

# **GENERAL CHAPTER 2018**

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Bro Yannick HOUSSAY s.g.

September 2017      - CIRCULAR 314

BROTHERS OF CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION



# GENERAL CHAPTER 2018

## CONVOCATION OF THE DELEGATED BROTHERS

Through this circular letter, I am happy to bring to the attention of the Congregation and of the Mennaisian Family the composition of our 27<sup>th</sup> General Chapter which will be held in Rome from March 1<sup>st</sup> to March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

You will find herein the list of the Brothers who have been delegated to the Chapter, whether members by right or elected, together with the Lay members who are invited to participate for a few days.

The delegates to the Chapter will, in due course, receive a personal letter of convocation, but they must already set aside those three weeks. May I recall what the **Chapter Book** (n° 20), which establishes the rules of the Chapter and which has been adopted by the previous capitular assembly, says: ***“A Brother who is convoked to the Chapter has an obligation to attend, unless he has a compelling reason accepted by the Superior General”.***

The list of delegates is established hereafter in the order of the votes obtained (Cf. Chapter Book).

The following Brothers are therefore called to participate in the 27<sup>th</sup> General Chapter:

## THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

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Bros. Yannick HOUSSAY	Superior General
Gildas PRIGENT	Assistant General
Gerard BYARUHANGA	Assistant General
Guillermo DAVILA	Assistant General

## THE PROVINCIALS AND VISITORS

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Bros. Edward ISMAIL	Province St-Michael the Archangel
Peter KAZEKULIA	Province St-Theresa of the Child Jesus
Pascal MBOLINGABA	District St-John-Paul II
Jean de la Croix LARE	District St-Paul
Benito ZAMPEDRI	Province de la Inmaculada Concepción
Mario HOULE	Province Jean de la Mennais
Hervé ZAMOR	Province St-Louis-de-Gonzague
Miguel ARISTONDO	Province Nuestra Señora del Pilar
Louis SEITE	Province St Jean-Baptiste
Rémy QUINTON	District St-Pierre-Chanel

## THE ELECTED MEMBERS

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### **Kenya-Tanzania**

Bro Antony Kithinji

### **Uganda-Southern-Sudan**

Bros Casio AIZIRE  
Vincent BARIGYE  
Vincent SSEKATE  
Pius OCHWO  
Joseph ZZIWA  
Celestine KAKOOZA  
Rogers KAZIBWE

### **RDC-Rwanda**

Bro Emmanuel GBIRO

### **Benin-Ivory Cost-Senegal-Togo**

Bro. Wilfried FARA

### **Argentina-Uruguay**

(note <sup>2</sup>)

### **England-France-Italy**

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<sup>2</sup> The delegate of this Province is the Provincial (Cf. Circular 313 p. 6).

### **Canada-U.S.A.-Mexico**

Bros Claude GELINAS  
Mario COUTURE  
Pierre LEBLANC  
Marcellin PERRON  
Daniel CARON

Bros Jean-Paul PEUZE  
Thierry BEAUPLET  
James HAYES  
Rémy HAREL  
Olivier MIGOT  
Hervé ASSE  
Michel GUYOMARC'H

### **Haiti**

Bro. Valmyr DABEL

### **Indonésie-Japon-Philippines<sup>1</sup>**

Bro. Jean-Pierre HOULE

### **Chile-Bolivia Spain**

Bros Josu OLABARRIETA  
Rafa ALONSO  
Joaquin BLANCO

### **Polynesia**

(note <sup>3</sup>)



### **EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS WITH NO RIGHT OF VOTE**

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Bros. Pierre BERTHE  
Daniel BRIANT  
*Hervé ASSE*

Procurator  
Treasurer General  
*Secretary General (note <sup>4</sup>)*

**The Chapter will be constituted by 43 members  
among which 41 with voting right.**

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<sup>1</sup> Since the ex-officio member of this District is Brother Gildas Prigent, Assistant, the Superior general, with the consent of his Council, has ask the Brothers to elect a delegate member.

<sup>3</sup> The delegate of this Province is the Visitor (cf. Circular 313 p. 6).

<sup>4</sup> Bro Hervé Asse has been elected *delegate* by the Province St-Jean-Baptiste. He is a member with right of vote.

## ***LIST OF SUBSTITUTES.***

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If one of the ex-officio or the elected members came not to be able to participate in the Chapter, for reasons admitted by the Superior general, the substitute of its Province or its District which obtained most vote would be summoned, or to its defect, the following one (cf. Chapter Book N 20).

