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JUBILEE OF HOPE



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JUBILEE OF HOPE

Sr. Lourdes Alonso Vicente, DW
General Councillor

As we publish this new issue of the International Wisdom Bulletin, dedicated to the inauguration in our Entities of the Jubilee of Hope called for by Pope Francis, we are moving along the Lenten journey towards the celebration of the mystery of Easter, the mystery that is the foundation of Christian hope. What a wonderful coincidence the liturgical calendar offers us!

The Easter Sequence, which we will read in our churches during the Eucharist on Easter Sunday, tells us in poetic words of the struggle at the heart of the Paschal Mystery:

***Death with life contended:
combat strangely ended!
Life's own Champion, slain,
yet lives to reign.***

And a little further on, it puts a very beautiful dialogue into the mouth of

Mary Magdalene. It culminates in a magnificent profession of faith:

***Christ, my hope, has risen:
He goes before you into Galilee***

Yes, before the extraordinary joy of Easter breaks out, there is indeed the struggle between life, Christ, and death, the evil that is in us and around us. Mary Magdalene, sad and in mourning after the violent death of Jesus, shows us how her great love for him opens a path of hope and acceptance of the resurrection. Her great love for Jesus leads her to the tomb to pay homage to him. There she is the first to receive the good news of the Resurrection and becomes an apostle of the apostles. The hymn she sang recalled the miracles she had witnessed and expressed her great joy: her love and hope were revived.

The celebration of the Jubilee of Hope invites us, in our own concrete circumstances and those of the world today, to turn our eyes to the One who is our love and our hope, the Risen One.



This Jubilee year invites us to renew our faith in the triumph of life, despite all that surrounds us which leads us to despair.

Several articles in this newsletter report on celebrations to mark the beginning of the Jubilee of Hope and the Day of Consecrated Life in Madagascar, the United States, DR Congo, Italia and Colombia. An article written by a student in her final year at the Institution du Sacré-Cœur tells us about the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Congregation in Haiti and the daily witness of our Sisters, who for her are "witnesses of hope and models of resilience". Finally, the Community of Pontchâteau, in France, shares with us the many pastoral initiatives that have taken place since the beginning of the Jubilee Year in this important place of pilgrimage of the Montfortian Family.

We are delighted with these articles, which tell us about the highlights of our life with God's people. They are opportunities to reflect and celebrate what the true life given by the Risen Lord is doing among us today.

The love of the Risen Lord gives us strength amid our struggles. Even if we sometimes feel the weight of our crosses, we can rejoice because we are renewed by a love that transforms our lives. In this way, Mary Magdalene's certainty becomes ours: **Christ, my hope, is risen!**

The sequence of Easter Sunday then invites us to go to Galilee, our own Galilee. There, in the various circumstances of our daily lives, the Lord is waiting for us to reveal his glory and to announce his miracles to our brothers and sisters. This is what tell us the articles by Sister Irma Torneatto on her Jubilee experience in the Roman prison of Rebibbia and by Sister Pradeline Cherrelus at the Montfort Institute in Port-au-Prince for hearing-impaired children tell us.

In this bulletin we will also find an account of the vocation of Catherine Brunet, a woman of hope and a beautiful figure from the early days of the Congregation. This is the first of a series of articles which, as announced in the last issue of the Bulletin, will be published in this jubilee year of her death to help us to know better the first companion of Marie-Louise de Jésus.

With Marie-Madeleine, Catherine Brunet and all the Women of Hope who have shared their experiences for this issue of the Bulletin and whom we thank, let us welcome the prayer that concludes the Easter Sequence:

***That Christ is truly risen
from the dead we know.
Victorious King,
Thy mercy show!***

Today this prayer can also be ours: looking at the risen Jesus, we can entrust all our difficulties to him,

certain that he will not abandon us; on the contrary, he has conquered death to live with us and to commit himself with us, for life, in our daily struggles. Yes, the Eternal Wisdom, Incarnate and Glorified, loves us and intercedes for us.

Happy Jubilee Year to everyone!

Happy Easter!



SOLIDITY OF HOPE

Hymn 7 of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort

1. *The virtue of Hope I am,
I make you expect from the Lord
Grace and its reward
Through the merits of the Savior.*
2. *I am that anchor firm and stable
That steadies instability,
That unshakable pillar
That supports all holiness.*
3. *I draw all my riches
From a God so full with truth,
Faithful to all his promises
Both now and in eternity.*
4. *Here is why I am so mighty:
God wills that man hope in him,
He warns, he repeats, he requires:
O mortal, in me place your reliance.*
5. *I love you as my handiwork,
I am your God, I am your King;
Hope in me. This is the homage
You should render to me alone.*
6. *I do not want you to perish,
I am your friend, I am all good,
I want you to change heart
And beseech for forgiveness.*
7. *O Christian, God himself is your father,
Hope in his charity.
A great fool is he who despairs
Of his father's kindness.*

