

ECHOES

of the GENERAL COUNCIL

Number 77

October 2012

The General Council held its regular session from 15 to 27 October 2012 in the Casa Generalizia, Rome.

This issue of Echoes brings to the attention of the entire Congregation the following information and decisions:

1. The animation of the Congregation

1.1 visit to the Provinces and Vice-Provinces

The Superior General, in August, presided over one perpetual profession in Haiti, 7 first professions and the entry into the Novitiate of three new novices. He also participated in a formation session for all the Brothers of the Province, which was intended to receive the text of the guidelines of the General Chapter. During his visit to Uganda in October, he reported on the current reforms in the initial formation and talked with the Brothers about the future mission in South Sudan.

The Brothers Assistants, after the animation sessions of July-August, visited some communities and participated in several meetings of Brothers in Spain, Uganda and Indonesia.

This time of year is also one of taking the first vows and the entry to the Novitiate in some areas of the Congregation:

- In early September at Dapaong (Togo) 7 Novices made their first profession (6 of the Vice-Province of West Africa and one of the DRC) and 11 new Novices began their formation (5 of DRC and 6 Vice-Province of West Africa).
- At Yogyakarta (Indonesia) also the Novitiate welcomed 2 new Novices.

Taking into account the Novices at Kasasa (Anglophone Africa) who began their Novitiate in January 2012, the Congregation has 29 Novices to date.

1.2 On-going Formation

Bro. Guillermo Dávila presented the results of the last session of the Brothers of 35-50 years, at Ploërmel. Overall this session met the expectations of participants who generously took part in the running of the proposed activities. However, it seems desirable, in the future, to better ensure upstream in the Provinces and Vice-Provinces, the phase of preparation and motivation of the participants in this session.

Bro. Guillermo also reported on the inter-Congregational formation session which took place in Rome during the month of September. This first experiment involving 8 Congregations of Brothers has been very positive and according to the statements of all participants, a real success. You could follow regularly the course of the session on the website of the Congregation. A full assessment will be made in the coming months and conclusions regarding the follow-up to this initiative.

The General Chapter 2012 requires that *"the international formation sessions for the various stages of religious life are maintained, developed and evaluated."* (No. 27) However, in 2013, exceptionally, there will be no session for Brothers of 35 to 55 years in order to allow both a thorough evaluation and the establishment of a new Formation Team.

1.3 The initial formation

Brothers Gerard Byaruhanga and Gildas Prigent took stock of the preparatory session for perpetual profession at Castel Gandolfo, then Ploërmel. The group of 19 Brothers proved to be participatory and open to different activities. The quality of the reception, the good physical facilities and conditions of life contributed greatly to the success of this session, be it at the house of Castelgandolfo or at the Mother-House of Ploërmel.

As requested by the General Chapter, the training of Formators will continue to improve the application of the Ratio and the start of a Ratio Studiorum (No. 26). Several meetings of Formators will be available to support their on-going formation (No. 27).

1.4 The Mennaisian educational project

The last General Chapter asks the *"General Council to initiate in liaison with the Provinces, Vice-Provinces and the Laity a reflection that clarifies the mission and explicitly defines the Mennaisian pedagogy and style of evangelization"* (No. 7).

To start this discussion, the Council decided to establish an international working group of Brothers and Laity chaired by Bro. Guillermo Dávila (Assistant General): Bro. Gerard Byaruhanga (Assistant General), Mrs. Sonia Acero and Bro. Porfirio Blanco (Spain), Mr. Richard Myre and Bro. Mario Couture (Canada), Mr. Jean-Jacques Erceau and Bro. Thierry Beauplet (France). The geographical origin of the members should facilitate travel.

The group's first meeting will be held in Rome at the General House on 21 and 22 February 2013.

1.5 The solidarity

To develop solidarity in the Congregation, the General Council, on the recommendation of the General Chapter (No. 37) has appointed for three years, a Solidarity Committee: chaired by Gerard Byaruhanga (General Assistant) and composed of Brothers Louis Balanant (Treasurer General), Joseph Kannaabi Zziwa (Uganda), Robert Gonneville (TSF), Alberto Prado (SAL), and André Richard (ASSIFIC).

