



### **Three Montfortians participate in the Vatican Meeting on Sanctuaries**

**ROME, Italy** - From November 9 to 11, 2023, the Dicastery for Evangelization organized the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Meeting of rectors and collaborators of sanctuaries, entitled “The Sanctuary: house of prayer”. A journey which continues, after the first International Meeting of 2018, with three days which involved numerous participants from all over the world. The meeting, which also prepares for the Holy Year 2025, was held in the Paul VI Hall of the Vatican. Three confreres from the Vice Province of France participated, namely Fr. Santino BREMBILLA, SMM, Fr. Ronel CHARELUS, SMM, and Fr. Jean Didereau DUGER, SMM, who gave his testimony below.

Hearing about Rome is one thing, but being in Rome is another. I had the great desire to visit Rome and the Vatican (the smallest state in the world). I had the visit from November 9 to 11, 2023 as part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Congress of Rectors of Sanctuaries organized by the Dicastery for Evangelization.

This opportunity allowed me to meet my confreres and to get to know the general house of the Montfort missionaries in which I spent my stay. The welcome was very warm despite the diversity of languages and cultures. It was an important moment for me to meet so many colleagues from different cultures in the same place. Those I knew and those I didn't know yet. We shared meals and exchanged a little news from our countries.

As for the international congress, there were 43 countries from 5 continents represented by rectors and their collaborators around the theme: “The Sanctuary: house of prayer. Moving towards the Jubilee 2025”. This congress took place over a period of three days, from November 9 to 11, with very interesting sub-themes concerning the specific life of sanctuaries. For example, intercessory prayer; the sinner's prayer; how to pray with music and singing, welcome in our sanctuaries, etc.

This congress ended with an audience with Pope Francis who encouraged us to ensure that our sanctuaries remain welcoming because they “are special places of prayer and reconciliation;

privileged places of encounter with the grace of God where the holy faithful people of God flock to pray, to console themselves and to look to the future with greater confidence”.

It was very enriching through everything I heard in the conferences and some testimonies that were given by representatives of the international sanctuaries of Ireland, Nigeria, Korea and the Philippines. This meeting remains a significant event for me, not only for its universal significance but also and above all for having been at the tomb of the one on whom Christ founded his Church.

*Fr. Jean Didereau DUGER, SMM*