

# ECHOES OF THE General Council



Number 89 - May - June 2016

*The General Council held its ordinary session from May 17th till June 13th, 2016 at the Casa Generalizia in Rome.*

*The General Council also welcomed in Rome the provisional International Commission of the Mennaisian Family, which met on May 23rd and 24th.*

*During this session, as every year, Brother Superior General participated in the meeting organised by the Union of the Superiors General on the theme of "Consecrated Life and Prophecy". The interventions of this assembly are available, in all the languages, on the website " Vidimus " (<http://vd.pcn.net/en> )*

## Jubilee of Mercy

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At the end of this session of the General Council, Brother Superior General and his Assistants went together to the Basilica of Saint-Paul-outside the walls, in the spirit of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. Thus, they entrusted their mission to God's Mercy and also presented to him all the members of the Mennaisian Family : Brothers, Laypeople, and children.

## 1. Animation of the Congregation

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### 1.1 Visits to Provinces and Districts :

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During these last months, Brother Superior General and the Brother Assistants visited various sectors of the Congregation. Here are some highlights of these visits:

- **Congo RDC:** After the Conference of Africa, Brother Gildas Prigent visited this area, whose structure is growing in strength and in the number of works and communities. The arrival of young Brothers who will end their Scholasticate next July, is going to allow the District Saint-John-Paul II, to strengthen the communities and new schools.
- **Indonesia:** Brother Gildas Prigent went to the novitiate of Yogyakarta and was able to meet both novices (an Indonesian and a Filipino). The latter will make their first vows at the beginning of July. Then he went to Larantuka where the presence of 6 young people in "the pre-Postulate", the "Pusat" and the new school « SDK Mennais » bring vitality and visibility to the FIC presence.
- **Canada-USA:** Brother Gerard Byaruhanga visited a number of communities of this sector which is getting ready to celebrate next August, the birth of the new Northern American Province. The new Provincial team and the structures which are going to be organised, will allow the Mennaisian family (Laitly and Brothers) of this sector, to continue to increase in number and to bear fruits.
- **South America:** Brother Guillermo Dávila witnessed the good brotherly climate of Quinta Normal's new Novitiate, in Chile. Both Novices and their Formators live in a

community open to the local and ecclesial realities as well as in closeness with the Mennaisian Family of Santiago. Brother Guillermo pursued his visit of communities and the works in Argentina and in Uruguay: he witnessed the big participation of the Brothers and the Laity in the educational Centres.

- **Scholasticate of Abidjan:** After the Conference of Africa, Brother Guillermo went to Abidjan, and was able to discover the life of both communities of the Scholasticate. He particularly met the young Brothers from Haiti. It also allowed him to understand better the commitment of the Formators, within both communities and at the CELAF, as the present Director of the Scholasticate will transmit the relay to another confrere.
- **Polynesia:** Brother Superior General visited the communities of Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands, a sector where the Mennaisian educational works are in full swing. However, the decrease of the number of Brothers, calls for the reorganisation of communities. Some Polynesian young people "aspirants" pursue their discernment, and allow the Brothers and the Laity of the Mennaisian Family to keep faith in the future of the FIC presence in this part of the Congregation.

### **1.1 Provisional International Commission of the Mennaisian Family**

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Following the Assembly of last Summer in Ploërmel, the General Council had decided to summon a provisional commission at an international level, to think about the organisation, the animation and the formation of the Mennaisian Family in the whole Congregation.

Five laypersons from Canada, Haiti, Argentina, Spain and France held a meeting with the General Council on May 23rd and 24th, 2016.

On the first day, the reality of the Mennaisian Family of every sector was presented - the Brothers Assistants presenting that of sectors not represented in the provisional commission. So, each one was able to tell their dreams, questions and challenges which he carries in himself and those of the whole Mennaisian Family where they live.

The second day was dedicated to the dynamics to be set up, to make the feeling of the Mennaisian Family grow at the international level, and to give a new boost to the formation, animation and organisation of its members. In the next "Letter to the Mennaisian Family ", the Brother Superior General will announce to all the entire Mennaisian Family of the decisions which were taken during these two days.

### **1.3 Conference of Africa :**

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The General Council revisited the Conference of Africa of last March and dealt with the most appropriate ways to help and encourage the Major Superiors of the four sectors of Africa to take up the main challenges and to implement the orientations taken during this assembly. The Major Superiors have already received these tools prepared by the General Council.

The questions that were raised are about the community project, the life of prayer of the communities, the young Brothers going out of the Scholasticate before starting university studies, the community mission, the good management of the properties.

The General Conference which will be held next October, will offer the opportunity to organise a new meeting of the four Major Superiors.

## 1.4 Year Theme 2016-2017 :

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The last Echoes of the General Council of last February, made known, that the recent document on " **the identity and the mission of the religious Brother in the Church** " would be the support of the animation of the year to come, the slogan of which is " **You are all Brothers** " (Mt 23/8). The material for the animation is common to all the Brothers' Congregations and is from now on available on the site of the Congregation, as well as on the site "Vidimus " (Union of the Major Superiors – (<http://vd.pcn.net/it>)

## 1.5 Conference of the Major Superiors in Haiti :

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An important time of the session of the General Council was dedicated to the direct preparation of the future Conference of the Major Superiors which will take place in Haiti, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of October of this year.

