



MENNAISIAN MONTHLY NOVENA

OCTOBER 2023

1-POSTULATION NEWS

After the Temporary Cessation of the Examination at the Dicastery of the Causes of Saints, we continue the path of the Cause. We are taking over Enzo Carollo's file, to submit it to other Specialist Doctors. At the same time, we are trying to prepare the bases for a possible Introduction of a process of Beatification for certain figures of Mennaisian Brothers or

Sisters. The journey is rather long. For the moment we are in the process of developing - for a few Brothers (currently Br. Zoël Hamon, Br. François Cardinal, Catechist Brothers in the Antilles) a fairly in-depth Historical Reconstruction. This Reconstruction will be submitted for a first informal evaluation to the Authorities of the Church and the Congregation.

- The Group of Animators of the Mennaisian Devotion is always more active. We will try to create Mennaisian Homes, with Images, Relics, materials to make known and pray to the Venerable of Mennais. It is to them that we can turn to indicate Intentions and Thanksgiving linked to our Founder. There is an Animator in each Country, charged with this Animation by the Brother Provincial.

2-RECOMMENDED INTENTIONS

- In UGANDA : **Caroline Tibindimunda**, sister of Brother Gerard Byaruhanga, sick with bone cancer.
- **Palma**, Aspirant of the Sisters of Providence of Nebbi: Chronic Bronchitis
- St. Francis Xavier District: PHILIPPINES: **Mrs. Corazon Mondragon**: Breast Cancer / JAPAN: **Mrs. Yukari Holmes**: Nervous System; **Lise Beaudouin**: Polyarthrititis; **Robert Scripko**: Skin Cancer / INDONESIA: **Mrs. Katarina Eda Botha**: Tumor.
- SENEGAL: **Mathilde Kayoungua**: Cancer and Kidney failure for two years.
- CONGO: Dungu: **student** with Severe Anemia.
- ITALY: **Giuseppe**, boy with Leukemia.
- DISTRICTO DIVINA PROVIDENCIA: a large number of Intentions. Let's highlight the first on the list: **Nerina Zavatarelli - Mari Luz Perez Callaù - Nicole Perez-Lorenzo** (3 years)
- SPAIN : **Mari Valle** (Reinosa)

3- REPORTED FAVORS

- ESPAGNE : "I thank God who, through the Intercession of John Mary, has improved the health of my brother Pedro. He thus recovered the voice he had lost after sessions of rays, now everything has become normal again. The doctors continue the checks. We remain confident in prayer". (Grace transmitted by F. Ivo Lopez, Aguilar de Campóo)
- BOLIVIA 2023: DORIS CUELLAR, BOLIVIA : Message to Brother Casimiro from a lady sick with Cancer: "Hello, Brother. Thank God everything is Okay. Thank you for your Prayers. I believe that Prayers are my Best Medicine and they keep me alive, because the Doctors told me that they are amazed at how I continue to endure the Treatment, without losing courage. Thank you, my Brother, may God bless you always!" Doris Cuellar, Bolivia

- PLESSÉ (LOIRE-ATLANTIQUE)- March 1928: Sudden and inexplicable healing of a School Student

"The Venerable de la Mennais enjoys lovingly spreading his benefits among children. Here is a fact which proves his credit above in favor of those whom he loved so much and for whom he had sacrificed everything here below:

In the first days of March, a child from the Christian School in Plessé (Loire-Atlantique) fell seriously ill. The Doctor consulted could not at first decide on the type of illness. In a second visit, he recognized Pulmonary Congestion and the beginnings of Heart Disease with complications of Emphysema. Day by day the child's strength abandoned him, he was reduced almost to the state of a Skeleton. He was Motionless, Speechless and looked more like a Dead Person than a Living one. On the Doctor's Advice, the parents had him Administer the Sacraments of the Sick. At their request I recommended him to the Venerable de la Mennais; and, on March 25th, with 9 children from School, I went to the Church to beg, if not for Healing, at least for Relief for the Sick little boy.