CELEBRATION OF THE JUBILEE 2025 IN THE DR OF CONGO

Sr. Jacqueline NABUNZA and Sr. Pierrette BWAMBA, DRC

We visited communities within the Delegation to understand how the dioceses and the Daughters of Wisdom in the DRC are experiencing the **Jubilee Year of 2025**. In the three dioceses where we are present, the Jubilee Year was locally marked by the opening of Cathedral doors, in connection with the opening of **the "Holy Door"** at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, inaugurated by Pope Francis on December 24, 2024. The faithful had the opportunity to cross their church's "Holy Door" in faith.

In the Archdiocese of Kisangani, Archbishop Marcel UTEMBI TAPA officially opened the Jubilee Year on **December 29, 2024**, in the presence of a large number of faithful. A pilgrimage preceded this event,

during which believers passed through the "Holy Door" of the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary. During this ceremony,



Pope Francis' message for the Jubilee Year 2025 was read aloud. Archbishop Marcel declared the Jubilee Year open in Kisangani under the sign of hope.

Several activities have been planned for this Jubilee Year, including celebrations such as that on February 2nd. This occasion was a beautiful opportunity to give thanks to God for the gift of our consecrated life within the Church. We, Daughters of Wisdom, renewed our vows in union



with all our sisters around the world.

The community of Daughters of Wisdom in Lokutu marked this festive day by **reviving the spirit of Father de Montfort and Mother Marie-Louise of Jesus**. They shared meals with some poor individuals from the Marie-Louise Health Center. On this same occasion, a vocation group accompanied by a Daughter of Wisdom was presented at the parish church.

It is important to highlight the challenging context of war in our country, which presents us with a cross to bear during this year. **May Wisdom help us live courageously** each day of this Jubilee Year 2025 as pilgrims of hope.



JUBILEE OF HOPE WITH HEARING-IMPAIRED CHILDREN

Sr. Pradeline Cherrelus, Haïti

On February 14, 2025, the Montfort Institute had the honor of participating in a memorable day marking the 19th anniversary of the General Inspectorate of Finance (IGF) at the Karibe Hotel. This event, part of the celebrations leading up to IGF's 20th anniversary, was much more than a mere commemoration.

It became **a true breath of hope** for students, especially for our deaf children who had the opportunity to engage in crucial discussions about auditing and combating corruption.

The meeting, led by experts from various oversight institutions, allowed participants to better understand the challenges of public administration. Among the attendees was **a delegation of four hearing-impaired students** - Acristo Fade Sonise, Ferdinand Georges Youri, Bernard Shilove, Damour Guervelie—accompanied by Sister Pradeline Cherrélus, DW, and Milord Pluviose. Their presence illuminated the day. Emotions ran high when IGF's director general warmly acknowledged these young people, reciprocating their enthusiasm with

Jubilee and celebrations

special attention. **Thanks to interpreters, the students actively participated** by asking questions and showing interest in the topics discussed.

The breaks were filled with moments of joy and sharing. On Valentine's Day,



a touching gesture occurred when boys were invited to offer flowers to the women present. Our only deaf boy, Youri Georges, presented a flower to the lady inspector—a symbol of affection and respect.

Before leaving, the hearing-impaired children invited the inspector to take souvenir photos, **capturing the spirit of friendship and sharing** that had prevailed throughout the day.

The following day, February 15, 2025, a day of recollection was organized by Rev. Father Gilot Miracle Idalgo at Notre Dame du Rosaire School in Pétion-Ville to prepare for World Missionary Childhood Day on February 23. Under the theme

“Become a sign of hope for others” (Tounen yon siy ki pote lespwa pou lòt yo), this gathering brought together approximately **50 participants**, including Sister Pradeline Cherrélus, DW, and Sister Maitide Mérisier, DW.

Rev. Father Marvens Émile delivered profound reflections on hope as depicted in both the Old and New Testaments and emphasized the importance of **being a model of hope for children**. Discussions focused on how to cultivate hope in Haiti's challenging context while highlighting the essential role of mentors in children's lives.

The hearing-impaired children also participated in this initiative, bringing their unique light to the event. After Mass on February 26 at St. Pierre Parish in Pétion-Ville—celebrated by children from various delegations—they amazed the audience during a cultural activity with a dance and musical interpretation titled **“Mary Witness of Hope.”** Their performance deeply moved all attendees.

The day concluded with a fraternal agape where participants shared moments of joy and camaraderie. The children left with smiles on their faces, embodying the joy and hope so needed in Haiti's current situation. These two days were far more than educational events; they were

opportunities for exchange and strengthening bonds. They reminded everyone of the importance of being a sign of hope for others—especially for children who represent our society's future. By cultivating hope together, **we can build a better future for Haiti**—one where every child, whether deaf or hearing, can dream and achieve their aspirations.



