

## 2 - EVANGELISATION IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION



### **OUR MISSION**

#### WORD OF GOD

Mk 6, 34 – 44

*"When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.*

*Dismiss them so that they can go to the surrounding farms and villages and buy themselves something to eat."*

*He said to them in reply, "Give them some food yourselves."*

Mk 16, 15

*"He said to them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature."*

Mk 10, 13 – 16

*"Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it."*

#### DOCUMENTS OF THE CHURCH

Africae Munus n° 61:

*"Concern for young people calls for courage and clarity in the message we proclaim; we need to help young people to gain confidence and familiarity with sacred Scripture so it can become like a compass pointing out the path to follow. Young people need witnesses and teachers who can walk with them, teaching them to love the Gospel and to share it, especially with their peers, and thus to become authentic and credible messengers."*

Consecrated persons in Schools, no. 6:

*"The Holy Spirit, moreover, guides us to rediscover the Charism, the roots and the modalities for our presence in schools, concentrating on the essential: the importance of the testimony of Christ, the poor, humble and chaste one; the priority of the person and of relationships based on love; the search for truth; the synthesis between faith, life and culture and the valid proposal of a view of man that respects God's plan... This mission requires a commitment of holiness, generosity and skilled educational professionalism so that the truth about the person as revealed by Jesus may enlighten the growth of the young generations and of the entire community."*

Educating together, n° 16:

*"In this particular expression of the Church, which is the catholic school, the spirituality of Communion must become the breath of the educational community, the criterion for the full ecclesial valuing of its members, and the landmark for the achievement of an authentic shared mission."*

#### RULE OF LIFE

Directory 114:

*"Education in the faith must be the major concern of all the Brothers. To the witness of their own lives*

*and to the climate of freedom which they help create in the school, they add special attention to catechesis, the awakening of vocations and the promotion of youth movements."*

## WORD OF THE FOUNDER

LETTER 3481. BR. ALFRED -MARIE LABORIE. D. S. Morlaix, July 7, 1844:

*"In your class, you must often raise up your spirit to the Lord, and pray to him to bless your works. Make a concerted effort to inspire in your children a true and tender piety. Do not consider yourself as a profane teacher, but as a missionary entrusted with the establishment of the kingdom of God in their souls. That is your true vocation, and it will be in making saints of them that you will sanctify yourself."*

## CHALLENGES

- **As Brothers**, the awareness of being "**Sons - sent**" and the deepening of our experience of the Mennaisian **Charism**, because the **mission** is for us source of **sanctification**.
- When facing changes, we often have feelings of **fear**: we do not always believe that **God** is still **present** and acting. We need to **adapt** ourselves to the Kingdom.
- **The Mennaisien Identity** of our centers needs to be clarified, and the elements of mennaisien **pedagogy** need be identified. To implement them in the different situations so as to work for the **liberation** of children and the young people, with a benevolent and trustful attitude.
- The **formation** of administrators and educators of our centers is more vital now than ever and we need **to be innovative** in the way in which we evangelize.
- Facing the current spirit individualism and lack of communion: we need to develop **bonds** with the laity, young people, parents, parishes.
- Each Brother should feel a **personal responsibility** to the way he lives his consecrated life and to his mission.

## ORIENTATION

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*Brothers and laity*, we are invited to **cultivate a common spirit** born of the Mennaisian Charism that we are called to deepen together in our educational and evangelizing mission, so as to ensure a better proclamation of the Good News. Elements to nourish this common spirit:

- To make his own, the spirituality of '**son - sent**' and the awareness of being sent.
- To practice the **charismatic reading of the Word of God**. (Mennaisian Spirituality, p.115-130)
- Together, to become **images of Jesus Christ** among children and young people.
- To make the experience of the **mission** as a source of **sanctification**

## ACTION PLAN

### To ensure the transmission of the Mennaisien Charism.

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To ensure the proclamation of the Good News and the fidelity to the Charism in our evangelizing educational work:

**The General Council will initiate**, in conjunction with the provinces, vice-provinces and the laity, a reflection that will render the **mission** explicit, and explain our **pedagogy** and the **Mennaisian style** of evangelization. This reflection will contain these elements:

- a. Deepening of the identity of the Mennaisian School.
- b. Clarification and elaboration of the Mennaisian pedagogy.
- c. Proposal for a framework that would enable the elaboration of a Mennaisian educational project in our educational communities, and its evaluation.

