



“The Montfortian Way for the 21st Century”

BANDUNG, Indonesia – The members of three Montfortian Congregations and their respective Associates (Daughters of Wisdom and Friends of Wisdom, Montfort Missionaries and Association of Mary Queen of All Hearts (AMQAH), Brothers of Saint Gabriel and Montfortian Gabrielite Associates) in Southeast Asia and Oceania feel the need to meet regularly to get to know each other, share and collaborate in deepening and spreading the charism and spirituality of Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort through concrete initiatives.

This is the awareness that is increasingly emerging among the participants in the Montfortian Conference of Southeast Asian and Oceanian Countries, which took place from Monday, July 29 to Thursday, August 1, 2024, at the “Pratista” spiritual retreat house, Bandung. The 70 participants in this meeting came from seven countries: Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Myanmar, Thailand and the Philippines. More precisely, the participants were distributed as follows: 5 Daughters of Wisdom, 12 Montfort Missionaries, 3 Brothers of Saint Gabriel and 50 Associates of these three Congregations.

The meeting, which was held on the basis of regional cooperation among the superiors of the three Montfortian Congregations of Southeast Asia and Oceania, with the Brothers of Saint Gabriel as the main initiator through their Montfort Centre in Singapore, took place under the general theme “The Montfortian Way for the 21st Century”.

During these four days, the participants had their eyes fixed on Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort and his missionary dynamic. They were inspired by the approach of Blessed Marie-Louise of Jesus and Father Gabriel Deshayes who missioned according to the inspiration of the Founder following Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, as messengers of the Heavenly Father: “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (John 20:21). The participants also reflected on the prophetic dimension of the missionary journey of the three Montfortian Congregations in the contemporary world, especially through the links with their respective Associates or collaborators. Finally, the participants also saw how these three Congregations, with their Associates, in Southeast Asia and Oceania, could work more closely together in a synodal spirit, in particular to deepen and share the Montfortian charism and spirituality. The speakers who explored these themes in depth came from the associates themselves and from members of the three Congregations.

This gathering was a great and significant breakthrough in the history of the missionary presence of the three Montfortian Congregations in this part of the planet. The various group discussions and then the cultural program around a bonfire that accompanied the performance of various attractions provided by each country truly ignited the joy and spirit of fraternity among the participants of this meeting. At this cultural evening, many members of the AMQAH from Bandung and Jakarta came to join to present their dances and songs to entertain the participants.

Although the challenges of synodality are real in every culture and in the concrete practice of the life of the Church in every country today, during these days of conference, some hopeful terms emerged as leitmotifs, such as “listening to the Holy Spirit”, “listening to one another” and “building relationships”. This is where the Montfortian Family of Southeast Asia and Oceania will now walk in its ongoing process of conversion in this 21st century, to be authentic missionary disciples, in creative fidelity, in the proclamation of the reign of Jesus Christ that comes through the action of the Holy Spirit, with the “yes” of Mary, the “queen of collaboration”.

Dolaa DHANUSH