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Audience with the participants in the General Chapter of the Brothers of the Christian Instruction of Saint Gabriel and the Members of the Montfort Family

At midday today, in the Clementine Hall of the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the participants in the 32nd General Chapter of the Brothers of the Christian Instruction of Saint Gabriel and the members of the Montfort Family.

The following is the Pope's address to those present:

Address of the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am glad to welcome you on the occasion of the 32nd General Chapter of the Brothers of Christian Instruction of Saint Gabriel. I thank the superior general for his kind words. I also greet the Monfort 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 commemorate, to give thanks and to return to the foundation placed more than three hundred years or so ago by Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Monfort – the anniversary of whose death we remember tomorrow – a foundation to which Fr. Gabriele Deshayes has given new impetus. One of these foundations is the Word of God, to be meditated constantly, so that it may be incarnated in life and gradually models thoughts and gestures on those of Christ. The other is Wisdom, whose love and tireless searching inspired Saint Louis-Marie's luminous pages. To obtain it, he invites us to "listen to God with humble submission; to act in Him and by Him, with faithful perseverance; and finally, to acquire the light and anointment necessary to inspire the love of wisdom in others, to lead them to eternal life (*The Love of Eternal Wisdom*, no. 30). Putting such counsel into practice, you will be able to discern the particular challenges that are always opportunities for "starting out again together from Christ and from Monfort".

The theme chosen – *Fraternal life and the community dimension in the Montfort mission* – is intended to situate your mission in our world marked by individualism and globalization, consumerism, efficiency and appearance, to try to be present in it as “inflamed” souls, inspired by the Spirit and living in Wisdom. According to Saint Louis-Marie, this is the only wealth capable of “teaching us to be”. It is an appeal to each one of you and for your mission as educators. It rests on a certainty, that of the beauty of life, a freely-given gift of God, and on a hope: that of the possibility of its development to fullness 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 the charity you live. The perfect example to imitate is that of the Virgin Mary: as your Constitutions emphasize, total consecration to Jesus through May is the fundamental path of the Marian life of the members of the Institute.

Besides, fraternal life, as described in the Acts of the Apostles (2: 42-47), of itself bears witness. It attracts and evangelizes every day, and it is contagious. Those who see us live are sensitive to our way of being, of accepting the diversity of our points of view, of facing tensions and resolving them with delicacy, charity and humility (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 227; *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 89). In your communities or in apostolic work groups, fraternity must encourage each person to be available to the Spirit by forgetting himself. Moving from a communal life to a fraternal life can make the daily journey easier and more joyful. Attention to the brother who stands beside me, along with dialogue, fosters communion in diversity. In the current spiritual crisis that generates anguish and sadness through the loss of the meaning of life, I invite you to form welcoming communities, in which it is beautiful to live, expressing to young people in particular the joy of following Christ and responding to His call. That they feel heard without prejudice, recognized and valued, so that they can offer with their enthusiasm the gifts that God has bestowed upon them for the good of all!

“Love with the heart and the hands”, summarizes what you aspire to live and to transmit. 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. Reflecting on it from this perspective, it can permeate the life of your communities as well as your collective mission as educators. Let us learn from Jesus, incarnate Wisdom, how to welcome the other and form links with him, especially if he is different, from another culture, from another generation, going to the heart of his expectation and expressing our love with concrete gestures, of compassion, of sharing, at the cost of risking, as I recalled in *Evangelii Gaudium* (88). Thus, the challenges of transmitting the faith and living together can be faced with creativity through pedagogy, the educational and social project of the institutes. At the centre of your mission there has always been attention to the poor and the marginalized. Continue to help them be agents of their future so as to take their place in society.

As I thank you for the treasure of your vocation in the Church, I invite you to “set out to sea” with trust and with renewed missionary zeal. In this Easter time, may the mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ be at the heart of your faith and you consecration, to enlighten the path of truth.

Entrusting the future of your mission to the maternal intercession of the Virgin Mary, Seat of Wisdom, I bless you all from the heart, along with your collaborators. And I ask you not to forget to pray for me. Thank you.