

SG 26-2025
Rome, 28 April 2025

MESSAGE FOR THE FEAST OF ST. LOUIS-MARIE DE MONTFORT
28 APRIL 2025

My dear Confreres, Brothers and Sisters consecrated persons, and Associates,
Greetings of joy and hope in this moment of grace.

Today, 28th April 2025, we are celebrating the 309th year of the death of our Founder and Spiritual Father, St. Louis-Marie de Montfort. This year is very special for us because we are celebrating his feast in the spirit of Jubilee year where the Universal Church calls each one of us to journey together as Pilgrims of hope. The theme *Pilgrims of Hope* emphasizes on our journey of faith and hope found in Christ. As pilgrims, we are called to embark on a spiritual journey, seeking renewal and deeper communion with God and with one another.

It is interesting to see the enthusiasm of Christians coming from different parts of the world to Rome to make their pilgrimage together to renew and strengthen their faith and hope in Christ. This reminds me of St. Montfort's pilgrimage to Rome on foot in Lenten season 1706. His pilgrimage to Rome was indeed the pilgrimage of hope. In this Pilgrimage, he put everything, his life and mission, the people entrusted to him and his future Congregation in God's Providence through the guidance and protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For St. Montfort, hope is the anchor firm and stable, the unshakeable pillar that steadies instability and supports all holiness (See *Hymn 7: Solidity of Hope*). It is obvious that St. Montfort's hope is deeply founded in Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Wisdom. St. Montfort believes that whoever has put his trust in God has never been confounded. For Montfort, faith in God is the root unshakable of all we hope in our pilgrimage on earth. That is why, St. Montfort encourages us to renew our faith, hope and love to God by renewing our baptismal promises in the act of Consecration to Jesus, the Incarnate Wisdom through the hands of our Mother, Mary.

Our celebration becomes deeply full of meaning because we celebrate the feast of our Founder in the spirit of the Jubilee year and also in the light of Pascal Mystery. As we have known that the life and mission of Jesus is to bring the Jubilee Year to his people. Through his life, suffering, death and resurrection, he has brought liberation and salvation to his people. The prophecy of prophet Isaiah (Is. 61: 1-2) is revealed fully in Jesus: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord."* (Lk. 4: 18-19). Jesus life and mission are indeed a

pilgrimage of hope for humanity. It is the path of hope that gives life to each one of us. For St. Montfort, this is the path that we have to follow.

St. Montfort reminds us that it is not enough to be just unafraid, but God wants us to hope for great things from him and to be filled with joy by reason of this hope (See *Letter to the members of the Company of Mary* 5). To journey together as pilgrims of hope in our context of today is very challenging. It implies our humility and courage to remain faithful and creative in following Jesus, our Lord. St. Montfort says that humanly speaking we have every cause for fear, but Jesus himself says to each one of us: *“It is I, do not be afraid. It is I who have chosen you.” ... “I am your protector and your bulwark. I hold you in my hands...”* (*Letter to the members of the Company of Mary* 2 – 3).

Let us journey together as Pilgrims of hope to let our hearts filled with joy and the sweetness of Jesus that brings new life and hope wherever we are. And together with St. Paul and St. Montfort, we pray: May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the holy Spirit. (See *Romans* 15: 13).

As we know, the Holy Father, Pope Francis has left us on 21 April. Let us remind ourselves the words of Pope Francis addressed to the Montfortian Family on the occasion of the General Chapter 2023 (*Audience of 20 May 2023*):

“I would like to highlight three values of yours that I hold to be important and timely: welcoming, internationality and tenderness. ... Uphold these three traits of God: closeness, compassion and tenderness. ... May the Heavenly Mother help us all to search, with courage and creativity, for paths of forgiveness, dialogue, welcoming and peace for all humanity. I bless you from my heart and I ask you, please, to pray for me.”

We thank the Holy Father, Pope Francis, for his closeness to the Montfortian Family and his service to the Church, and we continue to pray for his soul and the Holy Church.

May the spirit of Easter fill our heart with hope and renewal. Happy Easter! And happy feast of St. Louis-Marie de Montfort.

Fraternally in Jesus Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yoseph', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Fr. Yoseph Putra Dwi Darma WATUN, SMM
Superior General