

THE MENNAISIAN CHARISMA



La Mennais

Postulation Bulletin
The year 2017 - April 2017 - N° 4

God alone



Why Jean-Marie de la Mennais' beatification?

"I have a great devotion to the Servant of God if our founder led a holy life, what need is there to because of the good he did in our diocese, in Brit- proclaim him holy before everybody? If our Father tany, and in France at large, the good that I have insisted so much on simplicity, on humility and on seen myself for 28 years. I long for his beatification the discreet nature of our Congregation, what need for the general goodness of the Church and for the is there to proclaim his holiness to the whole honor of the clergy of Brittany, and for the good that Church and the world? If our mission is to work in- will thereafter be realised for the Church of France, tensely upon the evangelisation of young people and children, why waste time, money and re- the work of our schools, and religious vocations. sources for a work that is not directly related to our activities?"

(The Monk Jacobus Allo, Positio super fama, 1923, p.80)

And he added: "On the virtues of the vener- able, the Brothers of Christian Instruction keep their judgment [of heroicity] and, during retreats, I have often heard them talk of their devotion to their Founder. "

For a long time now (1911!) We, the Brothers, the Daughters of Providence, and our Mennaisian friends, pray and work for the official recognition by the Church, of our "Founder" Jean-Marie de la Mennais. This sometimes seems superfluous to us:

In rereading the opening document of the cause (1911) we can rediscover the atmosphere of joy and enthusiasm for this great gift. Here are some testimonies:

"I hasten to respond to your call and would like to do much more for this cause that interests the Church, your Institute and our country as a whole."

(Sister Marie Fidèle, Positio super introductione causae 1911, p.636)

"For your part, you will help to perpetuate, within your religious family, the ever-vivifying spirit of the eminent priest whose father he was."

(Ibidem, pp. 638)

"He (the Founder) will continue from heaven to watch over your Congregation and he will obtain for it the lights and graces that may be necessary for it in the sad circumstances that we will be going through."

(Bishop Jacquemet, Bishop of Nantes, ibidem, page 643).

Let us remember that we are in 1911, that is to say, in the years following the secularisation, the dispersal and the persecution of religious institutes in France.

With these words of enthusiasm for the introduction of the Cause of canonisation of the Founder, we would like, with simplicity, to give you the benefits of this official recognition by the Church, that is to say, the People of God.

1. Holiness must be brought to light

Just as the lighted candle must be placed on the table and the city must be clearly visible on the mountain so that everyone can see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven, thus, in every beatification, it is the Church that gives light. Thus is born a new and original history of holiness that has never been seen before. In a world where violent stories prevail, the narrative of

a story of sanctity, that is, an adventure of love is a precious gift for the Church and society. Why then do we want to lock up Father de la Mennais only in the Mennaisian milieu? His charism, his history, and his holiness do not belong to us, but to the Church for the world. It is only by his beatification that a light which will be put on will go beyond the limits of our milieu.

2. Father de la Mennais does not belong the past but the future

It is true that we study, we search into his history, we deepen the roots and the development of his and our charism through studies, thanks be to God, they have been very accurate in recent years. But all this work is not the spiritual archeology of a world that no longer exists. Certainly, the circumstances, the historical, geographical and social contexts have changed. But the charism remains a living seed that gives fruit at all times and in all places. It is the work of the Holy Spirit, who has however to incarnate himself in a person who has listened to him and has borne fruit in a heroic manner. And this person is our Founder, Jean-Marie: he is a prophet for today who indicates us the way, introduces the mission to us and guides us through everyday life to accomplish the evangelisation of young people and the children in the field of education, today more than ever decisive and to be profoundly renewed. The recognition of the holiness and the mission of Father de la Mennais is God's

sign for our future.

4. We have a true intercessor in heaven

3. The adventure of Jean-Marie's holiness is a very strong call

Each saint was a creator, a unique being, and an innovator. He opens new paths and launches a group of disciples in a great adventure of love, service and mission up to the ends of the earth and to the extreme measure of offering one's life "for".

Jean-Marie himself opened so many roads in the countryside and the towns of Brittany and France at large, in the islands of slavery and ignorance, in foreign countries deprived of the Gospel, and to the little ones and the poor of all conditions. These "corsair" horizons are like siren voices for young people of all ages, let alone for today's young people who seek responses to their desires to give their lives to something great and beautiful for God and men.

The beatification would be like a loudspeaker for the young people of today and the voice of Jean-Marie would certainly be heard in a strong and vigorous way. "How can they come, if no one calls them?" Can we silence the voice of the Spirit of holiness, especially in our time where the young people hear a thousand and one voices, but very few people call them to the great service of God and Brothers, especially in the West?

Yes, truly we can pray to the Father even today, and we are already doing so much: novenas, particular prayers, Founder's Day (on this subject: the first was launched in Canada in 1927, 90 years ago). But we have important limitations: we cannot celebrate Mass in his memory, we cannot officially and publicly venerate him, put his portrait in an official place of worship ... It is for this reason that it is convenient to pray the novena outside the liturgy of the hours which is the public prayer of the Church.

This seems to be a secondary detail, but because we are made of flesh and soul, we need signs, small or big, that help us to naturally follow our heart. In this we follow the liturgical character that entails in prayers and gestures, material signs and divine presence. The beatification would help us to live in a "liturgical" way the devotion to the Father and consequently would introduce a private devotion into the official domain of the liturgy of the Church.

These are some indications that can help us live with joy, commitment and enthusiasm this path of the Cause of Canonisation of our Founder Jean-Marie de la Mennais.

Brother Dino De Carolis

Healings, favours and miracles?

When we pray through the intercession of Father de la Mennais to obtain a favour or a cure, we can ask the question: are we really convinced that through his prayer we may obtain, for ourselves or for those for whom we pray, a favor, a healing, whether spiritual or physical?

A mother in a family at Biddeford; Me, U.S.A wrote: "Since 1952, one of my children, now five years old, suffered from very bad headaches. After examining him, several doctors believed he had polio. But the headaches continued to the point of becoming unbearable. I had then recommended him to the prayer of the monthly novena to Venerable de la Mennais. "In the General Hospital of Maine, where I drove my little patient, the radiography disclosed a brain tumor. It was in 1952; but it was not until July 1954 that they tried to operate on him: it lasted six hours. Surgeons discovered a second deeper tumor that they dared not remove. They told me to take the child to the hospital; six months later the little patient then would undergo a series of examinations. "However, in September 1954, when the surgeon took a new X-ray, he noted such worrying growth of the tumor that he ordered an immediate operation. My child entered

the hospital for the second time on 17th September. I then requested the Brothers at the school to pray to Venerable Jean-Marie de la Mennais for the success of this operation, more serious than the first, and every day my family united with the community for the prayers of the novena.

"The operation was set for September 23; but the day before, the doctors took a new X-ray, and, to their surprise, none could find any trace of the tumor! It was the fifth day of the novena . Two days later, the child left the hospital. Since that time, he was examined twice. Finally, the doctor declared him cured in an inexplicable way. My little boy now attends school and is in perfect health. Thank you with all my heart Father de la Mennais.

