

Mennonisian Novena Nº. 36

Education

Presentation. - To educate today is not an easy task... particularly education of faith ! We have the pleasure to offer you a poem written by Br. Fermin, well known to us and a good friend of mine. We worked together for 25 years for the formation of the young at Cordoba (Argentina).

To educate,
We need a boat and a motor.
Everything has to be measured, well balanced,
Weighted, and then start the whole thing.
But to do that
We have to possess within ourselves
Something of a seaman
Something of a pirate,
Something of a poet,
With one kilo and a half of concentrated patience

It is consoling to think that
this boat – this child –
will go forward, at large,
at the price of your work.

Believe that the cargo of that boat
is your own words,
that lead to faraway ports,
to faraway islands.

Believe that when, one day,
Our own boat will be sleeping
New boats will be there
And our flag will still be hoisted.

Br. Fermín Gaínza

Prayer for the beatification of John Mary de la Mennais

O God our Father, you have given
John -Mary de la Mennais,
a generous heart and untiring zeal
to make your Son Jesus Christ
known and loved especially by the 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 as 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

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THANKS , Jean-Marie !

This publication, - the one of the Postulation, a kind of magazine or leaflet, is quite simple and modest, but it is regular. Our readers can also participate under the column called "Mail Received". They can share their intentions of prayers, the obtained favors... It is true that our major expenses – trips, work for the Cause, etc – are assumed by the Congregation.

But we have other needs that call for the generosity of our readers, friends and people devoted to Fr. De la Mennais, by way of suggestions and demands, donations and hearty gratitude....

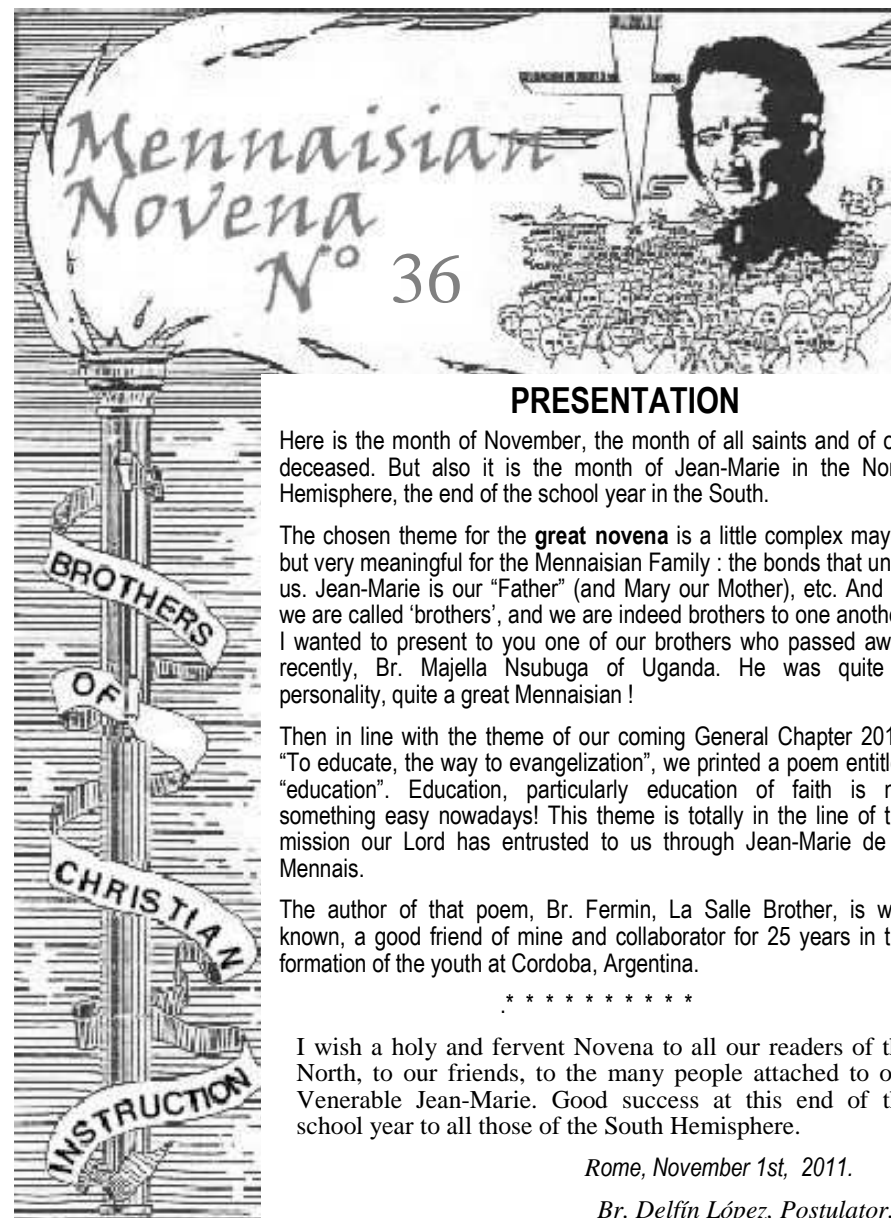
We were grateful to see the Alumni of Castelgandolfo (Italy) pay for the installation of a statue of St Joseph at the General House in Rome. We put the work we are doing now under the patronage of Mary's holy Spouse.

