clear eye on reality, knowing well today's society and the current generations. In this way, in the light of the pastoral vocational plan of the Institute and of the local Church, he knows how to create environments and find the appropriate means to make the Lord's call resound today.

Aware that personal relationship is irreplaceable, he commits himself to accompany the person, dedicating time and resources to welcoming and listening. In particular, he knows the art of helping to discern in truth, without fickleness or superficiality, the

human and spiritual motivations that push the person to orient himself towards the consecrated and priestly life (cf. SB\_2007 page 2).

He makes people participate in the Montfortian consecrated life, inspiring the passion for its charism and spirituality, its way of living the following of Christ and its mission.

Aware that his mission is to sow, he carries out his ministry with perseverance and patient expectation, without giving into discouragement and pessimism.

**189. Responsible for the Pre-novitiate.** In continuity with vocational animation, the person in charge of the Pre-novitiate accompanies the candidate in the discernment of his vocation, helping to evaluate and purify the motivations in the light of the radicality of the Gospel (cf. SB\_2007 page 2), educating to the faith and to the listening of God who calls (cf. 1Sam 3:8b-10), forming the human and Christian attitudes that nourish the response to God's call (cf. Phil 2: 3-5a).

In particular, he cultivates open interpersonal relationships, which foster trust. With adequate formative interventions, he offers personalized support that allows the candidate to discover his own abilities, to carry on human growth and the path of faith, overcoming the difficulties he may encounter, and to progressively internalize human, Christian and charismatic values. By creating a fraternal atmosphere that fosters collaboration and co-responsibility, he elaborates and implements a specific program, which includes regular personal interviews and systematic formative meetings.

**190. Novice Master.** He stands out for the quality and consistency of his consecrated life, for his knowledge of the dynamics of the spiritual life and the experience of Montfortian spirituality.

He has the delicate task of guiding the novice to the joy of belonging to God and of gradually introducing him to the spirit proper to the institute (cf. CIC, can. 652 § 1). For this, he becomes his traveling companion, sharing the bread of his spiritual experience, without assuming an authoritarian attitude, nor invading the space of the mystery of the other. On the contrary, it arouses trust in the person, favors clarity of conscience that leads one to let the truth that he carries within to shine through with simplicity. Regular personal encounters allow the Master to verify the growth and integration of the novice's experience (cf. SB\_2007 page 3).

It is up to the Master to implement the Novitiate program, establish an action plan that is flexible and appropriate for each candidate, and carry out periodic evaluations.

If necessary, the novice Master can be assisted by other confreres who depend on him for the running of the Novitiate and the formation program (cf. CIC, can. 651 § 2).

The figure of the "*socius*" is of particular significance. His task requires humility, sacrifice and a spirit of adaptation. He is called to support the novice Master, encouraging him like a brother, and to act in complementarity in the organization of the life of the Novitiate.

Without prejudice to freedom in the internal forum for the sacrament of reconciliation, it is useful for the novice Master to assume the role of spiritual director. However, another religious of the Company of Mary, duly trained and chosen, could also carry out this service.

It is the responsibility of the novice Master to make use of the contribution of other collaborators, in particular for the proposal and the deepening of the contents of the Novitiate.

**191. Responsible for the stage of temporary vows.** Distinguishing himself for prudence, wisdom and balance and letting himself be guided by the light of the Spirit, he lives up to the service of formator as a gift that enables him to grow and to help the others grow as well (cf. SB\_2007 page 5).

He endeavors to offer the necessary means for discernment and vocational maturation (cf. RFIS 134), continuing the formative action begun in the previous phase, creating a climate of dialogue and giving clear and strong guidelines, according to the Montfortian spirit, in order to ensure a systematic, complete and gradual formative process.

It is his duty to help the temporary professed to embody the values of Montfortian spirituality and religious profession in concrete daily life, gradually integrating faith and life, theory and practice, contemplation and action.

Furthermore, he facilitates a full experience of the life of the Congregation that allows the temporary professed and the Institute to have the certainty that the necessary conditions for a definitive commitment are present.

He accompanies the temporary professed with sensitivity and firmness in fraternal community life, helping him to grow in the acceptance, respect and esteem of the confreres of all ages, cultures and backgrounds.

**192. “Mentor” or “older brother” in the first years after perpetual profession.** In addition to a community and a ministry, it is necessary to ensure in the first years after perpetual profession the presence of a confrere, possibly different from the superior of the Entity, available for serious and serene accompaniment.

It is an “older brother”, who stands out for his way of relating to others. His qualities are to be a welcoming spirit, frankness, open mind and heart, capacity for discernment and paternal encouragement (cf. SB\_2007 page 7).

**193. Person in charge for ongoing formation.** It is desirable that the Superior of the Entity be accompanied by a collaborator or team to whom to entrust the animation and the concrete implementation of the common initiatives of ongoing formation. In fact, to favor ongoing formation “a sporadic gesture, some decision or operational choice is not enough. It is a question of starting a constant formative dynamic that has a relationship and impact on the entire community and personal life ”(CTB 56). This is especially important for the confreres of the middle age who have the main interlocutors for their formation in the Superior of the Entity and in the local Superior.

**194. Person who accompanies the confrere in the last stages of life.** The accompaniment of a confrere who takes the last steps of his pilgrimage to the Father's house is both a grace and an opportunity to express fraternal and spiritual participation.

In order to be able to offer, in an adequate way, all the necessary support, the one who is close to the confrere must know the psychological phases of dying, the methods of interaction and the tasks that derive from them.

Furthermore, he has the sensitivity to involve the family or other significant persons in the life of the confrere and knows how to make the most of all the spiritual means to comfort, support and surround the confrere with the light and consoling grace of the Lord.



## 2.5. Other formative indications

195. **Choice of formators.** We are always faced with the necessity to pay close attention in the choice of formators (cf. VN 16). Improvisation on the part of Superiors must be absolutely avoided. After careful discernment, it is useful to identify the confrere in a timely manner, so that he can deepen the motivations and take care of the specific preparation. The ideal is that the confrere should have some pastoral experience. Furthermore, a conscious, explicit and cordial commitment to the service of formation is important on the part of the confrere and it is opportune that the first experience does not involve direct responsibility. Superiors should have the constant concern of preparing new formators, respecting the duration of the mandate and guaranteeing a turnover.

196. **Ongoing accompaniment.** The formator, always on the journey toward a solid human, Christian and charismatic identity, finds an important resource in the choice of letting himself be accompanied by a spiritual director and other competent guides.

197. **Formative action as a team.** Formative action can never be isolated and individual, since it is a community process. Therefore, the formators, "for the effectiveness of their endeavors, must consider themselves to be a true formative community. They should act accordingly, sharing common responsibility, with due regard to the duties and the office entrusted to each member" (RFIS, Introduction 3). The concerted action of the formators is a model of collaboration, improves the coordination of the journey and matures good fruits in formation (cf. Ratio I 196). The principle of communion also translates into cohesion and collaboration among those responsible for the various stages of formation.

198. **Ministry of formation and other tasks.** For a real and effective formation, it is important that formators be involved full time in their ministry of formation (cf. RFIS 49; 132). Should the formator be invited to assume other apostolic commitments, these should not be to the detriment of the priority of the formative service.

## **Chapter IV - SPECIAL ISSUES**

199. Two issues require criteria and norms of discernment and accompaniment: admission and dismissal, especially in some particular cases, and training in respect for vulnerable people.

### **1. ADMISSION AND DISMISSAL**

200. In general, the first admission of candidates must be done very carefully, “since it is not infrequent that candidates continue the formation process considering each stage as a consequence and prolongation of this first step” (cf. RFIS 189). The Superior of the Entity, with the help of the formators, will evaluate in the candidates the family context, the physical and mental health, the human and moral, spiritual and intellectual qualities and the righteousness of intention (cf. Ratio II 218).

#### **1.2. Physical and psychological health**

##### *Physical Health*

201. At the moment of entry into the formative journey, the candidate is required to demonstrate that he is in a state of health compatible with the lifestyle of the Montfortian missionaries. In particular, he must present the results of general medical

examinations, which prove a healthy and robust constitution, as well as any documentation related to diseases, operations undergone or specific therapies that occurred in the past (cf. RFIS 190).

A great deal of caution and a prudent and personalized evaluation are needed for the admission of candidates oriented to the priesthood who cannot take gluten, because affected by celiac disease, or ethyl alcohol, without serious harm (cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Circular letter*, June 24, 2003; cf. RFIS 190).

202. Adequate health conditions must remain and be verified throughout the entire period of initial formation. In this regard, it is important to develop a lifestyle that includes regular physical exercise, a healthy and balanced diet, hygiene and cleanliness of the body, avoidance of tobacco and moderation of alcohol consumption, a balanced rhythm of work and rest<sup>3</sup> and regular consultation of the doctor.

#### *Psychological Health*

203. Candidates for religious life and for the priesthood are required to have human maturity and sufficient psychological, emotional and sexual equilibrium to live serenely the demands of their vocation. For this reason, it is good not to admit in formation, to vows and to the priesthood, a candidate with serious psychopathologies, whether manifest or latent, such as schizophrenia, paranoia, bipolar disorder, paraphilias, etc. (cf.

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<sup>3</sup> One's own and the others' rest, without indulging idleness, is everyone's responsibility. Physical exercise is, as far as possible, desirable for everyone. Healthy recreation and playful activities, which do not contradict the values of religious life, help to relax, to rationally manage one's reactions and emotions, without letting oneself be invaded by discontent, discouragement or exaltation (cf. FLC 28).

RFIS 191). A psychological evaluation will therefore be convenient, both for admission to the Pre-novitiate and subsequently, when this may seem useful to formators (cf. RFIS 193).

204. Recourse to experts in the psychological sciences is an aid to formators, who are nevertheless responsible for vocational discernment. Their contribution can be a useful tool in view of admission, allowing to better understand the nature and personality of the candidate and to offer a formative service more suited to the conditions of the single person (cf. RFIS 192).

205. Psychological help can also be offered to candidate during formation as an accompaniment to his vocational growth towards greater affective human maturity. However, it will be ensured that this psychological support does not conflict or compete with the spiritual accompaniment.

206. Recourse to psychological help may also be necessary in other phases of the consecrated person's life, especially in times of "crisis". This help, received with a spirit of faith, will allow the person to grow more and more in his vocation (cf. VC 70; FLC 38).

207. In choosing psychologists, it should be borne in mind that they must openly share the Christian vision about the human person, sexuality, as well as vocation to the priesthood and celibacy (cf. UCP 6; cf. RFIS 192). Furthermore, it is opportune that they be familiar with the dynamics and expectations of the consecrated life (cf. FLC 38) and, possibly, of the Company of Mary.

208. Whatever may be the type of psychological intervention, the following must be kept in mind:

- a) The condition of freedom, necessary for an effective psychological intervention. The formators will evaluate the reasons given by the candidate, if he refuses to undergo a psychological consultation. Furthermore, they will not force his will in any way but will proceed prudently in the work of discernment with the knowledge they already have (cf. UCP 12).
- b) The manifestation by the person concerned of a prior consent, given in writing, informed and free (cf. RFIS 194; UCP 12).
- c) The right to a good reputation which the person enjoys and to defend his privacy (cf. CIC, can. 220) for the protection of which “the candidate will be free to approach an expert, who is either chosen from among those indicated by the formators, or chosen by the candidate himself and accepted by the formators” (UCP 12).
- d) The expert, having carried out his evaluation, and taking in account the indications offered him by the formators, will communicate to the candidate concerned his contribution for the understanding of the subject’s personality and the problems he is facing or must face. Only with a previous written consent of the candidate will the expert communicate the evaluation to the Superior of the Entity, the Responsible of formation and the Spiritual Director, authorized to have knowledge of such information by reason of their office (cf. UCP 15; RFIS 195).

### **1.3. Candidate in adult age**

209. It may become more and more common to accept a candidate in adulthood who, after having achieved a certain autonomy of life and stability in a profession, feels the call to the Montfortian consecrated life. He presents himself “with a more structured personality and a life journey characterized by diversified experiences” (RFIS 24).

210. Accompaniment requires respect of the indications for a serious discernment of motivations (cf. Ratio II 65-70). In particular, the Responsible of Formation should carefully evaluate the candidate's ability to live in a formation context with younger people, to follow an academic program, to adapt to the lifestyle of the religious community, as well as to participate in the mission of the Company of Mary once the initial formation process is completed. It is also important to examine the candidate's actual employment situation, verifying the opportunity for a leave of absence from work, and clarifying his financial situation.

#### **1.4. Candidate from other seminaries or institutes of formation**

211. The admission to the formation process of candidates who have left or, even more so, have been dismissed from other seminaries or houses of formation, should be allowed with the utmost caution. Before any reception, the formators, with a supplement of accurate discernment, must gather “the necessary information from their respective Bishops or Major Superiors, especially about the causes of dismissal or departure” (UCP 16), tracing the documentation, including the psychological assessments, related to the time spent in another institute of formation (cf. RFIS 198).

