



ECHOES OF THE General Council



200
La Mennais 2019

Number 892 - May - June 2017

The General Council held its ordinary session from 22nd May to 15th June 2017 at the Casa Generalizia in Rome.

During this session, on 6th June, the General Council, together with the Casa community, underlined the opening of the Bicentenary, the first year of which is devoted to the General Chapter 2018. This was the main object of the work of the Council

The Brother Superior General participated in the meeting organised by the Union of Superiors General at the end of May. The interventions of this assembly, available in all languages on the site "Vidimus" (<http://vidimusdominum.org>), are centred on the theme of pastoral vocations in an intercultural world. Its objective was to enter into the preparation of the 2018 Synod on "The young people, faith and vocational discernment". A congress organised by the CIVCSVA will take place in Rome on the Pastoral of Vocations and Consecrated Life from the end of November to the beginning of December.

The Brother Superior General also participated in the celebration of the bicentenary of the Marist Brothers at their Casa Generalizia, on 6th June, 2017.

1. Animation of the Congregation

1.1 Visits to Provinces and Districts:

In recent months, the Brother Superior General and the Brothers Assistants visited various sectors of the Congregation. Some highlights of these visits:

- **Brother Yannick Houssay**, visited the Province of Haiti, communities and works. For many years, the Province has established good structures of animation and government which today bear fruit. The Pastoral of vocations and the development of the Mennaisian Family are at the heart of the animation of the Province. The presence and the apostolate of the young Brothers is a force for the communities and the works. These are very dynamic: the harvest is abundant; the workers are expected.
- **Brother Gildas Prigent** travelled to West Africa to visit the 9 communities of Benin, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire. All communities are well engaged in the works and mission of evangelisation. Their inclusion and presence in local churches is appreciated by the priests and the bishops. The District manages several formation houses: a Pre-Postulate in Ogaro (Togo), a Postulate in Thian (Benin), a Novitiate in Dapaong (Togo), and a Francophone Scholasticate in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire). Brother Gildas Prigent saw the good atmosphere of these Houses of Formation and the commitment of the Formators.
- **Brother Gerard Byaruhanga**, during his visit to Uganda, participated in several meetings of the Provincial Team and the Council. It was an opportunity for him to witness the launch of new missions (Ibanda), real estate projects that strengthen communities and works, the commitment and good work of Bro. Joseph Zziwa, the Projects Manager for the Province, etc. Brother Gerard also visited Kenya.

- **Brother Guillermo Dávila** first visited the community of Huatusco, Mexico. Recognition of the congregation by the Mexican state is on track. This is another step in the development of the FIC mission in this country. Then the Bro. Guillermo went to Haiti. With the Brother Provincial of Canada and the Brothers of Mexico, he presented the mission of Huatusco to the Provincial Council of Haiti. The two Provinces may be able to collaborate in the future in the development of this mission. Lastly, Bro. Guillermo lived several revitalising encounters with the Mennaisian Family in Argentina-Uruguay: Holy Week with the young people (90 youths and 10 facilitators from the 4 Cono Sur countries); a (3 days) meeting of the Management Teams of the establishments (50 people); a meeting of Argentine-Uruguayan Educational Guidance teams; accompaniment of a group of Walsh students at the Educational Centre of Maldonado.

1.2 General Chapter

An important work was initiated with the International Commission of the Mennaisian Family on the identity of the Lay Mennaisian.

A survey was carried out and was sent to all Mennaisian lay people, especially those who are most committed to the Brothers. Since its publication on the site of the Congregation on 1 April, more than 200 responses have been collected: 117 Spanish-speakers, 92 French-speakers, 9 Anglophones. Some sectors, which have preferred to carry out the paper survey due to the difficulty of accessing the Internet, still have to send their responses.

Following this inquiry, a text on "the identity of the Lay Mennaisian" will be proposed in view of the next Chapter.

During this session, the General Council made a first effort in this direction. They will send it to the members of the International Commission of the Mennaisian Family, in order to pursue the writing of this text with them.

1.5 Celebration of the Bicentenary of the Congregation:

Laitie and Mennaisian Brothers have henceforth entered into the 3 years of the celebration of the Bicentenary of the Congregation.