(To be continued)

For your reflection ...

... Before reflecting upon the following questions, we suggest that you read the thoughts of Fr. De la Mennais (pp. 8-9) and the explanation on p. 5...

1. What thought of Jean-Marie has struck you most, when he feels and says that he is our « Father » ?
2. *What does our founding « Father » expect from you so as to become really a true member of his family ?*
3. How do I feel that I truly belong to the mennaisian family ?
4. *You spend some time in prayer, a prayer that can be shared, for that family that we are forming...*



PRESENTATION

Here is the month of November, the month of all saints and of our deceased. But also it is the month of Jean-Marie in the North Hemisphere, the end of the school year in the South.

The chosen theme for the **great novena** is a little complex maybe but very meaningful for the Mennaisian Family : the bonds that unite us. Jean-Marie is our "Father" (and Mary our Mother), etc. And as we are called 'brothers', and we are indeed brothers to one another, I wanted to present to you one of our brothers who passed away recently, Br. Majella Nsubuga of Uganda. He was quite a personality, quite a great Mennaisian !

Then in line with the theme of our coming General Chapter 2012, "To educate, the way to evangelization", we printed a poem entitled "education". Education, particularly education of faith is not something easy nowadays! This theme is totally in the line of the mission our Lord has entrusted to us through Jean-Marie de la Mennais.

The author of that poem, Br. Fermin, La Salle Brother, is well known, a good friend of mine and collaborator for 25 years in the formation of the youth at Cordoba, Argentina.

I wish a holy and fervent Novena to all our readers of the North, to our friends, to the many people attached to our Venerable Jean-Marie. Good success at this end of the school year to all those of the South Hemisphere.

Rome, November 1st, 2011.

Br. Delfín López, Postulator.

Novena to Jean-Marie : How to do it ?

A remark : It is important to put ourselves in the proper spirit and enter into the suggested theme, as explained on p.1 of this leaflet: the meaning of the theme and how it was reflected in the life, words and actions of Jean-Marie.

This is only a suggestion. There are other ways to make the novena: For example : Steps :

- a) We start with the sign of the Cross
- b) We mention our prayer intentions (p.6 and 7)
- c) We read the 2 daily thoughts of Jean-Marie (p. 8 - 9).
- d) We recite the prayer for his beatification
- e) We end with the sign of the Cross.

This method is simple, and can last from 3 minutes to... 15 minutes, if we want ! We can also use profitably the suggested reflection on p. 14, reflecting upon one specific question every day, and then choose one to reflect in group and share with others.

The other texts in the leaflet are put there to help you know better our Founder, the Brothers, the FIC history, etc. .

Testimony ...

...of a young girl who attended the JMJ of Madrid, in 2011

"I met with many people from various countries and through that experience, I discovered the universal character of the Church. I have deepened the truth of my Christian faith: it is impossible that 2 million young people gather around one person if that person is not for us the representative of God on earth !

