

# **Echoes of the General Council**

Number 71

October 2010



*From the 4th to the 17th October 2010, the General Council held their Autumn session at the Community of the Brothers at Lourdes (France). And throughout these two weeks, the members of the Council have profited by the coolness of the climate and the warm welcome given by the community of the Brothers!*

*During their sojourn the General Council received several invitations and met the Director of the Collège-lycée St Joseph-Peyramale, and the Rector of the Sanctuary of Lourdes. The recreational outing was also an occasion of visiting the Brothers of the Community of Bethany (Ciboure).*

*The presence of the Council at Lourdes has given a Marian tone to this time of meeting and has permitted the members personally and as a community to present to Our Lady of Lourdes the whole Congregation.*

*Brother Superior General and the Assistants thank very much the Brothers of Lourdes for their fraternal hospitality and for the support of their prayers throughout this session.*

This Number of the Echoes informs the whole Congregation of the following decisions and pieces of information :

## **1. The animation of the Congregation :**

### **1.1 Visits to Provinces and Vice-Provinces :**

The Council heard Brother Superior General and Brother Gerard Byaruhanga on the visit of the communities in Uganda. Brother Superior General visited the communities and the schools of Kisubi and noted with admiration the important work realised in the field of education. He met the Scholastics and the Postulants as well as their Formators. During his sojourn he was able to participate in a joint meeting the two Provincial Councils of Uganda and Kenya-Tanzania concerning the formation at the Scholasticate.

Brother Superior General also presented the situation in Haiti after his sojourn in the country in August for the annual retreat of the Brothers and a session. The restoration of the buildings and properties is proceeding on slowly but steadily thanks to the efforts of Solidarity. However the problem of the numerous refugees on the premises of Delmas and of the Juniorate is not yet completely settled. The definitive reconstruction of the schools that were destroyed is proving to be more laborious than expected and it will still require more time and more aid. For the moment, temporary solutions are in place.

During the months of July and August, the Brothers Assistants animated the session of the preparation for the perpetual profession at Ploërmel.

### **1.2 Evaluation of the meeting of some Majors Superiors at Kisubi**

From 27 to 29 September 2010, the General Council convened at Kisubi in Uganda, the Major Superiors concerned with the structures of the initial formation in Africa. The exchanges permitted to take into account some evolutions and to identify some recommendations for both the ministry of vocations and for the different stages of the initial formation. They will be brought to the knowledge of the Superiors concerned.

One of these arrangements concerns **the Scholasticate of Kisubi**. An agreement with the Uganda Martyrs University College of Kisubi will permit the young Brothers, after having received a formation in human and religious sciences, to leave the Scholasticate after three years of study, with a Diploma recognised by the State.

### **1.3 Evaluation of the session of preparation for the perpetual profession at Ploërmel:**

The session in view of perpetual profession brought together 15 young Brothers for more than a month at Ploërmel, then for 2 days in Paris. The English-speaking group from the Provinces of Uganda and Kenya-Tanzania was the biggest, the 4 French-speaking Brothers came from Congo and Haiti.

For the first time, this session took place at the Mother House with a short sojourn in Paris. Besides providing excellent accommodation and working conditions, the sojourn at Ploërmel also permitted the participants to return to the origins of the Congregation and to live, by stages, the pilgrimage following in the footsteps of our Founders Jean-Marie de la Mennais and Gabriel Deshayes.

All the Brothers of the session noted with appreciation the quality of welcome received in our Communities of Ploërmel and of Paris. Very many thanks to Brothers François Milin, Michel Vallée and to all the Brothers who helped in the smooth running of the session especially for transport and feeding.

### **1.4 The Ongoing Formation :**

Brothers Guillermo Dávila and Jean Pétilon of the Ongoing Formation Animation Team, first presented the evaluation of the **session of formation for the Brothers of 35-50 years** which took place at Ploërmel and in Paris from 16 July to 18 August 2010. As a whole, his first session answered the expectations of the participants who particularly appreciated the pilgrimage following the footsteps of the Founders, the diversity of contents presented, the wealth of the internationality despite the difficulty of languages. The reflection then went on to stress the necessity, in the different Provinces and Vice-provinces, of preparing well the candidates to this session of formation and of foreseeing its follow-up.

In liaison with the Ongoing Formation Team, the Council decided that **the next session for the Brothers aged 35 to 50 years will take place at Ploërmel from 13 July to 18 August 2011.**

The Council then worked with the Ongoing Formation Animation Team on different points:

- **The theme of the 150th year**, in particular, on its launching in the different Provinces and Vice-provinces.
- **The booklets of Lectio divina** proposed to the Brothers and to the Laity : the pamphlet presenting 4 Sundays of the Ordinary Time of the year C has normally reached the Communities. A new booklet for the Time of Christmas is actually being prepared.