The first meeting is scheduled to take place at the General House in Rome on 15 and 16 February 2013.

1.6 The information

Mr. Michel Tanguy, the Director of information presented to the Council proposals concerning La Mennais Magazine and the Website for the coming months.

The second meeting of the Directors of information from several religious Congregations present in Rome took place at the Casa on October 16, 2012. The theme of the meeting was on the Internet websites of the Congregations. This common reflection will continue in the coming months.

The General Council also renewed the mandate of the Information Council for 3 years. This Council, chaired by Mr. Michel Tanguy, is composed of Brothers Marcel

Lafrance, Francis Kiggundu, James Hayes and Mr. Alfonso Blázquez. The Council wishes to add one or two others.

1.7 Meeting with Major Superiors

This meeting will take place from March 13 to 20 at the General House in Rome. The Council began the preparation by developing the program of the session, and identifying key themes to explore with the Major Superiors. The focus will be to present the plan of implementation of the General Chapter for the next 5 years.

1.8 The Logo for the Congregation and the Mennaisian Family

According to the wish of the General Chapter 2012 (No. 11), the General Council has considered how to choose a symbol or logo for the entire Congregation and the Mennaisian Family. The first step, which has just begun, is to collect proposals and suggestions from some Laity and Brothers competent in this field. From the results of this consultation, other steps will follow later.

1.9 The Provincial Chapters

Following the last General Chapter of March 2012, all Provinces and Vice-Provinces should hold a Chapter or meet in Assembly.

By the month of February, the Province of St. John the Baptist (England, France, Italy) envisage to hold a Chapter in 2 sessions, in November 2012 and in January 2013. The Province of St. Therese of the Child Jesus (Uganda) will hold its Chapter at the end of January 2013. All other assembly meetings will be held in the year 2013.

2. Decisions of the Superior General and his Council

2.1 Admissions to perpetual profession:

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has admitted to perpetual vows in St. Michael the Archangel Province (Kenya-Tanzania)

Brothers **MUTHEE GAKUUBI Martin** and **RIUNGU MUKINDIA Stephen**

2.2 Appointments of Formators:

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

Brother **RUKUNDO Franklin**,

Director of the Scholasticate, Kisubi, for a first term of 3 years.

Brother **TINKASIMIRE Joseph**,

Master of Novices at Kasasa for a first term of 3 years.

2.3 Appointment of a Delegate Superior:

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council has appointed

Brother **Stephen LE PAPE**, Delegate Superior of the Mission of Indonesia for a second term of 3 years.

3. Missionary Solidarity

3.1 The reconstruction in Haiti:

More than 2 years after the earthquake the reconstruction work continues for our schools in Haiti thanks to the help of international and national organizations, but also thanks to the solidarity of the whole Congregation manifested by the Provinces and Vice-provinces and our NGOs (SAL, TFS, ASSIFIC). The Province of St. Louis de Gonzague itself contributes equity to restore their schools and communities.

Here's what has already been achieved:

- Jean Marie Guilloux Primary School was totally rebuilt with the help of an American organization. The new buildings are already in use for several months.
- The Brothers' community residence of Jacmel is now rebuilt. The school is still partly on temporary premises.
- The School of La Vallée is still under renovation, but the work is progressing rapidly and should shortly recover its good looks. The community has already settled in its renovated premises. Finally TSF has helped to build a vocational school that will provide new training opportunities for young people in the region.
- The various buildings on the property (Juniorate, Gabriel Deshayes house) of Petionville were among the first to be rehabilitated. Some additional work (enclosure) continues and will be completed shortly.
- St. Louis du Centre School was completely destroyed. A new school is being built on the campus of Delmas, the foundations are nearing completion. Funding comes largely from ASSIFIC that raised funds in France and received donations from other Provinces of the Congregation.
- Saint Louis Delmas High School: immediately after the earthquake several buildings slightly affected were quickly repaired (school administration, catering, chapel). A classroom building of the High school has been completed and students have been able to join the rehabilitated premises. But other buildings are still under construction especially for the 3rd cycle. A UN agency will assist, but the Province must still find significant funds for comprehensive rehabilitation.

