



**Consecration and First Religious Profession
of Brothers Samuel, Lester, Athanasius and Laurent
in the Company of Mary**

QUEZON CITY, Philippines - Every man who is engaged to a woman looks forward to the day of his wedding. During the period of engagement, he looks at his lover with the eyes of truth. His heart and mind are all given to his lover because he wants to know both her likes and dislikes. He tries as much as possible to ask the people with marriage experience to help him to understand what marriage is all about. He submits himself to his lover: he is with her forever, not only on some occasional moments. When the day of his wedding comes, this man is the happiest person on earth: he is in his best element. He looks forward to seeing how he is going to grow old with his lover not how he will leave her at some point in time. During the wedding, this man makes vows to his lover with all his heart.

This was our experience of the novitiate journey. It was a year-long process for us to know and love 'Eternal Wisdom'. It was a period of engagement during which many people, with deep marriage experience with Eternal Wisdom, helped us to understand our lover, his likes and dislikes.

The consecration we made on 31st July 2016, marks our commitment to Eternal Wisdom as our lover. It was a great moment for us because, throughout the novitiate process, we had been preparing ourselves for this day of commitment. It was a day when we saw our lover coming to us in all his humility. He was there so that we could get wedded to Wisdom, as it really happened. Now, more than ever we belong to the family of Eternal Wisdom.

To show our faithfulness to our lover we renewed our baptismal promises and we vowed to live by his word, the word written of the Bible. We gave ourselves to him not as mere subjects but as slaves of love who serve their master out of their own free will. We are the slaves of the Virgin Mary who has helped us to grow more intimate with her son Jesus Christ. Indeed, we have seen him and have vowed that we will love and serve him as our beloved Master.

The commitment we have made does not result as a burden but as a call for us to love Jesus more than the way we have loved him before. Now we are no longer merely acquainted to him but his real friends and lovers. We respect and obey him for he is our head and we his body. We are like a married woman who is obliged to love and be faithful to her husband alone.

Now it is our responsibility to love and obey him in everything. Our Consecration is a wedding ring which we will wear on our fingers for the rest of our lives.

The consecration helped us to see the love of God in the Company of Mary, in which we made our first religious profession, on 1st August 2016. This day too will remain in us forever. With the vows we made to our lover, Eternal Wisdom, we have taken him as our “everything”.

This was the day we left all childish things aside and embarked on a journey toward full maturity and faithfulness. It was a moment that made our hearts leap with joy. It made us cry within ourselves out of joy and gratitude to God for choosing us to be his servants.

In the presence of the Montfortian family and the Christian community, we took our first vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. We thank all those who helped us to make such a courageous decision. Without them we wouldn't have been able to know and understand the momentous significance of what we have done.

This day marked the beginning of our new ministry as Montfortians. We are called to love Christ through the Blessed Virgin Mary, his as well as our faithful Mother.

On this occasion we vowed to obey him through the superiors who guide us in his place. We promised to be *Liberos*: always ready to obey when those in authority ask us to work for Christ and the Church. We never regret taking this vow because it will help us to deeply love and generously serve Christ and our neighbour.

We vowed to be chaste for his glory alone. With conviction we gave ourselves to him not as men running away from the world but as men running towards the world with the eyes of God. Our chastity is not a burdensome obligation but a decision made out of love and coming from the depth of our heart. We believe that we cannot be chaste if we do not sincerely love Christ and others.

With full conviction we took the vow of poverty. Our religious poverty does not make us idle but generates in us the very dynamic life of Christ and his apostles: always at work in order to serve and provide for others. With our founder today we say: “We are *Liberos*, men always on the move, without mother, father, brother or sister as the world understands them”.

Our Consecration and Profession have made us real crusaders of Christ. We are the friends of Eternal Wisdom forever. As Montfort says, “Wisdom is the cross and the cross is Wisdom”. We have been called to carry our cross and follow him, who called us from the beginning. To be a friend of Christ is to be a friend of the cross. Religious life is not a venue of luxuries but willingness to suffer for the sake of God: the kingdom of God is for those who are strong.

With the Blessed Virgin Mary we say: “Our souls glorify the Lord for He has looked with favour on His lowly servants; Holy is His name”. Indeed, as servants of the Lord, we let His will to be done in us. With Saint Paul we say, “We have competed well and we have finished the race. Now we no longer live but Christ lives in us”.

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