**The international Council of the ongoing formation** will have their first meeting in Rome in mid-March 2011. The **Council of Information** will also meet in Rome on the same dates.

### **1.5 Preparation for the meeting of Major Superiors in 2011**

The ensemble of the major Superiors of the Congregation will convene in Rome at the General Headquarters from the 2 to 10 March 2011. The Council has drawn an agenda for this meeting and has prepared the modalities for its running. It will be the last reunion of this kind before the General Chapter of 2012.

## 2. The admissions to perpetual profession

The Brother Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has admitted to the perpetual vows for **Saint Teresa of the Child Jesus Province** (Uganda) :

Bro. BYABASHEIJA Hilary,  
Bro. MUGISHA Alex,  
Bro. MURAMUZI John Paul,  
Bro. NSUBUGA Leonard,  
Bro. TUMWEBAZE Augustine

## 3. The Mennaisian Family

After consultations and modifications, the Council adopted **the formation project of the Mennaisian Family**. This document follows the Framework Document and specifies the main points of the content of the formation to be followed in all the sectors of the Congregation. It revolves around 3 definite modalities: the collaboration, the participation and the membership of the Mennaisian Family.

It will be sent to the major Superiors in the next few weeks. It will then be the responsibility of each Province and Vice-province to adapt and implement it locally.

## 4. The General Chapter 2012

The General Council went on to reflect on the next General Chapter of 2012, and brings already the following information to the knowledge of the Brothers :

**The General Chapter will take place at the Mother-House of the Brothers at Ploërmel**, in the course of the month of **March 2012**.

**The Preparatory Commission** is made up of the members of the General Council and of Brothers Guillermo Dávila, Michel Gougeon and Robert Smyth. The first meeting of the Commission will take place at Ploërmel on 28 and 29 November 2010.

**The Laity**, in the framework of the Mennaisian Family, will participate in this Chapter according to the modalities yet to be specified.

## 5. The Mission of Indonesia

Since the beginning of September 2010, two Novices began their formation under the responsibility of Brother Stéphane Le Pape, Master of Novices.

Brother Miguel Villace is in-charge of the three new Postulants. The two houses of formation are near each other in the same street, at Yogyakarta, on the island of Java.

Reflection is still going on in view of the future Scholasticate : at the end of the month of November 2010, a meeting will take place at Manila, in the Philippines, to prepare this stage of initial formation.

## 6. The Jean-Marie de la Mennais Year : 150th

The General Council will be present at Ploërmel on **26, 27 and 28 November 2010** for the official opening of the 150<sup>th</sup> year. They will participate in the diverse manifestations in the Mother-House at Ploërmel for the launching of this special year.

To mark the link between all the sectors of the Congregation and to underline the missionary dynamism of this 150<sup>th</sup> year, the General Council had a replica made in wood (of a reduced size) of **the Missionaries Cross**. This Cross will go round, according to an established calendar, in all the

different parts of the Congregation until the General Chapter of 2012. To help in the use of this Cross, an animation booklet will also be proposed.

Within the framework of this 150<sup>th</sup> year, Brother Superior General has prepared a **book** entitled

« *Following Jesus in the way of Jean-Marie de la Mennais* ». It should appear in the next few weeks and to be circulated by the Provinces and Vice-provinces. Number 8 of *La Mennais Magazine* gives its description on the last page.

Many initiatives connected with this 150<sup>th</sup> year are underway in all the sectors of the Congregation. **Number 8 of *La Mennais Magazine*** gives a wide coverage of this and invites everybody to know more about it.

The **new Internet site of the Congregation** will be opened on 26 November 2010. It will offer in 3 languages a renewed tool of communication for the whole Congregation and the Mennaisian Family.

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### Calendar of the members of the General Council

#### **Bro. Yannick HOUSSAY, S.G.**

October and November	France
December – mid-January	Rwanda and RDC
Mid-January - February	Rome

#### **Bro. Miguel Angel MERINO**

October and November	France
December and January	Spain
February	Rome

#### **Bro. Gerard BYARUHANGA**

November	Rwanda and Philippines
End of November	Ploërmel
December and January	East Africa
February	Rome

#### **Bro. Gildas PRIGENT**

October and November	Indonesia and Philippines
End of November	Ploërmel
December and January	West Africa
February	Rome

**The next Council will be held in Rome from 14 to 28 February 2011**