150 YEARS OF THE DAUGHTERS OF WISDOM IN HAITI

Christ Anchel Beaucéjour
Student in Terminale Class
Institution Of Sacred Heart
Haïti

On November 13, 2025, the Daughters of Wisdom will celebrate **150 years of presence in Haiti**.



Upon **their arrival in Port-de-Paix in 1875**, they immediately established a school to educate young girls. Their mission to empower Haitian girls has significantly expanded over time.

Today, they are active in at least **four departments**, working in education, healthcare, women's empowerment, and pastoral ministry.

Despite Haiti's ongoing socio-political challenges, **they have consistently dedicated themselves to serving the Haitian population** through dispensaries and numerous schools in both urban and rural areas—especially schools for children who are deaf or visually impaired.

This jubilee year coincides remarkably with the Holy Year of the Church under the theme **"Peregrinantes in Spem"** ("**Pilgrims in Hope**"), which calls us to embrace hope—a word that must resonate strongly within us. In a

world increasingly disoriented by poverty, inequality, wars, human rights violations, and a planet facing dire consequences from climate change, this jubilee year urges us not to remain passive but to act and contribute to the progress of the world while seeking God's presence in all our actions.

JUBILEE OF CONSECRATED LIFE: PILGRIMS OF HOPE AND WITNESSES OF LOVE

Sr. Cathy Sheehan & Sr. Evelyn Eckhardt, USA

*"Jesus had to become like his brothers
[and sisters] in every way ..."*

Hebrews 2:17

On the Day of Consecrated Life, the Sisters in the area gathered with the retirement community at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Convent **to celebrate the 70th Jubilee of Sr. Grace Malonzo and Sr. Ann Gray.**

We began the Liturgy by immersing ourselves in the world beyond the quiet town of Sound Beach, New York, on the north shore of Long Island. In the call to worship, we centered our attention on the Montfortian Family in the Democratic Republic of Congo and all the places where violence and struggle are part of everyday life.

The reading from the letter to the Hebrews reminded us that Jesus became like us in every way – experiencing the joys and the sufferings of his brothers and sisters.

As we rejoiced in honoring the lives of our Jubilarians, we did not forget



For us young people, the Daughters of Wisdom in Haiti are **witnesses of hope and models of resilience.** Through their philosophy and spirituality, they fulfill their noble mission. Like Mary, they humble themselves not to be served but to serve. May God, in His love—He who is the Source of life and eternal Wisdom—continue to instill in their hearts the hope that never disappoints.



all those who Sr. Grace and Sr. Ann continue to advocate for, people who are marginalized, those seeking political asylum and the imprisoned.

In the final hymn, we expressed our power to live as **“Pilgrims of Hope”** because of the enduring presence of Jesus – Incarnate Wisdom – with us.

*“Though the mountains may fall
and the hills turn to dust
yet the love of the Lord will stand,
as a shelter for all
who will call on his name,
Sing the praise and the glory of God.”*

Dan Shutte

CELEBRATION OF CONSECRATED LIFE IN MADAGASCAR

Sr. Annick Raondry et Sr. Marie Rose Rasoavololona, Madagascar

This year, the celebration of Consecrated Life was a significant moment of prayer for vocations and an opportunity to spiritually enter into the atmosphere of the 2025 Jubilee. The event brought together **1,050 religious** men and women on February 1 for a **day of gathering and prayer**, particularly for the religious communities in Madagascar's capital.

The festivities began with the solemn celebration of Lauds in the grand amphitheater of the Higher Institute of Social Work, run by the Daughters of the Heart of Mary in Mandrimena. The ceremony was presided over by Monsignor Tomasz Grysa, Apostolic Nuncio, assisted by Monsignor Jean de Dieu Raelison, Archbishop of Antananarivo, the two Vicar Generals, and the chaplain for religious in the Diocese of Antananarivo.



This time of prayer allowed participants **to reflect in communion with consecrated persons worldwide** and to ask for the grace to be bearers of hope and builders of peace.

During his address, the Apostolic Nuncio emphasized the importance of spiritual vigilance, drawing inspiration from Simeon and Anna, who recognized Christ in the Child presented at the Temple. He warned against spiritual complacency and forgetting God amidst frenetic activity, urging consecrated individuals to remain vigilant in prayer and open to the needs of today's world. **"Waiting for God is essential on our journey of faith. Each day, the Lord visits us, speaks to us, and reveals Himself in unexpected ways. At the end of our lives and time itself, He will come,"** he declared passionately.

This day of celebration invited everyone to personal introspection: Does my presence bring peace and joy to those around me in daily life?