Truly Extraordinary thing! The child felt real well-being at the very time we were praying in Church, that is to say from 10:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Then, to everyone's surprise, he started talking, smiling to everyone around him. The Doctor, who came during the day, noted a very Noticeable Improvement. It made it possible to give the child more substantial food. From that day on, his strength regaining the upper hand, the child was able to get up and run around the house. Everyone saw in this healing the truly Remarkable Intervention of Father de la Mennais with the Lord. In gratitude, little Jean Latouche, aged 11, from the village of Trégouet, in Plessé, made a Pilgrimage to the Tomb of the Venerable Father in Ploërmel, in the company of his parents. »

Jean-Baptiste Cottineau, Director of the Plessé Christian School

4- HISTORY OF MENNAISIAN DEVOTION

After the Second World War there was a Great surge of Renewal and Reconstruction in the Institute. The Vicissitudes of the Cause, blocked by heavy objections, had made it clear that the road to Beatification would have been longer than we thought. It was necessary to give new impetus to the Mennaisian Devotion. It would have accompanied the rebirth and the very rapid growth of the works of the Congregation : Schools were rebuilt or New ones built, the Houses of Formation filled up, the number of Brothers multiplied to exceed 2200. However, we began to realize that times were changing and we had to prepare for a Confrontation with a more Secularized Modernity. From there, the requirement to be more prepared from the Theological, Spiritual, and Pedagogical Dimension. It was also necessary to renew the Mennaisian Devotion by the knowledge of the Venerable de la Mennais, by the sense of belonging to the whole Institute, including the Missions, by the recourse to him in the prayer of intercession and by the support of the cause of Beatification.

For the Development of the Mennaisian Devotion, the Canadian Brothers had designed a Small Magazine, the « COURRIER du VÉNÉRABLE » which took over from "Towards the Beatification". It was the Driving Force of Devotion to Father de



la Mennais for almost 20 years - from 1950 to 1969 - for the Mennaisian Congregations. Its first Director, until 1964, was Brother Bernardin de Siena Crépeau: "He was the Indisputable Apostle of the Cause of the Father through his Courier, which immediately gained importance and, through its presentation and its extension, across Canadian and even European Districts. His Conferences, like his writings, placed him in the forefront of those who worked for Mennaisian Devotion." Bro.

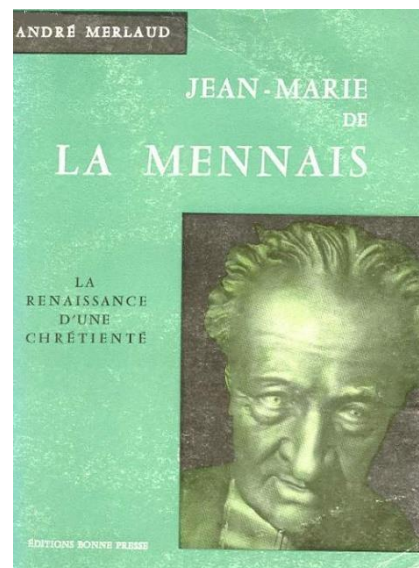
Bernardin was succeeded by Bro. Jean-Charles Bertrand, another great Mennaisian Apostle. After 10 years the small Monthly Magazine (around 20 pages per Issue) reached around 12,000 copies. In its beginnings it was aimed only at the Canadian Provinces. Very quickly it spread to all the Countries where the Brothers operated : France, Haiti and Polynesia, Spain, Argentina, the African Missions, Italy and England.

Overall the articles make up a sum of the Mennaisian Devotion: knowledge of the Father, indications for resorting to his intercession, state of the Cause of Beatification, diffusion of favors...The Provincial of La Prairie in his presentation wrote: "To respond to the pressing invitation of the Superior General, I present to you today the first issue of a modest publication intended to revive the respectful memory of the Venerable in the minds of his disciples, to make him known and venerated by their students, parents and friends , so that there may be many who invoke him in their needs". So the programming was well marked: spread knowledge of the Father and the current works of his Congregations; collect prayer intentions (especially healing) entrusted to his intercession; report favors received; promote the Cause of Beatification.