212. The person who asks to be admitted to the formative journey, in his written request has to state “his own personal journey, and the reasons that have led him to his previous dismissal or departure from another institute of formation” (RFIS 198).

### **1.5. Persons with homosexual tendencies**

213. Although the main requirement for the candidate to Montfortian religious life is the call of God and the capacity to live the lifestyle of the Institute, for admission to the path of formation of a person with a homosexual inclination it is necessary to evaluate with great attention the level of emotional and sexual maturity of the candidate (cf. PH 3).

214. While deeply respecting persons with homosexual tendencies, the Company of Mary, in line with the Church, cannot admit to starting the journey of formation “those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called gay culture”. (cf. PTO 2; cf. RFIS 199).

215. If homosexual tendencies were only the expression of a transitory problem, for example, that of an adolescence not yet completed, such tendencies must be clearly overcome at least three years before perpetual profession (cf. PTO 2; cf. RFIS 200).

216. The candidate, in a relationship of sincere dialogue and mutual trust, is required to reveal to his formators any doubts or difficulties he may have in this regard. It would be gravely dishonest for a candidate to hide his own homosexuality in order to proceed, despite everything, towards perpetual profession and ordination (cf. RFIS 200).

217. If a candidate practices homosexuality, his spiritual director, as well as his confessor, have the duty to dissuade him, in conscience, from proceeding towards perpetual profession and ordination (cf. PTO 3; cf. RFIS 200).



## **1.6. Discernment of the suitability**

218. The discernment of the suitability of a candidate is never merely formal and bureaucratic acts that employ standard and generic formulae, but represents the authoritative assessment concerning the vocation of a specific person and his development by those who have been authorized to do so by virtue of their office and in the name of the Congregation (cf. RFIS 204). Suitability must be clearly expressed and argued in writing, based on positive arguments and not simply on the absence of problematic situations.

219. The Superior of the Entity has the ultimate and definitive canonical responsibility for admission to first profession and the renewal of vows; hence he has the moral duty to consider with the utmost attention the evaluation of the persons in charge of formation. It is convenient for the Superior to express his decision in the form of a decree, providing at least in a summary form the reasons for what he has decided (cf. RFIS 210).

## **1.7. Dismissal**

220. “The formative journey has to be interrupted if the candidate, notwithstanding his own commitment and the support of the psychologist or psychotherapy, continues to show himself unable to face realistically, even given the gradual nature of all human growth, his grave immaturities such as strong affective dependencies, notable lack of freedom in relationships, excessive rigidity of character, lack of loyalty, uncertain sexual identity, deep-seated homosexual tendencies, etc.” (cf. UCP 10).

221. After having consulted his collaborators and the Superior of the Entity, if the Responsible of a stage of formation deems it

necessary to dismiss a candidate at any time along the way, this orientation is to be put in writing, with a prudent summary like explanation, in any case sufficiently indicative (cf. CIC, can. 51), of the circumstances that have motivated it, as a synthesis of the discernment made (cf. RFIS 197). The orientation of the Responsible of formation is delivered to the Superior of the Entity for the final decision.

### **3. FORMATION WITH RESPECT TO VULNERABLE PERSONS**

222. The protection and care of every person, especially the weakest and most vulnerable, is part of the ministry and service that the religious and priests of the Company of Mary render to the Church and to the societies in which they live and work in many parts of the world. Each person entrusted to their care is a son, a daughter of God. Hence the task and duty – freely chosen – to humbly place oneself at their service so that all may have the fullness of life (cf. Jn 10:10). No Montfortian can fail to work constantly and actively to create a healthy and safe environment for the most vulnerable people.

223. The phenomenon of abuses is complex and has both individual and institutional causes. Recent studies have highlighted a correlation between a poor formation of candidates for the priesthood, especially on a human level, and sexual abuse committed against vulnerable people<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> K. J. Terry - K. Schulth - M. L. Smith, *Incidence of Clerical Sexual Abuse over Time: Changes in Behavior and Seminary Training between 1950 and 2008*, in T. G. Plante - K. L. McChesney, *Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church. A Decade of Crisis 2002-2012*, Praeger, Santa Barbara, 2011, 17-30. M. Applewhite, «Lessons

224. This fact calls into question the formative project of the Company of Mary and of the Entities. A serious human formation of candidates to religious life and to the priesthood, besides having a fundamental role in the path towards a definitive commitment (cf. PDV 43), in the broader context of the efforts that the Church is putting in place for the protection of minors and vulnerable adults, takes on as well a preventive function. The more the candidate is chosen rigorously and trained from a human point of view, the healthier and safer will be the ecclesial environment in which he is called to work even for minors and vulnerable adults.

225. In this regard, a series of indications is presented which in each Entity must be integrated into the formation process both in its initial phases and in the more comprehensive phase of ongoing formation.

## **2.1. Indications for vocational discernment and selection of candidates**

226. In this phase it is of paramount importance to collect as much information as possible about the candidate, in order to be able to conduct a serious discernment and thus decide whether or not to accept his request for admission (cf. Ratio II 65; 262).

In particular, the psychological assessment of the personality by an accredited psychologist, i.e. registered in the Register, must include an analysis of the psychosexual development of the candidate and give elements about his suitability to lead a life of chastity in celibacy.

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for Seminary Formation Found in the Pages of the John Jay Studies», *Human Development*, 33 (3) 2012, 9-14. M. Keenan, *Child Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church. Gender, Power, and Organizational Culture*, Oxford University Press, New York 2012.

227. A candidate who has committed crimes or incurred in problematic situations in the context of relations with minors or vulnerable adults cannot be admitted in the formation process.

## **2.2. Indications for the initial formation**

228. The aspects which follow concern the stages of initial formation, in particular the usually longer period, which is that of temporary vows. These are elements of absolute importance and must be taken into serious consideration.

229. If it becomes known that the candidate, during one or the other phase of the formation process, has committed crimes or incurred in problematic situations in the context of relations with minors or vulnerable adults, the candidate must be dismissed (cf. RFIS 202).

230. In the context of an articulated and continuous human formation program it is of paramount importance to insist on the psychosocial and psychosexual aspects of a healthy life in view of chastity in celibacy which educates affectivity, qualifies emotional competence, strengthens the ability to establish adequate relationships. It is necessary to help candidates identify their abilities, work on their weaknesses and acquire the tools necessary to meet the challenges that a life of chastity in celibacy will present them.

231. The candidate who has experienced abuse is to be assisted with adequate accompaniment (cf. RFIS 202). This aspect presupposes that the candidate should feel free to share the experience of the abuse he has suffered from. It is therefore important that the formator be able to create the conditions in the

community and in the relationship with the candidate that this may find the strength and courage to open up and thus to be helped.

232. Specific training is needed on the prevention of sexual abuse and other forms of exploitation of minors (cf. RFIS 202). This aspect must include an in-depth study of the *Guidelines* of the Entity on the prevention of abuse. In each of the stages of the initial formation it is advisable to organize educational sessions for training and preventive purposes. In addition to the specific aspects related to the issue of abuse such as the effects on victims, the types of abuse and abusers, the alarm signals, the risk factors, it is necessary to insist on the balance between distance and proximity (respect for personal boundaries of physical, emotional and behavioral character) and on what each confrere can and must do to prevent abuse and protect the most vulnerable.

233. A candidate who, after due instructions on the prevention of abuses, behaves in a manner contrary to the provisions of the *Guidelines* of the Entity must be dismissed.

### **2.3. Indications for the ongoing formation**

234. For the confrere who is in the first years of active ministry, it is necessary to think as well about a service of real pastoral supervision or mentoring, as happens for other professions. In addition to ensuring the aspect of personal responsibility, this service will help and support the confrere in creating and safeguarding a healthy and safe pastoral environment for minors and vulnerable adults.

235. The moments of both spiritual renewal and human formation, organized by each Entity for the confreres, must include ongoing

formation on the dynamics, incidence, identification and prevention of sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults.

236. In the event that a confrere in Perpetual vows is accused of child abuse or inappropriate sexual conduct with an adult, the indications of the document *Basic Criteria*<sup>5</sup> and the *Guidelines* of the Entity to which he belongs or for which he is missioning are to be followed in terms of protection of minors and vulnerable adults.

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<sup>5</sup> Company of Mary, *Basic criteria for the treatment of cases of abuse of minors and sexual misconduct with adults*, Rome 2015.

## Chapter V - ORDER OF STUDIES (*Ratio Studiorum*)

237. This chapter does not present the overview of the various disciplines that make up the general study plan, for which reference is made to the general indications of the Church (cf. RFIS 153-187), but an overview of the study areas, favoring integration with the Montfortian spirituality and charism and the subjects that respond to the specific needs of the exercise of ministry.

An organization of studies attentive to these areas will allow the candidate to prepare himself adequately for the Montfortian mission, and, if necessary, for the religious Brother, even from the professional point of view (cf. St. 155.4), and for each member of the Company of Mary to be constantly updated in his apostolic service.

### 1. ACADEMIC MATERIALS AND THEIR INTEGRATION

238. *Philosophical and theological formation.* Philosophical studies are indispensable for a serious dialogue with contemporary thought and with society, to which we are called to announce the message of salvation (cf. RFIS 158; FR 64.99).

Theological formation is fundamental in the path of preparation for perpetual Profession and for the Priesthood because through theological studies the candidate grows in the spiritual life and prepares himself to carry out his mission (cf. RFIS 165). For the candidate for the Priesthood, the duration of the academic studies

in Philosophy must correspond to at least two years or to an adequate number of hours according to the school systems in force in the country. Furthermore, the duration of the theological studies will last for at least four years or a proportionate number of hours (cf. RFIS 154).

*239. Systematic deepening of Mariology.* A serious Mariological preparation is a fundamental component of the Montfortian missionary, who is called to be a "specialist" in this field.

It is therefore important to promote and ensure an integral Mariological formation that embraces study, devotion and life (cf. VMF 34), and contributes to the development of a solid Marian spirituality and to the provision of an enlightened and qualified service to the People of God in pastoral action.

*240. Integration of academic courses in a Montfortian key.* It is a question of studying and deepening the Montfortian themes related to the various courses attended by the candidate. In this way, the contents of theological formation are harmonized with the doctrine, the Montfortian spirituality and the charism of the Company of Mary.

An adequate itinerary, in continuity with what started at the Novitiate, will allow a vital assimilation of the charism and mission of the Company of Mary, through a revival at a deeper level of the life, the historical-cultural context, the works and spirituality of the Founder, which integrates the different theological disciplines.

In particular, it will be useful to develop the apostolic component of the various themes of Montfortian spirituality: the baptismal and Marian way, the centrality of preaching, the missionary pedagogy of the Founder, his choice for popular missions and in



favor of an apostolate of proximity, the involvement of lay people, the pastoral use of the Rosary and the Canticles.

The deepening of the history of the Institute and of one's own Entity, in particular in the most recent developments, the reading of the documents produced from time to time by the General Direction, offer the religious with temporary vows the possibility of growing in the sense of belonging to the Company of Mary.

241. *Systematic knowledge of the writings of saint Louis Marie of Montfort and of the contemporary interpretations of Montfortian spirituality.* It allows to better outline the identity of the Montfortian missionary and to know how to share today, in an authentic way, the treasure of the charism.

242. *History of Christian spirituality and of the trends that contextualize the message of saint Louis-Marie,* with particular reference to the French School of Spirituality.

243. *Hagiography.* It is about promoting knowledge of the lived spirituality and theology of the saints who have had a particular influence on Montfort's experience and spirituality.

244. *Elements of presbyteral spirituality.* The study of the doctrinal foundations and essential elements of presbyteral spirituality will help to combine it with the spirituality of Montfortian religious life, by appreciating what is specific.

245. *Elements of humanistic culture, history and sociology.* In view of an effective pastoral action, the candidate should acquire an adequate knowledge of the history, culture, traditions, in a word, of the socio-religious context in which he will be called to work.

246. *Missiology and inculturation*. It is about taking care of a specific preparation at theological-pastoral level, in dialogue with the other sciences, in view of a true inculturation of the evangelical message.

## 2. "MINISTERIAL" SUBJECTS

247. *The art of celebration*. “The Church evangelizes and is herself evangelized through the beauty of the Liturgy” (EG 24). Hence the importance of deepening the *art of celebration* that the liturgy be an action full of faith, participation, creativity, valuing language, gestures, signs, respecting the norms and, obviously, the spirit of the liturgy. (cf. SCa 38.40).

In particular, knowledge of the current liturgical books, the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and the *Instruction of the Readings for the Mass* will allow to appreciate all their richness.

