



Inauguration of the Blessed Botvasoa and Saint Joseph Church

MORAMANGA – MANGARIVOTR, Madagascar - April 20, 2026; the Christian community of Mangarivotra experienced a historic moment this Sunday with the solemn inauguration of the Blessed Botvasoa and Saint Joseph Church, under the care of the Montfortians, whose parish priest is Father Pierre Adolphe RAKOTO, SMM; Father Bruno Randrianasolo KIKY, SMM, is the Vicar. The grand celebration was presided over by Bishop Rosario VELLA, Bishop of the Diocese of Moramanga, and attended by the Superior of the Vice-Province of Madagascar, Father Jean Joël RANDRIANARIVOMANANA, SMM, Montfortian confreres, priests of the diocese, religious men and women, and approximately three thousand faithful.

The construction of the building began with the laying of the foundation stone on 2017, marking the official launch of the project. Work then continued, driven by the commitment of the diocese, the Montfortian confraternity, and the active mobilization of the local faithful.

In his homily, the Bishop of Moramanga reminded the congregation that the Church is first and foremost a place of encounter and the dwelling place of God: an encounter between God and humanity, made possible by the mystery of the Incarnation. *“God*

became man so that humanity might become children of God,” he emphasized, inviting the faithful to live their Christian vocation fully.

Bishop Rosario also stressed the essential mission of the Church, called to lead people to Christ and to nourish believers with the Word of God and the Body of Christ. He reminded them that the Church is the family of believers, called to holiness, because God himself is holy, and that each baptized person receives a particular mission according to God’s call.

Drawing inspiration from the work of Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort, and under the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary, the bishop concluded his homily with a simple yet powerful exhortation, stating that our bodies are also the dwelling place of God, just as Mary's was.

The celebration concluded with a festive meal for all those present.

May God accompany us throughout our mission.

Fr. Joseph Victor RATAFITANIAINA, SMM