Celebration with the Daughters of Wisdom

At the conclusion of this day with consecrated persons, during Vespers, the Daughters of Wisdom from two communities in Antsakaviro—Notre-Dame de la Joie and Marie de Nazareth—renewed their vows together during a Vespers celebration. This time of prayer, held in the chapel of the provincial house, was a moment of profound reflection and renewed commitment for each member.



The sisters in Antsakaviro communities

May this celebration be a time for all of us to express gratitude toward our beloved Founders, a moment for



prayer and reaffirmed dedication so that our consecrated life may continue to bear fruit and serve as a sign of hope in today's world.

Embarking Together on the Same Journey.

**LONG LIVE WISDOM !
LONG LIVE THE CONGREGATION !**



XXIX WORLD DAY OF CONSECRATED LIFE IN TURIN

Paola Foglino, Assistant Secretary

A week after February 2—the World Day of Consecrated Life instituted on the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple—the Cathedral of Turin was packed to capacity to welcome its Archbishop, now a Cardinal, for a celebration honoring the gift of vocation and commemorating those who have reached significant milestones in their years of fidelity to the Lord.

For the Daughters of Wisdom in Turin, it was a particularly joyful occasion: Mother Provincial, Sister Natalia del Redentore, was among the jubilarians this year, **celebrating her**

60th anniversary of religious profession.



Sister Natalia del Redentore

At the start of the celebration, a beautiful and vibrant procession of concelebrants and jubilarians made its way to the altar. Among them was Sister Natalia, slightly emotional from the visibility but **happy to be so close to her shepherd.**

The celebration had been postponed by a week because the Archbishop, already occupied on February 2, had requested to move the date rather than delegate the event. At the conclusion of the celebration, he explained his decision: **"It is important to me,"** he said. **"I did this because I want us to never take for granted that there are men and women who dedicate their lives to the Gospel. I hope we can learn to see one another from this perspective."**

Sometimes, in our families and congregations, there are tensions and

fatigue—it's normal—but everything changes if we look at our sisters or brothers knowing that, as much as they are able, they are offering their lives to the Lord. And this is not something we should ever take for granted, even in our time. We are often inclined to focus on our losses and fail to appreciate what is right here before our eyes: lives offered to the Lord."

At the end of the celebration, all jubilarians had the opportunity to personally greet the Archbishop, thank him, and receive from his hands a young plant—a **symbol of life that is generative because it is united with God.**

Sister Natalia joyfully greeted him and invited him to visit the sisters at the Castiglione community. This personal interaction crowned an already beautiful day.



JUBILEE OF HOPE AT THE ROMAN PRISON OF REBIBBIA

Sister Irma Toneatto, Roma

"Do not lose hope. This is the message I want to give you."

Pope Francis

The Jubilee at Rebibbia prison represents the experience of a pilgrimage that began during catechesis meetings held in the penitentiary's infirmary—a place where our friends live doubly confined: for the crimes they committed and for being ill, requiring stricter confinement due to medical care needs. Yet, they also need human words that heal.

When the news arrived, that Pope Francis would open the second Holy Door in the "Our Father" church—the penitentiary's church—the faces of our friends turned red with astonishment. They discovered that the Pope was giving them precedence over Rome's three great basilicas: **"The last shall be first"**—this Gospel



phrase was being fulfilled for them.

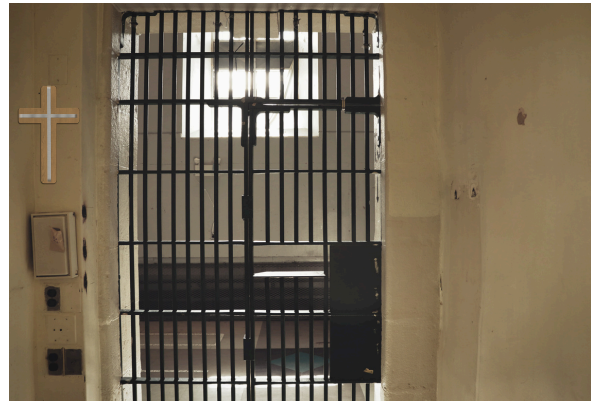
Questions and expectations arose: What does Jubilee mean? What is a Holy Door? And: Will the Pope obtain a pardon or an amnesty for us? During our meetings, we spoke about Jesus, sin and grace, freedom, salvation, and redemption.

Stories of wounded humanity emerged—dark and painful experiences, good and evil so intertwined in their lives that it is difficult to discern their respective roots and untangle this web: **the harm done, the good left undone, and the repercussions on their families and those they hurt or disappointed.**

On December 17th, in preparation for the Jubilee, we celebrated an early Christmas Mass. On this occasion, five or six inmates from each unit were authorized to attend. Others, luckier still, were selected to participate in the December 26th Mass with the Pope.