What a deep emotion to participate in the JMJ, particularly to hear the Pope tell us that even if all the people would be considering the youth of today as a superficial generation, looking for nothing deep, he himself would still believe in us and be proud of us.

It is incredible that the Pope be proud of ME !

(From my niece Ana Rabuffetti, clerk at the diocesan tribunal of Buenos Aires, written in 2010.)

Our "brother" MAJELLA NSUBUGA. A brother with a spark in his eyes



Last October 13, 2011, passed away at Nakasero, Uganda, our brother Majella Nsubuga, at the age of 89, and 66 years in religious life. He has the dean of our African brothers. He spent the last months in hospitals, but the Lord told him:

"It is enough! Good and faithful servant, come and receive the reward of your Lord! "

Yes, he was a good brother, this br. Majella, a faithful brother, with a great sense of humour. His funerals did not pass unnoticed: besides the brothers, more than a hundred religious – men and women-, delegations of students from many of our schools, numerous civilian and religious authorities attended the ceremony presided by Cardinal Emmanuel Wamala with five assisting bishops. Many priests were concelebrating.

The heavy rain that came just before Mass did not deter them from coming. His grandfather was the brother of one of the Ugandan Martyrs, who died without being tortured.

Br.Majella was the co-founder of a woman religious congregation, together with the Cardinal. After the Cardinal died, he kept on following the Sisters and helping them in their formation, giving classes on a regular basis.

But who was Br. Majella interiorly, daily ? The next issue of this leaflet will say you more. We had been colleagues during our studies and we breathed the same healthy air of Rome for four years.

F. D.L.



HAITI STANDS UP AGAIN AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE

Mass and blessing of the new constructions

Inauguration of the first FIC school being rebuilt

Wednesday, October 5, at Port-au-Prince (Haiti), a day of great joy for children and parents of Jean-Marie Guilloux School ! Founded in October 1864 by the first brothers in Haiti, it had been destroyed by the earthquake of last January 12, 2010. Today the school is reborn.

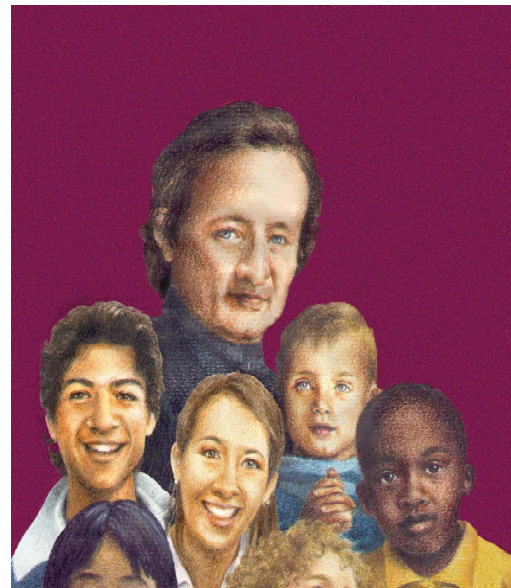
After two years spent on the school ground of St-Louis-de-Gonzague, the students entered their school on the very day of its inauguration. The building forms a "L", with two floors. It is the first school rebuilt in the Capital.

At Jacmel, the rebuilding works are progressing at a good pace. These works are also financed by a few Provinces of the Congregation and by the Province of Haiti itself.

At Delmas, the reconstruction of the Primary school is well advanced. Very soon it will be the turn of the Secondary School.



*College de
Jacmel en
construction*



**Jean Marie
de La
Mennais**

“father”

**of the
mennaisian
family**

To think of, to pronounce the name of Jean-Marie calling him «father », for us Brothers and Mennaisians, it is something that comes to our mind spontaneously: is he not our “founding Father” ?

It is not something new. From the origins, the Brothers referred to him not by his name but by giving him the title “Father” : “Father has arrived.” – “Did you meet Father?” – “Father has just got an accident.”... would they say.

Jean-Marie himself ended up with naming himself by that title. He wrote: “I must not forget that I am your father!”, while speaking to the assembled brothers.

And the children ? There is no doubt: We only have to remember the amount of youth congregations (prayer groups) he founded and that are still surviving!

Even on the occasion of meeting brothers leaving the congregation, he would manage to say in a gesture of tenderness, “At least, I continue to be your father”.

