



Montfort Missionaries
Extraordinary General Council
Loreto 1-10 October 2015

Letter from the Participants of the EGC at Loreto to Confreres and Lay Members of the Montfortian Family

Dear Confreres and lay members of the Montfortian Family,

How often we speak of walking “in the footsteps of Montfort”, but during this meeting of the Extraordinary General Council (EGC) this phrase has struck us deeply and enkindled genuine hope. **“Together, passing through Loreto”**. Our meeting took place at a turning point in the life of the Congregation. In 1706 Father de Montfort undertook an arduous pilgrimage to Rome, passing through the great Marian Sanctuary of Loreto, to meet with Pope Clement XI and discern the will of God for his life and mission. In 2015 we, Montfort’s sons and brothers, commemorating the 300th anniversary of his death, found ourselves making a pilgrimage to “Our Lady’s House”, to the heart of the Word made Flesh, in order to discover how God wants us to live today and tomorrow as Missionaries of the Company of Mary.

We are a **“poor and small Company,”** as Montfort dreamed. Nevertheless, at this moment we are 617 priests; 62 brothers; 130 scholastics and 61 novices! Together we become a powerful witness to the love of Jesus in Mary, first and foremost by our life lived in fraternity, as a community of missionaries and not as individual missionaries. Our life together should become a mirror of the communion of love in the Trinity that pushes us toward a **fraternity without frontiers**. At this point in the history of the Company of Mary, on the eve of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, we choose to be a prophetic sign – for our world of globalization – not of power and exploitation but of charity and justice.

During our meetings we had the joy of being surrounded by photos and videos – the faces of confreres from long ago, with long grey beards, crossing rivers and jungles, founding missions and entire provinces; the faces of young confreres of today, blazing new trails, studying and working in mission together with enormous joy and energy. The photos, the videos, the history and the memories spoke to us of great missionary zeal and sacrifice.

We, the members of this 2015 EGC at Loreto, are conscious of the challenge that comes to us all to accept and commit ourselves to the personal and

communal conversion necessary to journey toward a future as *“Liberos, as free men, gathered from among the nations...”* (PM 7ff, 18)

In our planning and our decisions let us reach out – with so many lay people and associates who live our Montfortian spirituality -- reach out for a renewed mission that dares to transcend borders and cultures. Let our concern and care for formation – for the mystery of growth and freedom in each confrere – lead us to welcome and accompany to full maturity the young God calls to our family as well as the older brothers who seek to become ever more faithful disciples of Jesus. Let us not fear to share our human and financial resources in the most transparent, fraternal of ways, in order to build God’s kingdom of justice, love and peace well beyond our own borders – indeed, beyond all borders – with a strong sense of belonging to the Company of Mary.

As we come to the end of this EGC, we look ahead with joy and courage to the General Chapter of 2017, because we look ahead with hope and commitment to the future of the Company of Mary as God will bring it to be through our lives and ministry. After having passed through Loreto on his way to Rome, St. Louis-Marie discovered a vast field for his missionary work in France... After our sojourn in Loreto, after our next General Chapter, what else shall we discover of the richness of our fraternity and our zeal to build the Reign of Jesus through Mary?

With our deep fraternal gratitude for your lives, your mission, your prayer,

The Confreres of the 2015 EGC at Loreto

October 10, 2015