

*A new page*



## ECHOES OF THE General Council

Number 99 - September-October 2019

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*The General Council held its ordinary session from 16<sup>th</sup> September to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 at Casa Generalizia in Rome.*

*Following the session of the General Council, from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> October, the meeting of the International Commission of the Mennaisian Family was held, with the participation of 6 lay people. You will find in these echoes the topics on which the Commission worked.*

*The General Council and the International Commission of the Mennaisian Family inaugurated with the community of the Casa, the extraordinary month of the mission, thus uniting in a particular way to the call for this year to «leaving for the mission».*

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

### 1. Animation of the Congregation

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#### a. Visits to Provinces and Districts:

Since the inauguration of the Bicentenary last June, the Brothers of the General Council have visited various sectors of the congregation, sharing with them important moments such as: Provincial or District Chapters, launching the Bicentenary, Perpetual professions ... Some important points of these visits:

- **Brother Hervé Zamor:** Brother Superior General, Hervé Zamor visited the Province of **Tanzania-Kenya** for the first time on the occasion of the Perpetual profession of 4 Brothers of Kenya. The participation in the Provincial Council and the visit to Moshi, Nairobi and Meru allowed him to discover the dynamism and the commitment of the Brothers of this Sector, and to encourage them to continue relentlessly with the Vocation Ministry, essential for the development of the Province. Brother Hervé also visited Nanyuki in Kenya, where a new school is being built for the Province.

Then the Superior General visited the three countries of the District of St. Francis Xavier: Indonesia, Japan and the Philippines. On 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019 in **Larantuka (Indonesia)**, it was the great festival of the District, with the final commitment of the first two Indonesian Brothers (Brothers Andreas and Frangky), the first Vows of the four Novices, who have since joined the Scholasticate of Manila; 40 years of religious life of Brother Gildas Prigent, Visitor and Brother Daniel Lefrère de Larantuka. The presence of many young people in formation in Indonesia, suggests a strengthening of our presence in the country. Then Brother Hervé Zamor went to **Japan**, where he met the Brothers gathered in the Community of Yokohama. Despite the advanced ages, the fraternal caring atmosphere and the willingness to serve the very end of all the Brothers are a great testimony to those around them. Finally, Brother Hervé Zamor visited the 3 Communities of the Philippines. The presence of three young Filipino Brothers and a vocation ministry, revitalised, are valuable assets for the growth of the District in the Philippines.

Finally, Brother Hervé Zamor visited **Haiti** in August. In addition to family time and participation in a formation day for Community Superiors, the Superior General presided over several celebrations: **on 14<sup>th</sup> August**, celebration for the entry of two Novices into the Novitiate and renewal of the commitment of 8 Lay Mennaisian Associates; **15<sup>th</sup> August**, feast of the Congregation, **final commitment of two Brothers** and first Vows of four young people. That same day, Brother Joseph Bellanger and Brother Éwald Guerrier were sent on mission respectively to Rome and Huatusco, Mexico. Notwithstanding the ongoing political and economic instability of the country, the Brothers continue to invest in children and young people and want to embrace the future with hope. Let's carry them in our prayers.

- **Brother Jean-Paul Peuzé** also went to **Tanzania**, to preside over the Chapter of the Province, which took place in Moshi from 1 to 3 July 2019. The assembly consisted of 20 Brothers of the Province. It also included two invited Ugandan brothers, Bro Peter Kazekulya and Bro Gerard Byahuranga. 6 Laity participated in the whole Chapter. It was the 2nd chapter of the Province. This Chapter was a very positive event for the brothers and lay people present and it made it possible to take important orientations for the Province and the Mennaisian Family.

Then Brother Jean-Paul went to **West Africa. In Benin**, he participated in the retreat and then chaired the chapter of the District, from 4 to 7 August. In addition to the ex-officio or elected Brothers, this chapter welcomed 3 Brothers of temporary vows and 5 Laity (2 from Senegal, 2 from Togo and 1 from Benin). The latter participated for a day and a half. The chapter was also the occasion for a strong and positive fraternal experience. There was a great convergence on the merits which reveals a strong will to move forward united for the mission. The chapter was followed by a **session of the District Vocations Delegates**. A dozen Brothers took part. The purpose of this meeting was to share, pool and harmonise the Vocations ministry of the District.

- **Brother Miguel Aristondo** travelled to **South America** for the "founding" Chapter of the new District, now called **District Divina Providencia** (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay) that was held from the 4th to 11th July, 2019 in Luján near Buenos Aires. The first three days were shared by Brothers and Lay people from the four countries, for a total of 69 people, including the Brother Provincial of Spain, Brother Rafael Alonso and Brother Miguel Aristondo, Assistant General, President of the Chapter. Significant work has been done to structure the new District through an upstream participatory approach of all communities.