Of course, in addition to the buildings, it was necessary to renew and complete much of the furniture and school equipment.

3.2 La nouvelle mission du Sud Soudan

From extracts of Brother Gerard Byaruhanga's letter to the Major Superiors.

- **Prospections en vue de la mission.**

The prospects of the mission to Tombura – Yambio Diocese, in South Sudan began being part of the thinking and conversation in the Province of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus, Uganda around 2004 /2005. In the year 2010 the first prospective visit was proposed and undertaken. Four fact finding missions have been carried out since. Brother George Kamanda has been the coordinator of all of the visits.

The Diocese of Tombura – Yambio (Yambio Town) is approximately 1000 kilometres from Kampala and lies in the North Western direction of the Uganda-South Sudan

boarder. Western Equatorial State, where the Diocese is found, is largely forest land and is very sparsely populated. It is in the neighbourhood of the famous Garamba National Park, a safe haven for Kony and the LRA.

They have made reasonably wide consultations on Education, working relationships and other dynamics in relation to missionary work and collaborative efforts in general within the Local Church and Society as a whole.

- **The situation on the ground**

The Diocese of Tombura-Yambio is very needy. The following information is from the Background to the State Education Sector Plan 2012-2016:

- Primary Schools offering a full Primary School cycle 17.0%
- Primary School enrollment 44.4%
- Illiteracy rate 62%
- Most of the structures in the Diocese are in a sorry state (a visitor from Missio described them as ruins). Many Primary Schools operate either wholly or partially in temporary structures or under trees. (The Pupil to Permanent Classroom Ratio is 248:1)
- The Education Sector is badly organized both at the Diocesan and State levels.

- **The current stage of the mission**

The Provincial Administration in Uganda is now fully aware of the Church's need in South Sudan and has formally accepted to undertake a mission in Tombura-Yambio Diocese. The Brothers in Uganda are convinced that it is high time they put the mission on the ground, come 2013. The following points have either been accomplished or are about to be accomplished.

- A committee to coordinate the mission related activities in Uganda is doing its work
- Location/ site of the mission has been decided and agreed (RIMENZE PARISH)
- The Memorandum of Understanding has been signed
- Diocesan Coordination Committee is in place and is coordinating activities in South Sudan
- Land has been offered (documentation of the same yet to be concluded)
- Contacts for temporary accommodation are yet to be concluded
- Arrangements for Residential Permits has been initiated (with the Bishop)

It is now up to the entire Congregation to encourage and support this missionary project of the Province of Saint Teresa of the Child Jesus, especially in this year of Faith and when the Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization has just ended.

Calendar of the General Council members

Brother Yannick HOUSSAY

5 to 13 Nov	U.S.A.
13 to 19 Nov	Mexico
19-25 Nov	Canada
25 to 28 Nov	Rome
28 Nov to 17 Dec	West Africa (Abidjan Scholasticate and perpetual profession in Benin)
17 Dec to 11 Jan	Rome
11 to 26 Jan 2013	Argentina
27Jan 2013	Rome

Brother Gildas Prigent

6 to 17 Nov	Rwanda
18 to 23 Nov	Rome
23 Nov to 6 Dec	Paris
6 Dec to 6 Jan	Rome
7 Jan to 15 Feb	Philippines + Indonesia
15 Feb 2013	Rome

Brother Gerard BYARUHANGA

5 to 14 Nov	U.S.A.
15-30 Nov	Canada
30 Nov to 5 Dec	Rome
5 Dec to 15 Feb, 2013	Uganda
15 Feb 2013	Rome

Brother Guillermo DÁVILA

31Oct to 11Nov	France
12 Nov to 19Dec	Spain
19 Dec to 7Jan	Rome
7 Jan to 17Feb	Latin America
17 Feb 2013	Rome

**The next session of the General Council
will be held in Rome from 25 Feb to 8 March, 2013.**