

Mennaisian
Novena
Nº. 26

Prayer for the beatification of
Jean-Marie de la Mennais

O God our Father, you have given
Jean-Marie de la Mennais,
a generous heart and untiring zeal
to make your Son Jesus Christ and his Gospel
known especially to children and youth.

As we venerate him as the Founder
of two religious congregations
devoted to Christian education,
we pray to you that he may soon
be recognized blessed.

Help us follow his example
at the service of truth,
and grant us through his intercession,
the favours we are now asking...

(silent pause)

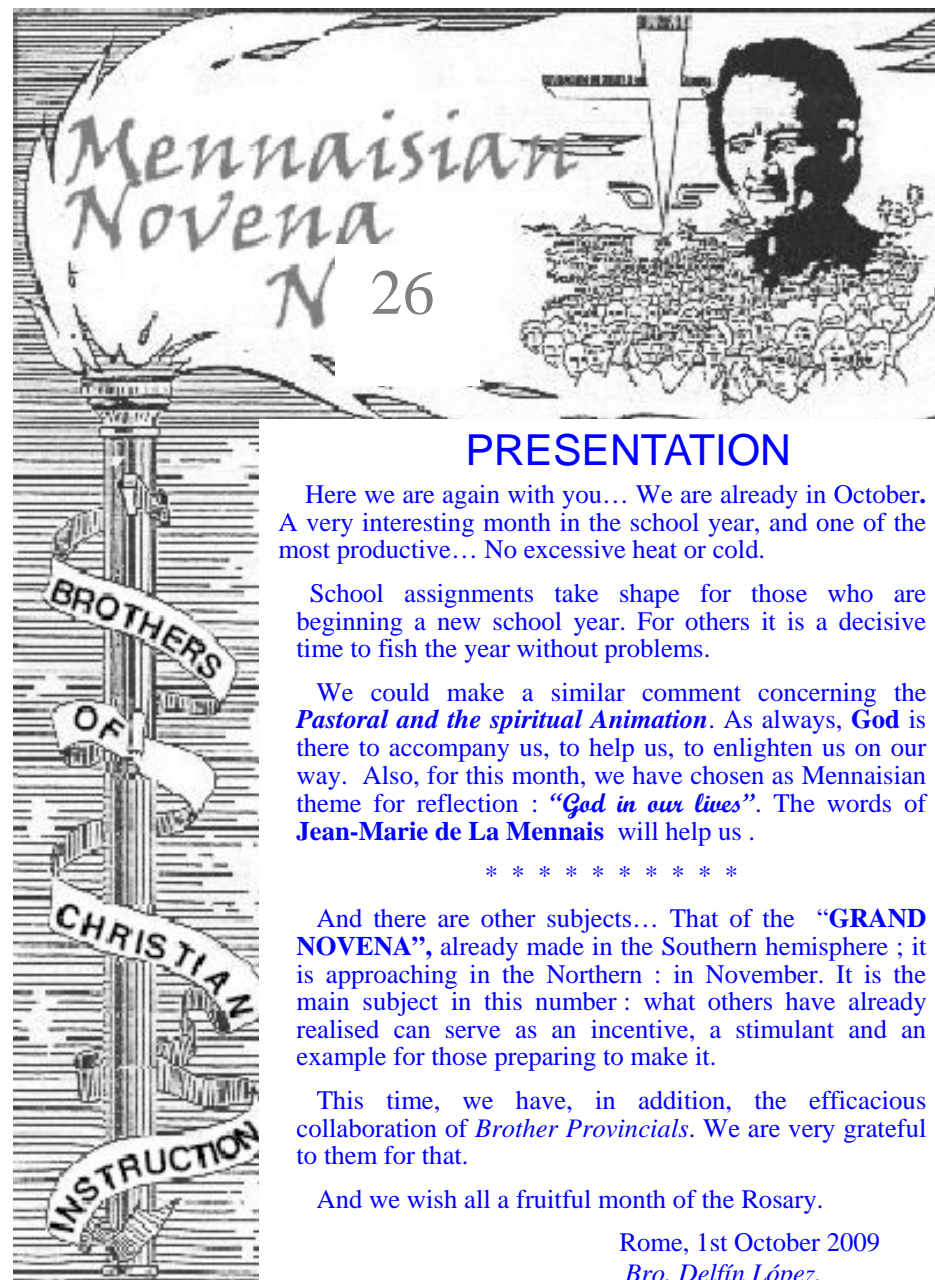
Through Jesus-Christ our Lord

O Lord Jesus, glorify your servant,
Venerable Jean-Marie de la Mennais

" MENNAISIAN NOVENA " N°.26 – ROME – 1.X. 2009

Tél.06 66 41 56 18 - Casa Generalizia FIC - delfinlopez03@yahoo.com
Via Divina Provvidenza. 44.
00166 – Roma (Italy)

A



PRESENTATION

Here we are again with you... We are already in October. A very interesting month in the school year, and one of the most productive... No excessive heat or cold.

School assignments take shape for those who are beginning a new school year. For others it is a decisive time to fish the year without problems.

We could make a similar comment concerning the *Pastoral and the spiritual Animation*. As always, **God** is there to accompany us, to help us, to enlighten us on our way. Also, for this month, we have chosen as Mennaisian theme for reflection : "*God in our lives*". The words of **Jean-Marie de La Mennais** will help us .

* * * * *

And there are other subjects... That of the "**GRAND NOVENA**", already made in the Southern hemisphere ; it is approaching in the Northern : in November. It is the main subject in this number : what others have already realised can serve as an incentive, a stimulant and an example for those preparing to make it.

This time, we have, in addition, the efficacious collaboration of *Brother Provincials*. We are very grateful to them for that.

And we wish all a fruitful month of the Rosary.

Rome, 1st October 2009
Bro. Delfín López,

Postulator

Novena to Jean-Marie : How to make it ?

Precaution : for preparing ourselves and to enter into the theme, it is convenient to read page 4 of the review (in addition to page 1); there, you will find the explanation of the meaning of his words and how Jean-Marie lived the proposed theme, etc.

Here, we indicate, a way of making it, using the materials offered.. There would of course be other ways of going about it.