248. *The art of preaching*. Preaching in the manner of the apostles is not an easy art, but a complex reality that requires multiple skills and constant training (cf. RM 60-65). It requires a remote preparation, based on the Word of God and on theological and human disciplines, in view of an effective communication, and a careful immediate preparation, which takes into account, on the one hand, the Word to be announced and, on the other, the context for which the message is intended (cf. EG 145-159).

For the formation of candidates to the priesthood in the *art of preaching* in the context of liturgy, the study of the *Homiletic Directory* is very useful (cf. DO; cf. also EG 135-142).

249. *Ministry of Confession*. Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort reminds his missionaries of the commitment to earn their bread not only on the pulpit, but also in the confessional (cf. LCM 10).

It is important to initiate future priests in the ministry of reconciliation, because one does not improvise as confessor. One becomes so when, first of all, he makes himself a penitent in search of forgiveness (cf. MV 17). Study and prayer, then, procure the knowledge and prudence necessary for the pastoral exercise of the ministry of reconciliation.

An adequate knowledge of the *Rite of Penance* and the aids for confessors (cf. MMD 64-134) will be useful as well as the Directives on the Formation of Seminarians Concerning Problems Related to Marriage and the Family (cf. PMF 8).

250. *Formation in proclamation and catechesis.* For future Montfortian brothers and priests an adequate preparation in this area is required (cf. DC 151). Care will be taken to integrate the indications of the Directory for Catechesis into the local Ratio (cf. DC 152-153).

251. *Formation in spiritual accompaniment.* Counseling and spiritual accompaniment are an integral part of the ministry of preaching, reconciliation and catechesis. In the period of preparation for perpetual profession and for the priesthood, initiation into the art of accompaniment appears ever more necessary and urgent (cf. EG 169-173), through the study of spiritual theology, the knowledge of the dynamics of the spiritual life, the fundamental guidelines for the discernment of spirits, pedagogy and psychology (cf. RFIS 178).

252. *Formation in popular piety.* Popular piety is a treasure that has in itself a great evangelizing force. For this reason, it must be known and appreciated in its most authentic values and meanings. Formation in popular piety, which finds a precious tool in the *Directory of Popular Piety and Liturgy* (cf. PPL), in particular, enables to purify, review and update the devotions and practices

of piety that explicitly refer to and draw on Montfortian spirituality, orienting them to the liturgy, harmonizing them with liturgical prayer, dropping the elements subject to the wear of time.

253. *The way of beauty.* The missionary strategy of saint Louis-Marie of Montfort testifies to his taste for beauty as a pedagogical element aiming at making Christ loved. It suffices to think of the good ordering of processions and celebrations, of the valorization of the Canticles, of the care of the churches in his missions.

It is necessary to train to recognize that the expressions of true beauty are a way of evangelization and catechesis (cf. EG 167) and to train to use correctly the arts in the pastoral sphere. The curriculum of studies should also include knowledge of sacred music, ensure a practical musical preparation, favoring the development of natural talents (cf. RFIS 181).

254. *Social dimension of evangelization.* The organization of studies should include courses on the doctrine and social pastoral care of the Church, arousing interest and sensitivity on the themes of fraternity and social friendship (cf. FT), commitment to justice and peace, safeguarding of creation, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, dialogue with civil society, culture and science.

A useful and adequate tool is the study of the Compendium of the *Social Doctrine of the Church* (cf. DSC), as well as the knowledge and deepening of the great social encyclicals (cf. SDS).

255. *Team work and leadership.* For those who dedicate themselves to the Montfortian mission and in general to the proclamation of the Gospel, it is required to learn to work as a team and, according circumstances, to exercise leadership.

256. *Art of communicating and means of communication.* The art of communicating is remarkably complex because it requires multiple knowledge and adequate tools. It is therefore necessary that candidate receive training that helps them acquire the necessary communication skills and relate to the media correctly, grasping the potentialities and opportunities of social networks and at the same time knowing their limits and risks (cf. SCS 14-28).

Since social networks today are one of the venues in which to live the mission of rediscovering the beauty of faith, it is important to offer paths for learning to become "an evangelizing presence in the digital continent" (DC 371).

257. *Study of languages.* The candidate must know accurately not only the language of his own country, but also the international languages, in order to have an adequate preparation for the mission that awaits him in an increasingly globalized world. The candidate for the priesthood should also take care to study the classical languages of Latin and Greek and, if possible, Hebrew.

258. These "ministerial" subjects can be treated in different ways, for example, through courses at study centers, sessions in the formation house, sessions within the Entity and the Congregation, personal readings. It is the duty of the Responsible of Formation to ensure that the candidate be given the opportunity to prepare himself in these areas before perpetual profession.

### **3. SPECIALIZED STUDIES AND UPDATING**

259. The mission may require specific preparation for some destined for particular tasks and offices. To this end, after having collected the appropriate information and assessed the needs of the

Entity, the superiors will be able to choose confreres inclined by nature, virtue and ingenuity, capable of pursuing these purposes (cf. RFIS 185; Ratio II 323). Superiors agree with the formators on the field and method of such specialized studies.

260. Updating (“*Aggiornamento*”) is the maintenance of one's life. This applies not only to those who dedicate themselves to study and teaching, who must never stop perfecting themselves, but it is important for everyone, if life is not to fall victim to monotony and insignificance.

Along with the habitual study, the "stages" of cultural and spiritual updating are important – to be planned and guaranteed to all – in order to encourage revival and regenerate enthusiasm in one's vocation and mission.

## **Chapter VI - ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

261. The SMM Administrative Directory, revised and updated in 2022 (DA22), is the reference for all the procedures that Superiors and formators are required to follow the good service for formation, in fidelity to universal and particular law. By following these procedures, they will ensure that all documents required by the DA22 are included in the personal file of each candidate. The list of documents will serve as a cover page as a reminder of the documentation to include.

### **1. VOCATIONAL ANIMATION**

262. The person in charge of vocational animation opens the candidate's personal file, gathering the documentation required at this stage (cf. DA22, 18b\_01-10).

### **2. ADMISSION TO THE PRE-NOVITIATE**

263. Before applying for admission to the Pre-novitiate, the Responsible for vocational animation carries out an investigation into the financial situation of the candidate. If the candidate owns properties, the modalities of their management during initial training should be established with him. In case of unpaid debts,

the candidate is required to resolve them. The attestation of the execution of these procedures and the outcome of the investigation must be included in the candidate's personal file (cf. DA22, 18b\_10).

264. After this first period of discernment, the person in charge of vocational animation prepares a written report on the candidate, with the recommendation for entry into the Pre-novitiate (cf. DA22, 18b\_12).

265. The candidate addresses a letter to the Superior of the Entity, in which he asks to be admitted to the Pre-novitiate and declares to make his request spontaneously and freely (cf. DA22, 18b\_11).

266. The Superior of the Entity involves the candidate to contribute to the expenses of his formation.

267. The Superior of the Entity, with the consent of his Council, admits the candidate to the Pre-novitiate, following the report of the Responsible for vocational animation (cf. C 141; cf. DA22, 18b\_13).

268. The Responsible for vocational animation hands over the personal file of the candidate to the Superior of the Entity who makes a copy of it for the formator responsible for the Pre-novitiate.

### **3. ADMISSION TO THE NOVITIATE**

269. The Superior of the Entity verifies that all the documents requested are present in the personal file of the candidate and that the conditions for a valid admission to the Novitiate are there, as



indicated by Canon Law (cf. CIC, can. 641-645) and by the Proper law of the SMM (cf. C 140-141; St. 140.1).

270. The candidate addresses a letter to the Superior of the Entity, in which he explicitly and reasonably requests to be admitted to the Novitiate and declares to make this request spontaneously and freely. This emphasis is necessary because the Novitiate is not valid if the subject is forced by the Congregation, by his family and/ or by certain circumstances.

271. The candidate for the Novitiate signs a declaration, civilly valid, in which he renounces any financial claim or compensation from the Congregation for:

- the decision to leave his work before entering the Institute;
- in the event of an accident and/or illness;
- the services rendered in the Congregation (cf. DA22, 18b\_15).

272. The Formator responsible for the Pre-novitiate writes a report in which he exposes the progress of the candidate and the qualities shown that make him suitable for the Novitiate (cf. DA22, 18b\_16).

273. The Superior of the Entity, with the consent of his Council, admits the candidate to the Novitiate (cf. C 141). The extract from the minutes of the Council that dealt with the admission must be included in the personal file. The notification of admission will be sent to the formator Responsible for the Pre-novitiate.

274. The Superior of the Entity ensures that the following documents are added to the personal file:

1. the candidate's request to be admitted to the Novitiate (cf. DA22, 18b\_14);
2. the declaration of renunciation of any economic claim (cf. DA22, 18b\_15);

3. the presentation of the Formator responsible for the Pre-novitiate to the competent Superior (cf. DA22, 18b\_16);
4. the extract from the minutes of the Council related to admission to the Novitiate (cf. DA22, 18b\_17);
5. the notification of admission to the Novitiate (cf. DA22, 18b\_18).

#### **4. PREPARATION FOR ENTRY INTO THE NOVITIATE**

275. The Superior of the Entity:

1. verifies that the candidate brings with him all the documentation necessary for the Novitiate;
2. sends a copy of the personal file to the novice Master;
3. informs the candidate of the date on which he must present himself to the Novitiate and of the instructions given by the novice Master.

276. Furthermore, if the candidate is sent for the Novitiate to another Entity, the Superior:

1. promptly initiates the procedures for obtaining a passport, visa and residence permit;
2. for all other matters (duration, costs, visits, etc.) he abides by the provisions contained in the statutes of that Novitiate.

#### **5. DURING THE NOVITIATE**

277. The Novitiate begins with a rite of entry (cf. Ratio II 99; cf. RRP 16-29).

278. The novice Master notifies the beginning of the Novitiate with a dated and signed document (cf. DA22, 20\_21). A copy is

sent to the General Secretariat and a copy to the Superior of the candidate's Entity of origin for his personal file.

279. The novice Master sends a written evaluation of the midterm-Novitiate to the Superior of the Entity of origin of the novice, accompanied by the novice's self-evaluation.

280. The novice Master transmits to the Superior of the Entity of origin of the novice, in due time, all the reports, the self-evaluations and the documents produced during the Novitiate's formative process (cf. DA22, 20\_22).

## **6. ADMISSION TO TEMPORARY PROFESSION OR DISMISSAL**

281. For admission to temporary profession, the novice Master sends the following documents to the Superior of the Entity of origin of the novice:

1. the letter in which the novice asks explicitly and with motivation to be admitted to temporary profession and declares to make this request spontaneously and freely (cf. C 147);
2. the self-evaluation of the Novitiate process;
3. the written report of the novice Master with his judgment on the candidate's admission to temporary profession (cf. C 148).

282. The Superior of the novice's Entity of origin, with the consent of his Council, admits the candidate to temporary profession (cf. C 149b), on the report of the novice Master (cf. C 141). The extract from the minutes of the Council that dealt with the admission is included in the personal file. A notification of admission will be sent to the novice Master.

283. For the departure and dismissal of a novice, the indications of the Constitutions should be followed (cf. C 177). The extract of the report that dealt with the dismissal is included in the personal file (cf. DA22, 19e\_19). A notification of the dismissal will be sent to the novice Master (cf. DA22, 19e\_20).

284. For a possible readmission of a novice, the indications of the Constitutions are to be followed (cf. C 179).

## **7. TEMPORARY RELIGIOUS PROFESSION**

285. The novice makes temporary profession during a liturgical celebration (cf. Ratio II 99; RRP 30-51). For the text of the profession formula, written by hand and signed, he follows the indications of the Constitutions (cf. C 151).

286. Temporary profession is received by the competent Superior, following the order indicated in the Constitutions (cf. C 150).

287. Temporary profession is attested in the "Register of Professions" (cf. C 152), signed at least by the professed and by the competent Superior who received the vows (cf. DA22, 20b\_29).

288. With the help of the novice Master, the Superior of the Entity, immediately after temporary profession, fills up the form of the "Profile of the newly professed" (cf. C 152; cf. DA22, 20b\_30).

289. The novice Master sends the following documents to the Superior of the Entity of the newly professed to be included in the personal file:

1. the notification of the beginning of the Novitiate (cf. DA22, 20b\_21);

2. all the documents of formative interest, produced and collected during the Novitiate year (cf. DA22, 20b\_22);
3. the written request by the novice to be admitted to temporary profession (cf. DA22, 20b\_23);
4. the final self-evaluation of the novice in view of admission to temporary profession (cf. DA22, 20b\_24);
5. the final report of the novice Master (cf. DA22, 20b\_25);
6. the original and signed text of the temporary profession (cf. DA22, 20b\_28);
7. a photocopy of the certificate of temporary profession from the "Register of Professions" (cf. DA22, 20b\_29);
8. the file "Profile of the newly professed" (cf. C 152; cf. DA22, 20b\_30).