Then Brother Miguel participated in the Brothers' Assembly in **Spain** and in the retreat at Nanclares. Then he went to Ploërmel for the end of the international retreat. Back in Spain, he took part in a meeting of Community Superiors around the animation of the year theme, and began the canonical visit of the Province.

- **Brother Vincent Ssekate** travelled to Haiti and first participated in the annual retreat of the Brothers, which was followed by the celebration of the Jubilees of the Province and the renewal of the temporary vows of two Brothers of the Province. Then he presided over the Provincial Chapter, which was held from the 15th to 18th July in Pétion-Ville. It has been a beautiful and strong experience of fraternity and synodality. 7 Lay persons participated in the first part of the Chapter. Finally Brother Vincent took part in the Provincial Council which was a rereading of the retreat, of the the Chapter and a preparation of the festivities of the Province in August.

## b. Theme of the year

- In most Provinces and Districts, at least those in the Northern Hemisphere, the theme of the year "**Leaving for a mission**" was presented, and lived in the communities on the occasion of the beginning of a new year and of the writing of the community project. This approach will be implemented in other sectors in the coming months.
- The Major Superiors received at the end of September, a second file for the animation of their Province or District. Through this file, all sectors were encouraged to live the "**Extraordinary Month of Mission**" wanted by Pope Francis. Similarly, the General Council, to further signify openness to mission, invited each of the 123 communities of the Congregation **to twin** with another from a different Province or District. This extraordinary month of October 2019, is for everyone a chance and a time of grace to live the "leaving for a mission" to "be a mission" according to the same words of Pope Francis.

## c. International Meetings

- **International Retreat at Ploërmel:** It took place from 14th to 21st July 14, 2019. 11 Brothers and 14 Lay people from the eleven Sectors of the Congregation were able to live this experience. All experienced the proposed retreat as a *memorial* (remembrance and actualisation) of what happened two hundred years ago in the Chapel of the Eternal Father in Auray. During the Summer of 2020, this retreat will also be offered to young Brothers who will participate in the preparatory session for perpetual profession at the Mother House of Ploërmel
- **Meeting of the International Commission of the Mennaisian Family:** it took place from the 2nd to the 5th October at Casa Generalizia. Six laypersons represented the Commissions of the respective Provinces of Uganda, Haiti, Argentina-Uruguay, North America, France and Spain. The General Chapter had given the General Council and the International Commission the task of continuing the reflection on the Reference Text of the Mennaisian Family and a draft Statutes for the Lay Mennaisian Associates. **Mrs. Carine Dequenne, of the CICALSAL** also came to enlighten the Commission, on the Association of Laity to a Congregation and the writing of Statutes. After fruitful exchanges, the Commission has managed to finalise both texts. **The Statutes** will be presented to the CICALSAL for a first reading, then sent to the Major Superiors for corrections and amendments. Then the General Council will take into account all the reports of the Animation Committees of the Mennaisian Family of Provinces or Districts and present them to the CICALSAL for approval "ad experimentum".
- As for **the Reference Text**, Chapters 4 and 5 written by the International Commission will be sent to the Provinces for corrections and amendments.

## d. Implementation of the guidelines of the Chapter

- Following the publication of the Motu proprio "Vos estis lux mundi" promulgated by Pope Francis on 7th May, 2019, the General Council devoted time during its session to readjust and complete the **protocol text** of the Congregation on "**The Child protection**". The last General Chapter recalled (3b) that the protection of children is a priority. All Provinces and Districts are expected to write or readjust their own protocol and send it to the General Council.
- The General Chapter also asked for **a guide to the application of the charism** (2, b), taking into account what has been done in the different parts of the Congregation in order to guide the formation of our Brothers and educators. This mission had been entrusted to **Brother Porfirio Blanco**. During the General Council he came to present the state of his work. An educational guide will be available in the coming months.

