

ECHOES

of the GENERAL COUNCIL

Number 66

April 2009

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE and THE MEETING OF THE BURSARS.

The General Council held their second part of the ordinary session at Kisubi, in Uganda, from the 10th to the 16th March, the days that preceded the General Conference, and continued it on the 2nd and 3rd April.

It is in the superb natural environment of Nabinoonya Beach, a property of the Brothers situated on the shore of Lake Victoria that the work of the General Conference took place. For two weeks, in a fraternal atmosphere, at once relaxed and studious, the Superiors of the Congregation examined the implementation of the last General Chapter and drew up orientations for the next three years.

The meeting of the Brother Bursars was also held at the same place and they profited by the 1st of April to have a joint meeting with all the major Superiors. Thereafter, they continued with their work until the 4th of April.

All the participants of the two sessions appreciated the hospitality of the Province of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus, the quality of the organisation and the devotedness of the Brothers to make their stay most agreeable. The Superiors and the Brother Bursars were especially pleased to visit some of the Communities and Schools of the Province.

The General Council, the Major Superiors and the Brother Bursars are very grateful to the Province of St. Teresa and especially to those in-charge as well as to all the Brothers and other persons who contributed to the success of these meetings.

It is now possible to find some information and photos regarding the General Conference on the Website of the Congregation. You will find there also some testimonies of the Major Superiors.

In a short time, a Letter to the Mennaisian Family will publicise the message that the participants of the General Conference wanted to give to the Congregation and to the Laity. This letter will be followed by a Circular that will present the orientations for the next three years.

DECISIONS of the GENERAL COUNCIL

1. Nuestra Señora del Pilar Province (Spain, Bolivia and Chile) :

The Brother Superior General with the consent of his Council, after consultation with the Province (C 99), names

Brother **Miguel ARISTONDO**, Provincial Superior for a mandate of 6 years,

And after the proposal of three names (C 105) by the latter,

Brother **Rafael ALONSO**, Assistant Provincial for a mandate of 3 years.

2. Nomination of the Director of the *Etudes Mennaisiennes* :

Brother **JOSU F. OLABARRIETA** is named Director of *the Etudes Mennaisiennes* for a mandate of 3 years. He will reside in Spain, and will work together with those responsible for the Ongoing Formation, and with Mr. Michel Tanguy, the Director of Information.

The review *Etudes Mennaisiennes* changes objective. After putting special emphasis on the historical research – which provides us now with an excellent tool on the origins of the Institute – this review becomes an instrument at the service of the Ongoing Formation, both for the Brothers and the Laity.

3. The year of the 150th anniversary:

The General Council, after consulting the Major Superiors has made the following decisions:

The year of the 150th anniversary of the death of Jean-Marie de la Mennais

will open officially on the **26 November 2010 at Ploërmel**

and will close on the **24 June 2011 at Larantuka in Indonesia.**

On these two occasions, the members of the General Council will be present at the very venue of the celebration.

The Provinces and Vice-provinces are invited to organise their own programme within the framework of this event of the Congregation.

Different documents and means will be proposed for the whole Congregation to mark this time of communion and of celebration of Jean-Marie de la Mennais.

4. The Mennaisian Family

The General Council has finally adopted the framework document on the Shared Mission after modifying it slightly during the General Conference

This document entitled « **The Mennaisian Family** » **will be available to all as soon as possible.** .

5. The Solidarity Fund

During the joint meeting of the Superiors and the Bursars, the principle of setting up a Solidarity Fund for the Congregation was presented and approved unanimously by the Brothers present.

The General Council decided to constitute it as soon as possible. During the next session of the Council a Committee will be set up to implement and follow up the realisation of this Solidarity Fund.

More detailed information about this will be given at the appropriate time.