290. The Superior of the Entity adds in the personal file:

1. the notification of admission to temporary profession (cf. DA22, 10b\_26);
2. the extract from the minutes of the Council that dealt with admission to temporary profession (cf. DA22, 20b\_27).

291. The novice Master delivers this documentation to the Superior of the Entity of the newly professed for archiving it in his personal file.

292. The Superior of the Entity of the newly professed sends a copy of the personal file to the Formator responsible for the stage of temporary vows. The Superior of the Entity of the newly professed sends the "Profile of the newly professed" to the Secretary General of the Congregation (cf. C 152).

## **8. PERIOD OF TEMPORARY VOWS**

### **8.1. Renewal of vows, leaving and dismissal**

293. At a suitable time, the religious with temporary vows addresses in writing an explicit and motivated request to the competent Superior to be admitted to renew his vows (cf. C 147). In the same letter he declares to make this request spontaneously and freely.

294. The person responsible for the formation of the stage of temporary vows draws up a written report in which he describes the progress of the candidate and the qualities shown that enable him to renew his vows.

295. The Superior of the Entity, with the consent his Council (cf. C149b), admits the candidate to renew his vows, on the report of the Responsible for formation (cf. C 141). The extract from the minutes of the Council, which dealt with the approval of the renewal of votes, must be included in the personal file.

296. A notification of admission to the renewal of vows is sent to the Responsible for formation and to the applicant candidate.

297. For the departure and dismissal of a religious with temporary vows, the indications of the Constitutions should be followed before the religious leaves the house of formation (cf. C 177-178; St. 178.1; DA22, 59).

298. The extract of the report that dealt with the dismissal is included in the personal file. This act will contain, as a synthesis of the discernment made, a prudent, summary-like and somewhat sufficiently indicative exposition of the reasons for the dismissal (cf. RFIS, 197; cf. DA22, 21d\_32).

299. The authorization with indult is sent by the Superior General to the Superior of the Entity who will deliver it to the religious to whom, if he has not already done so at the time of the Novitiate, he will ask to sign a declaration which frees the Congregation from any responsibility for the future (cf. DA22, 52c; Module\_09). A copy of the indult will be sent for knowledge to the person Responsible for the formation stage of temporary vows.

300. For a possible readmission of a religious with temporary vows, the indications of the Constitutions should be followed (cf. C 179).

301. The Superior of the Entity of origin of the religious with temporary vows includes every year in the personal file of the archives the written request for renewal of vows (cf. DA22, 21c\_31. I), the report of the person in charge of formation (cf. DA22, 21c\_31. II), the admission to renew the vows or the dismissal (cf. DA22, 21c\_31. III) and an extract from the minutes of the Council with the reasons for the acceptance or rejection of the request for renewal (cf. DA22, 21c\_31. IV).

## **8.2. Ministries of the Lector and Acolyte**

302. After receiving adequate and appropriate preparation, at the appropriate time, the religious sends to the Superior of the Entity of origin the written request to be admitted to the Ministries of the Lector and Acolyte (cf. DA22, 21d\_35).

303. The admission to the Ministries is the competence of the Superior of the Entity of origin of the religious. It will be sent both to the person in charge of formation and to the candidate (cf. DA22, 21d\_36).

304. The Superior of the scholasticate sends the notification of the conferral of the Ministries to the Superior of the Entity of origin of the religious and a copy to the General Secretariat (cf. DA22, 21d\_37).

### **8.3. Apostolic experiences and formative internship**

305. For pastoral experiences or formative internships, the Responsible for formation clarifies the purpose and modalities with the religious concerned and the person who supervises the experience. Both will present a final written evaluation (cf. DA22, 21d\_34).

306. The report of the evaluation of these pastoral experiences must be kept in the personal file.

## **9. PERPETUAL PROFESSION**

307. At an appropriate time, the candidate for perpetual profession addresses a formal request to the Superior General (cf. C 147), which includes the reasons for it. In the same letter he declares to make this request spontaneously and freely (cf. DA22, 22e\_38). To it he attaches a self-evaluation that retraces the years of formation (cf. DA22, 22e\_39).

308. If the candidate for perpetual profession owns properties, he will produce a valid will in accordance with the law (cf. DA22, 22e\_49).

309. The person in charge of formation draws up a report in which he recommends the candidate for perpetual profession (cf. C 148; cf. DA22, 22e\_41).



310. The Superior of the Entity, with the deliberative vote of his Council, presents to the Superior General the candidate's request to be admitted to perpetual profession (cf. C 156; cf. DA22, 22e\_42).

311. The Superior of the Entity, at least six months before perpetual profession, sends the following documents to the Superior General:

- the presentation by the Superior of the Entity;
- the extract from the minutes of the Council of the Entity (cf. DA22, 22e\_43);
- the candidate's formal application;
- the candidate's self-evaluation;
- the written report of the Responsible for formation;
- the self-certification on the material available online and on social media, relating to the candidate for Perpetual profession (cf. DA22, 22e\_40);
- a copy of all the other documents of the candidate's personal file produced starting from the temporary profession.

312. The Secretary General notifies the Superior of the Entity of admission or non-admission to perpetual profession (cf. DA22, 22e\_44).

313. The preparation required for perpetual profession is planned according to the norms of this document (cf. Ratio II 141).

314. After perpetual profession the Superior of the Entity:

1. inserts in the religious' personal file the original text of the formula of perpetual profession, signed by the professed (cf. DA22, 22e\_45);

2. sends to the parish where the religious was baptized, the notification of the perpetual profession to be recorded in the register of baptisms (cf. CIC, can. 535, § 2; cf. DA22, 22e\_48);
3. notifies the General Secretariat of the perpetual profession (cf. DA22, 22e\_47);
4. prepares with the person in charge of formation a synthetic profile of the newly professed in perpetual vows outlining his particular strengths, talents and points of attention and growth for his ongoing formation. This document must be given to the confrere. One copy is sent to the General Secretariat and another is included in the confrere's personal file (cf. DA22, 22e\_46).

## **10. DISPENSATION FROM PERPETUAL VOWS** (cf. DA22, 58)

315. The Superior General presents the dossier for the dispensation from perpetual vows<sup>6</sup> to the CVCISVA with the following documents:

1. By the applicant: personal data and curriculum vitae; the explicit request for dispensation, written by hand and signed; the reasons why he made perpetual profession in the Congregation of Montfortian Missionaries and the reasons why he wants to leave the Congregation.
2. The opinion of the persons Responsible for formation as regards the applicant's relationship with the authority and his external behavior; any psychological problems and pathologies.
3. The favorable vote of the Superior of the Entity and his Council.

316. Once the dispensation has been obtained, the Superior General hands it over to the applicant, who, if he has not already

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. CIC, cann. 691-692; DA22, 52b.c.

done so at the time of the Novitiate, signs a declaration valid in accordance with the law which frees the Congregation from any responsibility for the future (cf. DA22, Module\_33).

## **10. ORDINATION TO DIACONATE AND PRIESTHOOD**

317. At the opportune moment, in order to be promoted to the Order of the diaconate or the presbyterate, the candidate delivers to the Superior of his Entity a declaration, drawn up and signed of his own hand, in which he certifies that he intends to receive the sacred Order spontaneously and freely and that he will dedicate himself forever to the ecclesiastical ministry, and in which he simultaneously asks to be admitted to the Order to be received (cf. CIC, can. 1036). This document is included in the personal file (cf. DA22, 23d\_51).

318. The Superior of the candidate's Entity of origin, after having consulted the person Responsible for formation and with the consultative vote of his Council (cf. C 157), grants the Dimissorial Letters (cf. CIC, can. 1019, § 1; cf. DA22, 23d\_52) which must be sent to the ordaining Bishop.

319. In view of this concession, the major Superior verifies that:

- the candidate possesses the necessary qualities;
- is not held back by any irregularities and by any canonical impediment (cf. CIC cann. 1041-1042);
- has fulfilled the provisions of the CIC, cann. 1033 and 1039;
- there are the documents mentioned in the CIC, can. 1050;
- the scrutiny mentioned in the CIC, can. 1051, has been made. For this scrutiny he can avail himself of the means that seem useful to him, taking into account the circumstances of time and place as in the CIC, can. 1051.

320. The notification of the ordination must be sent to the General Secretariat (cf. DA22, 23d\_52) and to the parish of the place of the ordinand's Baptism, to be recorded in the register of baptisms (cf. CIC, can. 535, § 2; cf. DA22, 23d\_53).

321. The ordained receives from the Bishop a certificate of ordination (cf. CIC, can. 1053) to be included in the personal file (cf. DA22, 23d\_54).

## **12. ONGOING FORMATION**

322. The Superior of the Entity keeps the Superior General regularly informed on the ongoing formation program of his Entity (cf. St. 158.3; Ratio II 235).

323. To follow specific courses, the candidate asks the permission of the Superior of the Entity who, to grant it, consults his Council (cf. St. 158.4).

## CONCLUSION

324. Montfortian formation places us in the dynamic of fidelity experienced by Montfort. He was able to grasp and accept in a sublime way the role of the Virgin Mary as "teacher and guide" on the path of conformation to Christ (cf. PM 25).

Mary is the secret of our formation. Collaborating with the Holy Spirit she transmits her sentiments and her very life, initiating us in the art of making Jesus and herself reign in our hearts. Every Christian is the recipient of the "secret" that Montfort reveals and teaches, but in a particular way those who have been called to be "*Liberos*, true servants and children of Mary, whom she has generated by her love, nurtured and reared, upheld with maternal care and enriched with her graces" (PM 11) (cf. Ratio I 148).

"*At the school of Mary*, the path of formation coincides with the specific itinerary of Montfortian consecration which allows us to unite ourselves with Mary's pure faith" (cf. TD 214) and to acquire an *intelligence of the spirit* that reflects above all her *docile and obedient acceptance* of God's will (cf. Lk 1: 26ff; Jn 19: 25ff). It is at the school of Mary that every Montfortian is introduced in her wise humility and in the "freedom to learn throughout life, in every age and season, in every human environment and context, from every person and every culture" (Starting afresh 15). Just as Jesus wished to depend on Mary in his humanity, so too we depend on her to obtain a renewed humanity in us (Ratio I 146). By learning to adopt, throughout our life, the itinerary and the means that the Founder proposes to us, we will become a living answer to his prayer: *Da Matri tuae liberos!* Give children to your Mother! (PM 6).



## APPENDIX

**I.     EXTRACT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE  
      DIRECTORY 2022**

### **18. Vocational and Pre-novitiate animation**

a) The Responsible for Formation will take care of opening a personal file<sup>7</sup> for each candidate, which will be updated in the various stages of initial formation (cf. Module\_01).

b) The personal file that will accompany the candidate admitted to the Novitiate must contain the following documents<sup>8</sup>:

[01] Recent passport photo of the candidate.

[02] Basic information on the candidate (curriculum vitae, family background, education, health) as complete as possible of the places and contexts in which he lived.

[03] Self-certification on the material available online and on social media, relating to the candidate for Pre-novitiate (cf. Module\_17).

[04] Medical report of good health.

[05] School file (diplomas, etc.).

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<sup>7</sup> The "personal file" contains all the documents concerning the person, placed in a folder.

<sup>8</sup> The numbering in square brackets [00] corresponds to that in the personal file list (cf. Module\_01).

[06] Certificate of Baptism, Confirmation and Free Status (cf. CIC, can. 645, § 1).

[07] Letters of recommendation from the candidate's parish priest and other people significantly frequented by the candidate (for example: a spiritual guide, a family member, co-workers). If you need clarification, do not hesitate to contact these people by telephone.

[08] Testimony of the local Ordinary or of the Major Superior or of the Rector of the seminary (cf. CIC, can. 645, § 2), if the candidate is a priest or a seminarian from a diocese or other Institute of Consecrated Life or by a Society of Apostolic Life (cf. Ratio II 211).

[09] Result (s) of psychological test (s) (cf. Ratio II 203).

[10] Outcome of the investigation into the candidate's financial situation with notification of the procedures that have taken place (cf. Ratio II 263)

[11] Request of the candidate, addressed to the Superior of his Entity, to be admitted to the Pre-novitiate, in which he also declares that he has made the request freely and of his own free will.

[12] Written report of the person in charge of formation on the candidate, with the recommendation for entry to the Pre-novitiate (cf. Module\_02).

[13] Notification of admission to the Pre-novitiate.

[14] Request from the candidate, addressed to the Superior of his Entity, to be admitted to the Novitiate, in which he also declares that he has made the request freely and of his own free will.



[15] A civilly valid document, in which the candidate for the Novitiate declares to renounce any financial claims left by the Congregation for work left before entering the Institute, in the event of an accident or illness, for services rendered in the SMM (cf. Module\_09).

[16] Written report by the Responsible for the Pre-novitiate with the description of the progress and qualities of the candidate that make him suitable for admission to the Novitiate (cf. Module\_04).