The list of substitutes is established hereafter in the order of the votes obtained:

### **Kenya-Tanzania**

*Bro. Essai MLENGULE*

### **Uganda-Southern-Sudan**

*Bros Onesimus MUTAKIRWA*

*Gerald MWEBE*

*Franklin RUKUNDO*

*Francis-X. BYARUGABA*

*Denis KATUSIIME*

*Augustin MUGABO*

### **RDC-Rwanda**

*Bro Emmanuel RWANDAMURYE*

### **Benin-Ivory Cost-**

### **Senegal-Togo**

*Bro Alexis KOMBATE*

### **Argentina-Uruguay**

*Bro Carlos LOVATTO*

### **Canada-U.S.A.-Mexico**

*Bros Yvon ROY*

*Robert SMYTH*

*Hervé LACROIX*

*Maurice St-LAURENT*

### **Haiti**

*Bro Géniaud LAUTURE*

### **Japan-Philippines-Indonesia**

*Bro. Nolin ROY*

### **Chile-Bolivia-Spain**

*Bros Nemesio CASTAÑO*

*Porfirio BLANCO*

*Oscar RUIZ*

### **England-France-Italy**

*Bros Dino De Carolis*

*Michel BOUVAIS*

*Laurent BOUILLET*

*Robert LEAUSTIC*

*André CADORET*

*Pierrick BUSSON*

*Jean PETILLON*

### **Polynesia**

*Bro Yvon DENIAUD*

## **PARTICIPATION OF LAY MENNAISIANS**

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After consultation with the major Superiors, the General Council has decided to invite the Lay members of the International Commission of the Mennaisian Family to participate in the first week of the Chapter, from March 1<sup>st</sup> to March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

We wish to be coherent following the two Assemblies of the Mennaisian Family which were held in Ploërmel in 2008 and 2015. The members of this International Commission have already met twice in Rome with the General Council. They worked on the presentation of a text on the Identity of the Lay Mennaisian to the Chapter. They are therefore in a good position to share with the Brothers of the Chapter.

***Here are the names of the Lay Mennaisians participating to the Chapter from March 1<sup>st</sup> to March 8<sup>th</sup>:***

Michèle HETU	Canada
Maria Laura Jose	Argentina
Jean-Robert LEBRUN	Haiti
Lorena MOLINA	Spain
Françoise LE BRETON	France
John Bosco DUNGU	Uganda

## **Looking ahead in communion to the 2018 General Chapter.**

As I wrote in the last circular, "each capitulant participates in this Chapter Assembly in the name of all the Brothers of the Congregation and not only in the name of those of his Province or Vice-Province." The Rule of Life makes this clear: The Chapter "represents all the Brothers and constitutes the supreme collegial authority of the Congregation" (C 83).

It is this profound fraternal communion which should guide the work of this Assembly which the Lord summons through the provisions of our Rule of Life approved by the Church. The Brothers participating in the Chapter are not delegates of a clan or of a faction. They are all on the side of the Institute, if I may thus express myself, attached to following Christ in his likeness to his obedience to the Father, anxious to be led by the ardent breath of the Spirit.

Similarly, the Lay people who will participate in the first days of the Chapter will not represent their country or their province of origin; rather, they will be keen to represent the entire Mennaisian Family. They will harmonize with everyone else in search of what God wants today for our large international family.

Now, what should we do to prepare ourselves? To pray, to ask for the light of the Spirit, to listen to what the Spirit says to the Brothers, to the Laity, to the young people around us, to have a very strong desire that the Congregation and the Mennaisian Family emerge from this Chapter with new dynamism and a contagious joy.

This spirit of prayer that will be ours during the weeks that prepare us for the Chapter will enlighten us with Hope and Love. The fruits of the Chapter will not be measured by the sum of the initiatives or orientations that will be taken, or by the length of the texts that can be written, but by the ardor of the charity that will inflame the Institute and the Mennaisian Family.



Together, in prayer and fraternal charity, let us discern the paths of the Spirit, let us examine the horizons from which Hope comes. In the Church, for the Church, and for the world, we will open a new page.

