

Formation Session for Provincial Superiors
October 7 – 12, 2019
Closing Message: 12.10.19

Good afternoon to you all. Dear Brother Provincials, as we come to the end of the near 6 days of living together our fraternity, as members of one large family, committed to the same cause, and called to play a leadership role in our different entities, we have every reason to raise our hearts in thanksgiving to God for the manifold graces we have received through different persons and events. Though these were, no doubt, intense days, I feel confident to say that they were, at the same time, interesting and informative, encouraging and educative, for more reasons than one. You will agree with me that the primary objective of making this session “a moment of fraternal encounter and mutual understanding for the leaders of our Provinces” was a lived out reality.

As I mentioned during the Inaugural Session, this was expected to be a formation session, dealing with different aspects of our important role as animators and administrators. It is the earnest hope of the Central Administration that these days have borne fruits, and that you are ready to go back animated by a more positive attitude and equipped with better skills, so that you will “bear more abundant fruits”, in line with what Pope Francis said during the General Audience on Wednesday, 9th, *“The encounter of Saul with Jesus begins a journey that sees Saul transformed into Paul: God’s chosen instrument to bring the Lord’s name to all nations. With Paul’s passage from blindness to sight, he begins to see the world in an entirely new way”*.

If we can truly call the Formation Session an unqualified success, it is thanks to the team spirit that prevailed right from the planning stage, and the whole hearted co-operation and collaboration of different individuals and teams all through. I wish to take this opportunity to say a big THANK YOU to each and every one of them:

- Thanks to each one of you, the participants, for your positive attitude, your **Desire** to equip yourselves with skills and competencies, your spirit of brotherhood and your active participation.
- Thanks to all the members of the Central Administration, Brothers Dionigi Taffarello, Jean-Paul Mbengue, Pratap Reddy, James T. K., Jean-Marie Thior and Michael Mathew, for all the planning and preparation that preceded this Formation Session, and for their enriching presentations, focusing on the vital aspects of our life and mission, as consecrated persons, as leaders of our entities.
- Thanks to our two interpreters, Brothers Alain Henrion and Michel Mendy, whose energetic presence and lively interpretation during all the sessions, made communication easy and effective.
- Thanks to our two Secretaries, Brothers Ronald Brissette and Sebastian Ndabuganiye, who demonstrated a lot of patience and perseverance. A special thanks to Brother Ronald for all the time and energy spent in preparing the Morning and Evening Prayers,

binding them together into a booklet and transporting them all the way from Canada, with the help of his Provincial Superior!

- Thanks to our translators, Brothers Georges Le Vern and Marcel Chapeleau for spending days and weeks before and during the Formation Session, getting all the documents translated from one language to another.
- Thanks to our Chaplain Father Jaya Raju for presiding over the Eucharistic celebrations in English, and to Brother Faustino Besa Gil, Provincial of Spain, who presided over the Eucharistic celebrations in French.
- The participants of the Formation Session are certainly indebted to Brothers Georges Le Vern, Dionigi Taffarello and Jean-Paul Mbengue, for the numerous trips they made and will have to make to the airports to welcome you and to see you off. We all need to continue raising our hearts in thanksgiving for miraculously protecting the life of Brother Georges, in spite of a serious car accident!
- My renewed thanks to Brother Michael Mathew, our General Bursar cum Local Bursar cum our indispensable technician, who did a lot of multi-tasking, taking care of practically all the needs of the participants, and most importantly ensuring good and delicious food and the impeccable functioning of the sound system and the video projection.
- Similarly, we owe a special thanks to Brother Jean-Marie Thior, our Secretary General-cum-Local Superior, who was playing an important role behind the curtain, and especially for organising the Chapter Hall and all the files in advance, with the help of our Provincial Bursars under training, Bros. Léon Tendeng, Montrelor Jeanty, Justin Tanganga and Alfonse Haja, evidently with the approval and moral support of their master, Brother André Roberge.
- Thanks to Brothers Marcel Chapeleau, Bernard Guésdon and Paul Texier who did lots of home works to meet the needs of the participants of the Formation Session, getting ready with all the rooms and the whole campus for this important, and more especially for taking care of the food and snacks departments, which also plays a very important role for programs of this nature.
- We can never thank enough our dear Sisters of St. Joseph who were silently taking care of our different needs during the liturgical services, in the refectory and more especially in the laundry, in spite of being handicapped by one hand less!
- A special word of thanks also goes to Mr. Saviolo and his team for *Refectio Catering* for their tasty preparations and the timely services.
- Our sincere appreciation also goes to our Lay Collaborators, Mr. Berhanu, Mrs. Stephania and Mrs. Jessica, who have been working for days, before and during the sessions, to ensure that everything was in place.