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**The basic elements** to be taken into account by all our schools, centers and teachers, are:

- a. **The Gospel, source of inspiration** to renew the style of animation in our schools and educational centres.
- b. **The Mennaisian character** of our centers with the following basic elements:
  - Institutions that make children and young people central.
  - Educating the whole person.
  - Fostering a style of Gospel Brotherhood.
  - A place to make Jesus Christ known and loved.
  - Encouraging intercultural and Inter-Religious Dialogue.
  - Creating spaces of communion, a spirituality of the friendship.
  - Having a special sensitivity for the poor.
  - Living as a Christian community.
- c. **The necessary formation** of the Brothers and Lay Mennaisians so that their work be inspired by the Charism and that they live the Charism more deeply.
- d.

### Places of evangelization.

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The Chapter wants to encourage the administrators and the teachers in our schools and centres. The Chapter also extends this invitation to the Provinces and Vice-provinces:

1. To support the proclamation of the Gospel **to children and young people** today in the context of the new Evangelization, to lead them to encounter Jesus, through initial evangelization, interreligious dialogue, catechesis, etc.
2. To encourage and support groups of children and young people who are accompanied by Brothers and Lay Mennaisians (movements, prayer groups...).
3. To remind ourselves that "Christian schools do even more, integrating the acquisition of knowledge, the preparation to responsible freedom and education in the faith" (D106). "This mission entails a commitment to holiness, generosity as well as professional competence in the field of education (PCE 6). Therefore we need to increase our awareness of the importance of quality education that passes in particular through the type of relationships, our sense of responsibility in our work, methodology and our means of evaluation, etc.
4. To be **creative** in promoting and improving **structures adapted to evangelization** in our institutions.
5. To invest ourselves without fear in the **co-curricula** aspects of education (C2 §2).
6. To live out the invitation of Father de La Mennais to go to the frontiers, with a clear option for the **neglected** in our schools and educational centres: academic drop outs, juvenile delinquents, vulnerable children and young immigrants etc ...
7. To carry out **practical action** for the growth and development of children and young people who live in deplorable family conditions, intellectual, cultural or spiritual poverty, according to the particular challenges in each country.

### The Mennaisian Family and its Mission.

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The growth of the Mennaisian family enriches the Charism and the Church:

1. The Chapter encourages all the provinces and vice-provinces, and other members of the Mennaisian Family, to continue this process, taking into account the conditions of each country.  
Considering the evolution of the Congregation and the needs of the Church, the provinces and vice-provinces, under the leadership of the General Council, are invited:
  - a. To form a team of Brothers and Lay Mennaisians to evaluate our **mission**.
  - b. To set up executive **structures** of discernment and decision which will be able to help us to live the mission as a Mennaisian family: to promote relations with the various councils, to participate in teams working for the mission, to develop the promote the Mennaisian network, to share responsibilities, to encourage Lay association, mission gatherings, etc.
  - c. To initiate and encourage **joint formation** of Brothers and Lay people in the mission and in education, adapted to the needs of the provinces.

- d. To form Mennaisians (Brothers and laity) for the animation of the Charism and the formation of educators.
  - e. To intensify the **presence and the witness** of the Mennaisian family in our mission of evangelization, and to enjoy the experience of communion in our educational communities.
2. Taking into account the development of the Mennaisian Family, the Chapter encourages the provinces and vice-provinces to involve the laity of the Mennaisian Family in all the modalities in the mission: collaboration, participation, belonging. (cf. Official Document on the Mennaisian Family)