



n° 10

# Letter of the Mennaisian Family



## Missionary Disciples

I would like to review with you some extracts from the text of **Pope Francis**: "*The joy of the Gospel*," a summary of the recent Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization.

In this exhortation, the Pope says: "We are all **missionary disciples**" (cf. No. 119 and 120).

To show the importance of this term, he stressed: "We no longer say we are *disciples and missionaries*, but rather we are al-

*ways missionary-disciples*". This means that we are all called by Christ. He calls us and sends us.

The Pope insists: "*In all the **baptized**, from first to last, the sanctifying power of the Spirit is at work, impelling us to evangelization.*" And again: "*In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples ... this belief turns into a **call** to every Christian, so that no person waives his or her commitment to evangelization, indeed, anyone*

*who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love.*"

By our baptism, whatever our state of life, we are clothed with this vocation, which is **a sending to evangelize**. Can we still hesitate? Should we doubt the love of Christ for us? Isn't our joy great to be sent to speak about the Love that saves the world?

## Prayer of the Mennaisian Family

Most loving Father, we praise you for having inspired John-Mary de la Mennais and Gabriel Deshayes, to found our Institute for the evangelization and education of children and youth.

Grant that following them, Brothers and Laity put themselves generously to the service of the young especially the most needy.

With your help, may they give everyone a chance to develop the best of himself.

May they be joyful and enthusiastic witnesses of your Son who came to save the world.

Give them to be inventive and faithful, generous and humble **missionary disciples**, animated with fiery hope and united by the bond of brotherly love.

AMEN.

## TO GO FURTHER...

### THEME OF THE YEAR.

As you already know (see Letter No. 9), we wanted to dedicate this year to the Brother's vocation.

Page 2 of this letter expresses it clearly. Thank you, all of you, for supporting the Brothers in their fidelity to their vocation.

### LA MENNAIS MAGAZINE.

No. 21 of this journal is devoted entirely to the theme of the year: "Being Brother, good news!" Thank you for drawing inspiration from this to spread the theme around you, especially among young people.

### FORMATION TIME.

In your Province or your Vice-Province, the Brothers have provided time of sharing and formation for the Laity and the Brothers of the Mennaisian Family.

If you do not know how to participate in this, contact a Brother or other person working together with the Brothers.

### MENNAISIAN PEDAGOGY.

Since the last General Chapter of the Brothers, in 2012, a move is underway to define the gist of the Mennaisian Educational Project. Thank you for paying attention to the proposals that will be made to you to participate in its development.

### LENT.

This time is favourable for sensitizing the youth and adults to share in favour of the poorest, and to build a world of peace and justice. Thank you for supporting this with the strength of your conviction.

# The Brother's vocation, good news announced to the young

## TO BECOME A BROTHER, TODAY

When a young person expresses a desire to be a Brother, he is offered a time of discernment, be it either in the form of accompaniment with a community, or through regular meetings with other young people who aspire to join the vocation of Brothers.

After a period of one or more years of preparation, the aspirant requests to enter the **Postulate** that lasts one or two years, and includes lectures on the vocation, knowledge of the Institute of the Brothers, of its founders and its charism, plus the human and spiritual growth, etc. It also offers young people through concrete commitments, to enter into the dynamics of apostolic life in the charism of the Brothers. This formation provides a better understanding of themselves and leads to a fairer judgment of the personal vocation of each.

Then comes the **Novitiate**. It lasts one year and is the key period of discernment of a vocation. It immediately precedes the first religious profession for the young person who normally becomes a Brother at the end of the year. He must have sufficient clarity of what he undertakes and of God's call for him.

Then there are 3 or 4 years of theological and pedagogical studies specific to the Brother's vocation in an institution called the **Scholasticate**.

At the end of these years of formation, the young Brother is able to participate in the mission of the Congregation with his fellow Brothers in a community where he is sent by his Superior.

His formation, however, continues throughout life. It will enable him to prepare, 4 or 5 years later, for his **perpetual Profession**. It will offer him the chance to be especially faithful to the call he received and whose fertility depends on the grace of God, but also on the intensity of his personal involvement in the daily response to his vocation.

## John-Mary de la Mennais and the Brothers

John-Mary de la Mennais used to exhort his Brothers when they were taking their vows:

"What a great time for you, in the name - in the presence of the Most Holy Trinity - you will dedicate yourself to the Christian education of children and make the vow of obedience. Glory to God who has inspired you with this resolution and who will give you the power to carry it out! Peace be upon you! For you are one of those men of good will to whom the angels announced and promised it, when Jesus our Savior appeared in the world and gave us all an example of poverty, humility, and an entire self-denial. You

have the desire to follow in his footsteps, to be gentle and humble of heart following his example, and to be like him obedient unto death to the will of the heavenly Father."



Here is a prayer that Jean - Marie de la Mennais used to ask his Brothers to say daily. On reading it, it is easy to see what our Founder thought of the Brother's vocation.

(Hereinafter, the text of our father has been slightly

modified). It may also be the prayer of every person who lives his profession of a teacher or educator as the answer to a call from God by the grace of baptism:

"Jesus, you who have said: Let the little children come to me, and who have inspired me with the desire to lead them to you, deign to bless my vocation, assist me in my work and pour upon me the Spirit of fortitude, charity and humility, so that nothing distracts me from your service, and fulfilling with zeal the functions to which I devoted myself, I may be one of those to whom you have promised salvation because they will have persevered to the end."

## A Brother, a missionary-disciple, among the young...

Here are some testimonies of young people and adults about a Brother at

« Passionate about his work, his radiant life, transparent by his faith, Brother M. remains a model of life for us. But above all he was a Brother, happy and joyful in the path he had chosen. »

« He was a craftsman of God; he served as a guide in building our team of catechesis. He knew how to bring us together, energize us, and push us to meet others. »

« His genuine love of very poor families and his righteousness had conquered us »

« I thank God for the continuous and often discrete action of Brother M. that allowed our school, with the work of the community, not only to be a place of learning but also a place of devotion of the whole human person in its social and spiritual dimension. »

« Artisan of education, Brother M. respected and helped all those he encountered. He loved to move along with others and to help them bring out the best of themselves by listening, sharing, advice, delicacy and especially by his availability of mind and heart. »

« He knew how to find the words that give courage and confidence. »

« He was able to give everything with a smile »