[17] Extract from the minutes of the Council relating to admission to the Novitiate

[18] Notification of admission to the Novitiate.

## **19. Novitiate**

a) The norms of the Institute present in Constitutions 147, 148 and in Ratio II must be respected.

b) The admission of a candidate to the stage of Pre-novitiate and Novitiate belongs to the Superior of the Entity with the consultative vote of his Council (cf. CIC, can. 641). It is also your responsibility to ensure that:

- acceptance is preceded by a complete investigation into the suitability of the candidate (cf. St. 140.1) for our community life and our ministry (cf. CIC, can. 642);
- the candidate is free in his choice (cf. CIC, can. 643) and all the documents required in can. 645 are included in the candidate's file.

c) A document that mentions the starting date of the Novitiate must be duly signed by the novice Master. A copy of this

document must be included in the novice's personal file. A copy will be sent to the General Secretariat.

d) For the other aspects, the Superior of the Entity will apply the norms of the Ratio Institutionis.

e) For the departure and dismissal of a novice, the indications of the Constitutions should be followed (cf. C 177). In the personal file include:

[19] The extract of the report that dealt with the discharge.

[20] Notification of dismissal sent to the novice Master.

## **20. Temporary profession**

a) The norms contained in the Ratio II and in the Ratio Studiorum general and local will be applied faithfully (cf. C 155)

b) The personal file of the novice admitted to temporary profession must contain the following documents:

[21] Notification of the beginning of the Novitiate dated and signed by the novice Master (cf. Module\_08). A copy of this notification is sent to the General Secretariat and a copy to the Superior of the applicant's entity of origin.

[22] All written reports, self-evaluations and documents produced during the Novitiate's formative path (cf. Module\_06; Module 07; Module\_10; Module\_12).

[23] Formal request of the candidate, addressed to the Superior of his Entity, to be admitted to temporary profession, in which he indicates the reasons and declares

that he has presented the request freely and of his own free will.

[24] Self-evaluation of the Novitiate path (cf. Module\_11).

[25] Written report of the novice Master with his opinion on the candidate's admission to temporary profession (cf. Module\_13).

[26] Notification of admission to temporary profession.

[27] Extract from the minutes of the Council relating to admission to temporary profession.

[28] Original text of the profession formula written by hand and signed.

[29] Photocopy of the certificate of profession from the "Register of Professions".

[30] File "Profile of New Professed" (cf. Module\_14).

c) A copy of the personal file of the new professed, the original of which is kept in the Secretariat of the entity of origin, will be sent to the Responsible of the next stage of formation and to the Superior General (cf. C 152).

## **21. Period of temporary vows**

a) The norms of the Constitutions and of the Ratio II and of the Ratio Studiorum must be respected.

b) The instructions of the Constitutions will be followed for the departure and dismissal of a religious in temporary vows (cf. C 177-178; St. 178.1). Information relating to the opinion of the Board regarding the non-acceptance of the renewal of votes must

be communicated to the General Secretariat. The Superior of the entity of origin of the religious with temporary vows must ensure that the notification of dismissal is sent to the Superior General before the religious leaves the house of formation.

c) [31] For each year of temporary vows, the personal file of the religious must include the following documents:

I) Request of the candidate, addressed to the Superior of his Entity, to be admitted to the renewal of vows, in which he indicates the reasons and declares that he has presented the request freely and of his own free will Self-evaluation (cf. Module\_15).

II) Written report of the Responsible for Formation, in which he describes the progress of the candidate and the qualities shown that make him suitable for renewing the vows (cf. Module\_16).

III) Admission to the renewal of vows.

IV) Extract from the minutes of the Council that dealt with the approval. A notification of admission will be sent to the Responsible for Formation and to the religious admitted to the renewal of vows.

d) The personal file must also contain the following documents:

[32] Possible extract from the minutes of the Board relating to the dismissal.

[33] Possible authorization with indult of the Superior General.

[34] Evaluation and self-evaluation of pastoral experiences or stages (cf. Modules\_06 and 07).

[35] Application for admission to the Ministries of Lector and Acolyte.

[36] Notification of admission to the Lectorate and Acolyte Ministries.

[37] Notification by the Superior of the Scholasticate of the conferral of the Ministries to the Superior of the entity of origin of the Scholasticate. A copy of this notification is sent to the General Secretariat (cf. Module\_23).

## **22. Perpetual profession**

a) The formal request of the religious with temporary vows, addressed to the Superior General, must be received within a reasonable time before profession (six months). It must be accompanied by a presentation of the candidate by the Superior of the Entity (cf. C 156, 148), by the minutes of the deliberations of the Council, by the report of the Responsible for Formation in which the candidate is recommended to profession, and copy of all the documentation that was added to the file sent after temporary profession.

b) The preparation required for perpetual profession will conform to the norms of the Ratio Institutionis.

c) The notification of perpetual profession must be sent for entry in the register of Baptisms (cf. CIC, can. 535, § 2) and to the General Secretariat to be included in the personal file.

d) The lawful delegates of the Superior General who are able to receive perpetual profession are those recognized by the Constitutions (cf. C 150).

e) The personal file of the religious admitted to perpetual profession must contain the following documents:

[38] Formal and motivated request for admission to perpetual profession of the candidate, addressed to the Superior General. The candidate must indicate at the same time that he has made the request freely and of his own free will.

[39] Self-evaluation of the candidate for perpetual profession (cf. Module\_18).

[40] Self-certification on the material available online and on social media, relating to the candidate for Perpetual profession (cf. Module\_17).

[41] Written report of the person in charge of formation in which the candidate is recommended to perpetual profession (cf. Module\_19).

[42] Presentation of the candidate for perpetual profession by the Superior of the Entity (cf. Module\_20).

[43] Extract from the minutes of the Board that dealt with the subject.

[44] Notification by the General Secretary of admission or non-admission to perpetual profession.

[45] Original text of the formula for perpetual profession, signed by the professed.

[46] Brief profile of the newly professed in perpetual vows.

[47] Notification to the General Secretary of perpetual Profession (cf. Module\_22).

[48] Notification of perpetual profession for registration in the register of baptisms (cf. Module\_21).

[49] Holographic testament<sup>9</sup>. The holographic testament is the type of testament governed by an article of the Civil Code. It has been entirely handwritten, dated and signed by the testator. The violation of these formal requirements determines the nullity or annulment. The drafting of the holographic testament does not require the intervention of the notary. In fact, it can be drawn up independently by the testator at no cost. Each member of the Company of Mary should make his will every 6 years (cf. Module\_26).

## **23. Ministries and diaconal and presbyteral Ordination**

a) The advisory vote of the Council for admission to the Ministries and Orders must be recorded; any reservation or negative opinion must be explained carefully (cf. CIC, can. 1019, § 1; C 157). It is of the utmost importance that all reasons for the reluctance of the members of the Council and of any person whom the Superior of the Entity deems appropriate to contact are preserved.

b) Before accessing the diaconate and the priesthood, the candidate must submit to the competent major superior a written and signed declaration in his hand, in which he will certify that he intends to receive Holy Orders spontaneously and freely and that he will consecrate himself forever to the ecclesiastical ministry. , asking at the same time to be admitted to receive the Order (cf. CIC, can. 1036). This declaration must be included in your personal file. The Dimissory Letters of the Superior of the Entity will be issued only when all the required conditions have been verified.

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<sup>9</sup> If the religious does not have property, he will not be required to make a will (cf. C 88c).

c) Every ordained must receive from the Bishop who orders a certificate of Ordination (cf. CIC, can. 1053), which will be inserted in the personal file of the new Deacon / Priest.

d) The notification of the Ordination must be sent for entry in the register of Baptisms (cf. CIC, can. 535, § 2) and to the General Secretariat.

e) The personal file of the Deacon and ordained Priest must contain the following documents:

[50] Application for admission to diaconal and presbyteral ordination with declaration of freedom and permanent commitment to the ecclesiastical ministry.

[51] Copy of the Dimissorial Letters sent to the ordaining Bishop (cf. Module\_24).

[52] Notification of diaconal and presbyteral ordination to the General Secretariat (cf. Module\_25).

[53] Notification of diaconal and presbyteral ordination for the annotation in the register of baptisms (cf. Module\_21).

[54] Certificate of Ordination from the ordaining Bishop.



<b>II. MODULES</b>
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## 01. FORM FOR THE LIST OF DOCUMENTS IN THE PERSONAL FILE

Entity to which it belongs [name of the Entity] .....

List of the personal file of [Name and surname] .....

- ☐ [01] Recent photo.
- ☐ [02] Basic information (curriculum vitae, family background, education, health).
- ☐ [03] Self-Certification on the material online and on social media.
- ☐ [04] Medical report of good health.
- ☐ [05] School file (diplomas, etc.).
- ☐ [06] Certificate of Baptism, Confirmation and Free Status.
- ☐ [07] Letters of recommendation.
- ☐ [08] Testimonies on previous affiliations and formative experiences.
- ☐ [09] Result (s) of psychological test (s).
- ☐ [10] Investigation of the financial situation.
- ☐ [11] Pre-novitiate: application for admission by the candidate.
- ☐ [12] Pre-novitiate: written report by the Person in charge of Vocational Animation.
- ☐ [13] Pre-novitiate: notification of admission.
- ☐ [14] Novitiate: application for admission by the candidate.
- ☐ [15] Novitiate: declaration of exemption from any responsibility of the Company of Mary.
- ☐ [16] Novitiate: report of the Responsible of the Pre-novitiate for admission.
- ☐ [17] Novitiate: extract from the minutes of the Council concerning admission.
- ☐ [18] Novitiate: notification of admission.
- ☐ [19] Novitiate: extract from the minutes of the Council concerning possible dismissal
- ☐ [20] Novitiate: notification of possible dismissal.

- ☐ [21] Novitiate: notification of beginning.
- ☐ [22] Novitiate: reports, self-evaluations and documents produced.
- ☐ [23] Novitiate: application by the candidate for admission to temporary profession.
- ☐ [24] Novitiate: self-evaluation.
- ☐ [25] Novitiate: report of the novice Master for admission to temporary profession.
- ☐ [26] Novitiate: notification of admission to temporary profession.
- ☐ [27] Novitiate: extract from the minutes of the Council concerning the admission to temporary profession.
- ☐ [28] Novitiate: original text of the formula for Profession.
- ☐ [29] Novitiate: photocopy of the certificate of Profession from the “Register of Professions”.
- ☐ [30] Novitiate: file of the “new professed”.
- ☐ [31] Scholasticate: for each year of temporary vows, include: I) Application for admission of the candidate to the Superior of his Entity and Self-evaluation; II) Report of the person in charge of the temporary vows stage; III) Admission to renew vows; IV) Extract from the minutes of the Council that dealt with admission.
- ☐ [31] [20 \_\_\_\_ / 20 \_\_\_\_] First year of temporary vows (I; II; III; IV)
- ☐ [31] [20 \_\_\_\_ / 20 \_\_\_\_] Second year of temporary vows (I; II; III; IV)
- ☐ [31] [20 \_\_\_\_ / 20 \_\_\_\_] Third year of temporary vows (I; II; III; IV)
- ☐ [31] [20 \_\_\_\_ / 20 \_\_\_\_] .....
- ☐ [31] [20 \_\_\_\_ / 20 \_\_\_\_] .....
- ☐ [32] Scholasticate: extract from the minutes of the Council concerning the dismissal.
- ☐ [33] Scholasticate: authorization with indult of the Superior General.
- ☐ [34] Scholasticate: evaluation and self-evaluation of pastoral experiences or stages.
- ☐ [35] Scholasticate: application for admission to the Ministries of the Lector and Acolyte.
- ☐ [36] Scholasticate: notification of admission to the Ministries of the Lector and Acolyte.
- ☐ [37] Scholasticate: notification of the conferral of the Ministries of the Lector and the Acolyte.
- ☐ [38] Scholasticate: applicant's request for admission to Perpetual profession.
- ☐ [39] Scholasticate: global self-evaluation of the years of formation.
- ☐ [40] Scholasticate: Notification to review material online and on social media.

- ☐ [41] Scholasticate: report of the Responsible of Formation, for admission to Perpetual profession.
- ☐ [42] Scholasticate: presentation to Perpetual profession by the Superior of the Entity.
- ☐ [43] Extract from the minutes of the Council of the Entity that dealt with the subject.
- ☐ [44] Scholasticate: notification of admission to Perpetual profession.
- ☐ [45] Scholasticate: original text of the formula for Perpetual profession.
- ☐ [46] Scholasticate: synthetic profile of the newly professed in Perpetual vows.
- ☐ [47] Scholasticate: notification to the General Secretariat of the Perpetual profession.
- ☐ [48] Scholasticate: notification for the registration in the register of baptisms of the Perpetual profession.
- ☐ [49] Scholasticate: Testament.
- ☐ [50] Application for admission to diaconal and presbyteral Ordination with declaration of freedom and permanent commitment to the ecclesiastical ministry.
- ☐ [51] Copy of Dimissorial Letters.
- ☐ [52] Notification of diaconal and presbyteral ordination to the General Secretariat.
- ☐ [53] Notification for the registration in the register of baptisms of diaconal and presbyteral Ordinations.
- ☐ [54] Certificate of Ordination from the ordaining Bishop.

