



## **Let us dare to multiply the talents of the International Montfortian Mission in France**

**SAINT-LAURENT-SUR-SÈVRE, France** - It is 14°C in this small town on the edge of the Vendée. The gray sky does not prevent the bell towers, which, piercing the sky, continue to sublimate the soul of this place imbued with spirituality. At 9am, twenty valiant men are heading towards the *Salle Notre-Dame du Saint-Esprit*, while four others, stuck in traffic on the outskirts of Nantes, are still on their way. Under the soft and benevolent light of this freshly renovated room, a song to the Virgin Mary rises, “Mary, witness of Hope”. True children of Mary anchored in the prophecy of their Founder, gathered on November 27, 2024 in Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre to revisit the past, identify the present and dare the future: it is the General Assembly of the Montfort Missionaries of France.

The Assembly is under the aegis of the provincial superior, Fr. Paulin RAMANANDRAIBE, SMM and honored by the presence of Fr. Marco PASINATO, SMM, Vicar General and responsible for Europe. Like most entities in Europe, the Vice-Province is experiencing a drastic decrease in membership. Past years have been marked by the loss of several members: five deaths in 2021, seven in 2022, three in 2023 and three in 2024. However, Hope, with a capital H, endures thanks to many signs of Providence, visible here and now. The Vice-Province remains resolutely turned towards the future. Among them, the arrival of Fr. Ekenley JEAN-NOËL, SMM from Haiti, who is beginning to find his feet in these lands filled with history. Alongside this promising arrival, notable changes have taken place within the Vice-Province. Fr. Hervé RAFALISOLOHERINIRINA, SMM has been appointed provincial bursar, succeeding Bro. Daniel BUSNEL, SMM and Marie Milko has taken over from Caroline Martin as administrative and financial manager. The Vice-Province is driven by undeniable vitality. Among the planned activities, the Montfortian pilgrimage, which will

take place from April 21 to 27, 2025, remains a flagship event, with 22 active centers. The enthusiastic participation of the lay associates in the Vice-Province and the Montfortian Spirituality are also to be highlighted. About a hundred lay people will gather in Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre around the tomb of their model of holiness on December 7 and 8. The Vice-Province spares no effort to promote the Montfortian High Places and give effective fruitfulness to its presence through various missions. This day allowed us to discover that France has a whole range of projects. Marie Milko presented an overview of the real estate projects underway in Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre, Pontchâteau, Montfort-sur-Meu and Marillais. Another piece of good news is the legal recognition of the French State, which granted the Congregation of the Montfort Missionaries the status of a religious Congregation on July 24, 2024. The prospects for the future are clear: they are based on creative fidelity, focused on mission, spirituality and finance.

In the words of Catherine of Siena, “memory warms Charity”, the Eucharistic celebration of jubilees on this day is the top of this. Eucharist memorial of our salvation and all the graces received by these confreres during these years within the Congregation. Charity, the very essence of the bonds that unite “this little flock” who work for the coming of the Kingdom of Jesus through the Most Holy Virgin Mary. Here are the jubilarians:

- Profession: 80 years old 08/09/44 Fr. DERRIEN Henri, 75 years old 08/09/49 Fr. LE BORGNE Yves, 70 years old 15/09/98 Fr. PAGNOT Gabriel 15/09/98 Fr. VINCENT Marc, 60 years old 15/09/64 Fr. LAUNAY André, 50 years old 10/11/74 Fr. SIMONET Michel, 15 years old 08/09/09 Fr. DUGER Jean DIDEREAU.
- Ordination: 70 years 07/02/54 Fr. LE BORGNE Yves, 65 years 08/02/59 Fr. LEMARIÉ Paul 18/10/59 Fr. BEGOC Vincent 18/10/59 Fr. DUVAL Roger 18/10/59 Fr. ROBIN Jean-Dominique, 60 years 09/02/64 Fr. LEMARIÉ Michel.

Father Marco concluded the assembly by emphasizing the diversity within the Vice-Province. A diversity that will become a richness through commitments to God and neighbor. “Let us dare,” he urged, “to multiply the riches of the international Montfortian mission through prayer, pastoral action and fraternal life”.

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