On 10th May last, as all the communities were invited to do so, Casa Generalizia celebrated the commemoration of the first meeting of our two Founders in 1817. The site of the Congregation made echo of it.

The 6th June was the official launching of the Bicentenary celebrations. On this occasion the Superior General sent a video message to all the Mennaisian Family, which is on the homepage of the site. Those interested in the text of this message may ask their Major Superior or the Secretary General.

Lastly, there are many tools available to Brothers, lay people, communities, works, and Associations ... an Order Form is available on the Website.

The Bicentenary hymn is in the same section (Bicentenary / Logo-resources). This hymn was composed and put into music in Spain, translated and adapted in English by Brother James Hayes. After being translated and adapted in French by Brother Louis Le Guichet, it is currently being recorded at the College of St Julien de Malestroit.

2 Decisions of the Brother Superior General and his Council

2.1 Nominations

The Brother Superior General, with the consent of his Council, took the following decisions:

- **District of Saint John Paul II (Congo DRC - Rwanda):**

Brother Pascal MBOLINGABA, is appointed Visitor of the District of Saint John Paul II, for a new three-year term.

- **District Saint-Paul (Benin - Ivory Coast - Senegal - Togo):**

Brother Jean de la Croix LARE, is appointed Visitor of the District Saint-Paul, for a first mandate of 3 years.

- **District Saint-Pierre-Chanel (Tahiti - Marquises):**

Brother Rémy QUINTON, is appointed Visitor of the District Saint-Pierre-Chanel, for a first mandate of 3 years.

- **District of Saint-François-Xavier (Indonesia - Japan - Philippines):**

Brother Gildas PRIGENT, First Assistant, is appointed Major Superior of the District of Asia. In addition to his current duties, he will assume the responsibilities of Visitor of this new District until the end of his mandate as Assistant.

Brother Jean-Pierre HOULE, is appointed Deputy Visitor of the district of Asia.

- **Other appointments:**

ROME: Brother Hervé ASSE, Secretary General of the Congregation and Superior of Casa Generalizia for a second three-year mandate.

ABIDJAN: Brother Wilfried FARA, Assistant Superior of the Scholasticate of Abidjan, and Superior of the Community Gabriel Deshayes, for a three-year mandate.

Brother Wilfried has completed his second cycle of theological studies at the Gregorian University in Rome.

- **Communities and Works of Italy**

The General Council, after exchanges with the Council of the Province of St. John the Baptist and the Brothers of Italy, decided to unite the 3 Italian communities into a Delegation under the direct responsibility of the General Council. Thus the Brothers of Sant 'Ivo, San Giuseppe and Casa Generalizia will continue to support themselves through periodic meetings. Together they will seek the ways of the future that God will inspire them.

The Brothers of Italy are very grateful to the Province of St. John the Baptist, which has provided much-appreciated support during the 13 years during which the Community and School of Sant 'Ivo and the Community of Castelgandolfo were part of the Province.

Currently a new stage opens up to them. They entrust themselves to the prayer of the whole Congregation.

2.2 Accounts of Provinces/Districts (year 2016).

The General Council studied and approved the Accounts of the various sectors of the Congregation presented by the Brother Treasurer General. At the beginning of the year, Brother Treasurer General travelled to Uganda to conduct a meeting of community bursars and Brothers in-charge of projects (real estate, farm, etc.).

The Provincial/District Treasurers perform an important mission for the Congregation and recognise the need and urgency of solidarity among all sectors. A session of the treasurers will be held in Rome, from the end of September to the beginning of October to analyze the current economic situation of the Congregation and to scrutinise the evolutions in progress. The "experts" appointed after the last General Chapter will also be invited to this meeting.

Calendar of the members of the General Council

Bro. Yannick HOUSSAY

23 June – 20 July : France
20 July : Rome

Bro. Gildas PRIGENT

18 June – 02 August : Asia
03 August – 05 September : France
06 September : Rome

Bro. Gerard BYARUHANGA

21 June – 08 July : Uganda
09 July – 28 July : Tanzania – Kenya
29 July – 15 September : Uganda
15 September : Rome

Bro. Guillermo DÁVILA

18 July – 08 August : Spain
09 August – 17 September : Argentina-Uruguay
17 September : Rome

The next session of the General Council will take place in Rome, from the 18th to the 30th September 2017.