**I must not forget that I am your
father. J. M. de La Mennais**



Great Novena to Jean-Marie de la Mennais



**(18 – 26 November,
In the North Hemisphere)**

The Great Novena to F. de la Mennais is a high point of the school year in our institutions. For many it is the occasion for the most intense pastoral work: it touches all the activities of the school, with a clear impact on the whole school.

This is why we shall privilege some intentions during this Novena: for the sick and the persons asking for his intercession.

- That we keep on working in fidelity to his orientations and the objective of "making Jesus Christ known and loved".
- That the Lord bless us with the beatification of Jean-Marie, and that He bless all the efforts we are pouring into that Cause.
- As Jean-Marie is our Father, that we remain always faithful to the charism he has entrusted to us.
- That he may bless and protect all the members of the Mennaisian Family.
- That he may bless the Congregation with many and fervent vocations.

After more than 100 years, would not it be suitable to give once more value to that unique event ? Let us read the hronicle. The ceremony proceeded in three steps...

- At the cemetery of the community, where Jean-Marie de la Mennais was buried, on December 31, 1860.
- In the main entrance hall of the Community, where the coffin had been exposed for the medical examination of his rests.
- In the Chapel of the Mother-House, where he was again buried.

Preparation for the ceremony.

"The Mother-House looks like a hive where all the brothers are put to work, in a gentle drone and in feverish energy : carpenters, bricklayers, blacksmiths, sacristans, scholastics, novices and postulants, as well as the brothers with their students, and the event organizers and some coordinators... In all, everybody is busy.



In the Chapel, lays a huge wreath, from which leave long white banderoles edged in red that go up to the altar.

On each pillar we can see hanging flags of all colours, decorated with ermines – symbol of Brittany. In the middle, we see the national flag and also a picture of the Blessed Heart of Jesus.

In a very precise order, are put inscriptions in large letters, indicating the dates that have marked his life, the most significant monuments ordered by Jean-Marie de la Mennais.

(To be continued)



History of the Cause of Beatification of Jean-Marie de la Mennais

In the previous issue of this leaflet, we ended up saying that Jean-Marie had been buried in the cemetery of the community in Ploermel, as he had wished it.

But things changed afterwards, and the brothers thought it would not be inconvenient to have his rests transferred to the great Chapel of the Mother House. It was the wish of all the brothers. The transfer was done on August 6, 1900, at the same time as the preparatory approaches for the introduction of his Cause of beatification.

The exhumation and the inspection of the rests were decided, and that was done not only once, as many believe, but twice. Let's see : such a request always had much importance throughout history. According to documents, two personalities in the history of the Church (François Suárez, Jesuit, and Br. Louis of Grenade, Dominican) had their Cause of beatification stopped because, upon opening their coffin, it could be seen that they had changed position. Maybe they had been buried alive...

First exhumation and transfer of the mortal rests of Jean-Marie de la Mennais.

As we just said, the exhumation was done on August 6, 1900. The author as well as editor of the Chronical, Br. Alexis-Marie, wrote: *"That day of August 6 will surely remain one of the most beautiful and moving days that the Congregation has lived until today."* And he dedicated the whole issue of the magazine to that event.

RECOMMENDED INTENTIONS

- * That reading the thoughts of Jean-Marie, we may feel that he is our « Father », that we love him and follow his advices.
- * For the young people who hear the call of God to follow Jesus-Christ as Mennaisian Brother.

* For the sick asking for our prayers :