- ***SPREAD THE KNOWLEDGE OF P. DE LA MENNAIS***

The first goal to achieve was the dissemination of his life and works. There were already valuable Biographies (Laveille...), but it was necessary to compose Publications for a wider and more popular Audience. The Courier in each Issue publishes an aspect of the Father's life through short and precise stories: History of his childhood, Origin and Foundation of the Institute, Situation of childhood after the revolution, first Schools, Catechist Brothers, Laws Schools... The authors are very good Historians: HC Rulon, Jean Paitel, Anatolien-M Le Moal, Bro. Léontin, Bro. Laurent – Marist... The Courier emphasizes the Anecdotal Episodes: the young Jean-Marie during the Revolution, the Popular Missions, the Acquisition of the Small Seminary of Tréguier, the Missionary Brothers, Carriage races... Often these Episodes are offered in the form of Sketches. There are also some rather curious details, proposed by the well-known Archivist, Bro. Hubert: the Venerable's Passports, his Prie-dieu, his Breviary, his Library... For the youngest, the Courier offers Comic Strips on the aspects that capture their imagination. In 1960, the Centenary book was presented: "Jean-Marie de la Mennais, Renaissance of Christianity", written by André Merlaud. The Courier propagates the title "Le Corsaire de Dieu" which became very popular, especially through a well-illustrated Comic Book Album, produced by Bro. Chotard and Rigot.

The Magazine, as it takes on an International Dimension, provides Knowledge of the Works of the Congregation. In each Issue she illustrates a work or a Province of the Institute, with a valuable report of Photos of people and Landscapes. In this way the Courier contributes to making the Sons and Daughters of Father de la Mennais a large Family, to which we have the Joy of belonging.



INDICATIONS OF THE INTENTIONS TO BE RECOMMENDED TO THE INTERCESSION OF THE FOUNDING FATHER

In our Magazine every Month we publish a large number of requests for Special favors. At the beginning the Intentions were limited to the Provinces of Canada. Since then, they have been extended to the entire Mennaisian World. They asked for healing from all kinds of Illness, Success in Exams, a Job... We also find more Spiritual Intentions : Personal or Family Conversion, Return to the Sacraments, especially at Sunday Mass, Support in a difficult Test, Initiand Peace in the Family.

As an example, let us present the Intentions which come: from Haiti: "Courage in the Ordeal - Success in the Exams - the Choice of Vocation - the Healing of an Incurable Illness of a child who has already lost an eye – two Conversions – a Home."

From Ploërmel on the Tomb of the Father : “Recommended 25 Healings -to find Work - to settle Matters - Success- in Exams - Conversion of loved ones - two young people who have strayed from the Faith - a Family in Serious Material and Moral Difficulties - the Peace in Algeria - Recruitment in the St-Yves District.”

The Courier encourages the circulation of numerous Relic Images in Schools, Hospitals and Families. Father de la Mennais is invoked as a good Father to whom all his children address with Confidence and Tenderness. We call for his help in difficult times and Great Trials, but also for small favors : these too are important for walking with serenity in each Person's Vocation.

- **THANKSGIVING FOR FAVORS RECEIVED**

Prayers are always effective in one way or another, especially if they are prayed with Confidence and in seeking the Will of the Father. We discover God's Project and we see that His Providence always arrives, even if sometimes in the night or by somewhat confusing paths. The Reports of the favors attributed to Father de la Mennais are truly numerous : Healings, Peace in the Family, Work, Vocation... The Benefits are received everywhere : in Families, among the Daughters of Providence and the Brothers, in the Schools in Hospitals. It is from this harvest that we still draw today, to give the story of the favors attributed to the Intercession of the Founding Father.