## **02. GUIDELINES FOR THE REPORT OF ADMISSION TO THE PRE-NOVITIATE [by the Vocation Director]**

COMPANY OF MARY

Entity:

Name surname (candidate)

Date of birth and place:

### **REPORT OF ADMISSION TO THE PRE-NOVITIATE**

#### **1. FAMILY HISTORY**

- ☐ Information about parents and siblings.
- ☐ General description of the family environment.
- ☐ Experiences with male and female relationships.

#### **2. PSYCHOPHYSICAL HEALTH**

- ☐ General state of health.
- ☐ Family history to know any predisposition of hereditary pathology.
- ☐ History of allergies, diseases or addictions.

#### **3. EDUCATION AND WORK**

- ☐ Schools attended.
- ☐ Level of education achieved.
- ☐ Professional qualifications and work experience.

#### **4. CONTACTS WITH SMM**

- ☐ Montfortian Missionaries met (when, where and under what circumstances).
- ☐ Experiences in the Montfortian community (when and where).

#### **5. HUMAN DIMENSION**

- ☐ Signs of human maturity.
- ☐ Signs of sufficient self-knowledge.
- ☐ Attitudes in the interpersonal relationship.
- ☐ Viewing the material posted on social media and published online

## 6. SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

- ☐ Prayer and sacramental life
- ☐ Active involvement in the life of the local Church.
- ☐ Affinity with Montfortian spirituality.

## 7. INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION

- ☐ Considerations on learning ability and intellectual ability.

## 8. APOSTOLIC DIMENSION

- ☐ Indications of interest for the Montfortian mission.

## 9. OPENING TO THE MONFORTAN RELIGIOUS VOCATION

- ☐ Some choices in discontinuity with the worldly mentality.

## 10. SUMMARY OF THE VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT PROCESS

- ☐ Duration of the discernment process.
- ☐ Frequency of meetings with the Vocations Director.
- ☐ Attitude of openness and teachability.
- ☐ Final opinion of the Vocations Director.

Place, date and signature

### **03. GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY** **[For use in the Pre-novitiate and Novitiate]**

□ A spiritual autobiography is a rereading of one's life trying to decipher the guiding thread of a divine project, the traces of God's passage and therefore also his calling voice. This rereading has two characteristics:

1. It is biblical-historical, that is, a dialogue between subjective experience and reference to the Word of God
2. It is paschal, that is, it does not reject any event, especially the most difficult and painful ones, but recognizes in it a luminous and mysterious presence of the love of Christ who died and rose.

□ There is no fixed scheme for writing the spiritual autobiography. Since it is their own story, everyone chooses to express themselves as they see fit. However, the following guidelines are to be followed:

1. Relations with the family
2. Significant people who have been helpful on the path of growth
3. People admired because they are witnesses and models.
4. Special moments of peace or joy.
5. Particular moments of sadness and desolation.
6. Crisis experiences.
7. Your relationship with God
8. The vocational choice for consecrated and missionary life: its origin, the first steps, the motivations.
9. Strengths, gifts and talents.
10. Weaknesses and growth challenges.

## **04. GUIDELINES FOR SELF-EVALUATION AND APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO THE NOVITIATE** [by the candidate for the Novitiate]

COMPANY OF MARY

Entity:

Name and surname (candidate for the Novitiate)

Date of birth and place:

### **SELF-EVALUATION AND APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO THE NOVITIATE**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

☐ Global look at the stage of the Pre-novitiate.

#### **1. GROWTH IN THE HUMAN DIMENSION**

☐ Knowledge and self-acceptance.

☐ Work on one's character and personality.

#### **2. GROWTH IN THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION**

☐ Sacramental and prayer life, personal and community.

☐ Assimilation of Montfortian spirituality.

#### **3. GROWTH IN THE INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION**

☐ Application in the studies.

#### **4. GROWTH IN THE APOSTOLIC DIMENSION**

☐ Practice of the virtues of the apostolic man such as availability, the spirit of initiative, creativity, love for the poor, the art of working together.

#### **5. GROWTH IN THE DIMENSION OF RELIGIOUS LIFE**

- ☐ Experience of breaking with past habits.
- ☐ Fraternal life in community.

## CONCLUSION

- ☐ Relationship with the one responsible and the formation team.
- ☐ Improvements on the points of attention reported at the beginning of the Pre-novitiate.
- ☐ Points to which I draw the attention of formators to help me grow further
- ☐ Preparation for a multicultural experience, in the case of an international Novitiate
- ☐ Application addressed to the Superior of his own Entity, to be admitted to the Novitiate, in which he declares to have made the request freely and of his own accord.

Place, date and signature



## **05. GUIDELINES FOR THE REPORT OF ADMISSION TO THE NOVITIATE [by the Responsible of the Pre-novitiate]**

COMPANY OF MARY

Entity:

Name and surname of candidate for the Pre-novitiate:

Date of birth: place:

### **REPORT OF ADMISSION TO THE NOVITIATE**

#### **1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

- ☐ Place and duration of the Pre-novitiate.
- ☐ Global look at the year.
- ☐ Signs of affinity with the Montfortian charism.

#### **2. GROWTH IN THE HUMAN DIMENSION**

- ☐ State of physical and psychological health.
- ☐ Age-appropriate signs of human maturity.
- ☐ Ability of free choice and autonomy.
- ☐ Right distance from:
  - a) the family
  - b) the previous profession
  - c) money and material goods
  - d) past emotional relationships
- ☐ Detachment from bad habits (e.g. addictions, disorders, amoral behaviors, etc.).
- ☐ Signs of responsible reliability.
- ☐ Healthy realism in dealing with struggles and difficulties
- ☐ Exercise of the cardinal virtues.
- ☐ Loyalty and honesty with oneself and others.
- ☐ Willingness to know oneself, in one's gifts as well as in one's limits, in sincerity and truth.

#### **3. GROWTH IN THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION**

- ☐ Adequate degree of maturity in the life of faith, at the sacramental, doctrinal and moral level.

- Person's signs of faith, hope and charity.
- Signs of growth in the life of prayer, sacramental, liturgical life lived through Mary
- Docility to the Word of God
- Love for silence and interiority.
- Signs of love for Christ, in community and at the service of others.
- Interest in the figure and the spirituality of the Founder.

#### 4. GROWTH IN THE INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION

- Signs of careful and critical openness.
- Informed and balanced moral judgment.
- Completion of preparatory studies.

#### 5. GROWTH IN THE DIMENSION OF APOSTOLIC LIFE

- Cordial openness to the virtues of apostolic man such as availability, spirit of initiative, creativity, love for the poor, the art of working together.
- Signs of a genuine desire to give one's life for the Kingdom of God.

#### 6. GROWTH IN THE DIMENSION OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

- Sufficient ability to live some breaks with habits of the past.
- Attitude to fraternal life in community. Indicator signs.

#### 7. PREPARATION FOR THE NOVITIATE

- Active participation in the training process.
- Availability for dialogue, with an open heart.
- Preparation for a multicultural experience, in the case of an international Novitiate
- Opinion of the formator / formation team for admission to the Novitiate.

Place, date and signature

## **06. GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATION OF AN APOSTOLIC EXPERIENCE OR INTERNSHIP [by the supervisor]**

COMPANY OF MARY

Entity:

Name and surname: (pre-novice / novice / scholastic)

### **1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

- ☐ Start date of the experience:
- ☐ End date of the experience:
- ☐ Place of experience (community, institution)
- ☐ Activities entrusted:
- ☐ Name and surname of the supervisor:
- ☐ Role of the supervisor:

### **2. THE APOSTOLIC EXPERIENCE**

- ☐ How did the pre-novice / novice / scholastic participate in the activities? (e.g. dedication, self-forgetfulness, sense of cooperation with others, zeal for the Kingdom, motivation, physical endurance, etc.)
- ☐ Attitudes and apostolic gifts manifested? (e.g. the gift of speaking about Jesus Christ, the ability to pay attention to others, friendship with the poor, etc.).
- ☐ Involvement in the community
  - a. Fraternal relations
  - b. Participation in community prayer
  - c. Apostolic sharing
  - d. Other remarks
- ☐ Observations on a spiritual level
  - a. Fidelity to prayer
  - b. Look of faith on situations
  - c. Coherence of life

- d. Apostolic motivation
  - e. Other remarks
    - ☐ General notes on the apostolic experience.
    - a. Positive points
    - b. Aspects to be developed
    - c. Problematic attitudes.
      - ☐ Frequency of personal meetings with the pre-novice / novice / religious to reflect on the experience
      - ☐ Ability emerged to live as an apostolic in the Company of Mary.
- N.B. It is recommended to discuss the evaluation with the candidate.

Place, date and signature (internship supervisor)

## **07. GUIDELINES FOR THE SELF-EVALUATION OF THE APOSTOLIC EXPERIENCE [by the prenovice / novice / scholastic]**

### **COMPANY OF MARY**

Entity:

Name and surname: (pre-novice / novice / scholastic)

#### **1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

- ☐ Start date of the experience:
- ☐ End date of the experience:
- ☐ Place of experience (community, institution)

#### **2. THE APOSTOLIC EXPERIENCE**

- ☐ What activities did I participate in and what role did I play?
- ☐ From the point of view of human dynamics, how did I experience these activities? (for example, in carrying out the activities what was easy and what was not in the relationships with others?)
- ☐ At the apostolic level, did I perceive a link between my activity and the coming of the Kingdom, the mission of the Church and the mission of the Congregation?
- a) What questions did this experience raise in me?
- b) What signs of the Spirit have reached me?
- ☐ From a spiritual point of view:
  - a) how did the internship influence my prayer and my union with Jesus?
  - b) After this experience, what attitudes of an apostolic life does the Lord ask me to develop?
- ☐ At the community level:
  - a) How did I enter into the life of the community?
  - b) How did I live my participation in community prayer?

c) What kind of sharing did I do with the community? With the superior of the community? With my supervisor?

### 3. GENERAL EVALUATION:

- ☐ How do I judge this experience in the light of my path of formation?
- ☐ What have I learned about myself? What progress can I still make?

Place, date and signature (pre-novice / novice / scholastic)

## **08. FORM FOR NOTIFICATION OF THE BEGINNING OF THE NOVITIATE [by the novice Master]**

To the General Secretariat

The undersigned, ..... novice Master at (place)

### **declares that**

the novice cleric / brother

born on ..... a

diocese ..... country

belonging to the SMM Entity

1. has duly made an explicit and free request to be admitted to the Novitiate;
2. has been accepted by the Superior of his Entity with the deliberative vote of his Council;
3. began the Novitiate in on

### **It also states that**

the required documents are filed in the personal file.

Done at

Signature (novice Master)

## 09. FORM FOR THE DECLARATION OF EXEMPTION OF LIABILITY OF THE SMM

### DECLARATION OF EXEMPTION FROM ALL LIABILITY OF THE COMPANY OF MARY

The undersigned.....

Born in.....,

Allows early exit or unfavorable outcome from the Novitiate based on his suitability for religious life in the Company of Mary and

#### DECLARES

1) to exempt and relieve the Company of Mary from any civil, criminal and objective liability for any accidents or injuries suffered (including death or permanent disability) during the period of the Novitiate,

2) to waive any and all claims for compensation and reimbursement present or that I may claim in the future against the Company of Mary and its legal representative. Therefore, I exonerate the Congregation both from all responsibility and from any type of judicial and / or arbitration proceedings, of compensation for damages, except for the mandatory limits of the law,

3) to renounce any financial claims left by the Congregation for work left before entering the institute, in the event of an accident or illness, for services rendered in the Congregation of the Company of Mary,

4) that I have read and understood this disclaimer before signing it; I am aware that by signing this I am giving up certain legal rights.

Done at ..... on .....

.....

Signature



## **10. GUIDELINES FOR THE SELF-EVALUATION OF THE NOVICE [after six months of Novitiate]**

### **COMPANY OF MARY**

Entity:

Name surname:

Date of birth: place:

Baptized: day, place, diocese

Confirmed: day, place, diocese

### **SELF-EVALUATION AFTER SIX MONTHS OF NOVITIATE**

Introduction. I take the time to reread my personal experience of the Novitiate in the light of the Word of God [cf. Psalm 136 (135); 139 (138) and 1 John 1, 1-4]. I have had a unique experience in my personal life for six months. When I left my country, when I accepted to live this experience, I certainly didn't know exactly what to expect.

