

A new page

200

La Mennais 2019

ECHOES OF

The General Council

Number 97 - February-March 2019

The General Council held its ordinary session, from 18 February to 8 March 2019, at the Casa Generalizia in Rome

The Casa Community took advantage of the presence of the General Council to invite the Community of the General House of the Brothers of St Gabriel: it was a beautiful fraternal moment.

1. Animation of the Congregation

1.1 Visits to Provinces and Districts

In recent months, the Brothers of the General Council have visited various sectors of the congregation. Here are some highlights of these visits:

- **Brother Hervé Zamor** last October-November had an intensive internship in **Spain**, to master the language of Cervantes, especially in Zamora. But it was also an opportunity for him to meet the Brothers on the feast of the Province and to present the main orientations of the General Chapter 2018. The participation in the Provincial Council, the meeting of the Community Superiors, and the visits from other Communities helped to give him a good overview of the Province and its dynamism. The other highlight for the Superior General was his visit to **Uganda** at the beginning of the year: entry of 9 Novices to the Novitiate, renewal of the vows of 28 young Brothers, first profession of the 11 Novices, including the first South Sudanese Brother, the perpetual profession of 5 Brothers of the Province and the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of 3 Brothers. After these celebrations, Brother Hervé took the time to visit the Kasasa Novitiate, the Kisubi Postulate and Scholasticate. Almost 60 young people are under formation in these houses, but the real challenge is to set up Formation Teams to support these young people. Finally, the Superior General visited in two periods almost all the Communities of **France**: many meetings at the level of the Brothers as well as the Mennaisian Family Guardianship. It was also an important moment of listening and discernment as the Brother Provincial was coming to the end of his mandate.

- **Brother Jean-Paul Peuzé** in November, made his first canonical visit of the Province of St. Michael the Archangel (**Tanzania-Kenya**). Numerous trips to visit the Communities and the works of the Province: they made it possible to measure the significant engagement of the Brothers in the educational mission, the fraternal climate of the Communities, but also of the usual challenges of the vocations pastoral care, and the initial and the ongoing formation. The arrival of five young Brothers from the Scholasticate in the Province is good news! After a first visit to Togo last Summer, Brother Jean-Paul made the canonical visit of the communities of **Togo** and **Benin** in December. The Brothers are fully engaged in works of rather modest size, in a difficult economic context. Benin hosts a Postulate in Thian this year with 6 young people, and Togo has in Ogaro a Pre-Postulate of 6 young people as well. In Dapaong, where 3 Brothers made their perpetual profession at the end of December 2018, the Novitiate has 4 Novices: 2 from Congo, one from Senegal and one from Togo. From West Africa, Brother Jean-Paul went to **Uganda** for the Provincial Chapter. He was then able to meet the Formators of the 3 International Formation Houses in Uganda.

- **Brother Vincent Ssekate** in October-November made the canonical visit of **Haiti**. One of the highlights of the visit was the definitive commitment of Brother Jean-Marc Gustave at Delmas;

Provincial Council meetings, visits to communities, schools and formation houses allowed Brother Vincent to have a good overview of this Province he was getting acquainted with. A Province which is characterised by the presence of many young Brothers who participate generously in the educational mission of the Province in all its forms. Then in January, Brother Vincent flew to **Polynesia**. A smaller district, with 3 communities and 8 schools, but very extensive since the Marquesas Islands are more than 1400 km from Tahiti. It was another time of discovery for Brother Vincent. Beyond their isolation and their small number, the Brothers remain well engaged in the educational mission. The animation of the Mennaisian Family Guardianship, and Vocation Ministry remain important issues for the District. Brother Vincent then returned to **France** for the Provincial meeting of the Mennaisian Family.

- **Brother Miguel Aristondo**, at the end of the year, took part in several days of animation of the Province of **Spain**: the Assembly of Brothers in Bilbao and a day with lay people mainly around the General Chapter. Then he flew to South America, where he joined the Brothers of **Chile, Bolivia, Argentina and Uruguay** to experience various highlights of this sector. He took advantage of this time when all the Brothers were present to explain the process of the erection of the new administrative unit of Cono Sur: survey for the future Major Superior, and the steps towards the next chapter of foundation of the new entity, to be held next July. A rich time of encounters promising new pages!