- **SUPPORT FOR THE CAUSE OF THE VENERABLE DE LA MENNAIS**

The Courier also proposes the aim of supporting the Cause of Beatification of de la Mennais: by Soliciting Prayer, especially the Novena ; by the search for an Inexplicable Withheld Healing ; by supporting the General Postulation which finds itself in a very delicate moment. We find ourselves in the phase which precedes the recognition of the Heroic Nature of the Virtues. At the moment the Historical Section is responding to the very serious objections posed by the promoter of the Faith. The Postulator, Brother Hippolyte-Victor, works in close collaboration with the General Rapporteur, Mons. Frutaz. The Courier publishes Historical Articles which recount particular moments of the Cause: The Exhumations, the Diocesan Investigations, : the Examination of the Writings... It will also give Information on the Documentation to be provided in the event of a particular cure. Above all, it will create a movement of Knowledge, Admiration and Filial Attitude which will culminate in the ardent prayer for the Beatification of Father de la Mennais.

We can conclude that the Venerable's Courier was an Instrument which gave a decisive push for the Development of the Devotion to the Founding Father, in the phase of expansion of the Mennaisian Congregations.

5-TRACES OF HOLINESS IN THE MENNAISIAN CONGREGATIONS



THE MISSION OF HAITI, TWO BROTHERS IN DIFFICULT TIMES: JUVENTIN CHEMIN (1887-1943) AND CESAIRE BOURNE (1878-1945)

By quickly browsing the Biography of these two Missionary Brothers, we can have a look at the Glorious Mission of Haiti. The entire History of this part of the Island of Hispaniola has been marked by Poverty, Political Instability, Natural Disasters, Incidents, Hunger and Disease. But in this difficult story we find Treasures of

dedication and even Heroism. The Institute of the Brothers of Christian Instruction sent Hundreds of Missionaries from the Second half of the 19th Century and still Today it continues its Service to Haitian Youth

At the beginning of the 20th Century, the Country underwent one of its most difficult periods. The people lived in Poverty and are Cruelly Hungry. Poverty provokes repeated popular revolts which do not help anything. Political promises are regularly broken and cause new Disorders. State Coffers are empty. Teachers rarely receive the Salary and it is a pittance. Extreme Poverty makes the situation of Schools almost hopeless. The Principal Director, Brother Pascal Libaut, concludes a Report to the Superior General: “For me, I expect the end of the Haiti Mission soon”. The Brothers live in

absolute precariousness. Health is ruined without sufficient Nutrition. Five Brothers died in 1906, five others in 1907. When they arrived at the Hospital in Port-au-Prince, the Diagnosis is the same: "Too late, they should have been fed". From France, the Congregation, hit by Anti-Religious Laws, can no longer send Reinforcements in Money and Personnel. The gaps have not been filled: a dozen have died, around thirty, having returned to France, no longer have the Health and Strength to return. In 1907, the Mission received 7 Brothers from Canada and the Scholasticate of Taunton. The Principal Director complained: "It's not enough for our needs... and it's too much for our purse: we are unable to reimburse their trip."



Bro. Juventin CHEMIN

Let us quickly illustrate the work of two Missionary Brothers who devoted themselves in Heroic Simplicity in this Mission: Brother Juventin and Brother Césaire.

Brother Juventin Chemin arrived in Haiti in 1907. Little Jean-Marie Chemin was born in St-Sauveur-des-Landes on September 16th, 1887. He had been a Juvenist since September 1899, when the expulsions of 1903 forced him to return to his home Country family. In these times of persecution, he showed the almost Heroic determination to follow his Religious Vocation. On November 29th, 1904, he presented himself at the House of the Brothers in Taunton (England) where he took the Religious Habit with the name of Bro. Juventin began his Novitiate on February 2nd, 1905. Arriving in Haiti, he was placed in the St-Louis-de-Gonzague Institution, where Poverty was a little less acute than in Primary Schools; on the other hand, the work was very heavy: there were Six Teaching Positions which were vacant. An example of overwork in St-Louis: Br. Pierre-Edouard Boulard (the little one of the apparitions of the Virgin in Kério) was at the same time Deputy Director, Prefect of Discipline, teaching History and Geography in Secondary School, English and Spanish in Fourth Grade, ensures the most delicate supervision, participates in repairs needed after the devastating Fire in July. His strong constitution did not resist: he died in October 1908, at the age of 35.