- **«Let the Brothers, especially the youngest, be able to live a year of missionary commitment outside their home area. »** (12b) The General Council seized upon this call from the Chapter and set the framework for this missionary experience. Soon they will request the Major Superiors about candidates from possible places to live this missionary experience. A first experience will begin with the arrival of **Brother Jean-Marie Vianney Mbarushimana from Rwanda**, who will join Cap-Haitien (Haiti) for a year.
- The last Echoes of the General Council mentioned the creation of two Commissions, including the "Ad Gentes" which aims to help the General Council to discern the **new mission pages**. Prospective steps will soon be held in Asia and Africa, in conjunction with the Major Superiors concerned.
- The General Chapter called for the organization of **Continental Conferences** which would bring together the Major Superiors and their Councils as places of dialogue and consultation (24, c3). The first meeting of this type, the **Conference of Europe**, will be held in Rome from **21st to 23rd May, 2020**, the Major Superiors and their Councils from the Provinces of Saint John the Baptist (France-England) and Nuestra-Señora-del-Pilar. (Spain). The **African Conference**, (this will be the second time, after the one in 2016), will take place in Kisubi from the 29<sup>th</sup> September to the 2nd October 2020
- The General Chapter encouraged the holding of **formation sessions of local Superiors** in each Sector of the Congregation. (11, g, h) A first session for the Superiors of Communities of the Province of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus (Uganda, South Sudan) will take place from **15<sup>th</sup> to 19th January 2020** in Kisubi. Then, between the 3rd and 10th April, 2020, it will be the Formation of Community Superiors of the District Saint-Paul (West Africa).

#### **e. Information and Bicentenary of the founding of the Congregation**

- The General Council took advantage of the presence of Mr. Michel Tanguy, in charge of the Information in the Congregation, first of all to congratulate him on the success of the **Bicentenary Album**: a precious tool for the animation of the Bicentenary in the Sectors.
- It was also an opportunity to pay attention to the content of future **magazines La Mennais Magazine**, to review the work started for a future paperback on Jean-Marie de la Mennais, and list the various events of the Bicentenary throughout the Congregation, to make them known and post them especially on the site [www.lamennais.org](http://www.lamennais.org)
- The General Council reiterates **the importance of publicising all the initiatives** that have already taken place or will take place in the coming months. It is also a way of living and sharing the "mission". The GC thus encourages to transmit to the Secretariat and to Michel Tanguy, photos, texts, videos of all the events of the 200th lived in the Provinces and the Districts.

## 2. Decisions of the Brother Superior general and his Council

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### a. Noviciate at Culiprán (Chili)

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, gives his consent to the community of **Culiprán** to erect the **Novitiate of Divina Providencia District**, for the year 2020.

### b. Nomination

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, appoints **Brother Oscar RUIZ** as Novice Master of the Noviciate of Culiprán for a three-year term.

### c. Admissions to perpetual profession

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

Brother **Maricario ORIKIRIZA**, Province of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus (Uganda-South-Sudan)

Brothers **Bruno DJUKALEMA** and Justin **LOKANA BYARUHANGA**, Congolese Brothers of the District Saint-Jean-Paul II (Congo DRC-Rwanda)

### d. Approval of Provincial or District Texts

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has approved the texts of:

- **Saint Paul District Chapter** (Benin-Ivory Coast-Senegal-Togo)
- **Divina Providencia District Chapter** (Argentina-Bolivia-Chile-Uruguay)
- **Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague Provincial Chapter**, (Haiti)
- **St. Michael the Archangel Provincial Chapter** (Tanzania-Kenya)
- **St. Theresa of the Child Jesus Provincial Chapter** (Uganda – South-Sudan) - previous Echoes had forgotten to mention it.

## Calendar of the members of the General Council

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### **Brother Hervé ZAMOR**

9 – 30 October	Tahiti
6 – 15 November	Italy
22 – 26 November	RDC – 50 years of the mission
28 November – 12 December	Rome
13 December – 31 January	Senegal – Togo – Benin – Ivory Coast
1 February – 23 February	Rome
24 February – 6 March	General Council in Rome

### **Brother Jean-Paul PEUZE**

8 – 31 October	Uganda South-Sudan (10-15 October)
1 – 11 November	Rome
12 November – 31 December	District St JP II (11/11 – 6/12 RDC; 6/12– 31/12 Rwanda)
1 – 11 January	Rome
12 January – 21 February 2020	Uganda
24 February – 6 March 2020	General Council – Rome

### **Brother Vincent SSEKATE**

October	Rome
1 – 15 November	France
15 – 20 November	England
22 November – 2 December	Rome
2 December – 5 January 2020	Japan – Indonesia – Philippines
6 January – 2 February	Uganda
12 February – 21 February	France
24 February – 6 March	General Council – Rome

### **Brother Miguel ARISTONDO**

6 October – 28 October	Spain
29 October – 17 December	Canada
17 December – 28 January	Spain
28 January – 23 February	Rome
24 February – 6 March	General Council – Rome

**The next session of the General Council will take place  
From 24<sup>th</sup> February to 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 in Rome.**