1.2 Year theme

During the Council, the 3rd stage of this year's "**Calling Disciples**" theme was finalised and has since been sent to the Provinces and Districts.

After the official launch of the Bicentennial, on June 2nd at Ploërmel, will begin a new year, which will be the last step of the Bicentennial process started in June 2017. After the theme "**Discerning, scanning the horizon**", 2017-2018, year of the General Chapter, then "**Calling Disciples**", 2018-2019, the theme of the coming year will be "**Sent to the Mission**".

The first elements of animation will reach the Provinces and the Districts next June.

1.3 Formation of Formators

After the 2018 General Chapter, Brother Yannick Houssay received a mission of accompaniment to the Young Brothers and the **formation of the Formators of the Brothers**. He participated in two days of work of the General Council.

These two days made it possible to specify the contours of a formation which would be destined to the future Formators of the Congregation, to set up a Formation Team of the Brothers Formators, to discern possible candidates.

The reflection on the **formation of Formators** will continue at the meeting of Major Superiors at Portugalete

1.4 Meeting of Major Superiors at Portugalete

It has already been presented in the last Echoes of the General Council. It will take place from **8 to 15 April 2019 in Portugalete (Spain)**. The General Council spent a lot of time planning this meeting. It will be a time of formation of the Major Superiors and working together for the implementation of the Chapter and the preparation of the Bicentennial.

The last 3 days (April 12-15) of the meeting of Major Superiors will coincide with the meeting of the members of the **Committee of this International Solidarity Fund (FSI)**.

The morning of April 15th will be devoted to a time of exchange between the Major Superiors and the members of the FSI Committee.

1.5 « The Mennaisian Family »

The General Chapter entrusted the General Council, *"in connection with the lay members of the International Commission of the Mennaisian Family, to pursue research with a view to an ever more dynamic and life-giving structuring of being together and Laity"* (General Chapter 2018, No. 17c). During this session, the General Council continued to reflect on the reality of the Mennaisian Family and its structuring. In the weeks to come, the Superior General will contact the CIVCSVA to see what steps are necessary to programme *"for the organisation and durability of the United Mennaisian Family, Brothers and Laity"* (General Chapter 2018, p 29).

1.6 Approval of the accounts of the General Administration

The General Council studied the accounts of the General Administration, presented by the General Treasurer. It adopted the budget estimate and decided the fee for the year 2019.

2 Decisions of Brother Superior General and his Council

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

2.1 Erection of the District of South America (Argentina-Bolivia-Chile-Uruguay)

After the appropriate consultations,

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, decides that the new entity, consisting of the countries Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay, forms the District of South America.

This new administrative entity will be effective from 1 July 2019.

2.2 Nominations

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

- **Saint-Jean-Baptiste Province (France-England):**

Brother **Yannick HOUSSAY**, is appointed Provincial of the Province of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, for a term of 3 years.¹

¹ *Decision of the General Chapter 2018 : the Major Superiors' mandates (Provincial, Visitor) is now of 3 years.*

- **District of South America (Argentina-Bolivia-Chile-Uruguay):**

Brother **Benito ZAMPEDRI**, is appointed Visitor of the District of South America, for a term of 3 years¹.

- **Saint-Jean-Baptiste Province (France-England):**

Brother **Laurent BOUILLET** is appointed Provincial-Deputy of the Province of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, for a term of 3 years.

- **Saint-Jean-Baptiste Province (France-England):**

Brother **James HAYES** is appointed Provincial-Deputy of the Province of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, for a term of 3 years.

- **District of South America (Argentina-Bolivia-Chile-Uruguay):**

Brother **Felix CORADA**, is appointed Deputy Visitor of the District of Cono Sur, for a term of 3 years.

- **Other appointment:**

MANILA: Brother **Michel GOUGEON**, Director of the Scholasticate of Manila, for a term of 3 years.