In the meantime, the situation in Haiti was not improving. The Gigantic Fire of July 1908 in Port-au-Prince destroyed 3,000 Houses, a quarter of the City, leaving around 25,000 Homeless. Brother Juventin, with the Brothers and the population, participated in the recovery of Furniture and Materials from Schools. Immediately after a strong explosion at the Arsenal, enormous damage was caused to Doors, Windows, Partitions and Roofs. The 14 Stained Glass Windows of the Chapel were destroyed. In November of the same year, a new revolt broke out caused by Poverty. Schools remain deserted for Weeks.

Bro. Juventin was deeply marked by these Dramatic events. He became strongly attached to these suffering people and to this Establishment: he taught in St. Louis for 21 years, "serving the work with all his soul". He certainly contributed to making this School a very important Institution for Haiti, for the development of Culture, for Educational

Activities, for the Evangelization of the Country. From 1910, the situation would slowly improve: new Brothers would arrive from Canada and France. Teachers' Salaries would be paid more regularly. But there was yet another crisis: between 1914 and 1918 around Thirty young Brothers had to leave for the War. They left gaps that the other Brothers strive to fill, by redoubling their Work.

Let us follow the work of Brother Juventin a little. He was one of those Masters who were more efficient than brilliant. During his 21 years in St-Louis, he went from the smallest Class to the High School Class. He made himself available to teach "any Subject in any Class" according to the Mennaisian Tradition. He mainly taught Literature and English, but also Greek and Spanish. In the Community he exerts an influence of Peace. His calm and his strong and tender piety supported the young Brothers. He had a very particular devotion: to Jesus' Love and Mercy. [A devotion starting from Poland (St. Faustina Kovalska) which would spread throughout the Church with the Popes John Paul II and Francis]. Brother Juventin liked to make this devotion known and distributed its Images. He was also a cheerful colleague and concerned about the well-being of others, even in the simplest aspects. In the Province we remember that it was he who introduced "Monastic Beer", for which he studied and experimented with the Formula that every good wine merchant still follows even today.

Worn out by work and fatigue, Bro. Juventin could only teach part-time. He put himself at the service of the Commissary. In 1928, his health was seriously compromised: he had to agree to leave Haiti forever. He returned to France. He would be Supervisor at Notre-Dame du Bon-Secours in Jersey. The young people in Training kept the memory of his soothing presence. His health becoming less deficient again, in 1931 he was sent to Evreux, to a College run by the Jesuits. It was a favor done by the Superiors to the Society of Jesus and Brother Juventin accepted out of Obedience to provide this service to the Institute. He would have preferred to live in a Community of Brothers; but he observed with his usual fervor the Exercises of the Rule and carried out his Professional work, bringing to it his desire to do well and his

Apostle's zeal. I am saddened by no longer having you among my Colleagues and all my gratitude for the dedication, Professionalism and kindness you have shown here."

During the War he was in Jersey with the Novitiate group. In France he was in Timadeuc then in Fougères. Where he was given an Elementary Course: always available. "Brother Juventin was an Excellent Colleague, Helpful, Humble, with Rare Discretion. "His health was deteriorating again. He must return to the Josselin Clinic. He wrote: "My condition is very serious. The Director warned me that I would not recover unless there was a Miracle. It is a great grace to be thus warned of the great passage to Eternal Life. Thank you to Jesus Love and Mercy for having given me this grace: "With Christian resignation and great Peace, he prepared for death and on January 25th, 1945 he died slowly without agony".



Bro Césaire BOURNE

Let us now look at another Brother who spent his entire Mission life in Haiti: Brother Césaire-Joseph Bourne.