It will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Major Superiors of the Congregation since the last General Chapter of 2012, and the last one before that of the 2018. Besides the **time of formation** of the Major Superiors, that always takes place in this kind of meeting, it will also be a moment of reviewing the decisions of the last Chapter, the actions undertaken, what has been done and the challenges of our Congregation and the Mennaisian Family.

The General Council wishes that this balance sheet may **be resolutely forward-looking**, and also wishes that the Major Superiors **look and move forward together on new paths for the vitality** of the Mennaisian Family of today and of tomorrow.

This Conference will allow the Major Superiors to **discover also the Province of Haiti**, its communities and its works, to be witnesses of the commitment of the Brothers and the Laity, especially after the drama of the last earthquake of 2010, the event which deeply affected this sector.

## 1.5 Bicentennial Celebrations of the Congregation:

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In the document published after the Conference of Africa, which all communities received, Brother Superior General announced the two major events (on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019, and in September, 2020) which will mark the celebrations of the bicentenary.

The General Council wished to begin the approach of this celebration from June, 2017. Thus an important time was dedicated during this session to revisit and specify the various ways of animation which belongs to its initiative: the logo, the slogan, the bicentenary hymn (that will be broadcast in December, 2016), the "itinerant book" of the bicentenary which will travel throughout the schools and communities on 4 continents, and which will collect the "new pages" of the mission of the Congregation.

Other projects will be examined with the Major Superiors during the next General Conference in Haiti.

## 2 Decisions of the Brother Superior General and his Council

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### 2.1 Appointments

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The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has appointed:

- **Saint-John-Baptist Province (France – England – Italy) :**

Brother **Thierry Beauplet**, is appointed Assistant Provincial of the Saint-John-Baptist Province, for a new term of 3 years.

Brother **Rémy Harel**, is appointed Assistant Provincial of the Saint-John-Baptist Province, for a new term of 3 years.

- **Other appointments :**

**Brother Daniel Briant**, Treasurer General of the Congregation, for a second mandate of 3 years.

Brother **Dino De Carolis**, Postulator of the Congregation for a mandate of 3 years. The General Council thanked Brother Gil for the last 7 years at the Casa and for the services provided to the Congregation as translator then as Postulator.

Brother Dino will assume his functions of Postulator in September next. His first mission will be to arouse a renewed devotion to our Founders, and most especially to our Father, Jean-Marie de la Mennais. Sharing with the General Council, Brother Dino was able to express a certain number of initiatives that he hopes to implement with the Brothers and Laity, as well as with the children and youth. We pray that his mission be blessed by the Lord, and we thank him for his availability.

Brother **Franklin Rukundo**, person in-charge of the Archives at the Casa Generalizia, for a mandate of 3 years. Brother Franklin will pursue at the same time theological studies with a specialization in spirituality. Brother Joseph Pinel will still stay a few months in Rome to initiate his successor, before joining France.

Brother **Stéphane Le Pape**, Master of Novices at the Novitiate of Yogyakarta (Indonesia) for a new mandate of 3 years.

### 2.2 Admissions to perpetual profession

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The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, admitted to perpetual profession:

Brother **Simon GUEYE**, of Saint-Paul District (Western Africa).

Brothers **Vilson LAUTURE** and **Rony PIERRE**, of Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague Province (Haïti).

## 2.3 Accounts of the Provinces and the Districts (2015).

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The General Council studied and approved the accounts of the various sectors of the Congregation presented by the Brother Treasurer General. In some sectors, new Treasurers of Provinces or Districts were entrusted with this mission. All strive to bring the biggest rigour in the management of the accounts and the budget estimates. The Treasurer General is very attentive to it, and began to go on site for times of training and to accompany the work of the bursars.

## 3 Information, communication.

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The General Council took time to share with Mr Michel Tanguy, the Director of information, on the following points:

- The presentation of the possible tables of contents of the next numbers of La Mennais Magazine, in particular special issues;
- The future web site which should be displayed on line at the beginning of September, 2016. The last verifications of information which are there and the translations in 3 languages are on the way to completion. This new site should allow more interactivity and centralisation of the present resources in the various sectors of the Congregation. It will also try to be more readable and available on the various media, such as tablets and Smart phones.
- The Bicentenary of the congregation and the implementation of elements of communication and information about this celebration.

## Calendar of the members of the General Council

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### Bro. Yannick HOUSSAY

5 – 12 July	:	Chili
End of July	:	Rome
1-15 August	:	France
20-31 August	:	Rwanda

### Bro. Gildas PRIGENT

19 June	:	Paris
24 June – 26 July	:	Indonesia, Philippines
26 July – 23 August	:	France
23 August	:	Rome

### Bro. Gerard BYARUHANGA

21 June	:	Uganda, South Soudan, Kenya
13 September	:	Rome

### Bro. Guillermo DÁVILA

8-25 juillet	:	Haïti
25 juillet- 10 août	:	Mexico
11 août-14 septembre:	:	Spain
15 septembre	:	Rome

The next session of the General Council will be held in Rome, from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016.