Steps a) We begin with the sign of the cross.

b) We mention our **intentions** : cf. page 5 and others.

c) We read the **two sentences of every day** J-M (pp.6-7).

d) We recite the **prayer for the beatification** (p. 12).

We could add other personal elements, or at the initiative of the animator or of the leader.

e) We end with the sign of the cross.

That could last two minutes, as well as a quarter of an hour !

And the **Reflection** on page 5 ? – It could be made every day, on one number; or still better : consecrate a certain time, on a given day, and share it in a family or group.

The rest of the review serves to deepen the knowledge of Jean-Marie and the Congregation

IMPORTANT !

2010
Jean Marie de la Mennais' :
150th year of death,

on 26th December 1860, at Ploërmel.

It will be a year of reference for us if this event helped us to penetrate and live the ideals, the Charism, *that God confided to us through the* intermediary of our Father Founder.

* To be more united during this particular time, we invite to a *TIME OF PRAYER* in common, the Brothers and the Laity, for:

- The sick recommended to the intercession of Jean-Marie.
- The needs of children and youths of our school and of our area..
- The needs of the educators and the Mennaisian families.
- **The prompt beatification of Jean-Marie.**

* The three intermediary days of the Novena were days of *Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the Primary section*. We prayed with the Mennaisian sentence of the day, for the sick of the community and those of the Novena. *What beautiful kind of recognition for the gift of life of Jean-Marie !* It was animated by the Brothers and the Catechists..

* On Saturday, 5th September, a group of educators made a *spiritual retreat*, to deepen the meaning of the motto GOD ALONE. They themselves organised and animated it. A good way of celebrating and deepening the gift of God in the Charism of Jean-Marie.

* On Sunday, 8th September, a group of Mennaisian youths (missionaries, rural catechists, Old Students) Prepared a Mass in the neighbouring Parish, - Saint Maria Goretti-. The families of the School participated in it. Some *images of the Founder* and of *Our Lady of the "Amen"*. They will be installed in the classrooms. A real ecclesiastical feast, marked by the simplicity and testimony of life in the proclamation of the Gospel !

