

ECHOES of the GENERAL COUNCIL

Number 67

June 2009

During this session, the General Council has worked together with the on-going formation team, the Director of Information and the new Director of the Études Mennaisiennes.

As is usually the case at this time, the General Council took off three days of reflection and prayer. This time round it was at “Casa San Silvestro”, a monastery of the Carmelite Fathers of Déchaux at Montecompatri, 25 kms. from Rome. In a particular way, it was an occasion for the General Council to reflect on the implementation of the orientations of the General Conference.

The members of the General Council also participated in different gatherings and meetings organized by the Union of Superiors General (General Assembly of the USG, Executive Committee, Commission on Solidarity with Southern Sudan, Justice and Peace Commission).

This issue of the Echoes conveys to the entire Congregation the following news and decisions taken :

1. NOMINATIONS

1.1 Nominations of Major Superiors

- for the Province of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus (Uganda):

Brother **Gerard MWEBE**, Provincial for a term of 6 years

Brother **Francis X. BYARUGABA**, Assistant Provincial for a term of 3 years

- for the Province of St. Michael the Archangel (Kenya – Tanzania):

Brother **Edward ISMAIL**, Provincial for a term of 6 years

Brother **Celestine KAKOOZA**, Assistant Provincial for a term of 3 years

- for the Province of Notre Dame (USA):

Brother **Jerome LESSARD**, Provincial for a term of 6 years

Brother **Guy RODDY**, Assistant Provincial for a term of 3 years

- for the Vice-Province of West Africa:

Brother **Michel GOUGEON**, Vice-Provincial for a second term of 3 years

1.2 Nominations for the Houses of Formation

The Superior General, with the consent of his Counsel, has nominated:

- At the francophone Scholasticate in ABIDJAN:

Brother **Hervé ZAMOR**, director of the Scholasticate and superior of the community of John de la Mennais for a second term of 3 years

Brother **Fidèle NGUWA**, who is sent by the Vice-Province of Central Africa for two years of studies, to be superior of the community of Gabriel Deshayes.

- At the Novitiate of DAPAONG:

Brother **Jean HERBINIÈRE**, Master of Novices for a second term of 3 years

- At the Novitiate of PÉTIONVILLE:

Brother **Simon ALPHONSE**, Master of Novices for a second term of 3 years

1.3 Nominations at the service of the General Administration

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

Brother **Pierre BERTHE**, Secretary General and Procurator General for a second term of 3 years

Brother **Delfín LÓPEZ**, Postulator for a third term of 3 years

2. ADMISSION TO PERPETUAL PROFESSION

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

Brother **Blaise ARIDOU**, of the Province of St. Louis of Gonzaga, Haïti

3. THE ANIMATION OF THE CONGREGATION

3.1 The Orientations of the General Conference:

A circular of the Superior General presenting the General Conference and its orientations is now in the process of being dispatched to the communities.

The General Council, drawing from these orientations, has fixed its programme of action for the next 3 years. The most important aspects concern: initial formation, the formation of formators, vocations ministry, the development of the Mennaisian family, missionary awakening and the preparation for the 2012 General Chapter.

3.2 Accompaniment of the newly nominated Major Superiors:

In order to help the new Major Superiors in their mission, as was the case last year, the General Council will schedule a session at the Generalate in Rome for October 1 – 3, 2009.

3.3 On-Going Formation

The On-going formation animation team has submitted to the General Council **the new theme for the year 2009 – 2010** and the different proposals which will be made during the year. All these elements of preparation will be sent to the Major Superiors in the coming weeks. It will then be up to each Province and Vice-Province to make the necessary adaptations before proposing this theme to the communities.

In order to support the work of the on-going formation animation team, it has been decided that an **international council for on-going formation** should be created. This council will have as its objective to help the formation team to respond better to the expectations and needs of the Brothers and to relay in all the Provinces and Vice-Provinces the initiatives taken. After consultation with the Major Superiors, this council will be constituted during the next session of September 2009.

Among the animations proposed for the year 2010, there is already in plan a session for the Brothers aged thirty-five to fifty which will take place at Ploërmel from July 12 to August 14, 2010. The animation will be carried out by the on-going formation animation team who will also call upon other Brothers and Laity.

The General Council as well as the on-going formation animation team and the director of information have equally worked with Brother Josu F. OLABARRIETA, new director of the Etudes Mennaisiennes, on the possible contents of this review which has until now been dedicated to the on-going formation of the Brothers and the Mennaisian family.

3.4 Initial Formation:

A session for the young Brothers preparing for perpetual profession will be held at Ploërmel from July 12 to August 14, 2010. A session of this type has already taken place in 2008. It will be animated mainly by the Brother Assistants.

3.5 Solidarity:

As a follow-up to the General Conference, the creation of a solidarity fund has been decided for the entire Congregation. This fund will be put in place during the next three years.

In order to help in implementing this, an **International Committee of Solidarity** is constituted under the authority of the Superior General and his Council. This committee is composed of 5 members appointed for 3 years, with effect from July 1, 2009. It can be assisted by other competent persons and finance experts. The members of this committee are:

Brother Louis BALANANT, Treasurer General, Chairman

Brother Gerard BYARUHANGA, Assistant Superior General
Brother Lévi BOUDREAU, Province of John de la Mennais, Canada
Brother Guillermo DÁVILA, Province of Immaculate Conception,
Argentina – Uruguay
Brother André RICHARD, Province of St. John Baptist, France

Its first meeting will take place in Rome on September 18 – 19, 2009, together with the representatives of the Non-Governmental Organizations of the Congregation.