1. I had to face many challenges to have this experience well. I take the time to name them and see how I am dealing with them.
2. I have had many significant experiences in these first months of the Novitiate. Here are the ones that will accompany me forever and the reasons why they really marked me.
3. I thought I knew myself, but in these first months of the Novitiate, through the interactions and experiences, I discovered more about myself.
4. Here are the main things I have learned / discovered in this time and which I would like to keep in order to live my vocation well.
5. What are the steps and habits acquired that will help me live the three vows? What are the personal challenges or struggles for each of these three vows?
6. Observing myself in the experience of fraternal life in community, here are the points on which I have to work more.
7. On what points do I draw the attention of the formators to help me grow further?
8. The texts of the Word of God and Montfort that accompany and inspire me.

Place, date and signature (novice)

## **11. SELF-EVALUATION GUIDELINES FOR ADMISSION TO FIRST PROFESSION [by the novice towards the end of the Novitiate]**

COMPANY OF MARY

Entity:

Name surname:

Date of birth: place:

Baptized: day, place, diocese:

Confirmed: day, place, diocese:

### **SELF-EVALUATION FOR ADMISSION TO THE FIRST PROFESSION**

Introduction. I return to myself in an atmosphere of prayer and openness to the truth.

It is necessary to return to the points of attention indicated at the end of the Pre-novitiate and the expectations I had at the beginning, but above all to the evaluation of the six months of Novitiate.

I review the stages and events of the year, trying to identify the integration steps (awareness of reality - acceptance of a call for change - decision / commitment) and the remaining challenges. I begin to answer the questions.

### **I. POINTS ON WHICH TO QUESTION**

1. Man of faith and consecrated by Baptism and religious life.
2. Man who lives in an apostolic (and international) community.
3. Man who follows the obedient Christ
4. Man following the chaste Christ
5. Man following the poor Christ
6. Man sent for the coming of the Kingdom.

**FOR EACH OF THE 6 POINTS ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS:**

- a) What experiences and formative processes have particularly marked me?
- b) What challenges did I encounter and how did I overcome them, especially after the evaluation of the six months of Novitiate?
- c) What commitment do I make?

**II. ALSO ANSWER EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

- 7. Since the Pre-novitiate in which areas have I noticed the greatest growth? Why?
- 8. In the path of virtue, what new habits have I assimilated? In which virtue would I like to focus more in the future? Why and in which areas?
- 9. In the context of the needs and projects of the Congregation to which I feel most called?
- 10. On what points do I draw the attention of formators and superiors to help me grow further?

Place, date and signature (novice)

## **12. GUIDELINES FOR AN EVALUATION AFTER SIX MONTHS OF NOVITIATE [by the novice Master]**

### **COMPANY OF MARY**

Entity:

Name and surname: (candidate for temporary profession)

Date of birth: place:

Baptized: day, place, diocese:

Confirmed: day, place, diocese:

### **EVALUATION AFTER SIX MONTHS OF NOVITIATE**

1. The richness that as a Novitiate team we have discovered in the novice.
2. Signs in which we see his faith and passionate love for Christ radiate.
3. Signs in which we see him living charity towards his neighbor.
4. Signs of openness and teachability.
5. Signs in which we see him living his vocation with joy and freedom.
6. Some good initiatives we have seen taken.
7. Some challenges you should be aware of in order to grow as a Montfortian:
  - a. Human dimension
  - b. Intellectual dimension
  - c. Spiritual dimension
  - d. Apostolic dimension
  - e. Dimension of religious life
8. Are there some attitudes in him that pose serious questions to us?

Place, date and signature (novice Master and his team)

### **13. GUIDELINES OF THE REPORT FOR ADMISSION TO THE FIRST PROFESSION [by the novice Master]**

#### **COMPANY OF MARY**

Entity:

Name and surname: (candidate for temporary profession)

Date and of birth:

Baptized: day, place, diocese:

Confirmed: day, place, diocese:

#### **REPORT FOR ADMISSION TO FIRST PROFESSION**

##### **0. GENERAL INFORMATION**

- ☐ Summary of his personal and family history
- ☐ Relationship with the family
- ☐ Social background and living conditions
- ☐ Natural inclinations
- ☐ Physical and mental health
- ☐ Relationship with the novice Master
- ☐ Docility, responsibility, flexibility, listening skills

##### **1. GROWTH IN THE HUMAN DIMENSION**

- ☐ Signs of growth in self-knowledge and acceptance.
- ☐ Assimilation of the virtues related to chastity, poverty and obedience
- ☐ Work on one's character and personality.
- ☐ Self-discipline, order and cleanliness, management of work, leisure and rest.
- ☐ Development of personal talents and virtues at the service of the mission.
- ☐ Interpersonal relationship.

##### **2. GROWTH IN THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION**

- ☐ Level of spiritual and religious maturity

- Sacramental and prayer life, personal and community.
- Love and taste for the Word of God.
- Capacity for silence and meditation.
- The filial relationship with Mary.
- Assimilation and practice of Montfortian spirituality in life.
- Sensitivity for apostolic, personal and community prayer.

### 3. GROWTH IN THE INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION

- Interest and constant application in studies.
- Assimilation of the fundamental elements of religious and Montfortian life.
- Initiation into the life and writings of the Founder and the history of the congregation

### 4. GROWTH IN THE APOSTOLIC DIMENSION

- Practice of the virtues proper to the apostolic man such as availability, the spirit of initiative, creativity, love for the poor, the art of working together.
- Assimilation of the 4 notes of the Montfortian mission

### 5. GROWTH IN THE DIMENSION OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

- Initiation into the poor, obedient and chaste form of life of Christ.
- Fraternal relations within the community and outside the community.
- Sense of belonging to the Company of Mary.

### 6. CONCLUSION

- Evaluation of suitability
- Recommendations for the future path

Place, date and signature (novice Master and his team)

## 14. FORM FOR THE FILE OF THE NEW PROFESSED [by the novice Master]

### COMPANY OF MARY

Entity:

Surname:

First name:

Date of birth:

a) parish:

b) city:

c) province:

Nationality:

Citizenship:

Baptized: day, place, diocese

Confirmed: day, place, diocese

Father's surname and first name:

Mother's surname and first name:

Novitiate, from .....to.....place .....

Temporary profession: date, place ...

Primary studies (place and years):

Secondary studies (place and years):

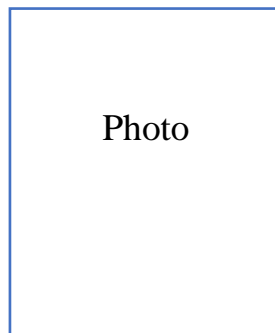
University studies (place and years):

Qualifications:

Academic degrees (place and date):

Spoken languages:

Languages understood:



## **15. GUIDELINES FOR SELF-EVALUATION FOR THE RENEWAL OF TEMPORARY VOWS [by the professed]**

### **COMPANY OF MARY**

Entity:

Name and surname (candidate)

Birth: day, place:

### **SELF-EVALUATION FOR THE RENEWAL OF TEMPORARY VOWS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- ☐ Global look at the year.
- ☐ Physical health.

#### **1. GROWTH IN THE HUMAN DIMENSION**

- ☐ Knowledge and self-acceptance.
- ☐ Integration of one's sexuality
- ☐ Work on one's character and personality.
- ☐ Self-discipline, order and cleanliness, management of work, leisure and rest.
- ☐ Development of talents and virtues at the service of the mission.
- ☐ Interpersonal relationship.

#### **2. GROWTH IN THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION**

- ☐ Sacramental and prayer life, personal and communal.
- ☐ Love and taste for the Word of God.
- ☐ Filial relationship with Mary.
- ☐ Practical assimilation of Montfortian spirituality.

#### **3. GROWTH IN THE INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION**

- ☐ Interest and application in the study.
- ☐ Integration of Montfortian themes.
- ☐ Interest in various branches of knowledge.



- Update on ecclesial life and its events, as well as those of the world and of the Congregation.

#### 4. GROWTH IN THE APOSTOLIC DIMENSION

- Sensitivity for apostolic prayer.
- Consolidation of the virtues proper to the apostolic man such as availability, the spirit of initiative, creativity, love for the poor, the art of working together.
- Purification of the apostolate from the worldly spirit (e.g. desire for personal recognition; exhibitionism, clericalism).
- Assimilation of the 4 notes of the mission “*à la Montfort*”.

#### 5. GROWTH IN THE DIMENSION OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

- Integration of the identity of a Monfortian consecrated person in one's life.
- Fraternal relations within the community and outside the community.
- Consolidation of the sense of belonging to the Company of Mary.

#### CONCLUSION

- Relationship with the Superior and the formation team.
- Improvements on the points of attention reported in the last report.
- Points to which I draw the attention of formators and superiors to help me grow further
- Application for admission to renew vows

Place, date and signature

## **16. GUIDELINES OF THE REPORT FOR THE RENEWAL OF TEMPORARY VOTES [by the Responsible of formation]**

### **COMPANY OF MARY**

Entity:

Name and surname: (candidate)

Birth: day, place:

## **REPORT FOR THE RENEWAL OF TEMPORARY VOWS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- ☐ Global look at the year.
- ☐ Signs of deepening of the Montfortian charism.

1. SIGNS OF GROWTH IN THE HUMAN DIMENSION
2. SIGNS OF GROWTH IN THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION
3. SIGNS OF GROWTH IN THE INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION
4. SIGNS OF GROWTH IN THE APOSTOLIC DIMENSION
5. SIGNS OF GROWTH IN THE DIMENSION OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

- ☐ Vow of poverty.
- ☐ Vow of obedience.
- ☐ Vow of chastity.
- ☐ Fraternal life in community.

### **CONCLUSION**

- ☐ Relationship with the Superior and the formation team.
- ☐ Improvements on the points of attention reported in the last report.
- ☐ Recommendations and points of attention for the future.
- ☐ Final judgment for admission to renew vows.

Place, date and signature  
(Responsible of formation and his team)

## **17. FORM FOR SELF-CERTIFICATION ABOUT CONTENT POSTED ONLINE AND ON SOCIAL MEDIA [before Prenoviciate and before Perpetual profession]**

Name and surname: (candidate)

Date of birth and place:

### **I CERTIFY THAT**

I am active on the internet and on the following social media (list which ones):

- ☐ website
- ☐ blog
- ☐ facebook
- ☐ twitter
- ☐ whatsapp groups
- ☐ instagram
- ☐ others

the content available online:

- do not contradict the Church's doctrine in matters of faith and morals;
- [before the Perpetual profession] promote the mission proper to the Company of Mary;
- are in compliance with the guidelines for the protection of minors of the Entity and / or the Congregation;
- are not offensive to any person, group or institution.

Place, date and signature

## **18. GUIDELINES FOR THE SELF-EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR PERPETUAL PROFESSION**

COMPANY OF MARY

Entity:

Name and surname: (candidate for perpetual Profession)

Birth: day, place

Baptized: day, place, diocese:

Confirmed: day, place, diocese:

### **SELF-EVALUATION OF THE CANDIDATE FOR PERPETUAL PROFESSION**

#### **0. GENERAL LOOK**

- ☐ The beginning of the journey of vocational research and the meeting with the Montfortian Missionaries.
- ☐ The strong points and challenges experienced in the various formation stages.
- ☐ Personal responsibility towards one's own training.
- ☐ Physical health.

#### **1. GROWTH IN THE HUMAN DIMENSION**

- ☐ Knowledge and self-acceptance.
- ☐ The ability to enhance one's qualities, combined with the serene acceptance of one's limitations.
- ☐ Ability to control one's own inconsistencies.
- ☐ Degree of affective maturity.
- ☐ Ability to face new situations, to allow oneself to be questioned, to know how to positively experience failures.
- ☐ Work on one's character and personality.

- Self-discipline, order and cleanliness, management of work, leisure and rest.
- Development of personal talents and virtues at the service of the mission.
- Relationship with others.

## 2. GROWTH IN THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

- Progress of the life of faith, hope and charity.
- Experience of God Alone and of a disciple of Wisdom.
- Filial relationship with the Virgin Mary.
- Sacramental and prayer life, personal and community.
- Love and taste for the Word of God.
- Practical assimilation of Montfortian spirituality.
- Sensitivity for apostolic prayer.

## 3. GROWTH IN THE INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION

- Attitude in dealing with studies.
- Integration of studies into the human and spiritual and missionary journey
- Contribution of studies to the in-depth study of the various aspects of Montfortian spirituality.
- Knowledge and study of the spirituality of St. Louis-Marie of Montfort.

## 4. GROWTH IN THE APOSTOLIC DIMENSION

- Awareness of the primacy of evangelization.
- Integration of the traits that constitute the Montfortian missionary, in particular: freedom, in order not to become attached to a place or habit, proximity, predilection for the poor, attention to the needs of the Church, avoiding the search for comfort (cf. PI 9 and 11), the ability to work with others, Marian spirituality.