2.2 Admission to perpetual profession

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

Brothers **Andreas PITO** and **Fransiskus Xaverius GUA MAKING**, 2 Brothers of the District St. Francis Xavier (Indonesia-Japan-Philippines).

Brothers **Damien HABIMANA**, **Jean-Marie Vianney MBARUSHIMANA**, **Vital RINGUYENEZA** and **Fulgence TURIKUMWE**, 4 Rwandan Brothers from the District of Saint John Paul II (Congo DRC-Rwanda).

3 Upcoming events

3.1 Opening of the Bicentenary in Ploërmel, June 2, 2019

The General Council will open the Year of the Bicentenary on **Sunday, June 2, 2019 in Ploërmel**. The Eucharist will be presided over by Bishop Lucien Fruchaud, Bishop Emeritus of Saint Briec, diocese of origin of the congregation. All the Brothers and Laity of the Mennaisian Family of Europe are invited. The other sectors of the Congregation are encouraged, as far as possible, to send a small delegation to the official opening of the Bicentenary of the Congregation.

The communities will receive a proposal of celebration for June 6, 2019. **On June 6 in Saint-Briec**, same day of the anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Union in this city between our two Founders, the General Council there will render for a time of prayer and thanksgiving in communion with the Church of this diocese.

On June 22, still in St Briec, it is the Sisters of Providence who will celebrate the bicentenary of their Congregation. The Assisting Brothers will be present.

3.2 The international retreat at Ploërmel

As already announced in the last Echoes of the General Council, an international retreat for the Mennaisian Family will take place in Ploërmel from **14 to 21 July 2019**. It will be animated by the

Brother Josu Olabarrieta. About thirty Brothers and lay people from all sectors of the Congregation are expected. The final list will be decided by the Major Superiors in Portugalete.

3.3 The "Tutti Fratelli" session in Rome

An *inter-congregational formation session* for the religious brothers, superiors of communities, will take place in Rome, **from September 8 to October 6, 2019**. Four Brothers of Christian Instruction will participate.

4 Communication

During this session, the General Council met with Mr. Michel Tanguy, on all topics related to information in the Congregation. An important time has been devoted to the future *"Bicentennial Album of the Brothers of Christian Instruction"* - 200 years of education and fraternity, which will be available this summer in the three languages of the Congregation. It is an important research and writing work that is being done. May Michel Tanguy be thanked and all the team of Brothers who works with him.

The General Council encourages everyone to go to the *Website of the congregation* to seize the tools available for the animation of the Bicentenary, those already present (images, songs, cartoon, photos, etc.) those to come (two videos, one on *the Mennaisian places* - and the other on *the spirit and the work of Jean-Marie de la Mennais*). The General Council encourages all members of the Mennaisian Family to send back to the General Secretariat, all the "new pages" that are written in the provinces and districts, so that they can be relayed on the Website.

Calendar of the members of the General Council

Brother Hervé ZAMOR

09 March – 03 April	:	Rome
03 – 17 April	:	Meeting of MS in Portugalete
17 April – 11 May	:	Rome
13 May – 14 June	:	General Council in Ploërmel

Brother Jean-Paul PEUZE

11 March – 20 March	:	Ivory Coast, visit of the communities of the Scholasticate
20 March – 03 April	:	Senegal, visit of the communities
03 April – 06 April	:	Rome
06 April – 16 April	:	Meeting of MS in Portugalete
16 April – 08 May	:	Rome
08 May – 23 June	:	General Council in Ploërmel

Brother Vincent SSEKATE

09 March – 03 April	:	Rome
03 – 17 April	:	Meeting of MS in Portugalete
17 April – 11 May	:	Rome
13 May – 14 June	:	General Council in Ploërmel

Brother Miguel ARISTONDO

13 March	:	Spain
03 – 17 April	:	Meeting of MS in Portugalete
17 April – 03 May	:	Huatusco
09 May – 16 June	:	General Council in Ploërmel

**The next session of the General Council will take place in Ploërmel
from 13th May to 14th June 2019.**