*I renew the invitation of the preceding circular letter: "We are called to be prophets of evangelical vigilance. The Spirit of God will enlighten us because we will be open to the voice of God who speaks, who opens the heart, who accompanies us on the way, and who invites us to walk towards the light. We will welcome God's day and its newness; we will open ourselves to his surprises, without fear or resistance. It is only in our attention to the needs of the world and in our docility to the impulses of the Spirit that the celebration of the Bicentennial will be transformed into a true Kairos, a time of God, rich in grace and creative fidelity."*

In community, let us often recite the prayer for the Chapter, in toto or in part, in communion with the whole of the Mennaisian Family, bearing in mind the words of Jesus: *"I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me."* (John 17, 20-21)

Let us build this large brotherhood, united in Christ. Thus, the Holy Spirit, whom Mary prays with us, will give us to discern his calls and to respond to them with generosity and joy. He will allow all Brothers and communities to receive the guidance and decisions that will be made with a willing heart and a strong desire to see the Institute bear new fruits in celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of our Institute.

Rome, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
Brother Yannick Houssay, S.G.

## **To read:**

A document of the **Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life** which appeared at the beginning of 2017 is an excellent preparation for participating in the General Chapter. You are strongly invited to read it:

**New Wine in New Wineskins**, The religious Life and the Remaining Challenges. CIVCSVA – 2017

The document can be found on the Internet, failing which the general Secretary will send it to you on request.



## **Also for your reading:**

**Address of His Holiness Pope Francis** to participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, 28 January 2017

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*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

It is for me a cause for joy to be able to receive you today, as you are gathered in the Plenary Session to reflect on the theme of faithfulness and abandonment. I greet the Cardinal Prefect and thank him for his words of introduction; and I greet you all, expressing my gratitude for your work in service to consecrated life in the Church.

The theme you have chosen is important. We may well say that at this moment faithfulness is being put to the test; the statistics you

have examined show this. We are facing a ‘haemorrhage’ that is weakening consecrated life and the very life of the Church. The abandonment of consecrated life worries us. It is true that some leave as an act of coherence, because they recognize, after serious discernment, that they never had this vocation. However, others, with the passage of time, have less faithfulness, very often only a few years after professing their perpetual vows. What has happened?

As you have well noted, there are many factors that condition faithfulness in what is a change of era and not merely an era of change, in which it becomes difficult to take on serious and definitive commitments. A bishop told me, some time ago, that a fine young man with a university degree, who worked in the parish, came to him and said, “I want to become a priest, but for 10 years”. The culture of the provisional.

The first factor that does not help maintain faithfulness is the social and cultural context in which we move. We live immersed in the so-called culture of fragmentation, of the provisional, which leads us to live in an “à la carte” way, and to be slaves to what is fashionable. This culture fosters the need to always have “side doors” open to other possibilities; it feeds consumerism and forgets the beauty of the simple and austere life, very often causing a great existential emptiness. A strong practical relativism has also spread, according to which everything is judged in relation to a self-realization that is often extraneous to the values of the Gospel. We live in a society in which economic rules substitute moral ones, dictate the laws and impose their own systems of reference at the expense of the values of life; a society where the tyranny of money and profit promotes a vision of existence in which those who do not produce are discarded. In this situation, it is clear that one must first let him- or herself be evangelized in order to engage in evangelization.

To this factor of the socio-cultural context, we must add others. One of them is the world of youth, a complex world, at the same time rich and challenging. Not negative, but complex, yes, rich and challenging.

There is no lack of young people who are very generous, supportive and committed at the religious and social level; young people who seek a true spiritual life; young people who hunger for something different from what the world has to offer. There are wonderful young people, and not just a few. But among young people there are also victims of the logic of worldliness, which can be summarized as follows: the search for success at any price, for easy money and easy pleasure. This logic also seduces many young people. Our task can be none other than that of standing beside them to infect them with the joy of the Gospel and of belonging to Christ. This culture must be evangelized if we want young people not to succumb.

A third conditioning factor comes from within consecrated life itself, where alongside much holiness — there is much holiness in consecrated life! — there is no lack of situations of counter-witness that render faithfulness difficult. Such situations, among others, are: routine, weariness, the burden of managing structures, internal divisions, the search for power — status seekers — a worldly way of governing institutes, a service of authority that at times becomes authoritarianism and sometimes ‘laissez-faire’. If consecrated life is to maintain its prophetic mission and its appeal, continuing to be a school of faithfulness for those near and far (cf. Eph 2:17), it must maintain its freshness and the novelty of Jesus’ centrality, the appeal of spirituality and the strength of mission, show the beauty of following Christ, and radiate hope and joy. Hope and joy. This shows us how a community is doing, what is inside. Is there hope, is there joy? It is going well. But when there is less hope and there is no joy, it is a bad thing.

