



Echo of the Jubilee of the 350th Anniversary of the Birth of Montfort

SAINT LAURENT-SUR-SÈVRE, France – Brother Claude MARSAUD, FSG, local superior of the international community of the Brothers of Saint Gabriel in Saint Laurent-sur-Sèvre, shares about his joy experienced and his reflections during the Jubilee of the 350th anniversary of the birth of Montfort in his native village on January 29, 2023:

“What a great initiative by the Montfortian Missionaries, the Montfortian Hospitality Center and the parish of Montfort-Sur-Meu, to have proposed that Sunday, January 29, 2023, be particularly marked by the 350th anniversary of the birth of Louis-Marie Grignion. The heart of Montfort-sur-Meu was invaded, from the morning by a procession of cars and a few coaches carrying Montfortians from the congregations, hospitality and friends from all over the greater region and even from other regions. What a joy to come together from very different backgrounds! What a surprise and pride for the inhabitants of Montfort, to see themselves joined on this day, at home, and to welcome us first to the birthplace of Louis-Marie then in the church and for the whole day!”

At 10.30 a.m., the church of Saint-Louis-Marie in Brocéliande was well filled, even if the temperature inside was cool. Carrying some banners and relics of Father de Montfort, a procession made up of the members of various constituted bodies: Daughters of Wisdom, Brothers of Saint-Gabriel, members of the hospitality, members of the parish, numerous priests and deacons, came forward, accompanied by music and the entrance song: “Jubilee, shout for joy, Acclaim the thrice Holy God!”. This song thus set the right tone for this beautiful and great day. Throughout the celebration, the words, the spiritual accents, the aspirations, the gestures and the prayers of Montfort himself resonated through the liturgical texts, the comments, the songs and of course the remarkable homily that Father Pierre d' Ornellas gave us. More than a homily, it was a meditation, à la Montfort, on the Mad Love of God for humanity and for each one of us. So many quotes from our good Father de Montfort. We would have thought he was

in our midst! The Montfortian Family represented in our assembly was perfectly in tune with what was proclaimed, meditated on, given by our archbishop. At the end of the homily, if no one dared to applaud, during the short time of meditation that followed, one could feel that everyone had heard the message: that of the Love of God inseparable from that of that every missionary must transmit, as Father de Montfort knew how to do in response to the title and the mission he had received from Pope Clement XI. “Live your Baptism and be missionaries of the Gospel through the Love of God who makes you live” could sum up in a few words the beautiful exhortation we heard.

At 3:00 p.m., the pilgrims of the day were offered the opportunity to experience an original festive time with the proposal of songs from parts of hymns by Father de Montfort, set to music by Father Willy and interpreted and accompanied by an orchestra and singers from Pontchâteau. An hour of happiness through the beauty and variety of songs, through the presentation of each of them and the life and good humor transmitted to us by the two animators of this time. The ovation and the repetition several times of the last song on Pontchâteau meant more than words, that this day which was ending to allow everyone to return before nightfall, would remain in everyone's mind and would undoubtedly remain inscribed forever, in the significant celebrations of the Montfortian Family in France. Let us hope that from heaven will come to us the relief that we always need as well as new strength to continue the mission that Father de Montfort received, in his time, from Pope Clement XI. Thank you to all those who contributed to this beautiful day!

Bro. Claude MARSAUD, FSG