* On 9th September, a group of Solidarity mothers held a *spiritual retreat in the morning at the School, and shared on the life of Jean-Marie...* What a surprise to discover the fecundity of his life and his passionate engagement towards Providence ! What desire to go in search of ways of imitating him daily as disciples of Jesus !...

Anything else ? The best is lacking. It will be for the next number.
Goodbye for now !

Rome, 30th

September 2009.- Bro. D.L..





Sainte Messe célébrée par Mgr l'Evêque, lors de la Fête de Jean Marie, sur la cour de l'école

The transversal axis of the Novena was the motto of the Province for this year: *"Attentive ears and available hands"*. In line with this motto, three campaigns were realised: imperishable foodstuffs, scholastic materials and clothes; they were destined for the needy people in our area, to the parish Caritas and to the "Triangle district".

Progress of the Novena. - During the time of catechism, some Mennaisian images are prepared for the establishment and don it with a festive dress for the 8th September. In the middle of the Novena, *competition of questions answers*... Complete success! Some classes were selected for the final, on the feast day of Jean-Marie

***And from day to day?** Every day, there was a time for prayer, with a "thought" of the Founder, a passage of the Gospel of the day and *a meaningful gesture for each day*: imposition of hands, offering them to help someone..., etc. Every educator animated the Novena in their class. It would end with the recitation of the *prayer for the beatification of Jean-Marie*.

* During the week, there was a prayer session with all the teachers and a Mennaisian formation course, and, in addition, a fraternal meal for the entire Mennaisian family of El Alto.

* As the 8th was drawing nearer, the preparations were intensified: invitation cards for the Feast, and drawings made by the children for decorating the galleries. Even 4-four year kids participated with enthusiasm making drawings.

*** Actions** - We gathered together for a simple meeting, all the teachers and other groups: pastoral ministry parents, pupils' representatives, "Amen groups", etc. *

... The peak of the week was lived with the participants in the shared mission: educators with their families, and Brothers. Prayer, reflection, games and a shared meal. The day closed with the celebration of the Eucharist in the Parish Church.

* To observe our motto during the Novena, we wanted to keep our hands open in order to receive tangible help.

10

Group of Mennaisian Novices, at Dapaong (Togo-Africa), with Bro. Yannick H., Superior General, showing the collective prize gained in the Mennaisian competition

Editor's note: In the previous number we announced the Religious profession of 7 African youths. We are giving the impression of a witness of this: that of Bro. Gabriel Gélinas, the Provincial of Canada. Thank you, Brother G. Gélinas

To the members of the Mennaisian Family:

Sincere THANKS for your generous prayers for my intentions. How I would have liked you to witness the engagement of these youths (four from Central Africa, and three from West Africa) who decided to live the year of Novitiate, to integrate into the community and to continue with their vocational discernment!

How I would have liked you to be present at the first profession of five Novices who engaged themselves with vows for the next year!

Imagine this scene: seven Postulants and five Novices engaging themselves publicly in our Chapel of the Sacred Heart of the provincial House, in the presence of the members of the Mennaisian Family!

How would I have liked you to be at Abidjan, amidst twenty scholastics spread out in three years, pursuing their studies, in view of living in the near future the Mennaisian Charism, each in their own respective country!

That is why I want to conclude with this prayer of thanksgiving: «It is truly right and fitting to glorify you and to offer you our act of thanksgiving, always and everywhere, God the Father, through your Son, Jesus Christ.»

Gabriel Gélinas

F. Gabriel Gélinas, f.i.c., provincial

3

GOD in the life of JEAN MARIE DE LA MENNAIS

Important theme for JEAN MARIE, the one of this month of October :
God was the **“the reason of his life”**.

“The mega-gifted natures, - wrote Bro. Carmelo Rizzo in a memorable article -, are predisposed to dispersion.

They need a guiding principle, an ideal... which can direct them. In the life of the prophets that God chose for his people, there is a privileged moment of their life in which they feel in an acute way the sign of their vocation. ”

It is said that a man's life depends on three or four “yes” or on three or four “no” before twenty years.

In the life of **JEAN MARIE DE LA MENNAIS** these **‘yes’** are altogether visible; we find therein the guiding principle of his life :

GOD... he clearly said **“yes”** to God, before the age of twenty :

- *The day of his first Communion*, by hearing God's call to be a priest, to the point of wanting to accompany his Bishop;
- **“yes”** to God during *the Revolution*, by sticking to his desire and going to the extent of risking his life in this engagement ;
- **“yes”** to God at the age of 20, by taking a *definitive step towards priesthood* with the *“blood of martyrs”* as a horizon of life.