One aspect that must be cared for in a particular way is fraternal life in the community. It must be nurtured through community prayer, the prayerful reading of the Word, active participation in the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation, fraternal dialogue and sincere communication among its members, fraternal correction, mercy toward a brother or sister who sins, and the sharing of responsibilities. All this must be accompanied by an eloquent and joyful

witness of simple life alongside the poor and by a mission that favours the existential peripheries. The renewal of fraternal life determines the result of vocational ministry, the ability to say “Come and see” (cf. Jn 1:39), and the perseverance of brothers and sisters, both young and not-so-young. Because when brothers or sisters do not find support for their consecrated life within the community they will seek it outside, with all that this entails (cf. *Fraternal Life in Community*, 2 February 1994, n. 32).

The vocation, like faith itself, is a treasure that we carry in earthen vessels (cf. 2 Cor 4:7); therefore, we must safeguard it, as we safeguard the most precious things, so that no one robs us of this treasure, and so it does not lose its beauty with the passage of time. This care is first and foremost a task for every one of us, as we are called to follow Christ more closely with faith, hope and charity, nurtured each day in prayer and strengthened by a good theological and spiritual formation, which defends against the fashions and culture of the ephemeral and enables us to walk steadfast in the faith. On this foundation, it is possible to practice the evangelical counsels and to have the very sentiments as Christ (cf. Phil 2:5). The vocation is a gift that we have received from the Lord, who has looked upon us and loved us (cf. Mk 10:21), calling us to follow him in the consecrated life, and is at the same time the responsibility of those who have received this gift. With the Lord’s grace, each one of us is called to take on responsibly, in the first person, the task of our own human, spiritual and intellectual growth and, at the same time, to keep the flame of the vocation alive. This means that we in turn must keep our gaze fixed on the Lord, being ever careful to walk according to the logic of the Gospel, and not to give in to the criteria of worldliness. Very often great infidelities begin with minor deviations and distractions. In this case too, it is important to make Saint Paul’s exhortation our own: “it is full time now for you to wake from sleep” (Rom 13:11).

In speaking of faithfulness and abandonment, we must accord great importance to accompaniment. I would like to emphasize this. It is

essential that the consecrated life invest in preparing guides who are qualified for this ministry. I say consecrated life, because the charism of spiritual accompaniment, let us say spiritual direction, is a “lay” charism. Priests have it too, but it is a lay charism. How often have I found sisters who have said to me: “Father, don’t you know a priest who can guide me?” — “But, tell me, in your community isn’t there a wise sister, a woman of God?” — “Yes, there is that old woman who ... but ...” — “Go to her!”. Take care of the members of your congregation. In the previous Plenary you already noted this need, as is also shown in your recent document, *New wine in new wineskins* (cf. nn. 14-16). We are never persistent enough on this need. It is difficult to remain faithful when walking alone, or walking with the guidance of brothers and sisters who are incapable of listening carefully and patiently, or who do not have adequate experience of consecrated life. We need brothers and sisters who are experts in the ways of God, so as to be able to do what Jesus did with the disciples of Emmaus: to accompany them on the journey of life and at the moment of disorientation, and to rekindle faith and hope in them through the Word and the Eucharist (cf. Lk 24: 13-35). This is the delicate and demanding task of a guide. More than a few vocations are lost due to a lack of effective accompaniment. All of us consecrated people, young and not-so-young, are in need of adequate help for the human, spiritual and vocational moment we are experiencing. However, we must avoid any form of accompaniment that creates dependencies. This is important: spiritual accompaniment must not create dependencies. Although we must avoid any form of accompaniment that creates dependencies, that protects, controls or infantilizes, we cannot resign ourselves to walk alone; there is need for close, frequent and fully adult accompaniment. All this will help ensure the continuous discernment that leads to discovering God’s will, to finding in everything what most pleases the Lord, as Saint Ignatius would say, or — with the words of Saint Francis of Assisi — “to always want what pleases Him” (cf. FF, 233). Discernment requires, on the part of the guide or the person accompanied, a refined spiritual sensitivity, the ability to stand before oneself and the other *sine proprio*, with

complete detachment from prejudices and personal or group interests. Moreover, it is necessary to remember that discernment is not only a question of choosing between good and bad, but between good and better, between that which is good and that which leads to identification with Christ. I would continue to speak, but let us finish here.

Dear brothers and sisters, I thank you again and I invoke upon you and upon your service as members and collaborators of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life the continual support of the Holy Spirit, and I bless you wholeheartedly. Thank you.