

A new page



ECHOS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

Number 98 - May - June 2019

The General Council held its ordinary session from May 13 to June 14, 2019 at the Mother House of Ploërmel.

The place was chosen because of the Bicentennial events that were celebrated during this period in Ploërmel. First of all, the 3-day Educational Congress by Mennaisian Network of the Province of Saint Jean-Baptiste, with the launch of the Bicentennial for the network; the official opening of this Bicentenary in Ploërmel on June 2nd; and finally a more sober celebration of 200 years in Saint-Brieuc, the very place where the Treaty of Union between our two founders was signed. All these events were well relayed by the site of the Congregation.

From May 22nd to 28th, Brother Miguel Aristondo took a brief absence to enable him preside and participate in the "Cap Esperance" Assembly of the Jean de la Mennais Province in Canada. On his return, the Council resumed its work, continuing the exchanges of the session of the Major Superiors held in Portugalete last April, to translate them into lines of action for the Year of the Bicentenary which will have the theme, "Leaving for the mission".

1. Animation de la Congrégation

1.1 Visites des Provinces et des Districts

Since the beginning of March, due to the session of the Major Superiors in Portugalete, the members of the General Council have been able to make only a few visits.

Brother Jean-Paul Peuzé concluded his visit to the Saint Paul District, visiting Ivory Coast and Senegal. In Abidjan, 22 young Brothers continue their initial formation in the two communities of the Francophone scholasticate. One of the challenges remains to strengthen the teams of the formators. In Senegal, two communities of 3 Brothers, in Diourbel and Vélingara, are fully dedicated in Catholic schools in predominantly Muslim areas. Brother Assistant was impressed by the commitment of the Brothers in their missionary apostolate. The third community, in Thiès, was affected this year by the death of Brother Pierre David, a missionary brother to the marrow, to whom the Church in Senegal paid a vibrant tribute. The District's challenge will be to strengthen this community, reduced to two Brothers, in order to continue the mission to the young people of Thiès, especially the hostel.

On his return from Africa, Brother Jean Paul made a canonical visit of the community of the Brothers of Sant'Ivo. Beyond, some health problems, which affected some Brothers at the beginning of the year, they continue their commitment and mission in both the school of Sant'Ivo and the Casa Menesiana at Castelgandolfo.

Brother Miguel Aristondo visited Mexico for the first time, where he discovered the mission of the Brothers at the John Paul II Centre in Huatusco. The meetings with young people and the Mennaisian Family in which he was able to participate, show hope. He was able to meet a young Mexican lady, who for several months now, has been in the process of a vocational search with the community of the Brothers there.

1.2 Theme of the Year

After *"Discerning, searching the Horizon" (2017-2018)*, *"Calling Disciples" (2018-2019)*, the General Council chose the theme *"Leaving for the Mission" for the Year (2019-2020)*.

On this occasion, as for the two previous years, the Superior General recorded a video message, which was broadcast on June 6, the date of the commemoration of the signing of the Treaty of Union. You can find the video and the text on the home page of the Congregation's website

On the other hand, the Major Superiors have received a dossier for the animation of the 1st stage of the theme of the year in their Province or District.

1.3 Two Commissions

During the session of the Major Superiors of Portugalete, last April, two working commissions composed of the different Provincials and Visitors, were set up. Their purpose is to promote synodal work with the General Council.

- a) The **"Ad Gentes" Commission**: Its mission is to help the General Council to discern the new missionary pages that the Congregation would be called upon to write in the next six years. The General Council expressed a two-fold wish: that three new missions involving several sectors, could be created: one in America, one in Asia and one in Africa; and that an international community is opened at the Mother House of Ploërmel to be at the service of everything related to formation. The Commission is working on the criteria for discernment and openness of these future projects.
- b) The **"Ongoing Formation" Commission**: its mission is to help the General Council for the permanent formation of the Brothers and the Mennaisian Family: theme of the year, local, continental and international formation sessions.

1.3 Following the General Chapter

1.4.1 Continental conferences

"The Chapter recommends that the General Council carry out its mission of government, discernment and animation by promoting sharing and participation of the other stakeholders. This could be done, for example, by: The organization of Continental Conferences which would bring together the Major Superiors and their Councils". (24.c.3).

Thus, the first continental conference "Europe" will be held in Rome, from 20 to 24 May 2020 and will bring together the Provincials of Spain, France-England and their Councils.

1.4.2 Formation of the Superiors of communities

"That Brothers' ongoing formation include an introduction to the service of authority ("government"), (11.h). "To Strengthen the unity of the Congregation as a living body, continental or international experiences will be offered: to the superiors of communities, in the form of sessions". (14.c)

Sessions for Community Superiors will be organized in all sectors in the coming years. The first will be held from 13 to 20 January 2020 in Uganda, for the Province St. Teresa of the Child Jesus (Uganda, South Sudan) and the second one for District of St. Paul, West Africa, from April 3 to 10, 2020.

A first international formation of local superiors will take place in Ploërmel during the summer of 2021.

1.4.3 Formation of Formators

"The formation of formators is a major challenge for our common future." (10) "We therefore propose That appropriate training and tools be given to formators to enable them to promote true fraternity and an openness to our international dimension. " (11.b)

A Formation session for Brothers Formators will take place in Abidjan in September 2020. It is intended for future formators or those who have just started this mission. The choice of participants will be made in close collaboration between the Major Superiors and the General Council.

1.4.4 Message from the General Council to schools on the theme of fraternity

"Each educational centre is invited to live out an inclusive educational philosophy that promotes fraternity, where everyone is attentive to the needs of others, lives in close proximity to all the members of the educational community (students and their families, teaching and non-teaching staff, administration." (3.1er §)

The General Council decided to record a short video message, addressed to all the young people of the schools and educational centres of the Mennaisian international network. It will be available in September 2019. This message focuses on fraternity, welcoming everyone and belonging to an international network.