Thereafter, this life will develop and these ‘yes’ will become clearer as the days pass by.

He synthesizes this in the motto that he makes his and which links together the members of the Mennaisian Family : **“God Alone”**.

And this God Alone remained firmly rooted in the apostolic choice of his life, for himself and for all of us, in the sentence that summarises the Mennaisian Charism :

**“My schools were founded
To make JESUS CHRIST known and
loved**



The Grand Novena to Jean- Marie de la Mennais

The Grand Novena to Jean-Marie is one of the landmarks of the school year in our establishments. In some, it is the time of most intensive pastoral work, because it implies all the aspects of the latter, and can have a decisive impact in the whole school.

In the Northern hemisphere, it takes place from the 18th to the 28th November. In the Southern, from the 30th August to the 8th September, including the feast of Jean-Marie, on the 8th: it is his birthday anniversary.

Half a dozen establishments in South America were kind enough to send us an account of the progress of the Novena. These are : Maldonado Nuevo (Uruguay) ; San Borja y El Alto (Bolivia) ; Villa Gobernador Gálvez, Biolet Massé and Luján de Cuyo (Argentina).

We have made a synthesis of these different accounts and we present them below. While enjoying reading them, we can think of the manner of envisaging, organising and implementing the forthcoming Novenas at the desired time.

We can always find initiatives and activities about which, though quite feasible, since others realised them, we have never thought of. We could appropriate or adopt them personally, or as a community.

Thank you, South American Mennaisian Brothers and Educators for your collaboration and support.

We transcribe what we received by thematic order, without mentioning where it came from. That will facilitate the reading.

Prior preparation and organisation

** We have prepared some «triptyques» to be shared among the families, in view of a prayer with Jean-Marie before the meal.*

** In order that the Novena is not shortened because of the week-end, we have decided to begin it four days before the 26th August. .*

** Several schools have had the same idea.*

Theme of the Novena. An example :

We synthesize the *general theme* by these words : Mennaisian Family (community of Brothers and Laity), **heart** (affective links to strengthen it), **memory** (based on the history, to strengthen the Charism), **testimony**. For methodology, we shall use three thematic axes : **Family, Friendship and Mission**, in relation with **Jesus, Mary and Jean-Marie**.



Mennaisian” Establishment (Madrid – Spain)

Editorial note:- We have the pleasure of narrating a story of a cure obtained through the intercession of Jean-Marie. This event, described by Bro. Gil Rozas, - now in Rome -, invites us to invoke our Founder and also to thank the Lord for his favours and even make them known in Rome. Thank you !

A FAVOUR FROM JEAN MARIE

Madrid, July 2009.

A one-year old child, son of a female teacher of a Mennaisian establishment in Madrid, whose name is left out on her request, was suffering from a grave congenital enlargement of the heart (cardiopathy). His blood was getting mixed up in the heart.

The family doctor would not give any hope of life to his parents, so much so that the mother had prepared a shroud for her son’s burial.

But, during a critical night, one other person, Paloma, a friend of the mother and also a teacher of the Establishment, prayed with fervour and the faith that moves mountains for the cure of the infant. *She prepared a small altar and put the image of Jean-Marie* that she had received on her pilgrimage to **Ploërmel** between two candles.

The following morning, to the joy of his parents and the surprise of his doctors, *Paul was found notably better*, and fit enough to undergo an operation of the heart. After a few days, the child was on his feet... Since then Paul leads a normal life and he is the joy of his family.

Doctor VILLAGRÁ, his family doctor, received me warmly for 40 minutes in his studio. " I am a Catholic and I believe in God. I also believe that he helps me in my operations to avoid errors. We owe everything to Him. I do not know if Paul’s case will serve His designs.". These are the exact words of the Doctor.

This case and many others took place in our Mennaisian entourage. They seem to indicate that **Jean-Marie** wants once for all to **spread** this silent sound of God’s action. *He walks by our side, he is very close to us.*

LET US OPEN OUR EYES TO THE FAITH AND THAT JEAN MARIE BE PROCLAIMED BLESSED.