- Identification with the charism in its characteristic components.
- Ability to live the wisdom of the apostolic man with balance, reconciling the different needs and commitments.
- Growth in love for the Church, in "feeling with the Church".
- Cordial obedience to the authority of the Pope and the Pastors of the Church.
- Identification of one's own apostolic gift within the Montfortian mission.
- Knowledge and appreciation of the mission of the Company of Mary.

## 5. GROWTH IN THE DIMENSION OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

- Identification with the charism in its characteristic components.
- Conformation to Christ poor, obedient and celibate consecrated for the Kingdom.
- Attitude to live fraternal life in an apostolic community.
- Integration of the 4 notes of the Montfortian charism
- Sense of belonging to the Company of Mary.

## 6. CONCLUSION

- In the context of the needs and projects of the Congregation, what do I feel most called to?
- Application for admission to perpetual Profession

Place, date and signature  
(candidate for perpetual Profession)

## **19. GUIDELINES OF THE REPORT FOR ADMISSION TO PERPETUAL PROFESSION [by the Responsible for formation]**

### **COMPANY OF MARY**

Entity:

Name and surname: (candidate for perpetual Profession)

Birth: date, place:

### **REPORT FOR ADMISSION TO THE PROFESSION**

#### **1. GROWTH IN THE HUMAN DIMENSION**

- ☐ Knowledge and self-acceptance gained over the years of formation.
- ☐ Valuing one's qualities and talents at the service of the mission.
- ☐ Inner freedom and ability to control the less mature aspects.
- ☐ Maturity and emotional freedom.
- ☐ Ability to face new situations, to know how to accept and allow oneself to be questioned by criticism, to know how to positively experience failures.
- ☐ Availability for continuous training.
- ☐ Signs of the progressive choice of true Wisdom and of the renunciation of the wisdom of the world (cf. LEW 78-83).
  - Freedom from the continuous search for the esteem and praise of men (cf. LEW 75; 78; 82).
  - Freedom from human respect and complacency that pushes towards conformity to gain the approval of others, or to avoid their rejection (cf. H 33:100).
  - Freedom from the constant search to please oneself and the world, to please God (cf. H 33:107).
  - Freedom, in acting, from seeking one's own interest (cf. H 38:122.119).

#### **2. GROWTH IN THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION**

- ☐ Progress of the life of faith. Significant steps.
- ☐ Attitude to prefer and enjoy being and staying in the things of the Father (cf. LEW 98).

□ Filial relationship with the Virgin Mary in the practice of Montfortian consecration. Evangelical Marian devotion, not extravagant or contrary to the Gospel and the spirit of Montfort.

### 3. GROWTH IN THE INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION

- A mature attitude in dealing with studies: interest, seriousness, perseverance, humility, depth, non-knowledge, no search for prestige.
- Integration of studies into the human and spiritual journey and the ability to evaluate and discern in the light of evangelical wisdom (cf. LEW 92).
- Sapid knowledge of spiritual realities (cf. LEW 93).
- Integration of studies in the process of preparation for the apostolic mission.
- Knowledge and deepening of the Founder's spirituality.

### 4. GROWTH IN THE APOSTOLIC DIMENSION

- Awareness of the primacy of evangelization, lived and requested by St. Louis-Marie of Montfort of his missionaries.
- Integration of the traits that make up the Montfortian Missionary, in particular: the freedom not to cling to a place or habit; proximity to simple and poor people, avoiding bourgeois attitudes and the search for companies of higher social classes;
- Clear and progressive signs of apostolic zeal and passion for the glory of God and for the salvation of humanity (cf. LEW 100; 102) vs lukewarmness, laziness, little interest and spirit of initiative, silence in the service of God and his people, fears.
- Attention to the needs of the Church, avoiding the search for comfort (cf. PM 9 and 11);
- Ability to work with others and to relate to people in the mission;
- Sensitivity of making known the place of Mary in the history of salvation, without distorting her role.
- Ability to live the wisdom of the apostolic man with balance, reconciling the different needs of fraternal life in community.
- Growth in love for the Church, in "feeling with the Church", in cordial obedience to the authority of the Pope and the Church's Pastors.
- Ability to carry out the mission of the Company of Mary in its various forms (e.g. preaching, evangelization, spreading of spirituality), in particular to communicate the truth adequately, with a word that comes from the fullness of the heart and from experience lived (cf. LEW 95-97).



- Identification of the apostolic gift within the forms of the Montfortian mission.
- Knowledge and appreciation of the mission of the Company of Mary.
- Attitude to fully live the life and mission of the Company of Mary.

## 5. GROWTH IN THE DIMENSION OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

- Identification with the charism in its characteristic components. Signs of poverty, obedience and apostolic chastity, putting all energy at the service of the Kingdom of Jesus for Mary.
- Maturation of the features of the "liberos", true children of Mary.
- Following Christ Wisdom on the way to evangelical chastity (cf. LEW 54). Signs of a transparent and stable response to the love of Jesus Wisdom with an undivided heart, capable of universal and unconditional love, despite the weaknesses common to every human journey.
- Following Christ Wisdom on the path of evangelical poverty (cf. PM 7), on the trail of the poor apostles. Signs of a harmonization of the choice of a poor life, first of all before God, "a Father who never fails" (L 2), and of proximity to the poor.
- Following Christ Wisdom on the way of evangelical obedience (cf. PM 10). Signs of obedience and docility to the Founder, in the loving reference to the Rule of life, in letting oneself be taken "by the hand" by the Lord, through the Superior and the confreres of the community.
- Fraternal life in community. Signs of cordial welcome towards all, of acceptance of reciprocal diversity, of sharing of spiritual and material goods.
- Signs of maturation in the sense of belonging to the Company of Mary.

## 6. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Participation in the formation process.
- Relationship with the Superior and the team of formators.
- Summary of the strong points in the various dimensions of the person.
- Summary of the points to be improved in the various dimensions of the person.
- Tips for continuing education.
- Recommendation to perpetual profession.

Place, date and signature  
(Responsible of formation and his team)

## 20. FORM FOR PRESENTATION TO PERPETUAL PROFESSION [by the Superior of the Entity]

COMPANY OF MARY

Entity:

**Subject: Presentation for admission to perpetual profession**

Following the Provincial / Delegation Council meeting  
held in ..... the .....

after studying the report presented by the Responsible of  
Formation and the candidate's application and after discussing the  
case with the Provincial / Delegation Councilors,  
with the consent of my Council I present the candidate

.....

(Name surname)

to admission to perpetual Profession.

I enclose the documents concerning the candidate:

- self-evaluation and personal request to be admitted to perpetual Profession,
- opinion of the Responsible of formation,
- extract from the minutes of the Admission Board, with the deliberative vote,
- any other document added to the personal file from the first Profession onwards.

The proposed date for perpetual Profession is .....

[STAMP]

Place, date and signature  
(Superior of the Entity)

## 21. NOTIFICATION FORM FOR BAPTISMS REGISTER

COMPANY OF MARY

Entity:

Address:

Name and surname of the professed religious / deacon / priest

Son of (name of the Father)

and of (mother's name and surname)

Born: day, place

Baptized: day, place, parish

he made his perpetual Profession in the Congregation of the  
Montfort Missionaries

Date, place: .....

Ordained ☐ Deacon ☐ Priest in the Congregation of the Montfort  
Missionaries

Date, place: .....

by the bishop .....

[STAMP]

Signature .....

[space reserved for the **parish priest**, to be filled in and returned to the sender]

The undersigned ..... parish priest of .....

certifies having transcribed this information in the Baptismal  
Register.

[STAMP]

Place, date and signature

[space reserved for the **Secretariat** of the Institute]

Certificate of entry, dated  
Signature

## 22. FORM FOR NOTIFICATION OF PERPETUAL PROFESSION

To the Secretary General

### **Subject: Notification of Perpetual Profession**

The undersigned,

(Superior of the Scholasticate / Superior of the entity / Secretary of the entity)

notifies that the confrere

(Name and Surname).....

in the hands of the Rev. Father

(Superior who received the profession)

he made perpetual Profession

on a

(day / month / year) (place)

Done at

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

(Superior of the Scholasticate / Superior of the Entity / Secretary of the Entity)

## 23. FORM FOR NOTIFICATION OF THE CONFERRAL OF LECTOR / ACOLYTE

To the Secretary General

**Subject: Notification of the Conferral of the Ministry of Lector  
/ Acolyte**

The undersigned,

(Superior of the Scholasticate / Superior of the Entity / Secretary of the Entity)

notifies that the confrere (Name surname)

received from

(name and surname of the person conferring the ministry)

the ministry of the Lector / Acolyte

on a

(day / month / year) (place)

Done at

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

(Superior of the Scholasticate / Superior of the Entity / Secretary of the Entity)

## 24. FORM FOR DIMISSORIAL LETTERS

COMPANY OF MARY

**Subject: DIMISSORIAL LETTERS for ordination to the  
Deacon / Priesthood**

To His Excellency Most Reverend  
Bishop of the Diocese of  
from ..... smm  
(Name and Surname of the Superior)

As Provincial Superior / General Delegate of the Montfort  
Missionaries of the Province / Delegation of .....  
and by virtue of the powers granted by the Law (cf. CIC, cann.  
1019, 1021), I am sending you the dimissorial letters for  
ordination to the Diaconate / Priesthood of .....,  
perpetually professed religious of the Company of Mary.

[Diaconate] As far as we are able to judge, this religious has the  
aptitudes and qualities necessary for the diaconate. There is no  
canonical impediment to receive this sacred Order. For this reason,  
with the consent of my Council, I grant to .....  
the necessary authorization and I ask you to confer the Diaconate  
on him.

[Priesthood] This candidate, a perpetually professed religious, has  
completed the prescribed studies, has obtained all the documents  
required in CIC, can. 1050 and has met all other requirements for  
priesthood ordination. Received the Diaconate on (date): .....  
For this reason, with the consent of my Council, I authorize him  
to contact you to be ordained a Priest.

[STAMP]

Place and date

Signature of the Superior\_\_\_\_\_

## **25. FORM FOR NOTIFICATION OF ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE / PRIESTHOOD**

To the Secretary General

**Subject: Notification of Ordination to the Deacon / Priesthood**

The undersigned,

(Superior of the Scholasticate / Superior of the entity / Secretary of the entity)

notifies that the confrere

(Name surname)

was ordained a Deacon / Priest

at the hands of His Excellency Most Reverend Mons.

Bishop of the diocese of

dated in the church of

(day / month / year) (place)

Done at

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

(Superior of the Scholasticate / Superior of the Entity / Secretary of the Entity)

## 26. TESTAMENT FORM TO BE TRANSCRIBED BY HAND<sup>10</sup>

I, **Louis GRIGNION** born in **Montfort la Canne** on **January 31, 1673**, tax code number **LSSGRN73F31A869V**, a member of the **Company of Mary of the Province of France**, make, with this document, my will as follows.

**IF IT IS NOT THE FIRST TESTAMENT, the following must be added to the text:** I revoke all acts, codicils and testaments prior to the last wishes that I express here and any other testamentary disposition that I may have made up to this date and I declare that only this document contains my last wishes.

I formally acknowledge and explicitly declare that, by virtue of my vow of poverty, all my property, rights, pensions, annuities, personal bank accounts, personal insurance policies, which I may have acquired for my work, on the occasion of my work, or for my work, as well as any personal property and real estate and movable property for my use at the time of my death, belong and return by right to the **Company of Mary - Province of France** of which I have been a member since **15 August 1693**, as my universal heir in all my assets and in equal shares.

I attach **the house of Vouvant** to **Nicolas of POITIERS, Philippe of NANTES, Louis of La ROCHELLE**.

I tie **the money from the sale of religious books** to **Nicolas of POITIERS** to pay his pension.

I designate and appoint **René MULOT** executor of my last wishes expressed here and **my successor as director of the missions**.

Any good that a recipient of the above is or considers to be unable to accept, will return to the **Company of Mary - Province of France** as my universal heir.

Done at **Saint Laurent sur Sèvre** on **April 27, 1716**.

Yours faithfully, *Louis Grignon*

---

<sup>10</sup> In **red** the parts to be adapted.



## 29. FORM FOR THE RECEIPT OF THE INDULT AND DISPENSATION FROM TEMPORARY VOWS

I, the undersigned, ..... freely accept the indult to leave the Congregation of Montfort Missionaries, which includes the dispensation of temporary vows and other obligations resulting from these vows that I made in Congregation of Montfort Missionaries.

I freely leave the Congregation of Montfort Missionaries.

Done at .....  
[place and date]

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
[applicant]

Made in the presence of: .....  
[Witnesses and Superior of the Entity]



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