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The International Montfortian Marian Congress - II

BANGALORE, India - The Montfort Marian Centre, under the direction of Fr. Alexander, SMM, organized the second International Montfortian Marian Congress (IMMC) in Bangalore, India on October 26, 2024. The congress saw the participation of over 230 attendees and featured seven insightful presentations by eminent theologians, mariologists, and scholars, centered on the theme, *“Mary of the People and Ecology: An Ecological Reading of Marian Apparitions.”*

Fr. Sebastian RAJ, SMM, Provincial of the Vice Province of India, addressed the gathering. Fr. Yoseph Putra Dwi Darma WATUN, SMM, the Superior General of the Montfort Missionaries, and Fr. Prem KUMAR, SMM, the Assistant General, delivered video messages of encouragement and support. Fr. Jos VAN DEN BERGH, SMM provided an introduction to the theme.

The conference included presentations by leading scholars in Marian studies: Dr. Reimund BIERINGER, professor at the Catholic University of Leuven, discussed the potential for a Biblical foundation of Marian apparitions; Dr. Sarah Jane BOSS, founder of the Centre for Marian Studies (UK), explored the theological roots of popular devotion. Dr. Denis KULANDAISAMY, President of “Marianum” (Rome) and Counselor of the Pontifical International Marian Academy (Vatican City), shared insights into the apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Additional presentations highlighted ecological perspectives on Marian apparitions. Dr. Nepolean, SMM, a mariologist, and Dr. Maria Michael FELIX examined the ecological reinterpretation of

Our Lady of Guadalupe, while Dr. Jose Kizhakkekuttu CMI spoke on Our Lady of Fatima. Dr. Robert MICHEL (Germany) and Dr. Nepolean elaborated on the ecological significance of Our Lady of Banneux (Belgium). Finally, Dr. Alexander, the director of the Montfort Marian Centre, presented on Our Lady of Velankanni (India).

The Maria Bhavan scholasticate community of Montfort Fathers expertly organized the event, ensuring a smooth and engaging experience for all. The participants responded positively, appreciating the contemporary theme and its fresh approach to Marian spirituality. This congress was a meaningful opportunity to highlight the Montfortian presence in India and to expand the reach of Marian spirituality through the Montfort Marian Centre.

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