Born in Brittany, in St-Malo des-Trois-Fontaines in 1878, he arrived in Haiti in 1896, a very young Brother of 18 years old. He set to work in

Borgnes, where he had time to catch Yellow Fever. He also touched with his own hand the situation of extreme Poverty of the Mission; no Financial Resources, Housing too small and Unsanitary, Rare or non-Existent Furniture. At Trou, Bro. Evodius grouped 90 Students in a Class measuring 6 by 8 m, heated by a Sheet Metal Roof that you can touch with your hand. This does not prevent us from doing a good job and attracting the esteem of the population. Frequent deaths forced the Principal Director to make frequent transfers. Let us recall the waves of Yellow Fever which struck the Brothers. In 1879, in the space of one Month, 7 Missionaries died. Out of 373 Brothers who carried out their Missionary Service in Haiti, between 1864 and 1922, 119 died from Illness, Fatigue or Hunger. The Mission further suffered from the Persecution of the Congregation in France and in the Colonies and then from the War. In the midst of these difficult circumstances, Brother Césaire moved from one School to another: Aquin, Jérémie, Port-au-Prince to Grande Rue. He himself was drafted into the War in 1914. He fell ill and was sent to the Auxiliary. He tried to do an Apostolate among his companions, but without much success. Placed on Probation in 1917, he embarked on a Ship that was part of a Convoy to reach Haiti. But the Ship is torpedoed by a German Submarine. The return on a Lifeboat is dramatic: more than a Month at the mercy of the Sea, until reaching the Coasts of Spain. Brother Césaire attributed his salvation to Sainte-Anne and Father de la Mennais. 119 died due to Illness, Fatigue or Hunger.

In 1919 we found him in St. Louis with 7 other Brother Veterans. In 1920 he was put in charge of the New School in Cap-Haitien. He worked hard on its development for 9 years: New Premises, New Classes, a very young but Enthusiastic Teaching Staff. In 1929 the School was attended by 900 Students, divided into 13 Classes. Bro. Enrique has 80 Students in his Junior Class; Br. Victoriano, also Spanish, helped by a young Collaborator, has 120. The Director's greatest concern was reserved for Education and Religious Instruction, according to the Founder's Instructions. He complains that Communion is not given to young children, despite the Directives of Pope Pius X. So, after his Ordinary work, he himself goes to prepare the young

Students for the Sacraments. He exhorts Teachers to give good Religious Instruction, he organizes Public Exams and Competitions, with Diplomas and Special Prizes. The students are accompanied to the Parish Church every Sunday and they lead the Songs. On the feast of St Joseph, Patron of the School, he organized a Solemn Celebration with a Grandiose Procession.

For other Teaching Subjects, Brother Césaire's School made the mistake of being too Successful, triggering the envy of surrounding Establishments. He has organized an Upper Primary Course: he must fight to keep his best Students who many Secondary Schools would like to take away from him. It raises the level of the study of the French Language, thanks to a very Practical and Effective Method which is spreading rapidly throughout Haiti. Given his abilities, the Superiors entrusted him with the Direction of Several Schools. In Jacmel he transformed an Old Military Fort into a Renovated School on the Seaside. He was called back again to Direct the Cape School and then again that of Jérémie and one last time to his "heart" School in Cape Town. But now Bro. Césaire can't take it anymore. He is 67 years old, but his health is completely ruined because of the ordeals endured and the Tumor which is rapidly advancing. He is being cared for Fraternally in the St. Louis Infirmary. On June 5th, 1945 he went to Heaven to join his Founders and his fellow Saints. Always highly esteemed by the Brothers of the Province, he was one of the Missionary Pearls of the Congregation in the tormented land of Haiti.

SOURCES:

Bro. JUVENTIN PATH: MENOLOGE V pp. 1569-72

**Bro. CESAIRE-JOSEPH BOURNE: MENOLOGE V
pp. 1590-93**

**HISTORY OF THE MISSION OF HAITI MENOLOGE II,
p. 481-86**