

ECHOES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

Number 60

June 2007

The General Council began their session with three days of prayer and reflection at La Verna, a high place, where St. Francis of Assisi received the Stigmata. It was particularly the occasion of reviewing the work done by the Council during their first year of office.

During the present session, the members of the General Council have participated in various sessions and meetings organised by the Union of Superiors General (General Assembly of the Superiors General, Executive Board Meeting, Commission for Sudan, and Commission for Education).

This issue of the Echoes brings to the whole Congregation the following information and decisions :

1. The animation of the Congregation:

1.1 The General Council's animation responsibilities:

After a review of the first year's performance, and with reference to the last General Chapter, the Superior General has decided to share the different animation mandates and duties with his Assistants. «*Such a method of animation allows for a more global approach to the reality of the different sections of the Congregation, favours a better understanding of life, underscores the internationality and thus reinforces unity and communion* » (Pg. 30, General Chapter 2006 : *Functions of Assistants*).

The Brother Superior General confides the following mandates to his Brother Assistants:

Brother Miguel Angel MERINO, in-charge of the **On-Going Formation** and the **Shared Mission**;

Brother Gérard BYARUHANGA, in-charge of the **Missionary Engagement** and the **Vocations Ministry**;

Brother Gildas PRIGENT, in-charge of the **Initial Formation** and the **Vocations Ministry**.

These new mandates are in addition to those previously attributed to them, in particular for the accompaniment of the Provinces and Vice-provinces, and which are retained.

1.2 Life in the Provinces and Vice-Provinces :

Following the different visits made by the Superior General and the Brother Assistants since mid-March, the Council has made a survey of some sectors: the Mission in Indonesia, the Vice-Province of Kenya-Tanzania, and the Province of Jean de la Mennais (Canada).

Two particular events have also been noted by the Assistants who participated: the Mennaisian Congress held at Ploermel from 27 to 29 April, and the meeting of Major Superiors at the Scholasticate of Abidjan at the beginning of May.

In its survey of the Congregation, the Council has taken note of the different actions taken in the Provinces and Vice-Provinces for the on-going formation of the Brothers.

The Council has also studied the Directory of the Province of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus (Uganda) and the Vice-Province of Kenya - Tanzania and given its approbation to the text.

1.3 The preparation of different sessions :

The Council has devoted time to the final and detailed preparation and organisation of the forthcoming two sessions:

- a) **The session on the Vocations Ministry** to be held from the 5th to the 12th of August 2007 at Castelgandolfo. The main themes to be discussed will be :
 - The Vocations Ministry; education : as **instilling** into the youths **the meaning of life**, the accompaniment in the Vocations Ministry;
 - General pastoral work and the Vocations Ministry;
 - The Vocations Ministry and the life in the Communities;
 - The Vocations Ministry in the Shared Mission.
- b) and the **Major Superiors' session** to be held at Ploërmel from 10 to 25 October 2007. In view of this meeting the Council considered the question of a Vade Mecum for the use of the Major Superiors, and the question of government in the Rule of Life
- c) The General Council has also deepened its reflection on the forthcoming international meetings, especially on the **Shared Mission**. The results of the international survey launched in the month of May are arriving in Rome. The final synthesis of this worldwide survey is underway. In order to prepare this session of 2008, an international Commission will be set up.

1.4 The Initial Formation in French-speaking Africa

A meeting of Major Superiors having the young in formation at the Scholasticate level in the French-speaking Africa took place at Abidjan on 5 and 6 May 2007, in the presence of Brother Gildas Prigent, Assistant Superior General. This meeting had as its objective the study of the current situation and the orientations to be taken, in particular, with regard to the subsequent increase in the number of student Brothers.

The Superiors re-affirmed the relevance of the actual formation and the necessity of keeping it up. This year, a second Community of formation has been opened already but on rented premises. It was decided, therefore, to purchase a new piece of land on which to build a second residence for the Brothers in formation. Other developments will eventually be made on the actual land of the Scholasticate.

1.5 The On-Going Formation

- The third booklet **The Rule of Life in the light of the Word of God** whose theme is the Evangelical Counsels, is already at the disposal of the Provinces and Vice-provinces. The dispatching of the next three booklets will be spread over the period of 2007-2008 and will complete this formation cycle.
- The English translation of the *Anthologie tirée de ses œuvres* of Brother Marcel Doucet is completed. Final preparations are being made before it is sent to the printing press.