For some of them who serve as sacristans, this Mass was also an

official rehearsal for the gestures they would repeat as altar servers during the Mass celebrated by Pope Francis on the day after Christmas. Others formed a small choir that would sing during the Holy Door opening celebration.



Silently, the church filled up: inmates, prison officers, chaplains, five religious sisters, and various staff members. The Eucharist was presided over by Monsignor Benoni Ambarus, director of Caritas Rome, affectionately known as Father Ben.

The day's liturgy included Matthew's genealogy of Jesus—a passage that also echoed humanity's genealogy, ours included. During the celebration, **an intense silence prevailed**; a lived



faith emerged—rediscovered or simply desired—as well as thoughts and memories of lives marked by suffering. A painful prayer arose: "Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord; Lord, hear my voice..." It is difficult to express how this sacred space was filled with prayer and wounded humanity—confined yet on pilgrimage. Together we formed a community of poor souls praying and seeking hope.

On December 26th, 2024, the opening of the Holy Door was a sacred and indescribable moment. The inmates received a great gift: welcoming and being welcomed by Francis—the Pope whose presence transformed the prison church into a cathedral and its door into a "Holy Door."

After the celebration ended, **Pope Francis wanted to personally greet everyone present—the authorities, prison staff—but above all those experiencing confinement.** Each person passed before Pope Francis; some shook his hand quickly and moved on; others paused to whisper something in his ear or embrace him before being escorted back to their cells by prison officers.

"Hope never disappoints—never! Sometimes the rope hurts our hands... But holding onto that rope while looking toward the shore—the anchor moves us forward. There is always something good; there is always

something that helps us move forward."
(Homily by Pope Francis)

Francis' words remained etched in their hearts—unforgettable caresses that comforted them and brought a ray of light behind bars where holding onto hope's rope and anchor is so desperately needed.

I witnessed it all.



JUBILEE OF HOPE AT THE CALVARY SHRINE IN PONTCHATEAU

Srs. Anne Marie, Dominique, Chantal, Christine et Virginie

The Shrine of Calvary in Pontchâteau, in the Loire-Atlantique region of France, is a **major Montfort pilgrimage site founded in 1709 by Saint Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort.** In 2024, at the General Chapter, the Daughters of Wisdom decided to support the project of the **"Radiating Pole"** for the Shrine.

Jubilee and celebrations

This place, a powerful symbol of faith and hope accessible to all, was chosen by the Bishop of Nantes, Monsignor Percerou, as one of the places to live the Jubilee of 2025, especially for those who cannot travel to Rome.

Supported by the entire Montfortian Family (Fathers, Brothers, Sisters) and numerous volunteers, the Welcome Team / Spiritual Centre at the Shrine offers **a monthly Jubilee themed day throughout the year**. Pilgrims can come alone, as a family, in groups, in a parish, etc. Throughout the day, pilgrims are invited to take part in various activities: celebrations, times of prayer, reflection, teaching, adoration, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Eucharist, and to have a spiritual experience by choosing one of the 6 proposed itineraries, including those of Louis Marie and Marie Louise.



The monthly Jubilee Days are an opportunity for Christians to come together around the same theme and to encounter the Lord, who is full of mercy and invites people to conversion

and happiness. Each month they offer an opportunity to explore Christian hope through a variety of themes: Biblical Jubilee (The Way of God's Tenderness), Jubilee of Consecrated and Religious Life, Jubilee of the Way of the Cross, Jubilee of the Way of Montfort and Marie-Louise, Jubilee of the Rosary and Families, Jubilee of Music (The Canticles of Montfort), Jubilee of Solidarity, Jubilee of Laudato Si, Jubilee of Young People, Jubilee of the Way of Consolation, Jubilee of Families. More than 150 people participated in the event on consecrated life on 1 February.



Each day begins with a celebration using **the gesture of water to remember our baptism** and ends with a closing celebration with the presentation of **a Jubilee 2025 candle**, an invitation to carry the light of Christ.

Following the example of their Founders, Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort and Blessed Marie-Louise Trichet, who invited everyone to become a "pilgrim of hope", the Daughters of Wisdom of the Community of Pontchâteau are

actively participating in these Jubilee Days by designing the programme, welcoming pilgrims, accompanying them and leading the celebrations.



Hope." In his address, he invited attendees to live this Holy and Jubilee Year with the joy inherent to consecrated persons in the various environments and contexts where they are present. He emphasized the importance of not forgetting the option for and cries of the poor, caring for creation and being its guardians, and strengthening the spirit of fraternity and solidarity. He encouraged living with joy, faith, and charity while embracing the virtues of "believing, hoping, and loving." Quoting Bula *Spes non Confundit* No. 3, he urged everyone to rekindle hope in personal and communal life.