1.4.5 Reference Text of the Mennasian Family and the Statutes of Lay Mennasian Associates

"The General Council to continue discerning with the members of the International Mennaisian family Commission an appropriate structure that will bring greater dynamism and life to our fraternal communion of Brothers and Laity together." (17.c)

Proposal of the Laity of the International Commission: "we began to discuss the possibility of seeking the official recognition of our statutes by the Church, through the means of the Congregation. As an outcome of our discussions we ask that this procedure be looked into further as a necessary step forward for the organization and ongoing life of a united Mennaisian family, Brothers and lay people together." (P.28)

The General Council, after having met an official from the Congregation of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life and taking into account the contributions of the Major Superiors during the session of Portugalete, retouched the Reference Text of the Mennaisian Family and prepared draft Statutes of the Lay Mennaisian associates.

The next meeting of the International Commission (October 2019) will continue the reflection before sending the Provinces and Districts the proposals for the organization and structuring of the Mennaisian Family.

2 Decisions of the Superior General and his Council

2.1 Appointments

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

• **Appointments:**

DAPAONG: Brother Eric MUGISA, Master of Novices at the Dapaong Novitiate, for a 3-year term.

PÉTION-VILLE: Brother Jean HERBINIÈRE, Master of Novices at the Pétion-Ville Novitiate, for a 3-year term.

ROME: Brother Joseph BELLANGER, in charge of the formation of the young Brothers, of formation of the Formators and Archivist General of the Congregation, for a 3-year term.

ROME: Brother Daniel BRIANT, Treasurer General of the Congregation, for a new term of 3 years.

ROME: Brother Dino DE CAROLIS, Postulator of the Congregation, for a new term of 3 years.

ABIDJAN: Brother Simon ALPHONSE, Director of the Scholasticate of Abidjan, for a new term of 3 years; and **Brother Gérard HOUNYETIN**, Deputy Director, for one year.

YOGYAKARTA: Brother Stéphane LE PAPE, Master of Novices at the Novitiate of Yogyakarta, for a new term of 3 years.

• **Other decisions:**

- The 2018 General Chapter asked to *"Appointing a person or a team of people whose role would be to create an international network of schools with a clear Mennaisian identity so as to encourage exchanges and collaboration between these schools."* (3a). The Superior General therefore appointed **Brother Guillermo DÁVILA**, leader of the team responsible for creating an International Network of Schools. This commission is constituted for a for 3 years term composed of:

F Guillermo DAVILA (USA), F Olivier Migot (France), Sonia ACERO (Spain), F Gildas PRIGENT (Philippines), and a layman from South America.

- The Brother Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has authorized the opening of a new community in **Timau - Nanyuki in Kenya**, and the taking charge of the **St Padre Pio High School** being established in this place.

2.2 Admissions to perpetual profession

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

Brothers **Jean-Yvelt PHILIPPE** and **Olson DUMEZIL**, Province Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague (Haiti)

Brother **Gilbert GBANYOBEDJOA**, Togolese Brother of Saint Paul District (West Africa)

3 Up-coming events

3.1 The International Retreat of July 2019 will bring together 30 Brothers and lay people from the eleven sectors of the Congregation. It will take place from July 14th to 21st at the Mother House of Ploërmel. Brother Josu Olabarrieta will be the main animator. This retreat is meant to be a **memorial** (remembrance and actualization) of what happened in the Chapel of the Eternal Father in Auray. This spiritual intense moment was the starting point of the New Page which was the Congregation for the people of that time.

3.2 "Tutti Fratelli" Formation in Rome, from September 8 to October 5, 2019. Nearly 60 members from 14 different congregations of Brothers will participate in this inter-congregational formation. This formation is intended for community superiors engaged in the animation of their District or Province. Brothers Nemesio Castaño (Spain), Valmyr Jacques Dabel (Haiti), Denis Katusiime (Uganda) and Oscar Ruiz (Cono Sur) will participate.

3.3 Meeting of the International Commission of the Mennaisian Family. This will be held at Casa Generalizia in Rome from 2 to 4 October 2019. 2.2 Admissions to perpetual profession

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Calendar of the members of the General Council

Frère Hervé ZAMOR

17 June – 27 June :	Tanzania – Kenya
28 June – 23 July:	Indonesia – Philippines – Japan
01 August – 31 August:	Haiti – Perpetual and First vows
01 September – 07 September :	Rome
08 September – 15 September:	Retreat of General Council
16 September – 5 October:	General Council in Rome

Frère Jean-Paul PEUZE

27 June – 07 July:	Tanzania, Provincial Chapter of the Province St Michel Archangel
08 July – 26 July :	Rome
27 July – 14 August:	Togo – Benin, Chapter of the District of St.-Paul
14 August– 7 September:	Rome and France
08 September – 15 September:	Retreat of General Council
16 September – 05 October:	General Council in Rome

Brother Vincent SSEKATE

15 June – 03 July:	France
04 July – 22 July:	Haiti, Chapter of the Province St Aloysius Gonzaga
24 July – 7 September :	Rome
08 September – 15 September:	Retreat of General Council
16 September – 05 October:	General Council in Rome

Hermano Miguel ARISTONDO

15 June – 25 June:	Ploërmel
26 June – 04 July:	Spain
04 July – 13 July:	Argentine, Chapter of the new District of South America
16 July – 21 July:	International Retreat at Ploërmel
22 July – 07 September :	Spain
08 September – 15 September:	Retreat of General Council
16 September – 05 October:	General Council in Rome

**The next session of the General Council will be held in Rome
from 16 September to 5 October 2019.**