



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO PARTICIPANTS AT THE 32nd GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE
BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION OF SAINT GABRIEL
AND THE MEMBERS OF THE MONTFORT FAMILY**

Clementine Hall

Friday, 27 April 2018 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am pleased to welcome you on the occasion of the 32nd General Chapter of the Brothers of Saint Gabriel. I thank the Superior General for his kind words. I also greet the Montfort Missionaries and the Daughters of Wisdom, as well as the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Kottayam, with many good wishes for their anniversary.

This is an opportunity to remember, to offer thanks and to return to the foundations laid down more than 300 years ago by Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort — the anniversary of whose death you will celebrate tomorrow —, foundations to which Father Gabriel Deshayes gave new impetus. One of these cornerstones is the Word of God which must be constantly meditated upon, so that it may become incarnate in life and gradually model thoughts and gestures on those of Christ. The other is Wisdom, the love and constant search for which inspired Saint Louis Marie to write luminous pages. To obtain it, he advises us to “listen to God with humble submission; act in him and through him with persevering fidelity”; and lastly, to “acquire the light and unction you need to inspire others with that love for Wisdom which will lead them to eternal life” (*The Love of Eternal Wisdom*, ch. 2, n. 30). By putting this counsel into practice you will be able to discern the particular challenges that are always opportunities to “start afresh from Christ and from Montfort”.

The theme chosen: *Fraternal life and the community dimension of the Montfort mission*, seeks to situate your mission in our world marked by individualism and globalization, by consumerism, efficiency and appearance, in order to try to be present in it as souls “of fire”, inspired by the Spirit and living in Wisdom. According to Saint Louis Marie, this is the only treasure capable of “teaching

us how to be”. It is an appeal to each of you in your mission as educators. It rests on a certainty, that of the beauty of life, God’s freely given gift, and on a hope: that of the possibility that it may fully develop thanks to the growth of love, which unifies all the dimensions of the person. This synthesis is built up every day in prayer, in docility to the Holy Spirit, in fidelity to your Rule of life and in lived charity. The perfect example to imitate is the Virgin Mary: as your Constitutions emphasize, total consecration to Jesus through Mary is the fundamental path of the Marian life of the members of the Institute.

Moreover, as described in the Acts of the Apostles (2:42-47), fraternal life itself bears witness to this. It attracts and evangelizes every day, and it is contagious. Those who see how we live are sensitive to our way of being, of accepting the diversity of viewpoints, of facing conflicts and of resolving them with sensitivity, charity and humility (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 227; *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 89). In your communities or in apostolic working groups, fraternity should encourage everyone to be open to the Spirit and to forget themselves. Moving from a life in common to a fraternal life can make the daily journey easier and more joyful. Attention to the brother beside me, as well as dialogue, foster communion in diversity. In the current spiritual crisis which generates anguish and sadness due to the loss of the meaning of life, I invite you to form welcoming communities in which it is beautiful to live, manifesting particularly to young people the joy of following Christ and answering his call. May they feel listened to without prejudice, recognized and valued, so that they may offer enthusiastically the gifts that God has bestowed on them for the good of all!

“*Love with the heart and with the hands*” summarizes what you aspire to live and to pass on. Only the “civilization of love” can give a soul to our globalized world in the grip of constant change. Thanks to your charism lived with dedication and wisdom, you can be beacons, highlighting the evangelical character of the educational mission. The Gospel refers to life and action in all areas. By meditating on it in this perspective, it will permeate both the life of your communities and your collective mission as teachers. Let us learn from Jesus, Wisdom Incarnate, how to welcome the other and to forge bonds with him, especially if he is different, from another culture, from another generation, by going to the heart of his expectations and expressing our love with concrete gestures of compassion, of sharing, at the cost of taking risks, as I recalled in *Evangelii Gaudium* (88). Thus, the challenges of transmitting the faith and of living together can be creatively met through pedagogy, the educational and social project of the Institutes. Concern for the poor and the marginalized has always been at the centre of your mission. May you continue to help them to be protagonists of their future so that they may take their place in society.

While I thank you for the treasure of your vocation in the Church, I invite you to “put out into the deep” with confidence and with renewed missionary zeal. In this Easter Season, may the mystery of Christ’s death and Resurrection be at the heart of your faith and your consecration, to enlighten your journey in truth.

Entrusting the future of your mission to the maternal intercession of the Virgin Mary, Seat of Wisdom, I wholeheartedly bless you all, together with your co-workers. And I ask you not to forget to pray for me.

Thank you.