CELEBRATION OF THE DAY OF CONSECRATED LIFE IN BOGOTA

Srs. Maribel Ladino, Nubia Duque, Derly Villanueva, Hilda Velásquez

On Saturday, February 1, as part of the celebration of the Day of Consecrated Life and the Jubilee Year of Consecrated Life at the College of Our Lady of the Pillar, Father Hermann Rodríguez, SJ, President of the Conference of Religious of Colombia (CRC), delivered a conference on the theme: "Consecrated Life as a Prophecy of



Following Father Hermann Rodríguez's intervention, the Eucharistic Celebration began. It was presided over by Cardinal Luis José Rueda Aparicio and concelebrated by two auxiliary bishops—Monsignor Daniel Delgado and Monsignor Edwin Vanegas—as well as twenty priests.

During his homily, Cardinal Luis José Rueda Aparicio highlighted the significance of this jubilee celebration. He called on everyone to be signs of

hope and joy in service, resisting pessimism and sadness. He also stressed that the foundation of synodality is the Trinity.

The synodal atmosphere encourages looking at the future with fresh eyes and advancing in fraternal relationships by opening doors and fostering connection. The Cardinal emphasized that listening and dialogue are essential ways of being Church. He urged participants to avoid polarization—described as toxic and repugnant—which has caused divisions even within families. At the end of the Eucharist, three religious individuals—Colombian and foreign—shared testimonies about their commitment and mission in marginalized neighborhoods with vulnerable populations. Their stories affirmed that consecrated life continues to be a prophetic sign of hope in today's world.

The event concluded with a gesture from the Food Bank, which provided copies of the encyclical *Dilexisti Nos* along with a delightful snack. A musical group enlivened the gathering, inviting participants to enjoy themselves through listening or dancing.

This pleasant, relaxing, and productive day ended with gratitude to God for granting us this opportunity to participate. A significant representation from the Daughters of Wisdom was present.

CATHERINE BRUNET, THE SECOND DAUGHTER OF WISDOM (1665–1725)

Pauline Carminati - Archivist

PART 1: VOCATION

In the shadow of the founders, Catherine Brunet—Sister of the Conception—was nonetheless a significant figure in the early history of the Montfortian movement. On the occasion of the tricentennial of her death, the Archives Service of the Congregation invites us to rediscover her life, as recounted here by a Daughter of Wisdom based on Sister Stéphanie du Sacré-Cœur's book "Folie ou Sagesse?" ("Madness or Wisdom?"). "A poor Babylon!" That is how Father de Montfort described the lamentable state of Poitiers General Hospital when he arrived there in 1701.

He attempted reforms by addressing the root causes of abuses and disorder. The young reformer quickly became popular among his poor flock. The bishop supported him and approved his regulations for governing the institution. The hospital board welcomed his initiatives, and the city took an interest in his efforts. Marthe de Berthé, the superior of the hospital, joyfully welcomed this zealous, energetic, and intelligent priest. Everything seemed to be going well;

however, things soon took a turn for the worse. The hospital's steward, governors, and superior began opposing the chaplain at every turn and criticized his conduct, which stirred up unrest among the poor. During this stormy period, Montfort temporarily left the battlefield to retreat with the Jesuits and prepare himself for new challenges.

Montfort returned to Poitiers Hospital in mid-October 1702 and requested to preach a retreat for both the poor and soldiers. In November 1702, he formed a small community of infirm individuals in a room named Wisdom.

This humble group—crippled but possessing exquisite souls—practiced part of The Rule of Wisdom. In Montfort's mind, this group was merely a preparatory association for what would later become the Daughters of Wisdom Institute.



L'ancien porche de l'Hôpital de Poitiers.

Montfort intended to include “young ladies from town” who were healthy and well-educated. His first choices

were two pious women of mature age who had recently retired to the hospital to replace two deceased directors. These newcomers had not yet made any definitive commitments; they were being tested and held a lower rank than other governors. Although they paid a modest pension, they were not allowed to dine with the officers. They came from respectable bourgeois families.

Who were these women? Marie and Catherine Brunet. They were either sisters or aunts of Montfort's disciple Jean-Laurent Brunet, whom Father de Montfort frequently visited. This explains the friendly rapport he shared with Marie and Catherine Brunet.

The sisters had lost their mother while still young. Marie, the elder sister, was a deeply pious and composed individual who worried about her younger sister's frivolity and tried to guide her toward devotion. She recommended Catherine to Father de Montfort.

