

## **Saint-Montfort Parish in Port-de-Paix: a mission according to the heart of God**

“For I was hungry and you gave me food: I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger, and you welcomed me. Naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you visited me. I was in prison, and you came unto me” (Mt 25, 35-36) ``. These passages become, day after day, the practical key to our mission supported by the faithful of Saint Anthony



Parish.

This text is the expression of the relationship between the two parishes: St Montfort and St Anthony. This friendship has existed for over 20 years. St. Montfort Parish is located in a poor area of Port-de-Paix, an area that carries the parish’s name. When you say “St. Montfort,” you think of poor people, people in difficulty. When you say “St. Montfort,” you also see Providence at work.

### Students at St Montfort school

Saint-Montfort School is a school intended for poor children. During the first meeting between Saint-Montfort and Saint-Anthony, the construction of the school became the first concrete action carried out by the parishioners of Saint-Anthony, who helped us build the institution.

As you know, the political situation has a



harmful impact on the population. Their living conditions are very difficult, and many have fallen into extreme poverty. We are witnessing a rise in juvenile delinquency. This is why the presence of the parish is so important in the community. We try to do our best. We offer them an integral formation, both human and spiritual. At the parish, we have school and the dispensary.

Indeed, St. Anthony Parish, as our sister parish, is truly providential. God alone knows why He chose St. Anthony for St. Montfort. It is a grace and a surprise. The parishioners and benefactors of St. Anthony help St. Montfort in many ways. They are very generous. We remember the work they have already accomplished for the Church, and now we continue with maintenance. This relationship is a real blessing for St. Montfort.

We have a program for malnourished children, and many parents come with their little ones. “I was hungry and you gave me food.” Our sister parish is the Gospel in action. This support strengthens our pastoral mission. We take advantage of these moments to train people, including some who do not come to church. We serve everyone. We do not ask about their religion. All people are our neighbors.



“I was ill and you cared for me.” At the parish, we have a dispensary. The dispensary is very useful to the community. It serves a population of 16,739 inhabitants. Many people cannot afford private clinics, so they come to our dispensary, where they pay only \$0.77 US for a consultation. In private clinics, they would need \$19.37 US. At our dispensary, we also provide medicines at a low cost. In the area of health, this relationship is a great blessing for St. Montfort Parish. We also have another program at the dispensary: the Mobile Clinic. St. Anthony’s Parish is truly a blessing for St. Montfort.

### **Patients at Dispensary**



Our sister parish helps us a lot about the parish with their contribution. St Anthony's parish is very useful for our community. Our mission is to work together. We walk together. We build together the Kingdom of God.

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### **Mass at the prison**



“I was in prison, and you came unto me”. We always come to the prison to celebrate mass and for the Mobile Clinic also. When we came, the prisoners were very happy. At the prison, we can say the Gospel is in act. Sometimes, they forget them. It is our mission to join them, to talk to them. Because they are the sons of God.

In fact, the Montfort's faithful appreciate all the parishioners of St Anthony. When they look at the church, they think of all the benefactors who came to Port-de-Paix to repair the roof and the ceiling of the church. Thus, the relationship of both parishes is very beneficial. We continue to dare and risk for God, the Master of the mission.

Fr. Benedick Lazar, smm!