2. The decisions of the Superior General and his Council

2.1 Nominations in the General Administration:

The Brother Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has named

Brother Louis BALANANT Treasurer General, for a third three-year mandate,
and Editor of the Chronicle for a third three-year mandate.

Brother **Gerard CHATELIER**, Director of the Generalate and Superior of the
Community for a second three-year mandate.

2.2 Nomination of the Vice-Provincial of Polynesia:

The Brother Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has named :

Brother **Jean-Pierre LE REST**, Vice-Provincial of Polynesia
for a third three-year mandate.

2.3 Nomination of the Master of Novices of the Province of Spain:

The Brother Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has named:

Brother **Rafael ALONSO**, Master of Novices of the Province of Spain,
for three years.

The Noviciate will be in the Community of Virgin de Nuria in Madrid,
and its duration will be one year.

2.4 Admissions to the Perpetual Profession :

The Brother Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has admitted to perpetual
vows:

Brother **Anthony KAMAU**, of the Vice-Province of Kenya-Tanzania

Brother **Eric MWITHIGA**, of the Vice-Province of Kenya-Tanzania.

3. Mission of Indonesia

Last March, the Superior General made his first visit to Indonesia. He was accompanied by his Assistant, Brother Gildas Prigent, who was going there for the second time. While on their journey, they called at Yodjakarta to study the possibility of opening a second Community: visits and various meetings – with the Bishop of the Diocese, and with the Superiors of Brothers' and Sisters' Congregations etc. – were on their programme.

At Larantuka, the mission continues with the children and the youths, be it in the framework of the formation for the 'Pusat la Mennais' or of the different activities of animation and formation in the educational centres of the Diocese and the Parish. The Vocations Ministry work is being pursued by the Brothers, in spite of the difficulties involved, but the Brothers are looking forward to the future with hope. Fortunately, the Brothers are in good health, even though some would welcome a well deserved holiday break. Another good piece of news : the long resident permits were renewed for Brothers Alberto, Miguel and Stéphane. As soon as possible, Brother Daniel will also obtain a similar visa!

The constructions are going on according to plan and, little by little, they are transforming the general atmosphere of the Community! The Pusat (formation centre where computer, tailoring and motor-mechanical lessons will be given) is nearing completion, and the building of the aspirants' dormitory is under way... Only work on the multi-purpose hall has stopped because of lack of sufficient funding. But we are still hopeful! The next stage will be the provision of the necessary equipment for these new facilities.

4. The Casa Generalizia

Since several weeks, the *Casa Generalizia* has been undergoing major transformations in the older section of the house (the section used by the General Administration is still intact for the time being) and new sanitary and electrical installations are being put in place. The roof has already been changed since a few months. The big Community of Casa is trying, not without difficulty, to adapt itself to all the constraints occasioned by the transformation works, such as deafening noise and dust!

All these transformations are in view of improving the capacity for accommodation of visitors and the possible organisation of meetings in the House. This work is expected to be completed by the beginning of October 2007.

Calendar of the Members of the General Council

Brother Yannick HOUSSAY

29th June to 23rd July	Argentina-Uruguay
23 July to 15Aug	Rome
1 st Sept to 20th Sept	Rome (to go to Dapaong for Professions)
20 Sept to 30th Oct	France (Council + Major Superiors session)

Brother Miguel Angel MERINO

25th June to 22nd July	Haïti
22nd July to 30th Aug	Rome
20th Sept to 5th Nov	France (Council + sessions)

Brother Gérard BYARUHANGA

20 th June to 2nd Aug	USA
3rd Aug to 20th Sept	Rome
20th Sept to 5th Nov	France (Council + sessions)

Brother Gildas PRIGENT

22nd June to 30th June	Paris
30th June to 24th July	RDC (Congo)
30th July to 15th Aug	Rome
2nd Sept to 10th Sept	France (provincial team session)
20th Sept to 5th Nov	France (Council + sessions)

**N.B. : the next Council session will take place at Ploërmel
from 20th September to 6th October 2007.**