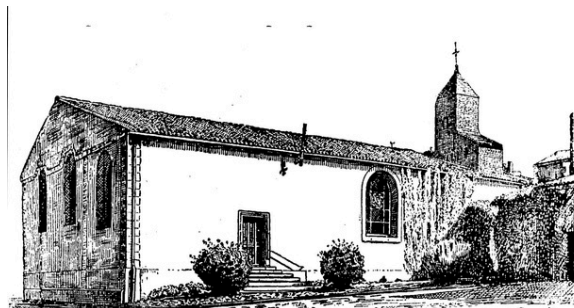
Catherine had an entirely different temperament: lively, energetic, action-oriented, with a heart of gold! Born in 1665, she was about 37 years old at this time. She enjoyed cheerful gatherings where people laughed, sang, and even danced to harpsichord music. She adored flowers, wore them on her bodice, and savored their fragrance—a vibrant personality with considerable wealth.

Montfort quickly recognized her potential and set out to guide her toward serious thoughts. At first, Catherine resisted when gently reproached by Montfort. She defended herself in her charmingly spontaneous way: she interrupted him with a cheerful verse! When Montfort gently corrected her again, Catherine laughed and said: "I don't pay attention to words; I only like the melody! Compose me a hymn to that same tune, and I'll give up my song!" The stern censor couldn't help but smile! He accepted her challenge and took her at her word. Resting his head in his hands for a moment to think quietly...soon some improvised stanzas echoed...and Catherine kept her promise.

At the Brunet household, Montfort occasionally visited and soon succeeded in "converting" Catherine - steering her pure heart toward Christian heights. But what a contrast between Montfort's approach with Marie-Louise Trichet versus Catherine! While he pushed Marie-Louise forward quickly despite her youth (18 years old), encouraging her to face daunting obstacles head-on, his guidance for Catherine—a mature woman—was gentler and more gradual.

When Marie and Catherine joined Poitiers Hospital as residents, Montfort knew they would be among his faithful followers. From then on,

Catherine embarked on a life of deep devotion and set sail toward spiritual greatness.



La chapelle de l'hôpital de Poitiers.

Montfort placed these recruits in his small community of infirm individuals led by a virtuous but blind woman as their superior. Catherine was tasked with guiding this blind leader around town or to church ceremonies—a role she accepted with good humor despite finding it odd that someone visually impaired was chosen as their leader. She remarked playfully:

-"Father, you've given us a blind superior?"

-"My daughter," replied Father de Montfort, "it is so you won't concern yourself with what kind of superior God has given you but obey out of love without regard for their talents or flaws."

This was indeed a meritorious novitiate. A year earlier, such a life would have daunted Catherine; now she embraced daily life alongside virtuous yet uneducated women with humility.

Months passed before Catherine could receive her religious habit due to rigorous testing of her vocation—a fidelity that earned her recognition as the second Daughter of Wisdom.

Shortly after their entry into this community in early January 1703 came another pivotal figure: Marie-Louise Trichet (Sister Trichet). Like them, she faced jealousy from others at the hospital but bore it with serene patience—a quality not yet fully developed in Catherine or Marie Brunet.

They carried out their duties with zeal and charity, but kept as far away as possible from the Bourceau ladies, who were not very fond of them. This attitude, for which they are criticised, is perhaps a kind of wisdom: the ebullient Catherine, who must be exasperated by so many things, is better able to avoid the sharp repartee that would inevitably come to the tip of her mischievous tongue!

By 1706 both sisters gained recognition for their dedication: Catherine became one of Poitiers Hospital's governors responsible for various wards (Wisdom Hall, Lower Hall, etc.), while Marie taught sewing skills.

In September 1713 during one final visit from Montfort himself before founding The Daughters Of Wisdom Institute, he confirmed Catherine's

calling—leading eventually toward full commitment aged 49 under “Catherine Of Conception” name Dec-1714.

And the rise of our heroes continued... By decision of 25 May 1708, Marie-Louise Trichet was appointed Gouvernante in charge of the Salle du Milieu in place of the deceased Catherine Bourceau, and by the same decision, Catherine Brunet was appointed assistant in charge of the Salle haute in place of Catherine-Thérèse Bourceau.

The title of Gouvernante entitled the sisters to certain privileges, and the two Brunet sisters were summoned to the meeting of the Bureau on 23 November 1708, where they were informed that they had been relieved of their support and admitted to the officers' table. As for Sister Trichet, who had worked at the hospital for more than five years, the same deliberation also admitted her to the same officers' table.

Sharp and intelligent enough to appreciate all the heroic aspects of Sister Trichet's behaviour, Catherine Brunet was struggling with a kind of fear against the secret voice that urged her to imitate her companion when, at the end of September 1713, the rapid passage to Poitiers of M. de Montfort, her former director, broke her hesitation. The holy man shed light on her heart and showed her that her vocation was certain...