- Fernando Nogales: with malign tumor.- San Borja (Bolivia).
- * Mr. Godin, upon request from br. Albert Côté (Canada).
- Teihotu TAMARII, student in Tahiti.
- * Natalie Cubillo, with cancer (Madrid - Spain).
- Patrick Lebeau, tumour in the esophagus (France).
- * Olivier Meunier (12 y. old): spinal amyotrophie (Canada).
- José A. García Martínez, multiple sclerosis- Bilbao (Spain) .
- * Guadalupe Morales, congenital arthrogripale affection - Luján de Cuyo (Argentina)
- Luz María Land, with cancer - Reinosa (Spain)
- * Marcos Sosa, leukemia – Luján de Cuyo - Mendoza (Argentina)
- Bro. Louis Le Guichet, spinal problems - Béthanie (France)
- * Clara García Roig, a special intention.- Buenos Aires (Argentina)
- Br. Pierre Tousignant, a serious cancer case - Canada.
- * Mercedes A. Alvarez, advanced cancer.- Luján de Cuyo - Mendoza (A)
- Jeannine Robert, sister of Br. Jean Malo: deforming arthritis- France.
- * Lesage Dessalines, in a coma, nephew of Bro. Lamy D. (Haiti)
- Giorgio Mucci: cerebral thrombosis - Roma (Italy)
- * Michael, child of 5 y. old, sick at Santa Fe (Argentina).
- Rafael Gómez: 10 y. old, lymphatic cancer
- * Julián Castro, child with spinal problems, Luján de Cuyo (Argentina)
- Khalid Sid Imorou: brain tumor.- Parakou- Benin (Africa).
- * Romina Campostrini, lung problems- Villa Gdor. Gálvez (Argentina).
- Pía Martina, child near death - Villa Gdor Gálvez (Argentina).
- * Giorgio Mucci, brain thrombosis.- Rome (Italy)
- Ken Latos Saskatoon and David Hillbo - Saskatchewan (Canada)
- * Br. Andrés Pérez, complex cancer (Bolivia)
- Grace Nabagala, breast cancer, Masaka (Uganda).
- * Scholastica Bonabaana, heart problems -Fort-Portal (Uganda)
- Br. Benedicto de Francisco: stomach cancer - Bilbao (Spain)

***... And the intentions placed on the tomb of the Father at Ploërmel... and those particular to each location.**

**JEAN MARIE DE LA MENNAIS,
“FATHER” of the Mennaisian Family
His Words**



✠ 18 – XI

We must help one another to praise and serve our divine Lord. This is part of the communion of saints. That communion will be complete only in heaven where all hearts will become one in the heart of Jesus.

** But it must start here on earth, by the communion of our feelings, our efforts and our prayers. (R 438)*

✠ 19 – XI

Let us strengthen the bonds that unite us, those dear bonds that even death cannot break.

** I have the firm hope that, when we will gather together, we will encourage one another in the resolution we have taken, that to walk towards heaven by the practice of the virtues that will make us worthy to enter there.*

✠ 20 – XI

Let us have a truly catholic heart : may those who like us are working for the expansion of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus remain always dear to us.

** Let us be interested in their works and achievements, as if they were ours. (A 125)*

✠ 21 – XI

Let us get together and unite our strengths, let us put our hearts besides one another, and as Scriptures say, let us stand in order of battle in front the enemies of Christ.

** With the crucifix on our chests, let us face them. By that sign we shall win. (S VIII)*

✠ 22 – XI

The annual retreat is the great feast of the congregation. On that happy occasion, I will see you all, we will all gather in that house that has given birth to you anew in Christ Jesus and has been for you like a cradle... Yes, how beautiful, how sweet it is for brothers to live together !

** As long as we remain united, we will be strong and happy. Yes, that holy unity will be your joy, and the grace and strength of our society.*

✠ 23 – XI

(To a sick absent brother).- We shall not forget you at Ploermel: every day I pray the Lord for you, and so do the brothers. It will be a great day of joy for me and for them when we meet you again.

** Courage and patience, my dear son ! I embrace you with the heart of a father.*

✠ 24 – XI

Like good brothers, faithful sons, let us help one another walk with a firm step on the road God our Father has shown us and that leads to him.

** Let us love one another like members of the same family. In life and in death, let us all serve one another.*

✠ Le 25 – XI

Be assured, my dear child, that each one of you is, after God, the sole object of my love and that I am ready to offer my life and my blood for each one of you.

** Surely we will not forget one another in our prayers : each time I walk up to the altar, I put you all on the paten. Think of me in your communions.*

✠ Le 26 – XI

When the Lord will take me away from this world, they will have as superior a Brother who, with zeal and wisdom, will continue the task I have initiated.

** They will not forget the one who has been their Father and who loved them so tenderly.*