3.6 Information and Communication:

An international council for information is created in order to contribute to the realization of tools for the information of the Congregation and the Mennaisian family (*La Mennais Magazine*, Internet Sites, publications, image banks, videos and other media). It is also necessary to constitute an international team of resources, stock of proposals and prospects. This council has a consultative role and is headed by the director of information under the authority of the Superior General and his Council. The members of this council are appointed for 3 years with effect from July 1, 2009:

Mr. Michel TANGUY, Director of Information, Chairman
Brother Philippe BLOT, Brother Guillermo DÁVILLA, Brother James Hayes, Brother Francis KIGGUNDU, Brother Marcel LAFRANCE.

The Director of Information has also submitted to the General Council the themes for the next issues of the *La Mennais Magazine* as well as the state of the development and renovation of the internet site.

3.7 150th Anniversary: “Year of John Mary de la Mennais”

Mr. Michel Tanguy has taken stock of the different means and materials which will be needed in the framework of this year which has been called: “Year of John Mary de la Mennais”. The materials are in the process of being prepared and they will be proposed to the entire Congregation.

The logo of the 150th anniversary is ready and will be officially diffused on the web site of the Congregation at the same time as the *Letter to the Mennaisian Family* in December 2009. The Provinces and Vice-Provinces could therefore request Mr. Michel Tanguy if they want to reproduce these documents, t-shirts, etc.

In a few weeks the Provinces and Vice-Provinces will receive a list of proposals about which they will be invited to make orders. It will be necessary to determine the quantity to be prepared and to adjust the costs.

4. MISSION OF INDONESIA

The mission of Indonesia is continuing to grow and will come to an important phase of its young history in the coming weeks. The community is now made up of four Brothers: Br.

Stéphane le Pape, Br. Daniel Lefrère, Br. Miguel Villace and Br. Salomon Hedible who has just arrived in Larantuka last March and who is right now taken up with learning the Indonesian language.

At Larantuka, important constructions have reached a final phase, what remains is putting in place a fence and some work either on the repair or renovation of the community house.

The centre of formation – “*Pusat la Mennais*” – continues its educational activities with close to 180 young people annually and groups of adults. However, to respond better to the needs and expectations of the people, the courses to be undertaken (computer science, tailoring and motorcycle repairs) will tell the evolution of this project. For example, it is necessary to make the motorcycle repairs section more attractive by adding to it a course in welding or again by adapting the duration of the training with regard to computer science and tailoring. Reflecting with the lay trainers is in process on this adaptation as well as the necessary improvement of the centre in order to make it better known.

Different activities will be proposed in the multi-purpose hall in the course of the year 2009 – 2010. The library is already in place, the computers which are to be put at the disposal of the young people have arrived and a number of activities have already taken place in the gymnasium. What is remaining is to organize and to put all these activities in line with the “*pusat*” and to make it a place of life and education for the children and the young people of the area.

The other important dimension of the work of the Brothers is in vocations ministry. This year there is a group of 5 aspirants from different parts of the islands of the country. Some initiatives have been taken to make the Congregation known and to meet the young people in the schools and parishes of several dioceses. It is a difficult work which has to be continually repeated every year.

During this session of the General Council, two important decisions have been taken regarding the mission:

- **Opening of a postulate at YOGYAKARTA**, on the island of Java. This second community will therefore provide the possibility for the young aspirants to embark on the first phase of initial formation. This formation will be, for a part of the week, in common with other religious congregations. Brother Stéphane will be in charge of the postulate which should start at the beginning of August.
- **The appointment of a fifth Brother for Indonesia: Brother Philippe BLOT**, presently the director and superior at Parakou in Benin. He will join the community at the end of the month of September 2009.

5. GENERALATE HOUSE

- **The Archives**

After creating two air-conditioned spaces for the classification of the most fragile archives, the work of computerizing the inventory is going on as well as the numeration of some documents concerning our founders. This work which demands close attention and patience is carried out by Brother Gilles Pierre, Assistant Archivist. Brother Louis Balanant has equally carried out the classification of the financial archives of the Congregation. Some other work will be undertaken, for example, the numeration of files of photographs.

- **The Community of the Generalate House**

The community of the Generalate House will be reinforced by the arrival of Brother Gil ROZAS, currently at Reinosa (Spain) and former missionary in Argentina. He will render various services to the General Administration. We welcome him in advance and thank him for his availability.

CALENDAR OF THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

Brother Yannick HOUSSAY

July 18 – 22	Moshi (Tanzania)
July 25 – August 5	Parakou (Benin): retreat and session
August	Rome and France
September 6 – 13	France – Manrèse (Retreat of the General Council)
September 15 – 30	Rome (Session of the General Council)

Brother Miguel Ángel MERINO

June 25 – July 6	Abidjan (Session for formators)
July – August	Spain
September 6 – 13	France – Manrèse (Retreat of the General Council)
September 15 – 30	Rome (Session of the General Council)

Brother Gerard BYARUHANGA

June 25 – July 6	Abidjan (Session for formators)
July 15 - 22	Moshi (Tanzania)
July 28 – August 21	Japan
End of August	Uganda
September 6 – 13	France – Manrèse (Retreat for the General Council)
September 15 – 30	Rome (Session for the General Council)

Brother Gildas PRIGENT

June 25 – July 6	Abidjan (Session for formators)
July – August	France and Rome
September 6 – 13	France – Manrèse (Retreat for the General Council)
September 15 – 30	Rome (Session for the General Council)

The next session for the General Council is scheduled for September 15 – 30, 2009 in Rome. It will be preceded by a retreat for the members of the General Council together which will be animated by Father O’Neil (Jesuit). This retreat will take place at Manrèse (Clamart) not far from Paris from September 6 to 13.