F. Gil Rozas

For reflection

...Before reflecting on the following questions, you should read all the quotations of Jean-Marie and their explanation on page 4...

1. *What are the “yes” of Jean-Marie which have captured your attention more ? Why ? Reflect.... meditate on them...*
2. *Could you cite another moment or action in the life of Jean-Marie de La Mennais which, in your opinion, constitutes another ‘yes’ to God ?*
3. *Considering the life of Jean-Marie, do you think he really had an ideal of life ?*
4. *Today, do the youths appear to you to be searching for or trying to have an ideal of life ?*
5. *Basing yourself on your own experience, what do you think of your personal ideal ? Do you have any ? Do you live it ?*

RECOMMENDED INTENTIONS

- * That we may have in our life milestones which guide us on our way and give us strength to forge ahead up to the final goal: **God**.
- * For all the youths who feel called by God to follow Jesus Christ, as Mennaisian Brothers.
- * For the sick recommended to our prayers:
 - Romain Delenne, seriously ill, 6 years (France)
 - * Mr. Godin, requested by Bro. Albert Côté (Canada).
 - Teihotu TAMARII, pupil of Tahiti.
 - * Dominique BLIN, nephew of Bro. Michel (France).
 - Natalia Cubillo, cancer case (Madrid- Spain).
 - * Adela Pertierra : persistent disease of throat. Nanclares de la Oca (Spain).
 - Fred Kare, seriously ill, a brother of Bro. Eugène Mwesigye (Philippines).
 - * Walter Sayavedra, disappeared nine years ago.- Córdoba (Argentina).
 - Father Nicolas Guillou.- Fougères (France)
 - Mrs.Carmen Vélez Martín : stomach tumour . Aguilar de Campóo (Spain).
 - * Andrea Gutiérrez, osteoarthritis with complication. Santiurde de Reinosa (Spain).
 - Emanuela Guerra, seriously sick.- Rome (Italy).
 - * Luis Fernando Nogales : brain tumour.- San Borja (Bolivia).
- ... and the local cases.

**GOD in our life,
according to JEAN MARIE DE LA
MENNAIS**



✘ **18 - X**

* **Abandon yourself to God** and he will support you, bless you, and reward you abundantly for all the sacrifices that you would have offered to him.
- *Yes ! Love God truly, see only him, and do not listen to any other voice but his only. May he **be all to you.***

✘ **19 - X**

* Whatever progress you may have made in your spiritual life, **strive to do** always better.
- *Never, during your exile here below, will you ever penetrate so deeply in God so as **not to be able to penetrate him still more deeply.***

✘ **20 - X**

* **My God**, perhaps our faults will oblige your justice to permit that the impious triumph and prevent us from doing good tomorrow.
- *But my God ! Your mercy still leaves us the freedom of doing good today. Well then ! My God, **we shall do the good today, while blessing your mercy.***

✘ **21 - X**

* The men whose reason is strongest **sometimes talk nonsense** with distressful assurance.
- *God permits it, without doubt, that we might know how to put our faith and trust in Him. In Him alone is found **all light and all truth.***

✘ **22 - X**

* When **God has no more authority**, what man can preserve his ?
- *Remember that the demon of pride, which is the same as that of the revolt against authority **is called 'legion'.***

✘ **23 - X**

* The skies **recount the glory of God** and their voice is quite eloquent.
- *But the preservation of society proves perhaps still better His existence to a man who knows **what man really is and his passions.***

✘ **24 - X**

* We reasonably accord great importance to the **advice of our friends**, and we would think of brushing it aside as committing a great act of imprudence.
- ***Would God have less light or less authority ?***

✘ **25 - X**

* **God ! Eternity !** Sometimes I imagine understanding these two words and immediately after I realise that I am unworthy to pronounce them.
- *My God ! I want to love you with all the angels ; **I want to love you with yourself and as you love me yourself, for only you can love yourself as you deserve.***

✘ **26 - X**

* To be really holy, it suffices to take the Holy of holies as model and to resemble Him.
- *This resemblance begins here below, where it is always imperfect, and it is completed and **consumed in heaven.***