Montfort listened to Marie-Louise's confidences: he saw that the nasty little tricks of her envious colleagues had not embittered her; that the discreet approval of the Bureau and the Bishop, the confidence shown in her, had not inflamed her heart. More modest than ever, she seemed to have forgotten her natural talents, without a shadow of that "slight as for me" from which worthy people seldom shrink... Montfort could judge: the soul that the Blessed Virgin had placed in his path in the early days of his ministry was ripe for the work whose realization he felt approaching... So, there was talk of the Institute of Wisdom! The moments of Providence were at hand, and it was time for Marie-Louise to have a companion: she chose Catherine Brunet.

Defeated, Catherine accepted without resistance the prospect of sharing the difficulties that awaited her young predecessor and of taking the ashén habit at the more than reasonable age of 49.

Catherine Brunet took the habit a year later, on 8 December 1714, hence the name Catherine de la Conception. Abbot Charles Dubois, a former collaborator of Montfort, was appointed by him to perform the ceremony in the Hospital Chapel.



COMMITMENTS IN THE CONGREGATION

First Profession

Haïti

Sr. Marie Alice MINGOT
Sr. Michelène SAINT-LOUIS

February 2, 2025



Perpetual Profession

Indonesia

Sr. Novriana Yudit LENAMA

March 25, 2025



IN MEMORIAM

"I know in whom I have put my hope..."

Filles de la Sagesse

Naissance Profession

Octobre 2024

08	Sr Marie-Madeleine Bofoe Bosongo.	KINSHASA - Marie Louise R.D. Congo	16-10-69	02-02-92
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Décembre 2024

02	Sr Marie-Thérèse Clais Marie-Gabriel de la Trinité	N.D. de l'Espérance St Laurent	15-01-27	02-02-48
10	Sr Jozilda Janssen Janssen Jozilda	Communauté de Vertefeuille Belgique	05-02-35	02-08-56
31	Sr Huguette Veillette, fdls Sr Stanislas du Sacré-Coeur	Maison Accueil-Sagesse Ottawa	26-02-34	02-08-56

Janvier 2025

05	Sr Agnes Marie of the Child Jesus Patricia Bracken	Maria Regina Residence Brentwood, NY	31-07-37	02-02-57
07	Sr Dominique Demontagne Dominique du Divin Cœur	PONTCHÂTEAU - EHPAD	12-08-39	02-08-59
12	Sr Benigna Maria Suzanna Lucia van der Poel	Wijchen - Hollande	11-08-24	02-08-46
14	Sr Jeanine Vanhooft Ancilla de Sainte Germaine	Vertefeuille Belgique	05-12-36	02-02-60

Février 2025

03	Sr Odile du Christ Odile Cabasse	Notre-Dame de la Sagesse St. Laurent	07-03-33	02-02-59
09	Sr Lucille Garand Florence de l'Immaculée	Maison Accueil-Sagesse Ottawa	27-02-32	02-08-54
10	Sr Hélène Tual Émile de Jésus-Hostie	Notre-Dame de la Sagesse St Laurent	08-02-29	02-08-52
21	Sr Célestine de la Croix Hendrika Maria Helena Verbeten	Wijchen - Rivo Torto Hollande	03-03-19	02-02-42
27	Sr Victor Marie Louise Dufour	Brentwood New York	23-01-32	02-02-52

Mars 2025

16	Sr Marie-Paule Chartrand Montfort de l'Assomption	Maison Accueil-Sagesse Ottawa	27-01-29	02-08-47
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IN MEMORIAM

"I know in whom I have put my hope..."

Oblates de la Sagesse

Janvier 2025

08	Sr Suzanne Audebert Marie-Aimée de la Sagesse	Oblate de la Sagesse - Larnay	14-08-27	27-06-56
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Compagnie de Marie

Février 2025

15	P. Alphonse Walder	Mysore Inde	64 ans	42 ans
20	P. Jean Dominique Robin	Cholet France	92 ans	72 ans

Mars 2025

06	P. Egidio Albertin	Bergamo Italie	83 ans	59 ans
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Frères de St-Gabriel

Janvier 2025

06	F. Jean-Etienne Sanquer	Nantes France	84 ans	64 ans
26	F. Marcel Bonhommeau	La Hillière France	94 ans	76 ans

Février 2025

14	F. M. A. Thomas	Guwahati Inde	86 ans	64 ans
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Mars 2025

15	F. Corentin Plantec	La Hillière France	87 ans	67 ans
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Dear Sisters,

After almost four years at your side as Communications Officer, it's time for me to say a fond and grateful farewell.

These years have been rich in meetings, exchanges and precious experiences. I've had the honour of contributing in my own way to the wonderful mission that drives you, and I have fond memories of your dedication, goodwill and spirit of service.

I wish you continued progress with the strength and generosity that characterize you so well.

With all my gratitude and friendship.

Xavier Le Roux