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“LAKBAY MONTFORTANO” Montfortian Walk 2016

BULACAN, Philippines - The Montfortian Mission in San Jose del Monte City, Bulacan continues to touch the lives of our lay faithful. The fruit of its untiring evangelization brought us new hope for a possible opening of the quasi-parish which will be entrusted to the Montfort Fathers.

Earlier this 2016, through the efforts of the SMM Bulacan Community and the parish priest of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, the lay people are being prepared for the foundation of a new parish which is to be named Santo Cristo de Montfort. For a start of bringing to the hearts of the lay people the spirit of Father de Montfort, the Montfortian Family Tercentenary Committee organized for the first time an event which we called: “Lakbay Montfortano” (Montfortian Walk). The plan was then coordinated and implemented by Rev. Fr. Rene Bustillo, SMM and Rev. Fr. Francisco Tacio, SMM and the lay faithful in that new community. The event was held on November 19, 2016. Among the many people who joined in the event were the Legion of Mary and other active parishioners of Santa Teresita Parish, representatives from the Daughters of Wisdom, our Totus Tuus Journey Associates and our Scholastics, Novices, Postulants and Collegians.

The Pilgrimage started at the chapel of Santo Cristo around 5:30 in the morning. There were six stations which showed the important scenes in the life of Father de Montfort. The walk ended at the chapel of the Montfort House of Prayer and Postulants House in Purok 5, Paradise III through the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The Mass was presided over by our newly ordained priest in the person

of Rev. Fr. Gener C. Pito, SMM with some Montfort Priests concelebrants. The homily was given by Rev. Fr. Richard J. Magararu, SMM, the Delegation Superior. The "Lakbay Montfortano" was a part of the Celebration of the Tercentenary Anniversary of the death of Father de Montfort, which in the Philippines is a year-long celebration (April 28, 2016 – April 28, 2017). The occasion was also a thanksgiving Mass of Fr. Gener who was assigned in the place as a deacon. The whole event culminated by the planting of a Cross with the inscription "Cross is Wisdom and Wisdom is the Cross." After the mass, everyone gathered outside in the slope of the Rosary Garden to witness this touching moment. Lastly, a simple lunch packs wrapped in banana leaves were distributed to all the pilgrims.

For most of the pilgrims who were present in the "Lakbay Montfortano", one of the good thoughts common among them was a grace-filled journey to the life of Father de Montfort never minding how long we have walked. It was as if all were in France witnessing how Montfort has successfully brought many people closer to God through Mary in his life here on earth. For the parishioners of the Santo Cristo de Montfort Quasi-Parish, it was indeed the start of something great for the glory of God Alone! May the burning love for God alone remain always in us!

*-Armel Collantes
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