Today's Thanksgiving Mass has a special flavor because it is not just a ceremony of sending forth on mission the Provincial Superiors who have terminated their Formation Session, but it is also a joint Jubilee Celebration of 7 of our dear Brothers. We have every reason to raise our hearts in thanksgiving for the gift of our Jubilarians to our Congregation and for their faith

witness to the Montfortian charism in the different parts of the world, for the past several decades. As our dear Jubilarians, Brothers Dionisio Santoro, Paul Texier, Georges Le Vern, Claude Marsaud, Gaetano Viccione, Irudayam and Pratap Reddy go down the memory lane, I am sure that they will be able to sing with the Psalmist: *“What marvels the Lord marked for us: indeed we are glad”*. Since I had the joyous privilege of interacting with each of the Jubilarians for several years, I have no hesitation in saying that each of them fulfills the 3 essential qualities of being a consecrated person, namely **credibility or integrity, commitment to their duties and love for the Congregation** that I referred to during the Formation Session. Time does not permit me to describe their qualities here today, and therefore, in the customary style, on behalf of all of us present here I say, *“Hearty congratulations! Happy Jubilee!! Ad multos Annos”*. Dear Brothers, we are certainly proud of your contributions to the Congregation in varied ways and we assure you of our continued prayers for your good health and happiness, peace and contentment in your life and mission.

The presence of the Montfort Missionaries and the Daughters of Wisdom today, makes our celebrations a true ‘fiesta’. Thank you, Fr. Jean-Charles Wismick, for presiding over today’s Thanksgiving Mass, and for the animated and thought provoking message. We also appreciate the presence of Fathers Marco Pasinato, Arnol Suhardi and Felix Mabvutu Phiri from the Montfort Missionaries, and Fathers Jaya Raju, Jinson and Antoine from our Casa , who have taken time off to concelebrate the Mass with Fr. Wismick, the Vicar General of the Montfort Missionaries. I am fully aware that Sister Rani Kurian, the Superior General, and Sister Marie-Reine, the General Councillor of the Daughters of Wisdom, had to make a big sacrifice, keeping side some important celebrations in St. Laurent-sur-Sèvre, in order to honor us with their gracious presence. Thank you Sr. Rani, also for your enlightening sharing about the Orientations of your General Chapter with our Provincial Superiors. We certainly appreciate your expression of solidarity with the whole Montfortian Family, as always. The presence of Brother Marcel Ulenaers, the Sector Superior of Belgium, Brothers Franco and Claude Passebon from Italy, and Mrs. Maddalena and family, who have been an integral part of the Casa Generalizia for several years, adds joy and color to the celebrations today.

Today’s celebration is truly a con-celebration, in every sense of the word! Immediately after the conclusion of the Holy Eucharist we shall go down for a group photo first, followed by the official inauguration of the modified and renovated new Dining Hall and kitchen, by Brother René Delorme, our Former Superior General. On behalf of the whole Community of the Casa Generalizia, I salute Madam Rossetti Barbara, the Architect, and her team of contractors and workers, who have done an excellent job of high quality, pleasing to the eyes of all who walk into this new facility. We appreciate your whole hearted commitment in carrying out this important task. I also take this opportunity to a special word of thanks to Brothers André Roberge, Dionigi Taffarello and Michael Mathew, who have been following the works with great interest and unparalleled dedication. If this mega project has become a reality, it is thanks to the generous gesture of several Provinces. I wish to place on record my sincere appreciation to each one of them for your substantial contributions.

Dear Brother Provincial Superiors, with this Thanksgiving Eucharist you are being sent forth, to “go and bear abundant fruits”. As I mentioned during the session on the Animation of the Provinces, a Provincial Superior need not have high profile qualities and qualifications of a business executive, but the spiritual quality of credibility, dedication to duty, love of the Congregation, and a spirit of prayer, in order to be an effective leader. As our 31st General Chapter reminded us repeatedly, our primary call to a life of credibility, integrity and authenticity is to be rooted in Jesus Christ. Please keep in mind the clarion call given to each one of us consecrated persons by Prophet Micah, *“Love tenderly, act justly and walk humbly with your God”*.

As you go back to our Provinces, commit yourselves to be men of integrity, putting into practice the principles of good governance in our role as animators and administrations, practising transparency and accountability in all aspects of our life and mission, leading by example. Finally let me end with the words of St. Paul, *“Brothers, I urge you to lead a life worthy of the vocation to which you were called. With humility and gentleness, and with patience, support each other with love. Take every care to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together”*. (Eph. 4: 1-3).

Please greet all the Brothers of your Provinces. May Our Blessed Mother, St. Louis Marie de Montfort and Blessed Marie Louise of Jesus accompany you in discharging your leadership roles! We, the members of the Central Administration, renew our fraternal support in making your difficult and challenging task well accomplished. Let me end repeating the words of Pope Francis to the newly consecrated Bishops last September, *“Our mission is to be for the Church and for the world the ‘sacraments’ of God’s closeness to God, to God’s people, closeness to the Good Samaritan, closeness to the poor and becoming Apostles of listening”*!

Before I conclude, let me place on record my sincere appreciation to the Sisters of St. Joseph for the tasteful decoration of the Chapel, and to Brothers André Roberge, Ronald Brissette and Dionigi Tafferello, who with their choir made the Thanksgiving Mass lively. My sincere thanks also go to Brother Jean-Paul Mbengue who was the Master of Ceremonies for the Concluding Celebrations today.

Thank you and God bless.

Br. John Kallarackal
Superior General