



The Bishop concludes his Pastoral Visit to Saint-Laurent

SAINT-LAURENT-SUR-SÈVRE, France - It is with joy that our parish-sanctuary welcomed Mgr. François JACOLIN from Thursday, November 30 to Sunday, December 3, 2023, with the celebration of the Mass of the first Sunday of Advent during which 28 young people received the sacrament of Confirmation. This visit was part of the bishop's pastoral visit to the Herbiers deanery. The latter is made up of 7 parishes. And it is in our Parish-Sanctuary of Saint-Louis de Montfort in Saint-Laurent sur Sèvre that this immersion of the pastor among his sheep ended. Of course, it was a symbolic event.

A pastoral visit is always a moment of grace. It is an opportunity for the bishop to enter into *"the smell of his sheep"*. Furthermore, it is not only a question of Catholics but of all men of good will. He is interested in the economic, social and cultural life of each parish. Because the Church does not have to live closed in on itself.

This is how the bishop, accompanied by his vicar general and the dean priest, took the time to meet our two pastoral councils (the Parish and the Sanctuary). Also, he visited the three congregations, the *"Militantes de la Sainte Vierge"* and the municipality. His passage invites us to look to the future with great hope. Note that these three nights that he spent in the *"Saint Esprit"* house where he fraternally shared breakfasts and dinner from Friday, December 1st to the evening are as much an encouragement for our mission as a recognition of what our predecessors did.

Indeed, he strengthened us all, listened to and encouraged us in our mission of spreading Montfortian spirituality. After meeting the *"Militantes"*, the Montfort missionaries, the brothers of St. Gabriel and

the Daughters of Wisdom, he noted that, with its immense potential, Saint-Laurent is a remarkable place of pilgrimage for the Diocese.

He hopes that the Diocese will work in synergy with the sanctuary as a source of spirituality, taking into account our pastoral vision: *“In communion with our Diocese, in the spirit of Father de Montfort, to love and serve our neighbor in the Church, we want our Parish-Sanctuary to be a place of welcome, of evangelization, an oasis of mercy, peace, joy and listening for all, especially the poorest.”* On this, a committee is already in place and the reflection is already underway.

The pastoral visit ended with a good friendly meal at the *“Sagesse Spiritual Center”*.

Fr. Ronel CHARELUS, SMM