

MENNAISIAN NOVENA

NOVEMBER 2024



1- POSTULATION NEWS

- The Specialists in Infectious Diseases, Dr. Scoppettuolo (H. Universitario Gemelli, Rome) and Dr. Krzysztofiak (Gesù Bambino Pediatric Hospital, Rome) have examined together the History of Enzo Carollo's Recovery, taking up the Entire Clinical History from the beginning. Now they must complete their Examination with the Consultation of a Neurologist. We have also received the Expertise of the Doctors from Argentina - Roig and Arroyo - present during the Hospitalization of little Enzo. At the end of the work of these Doctors, everything will be brought to the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints.



- At the same time, we continue the search for the Documentation necessary to Introduce the Causes of Beatification of some of Our "saint" Brothers (currently those who seem the most obvious are: Brothers Zoël Hamon, François Cardinal, Hyacinthe Fichou, Constantin-Marie Roulin, Lucien Séveno...)

We ask the Brothers, who can carry out this Research, to collect the Documents: Testimonies, Writings, Biographies, Favours... of these Brothers, but also of others who have left a good reputation of Holiness. The Documentation collected can be sent to the Postulation directly or through the Archives of each Province.

The Postulation, with the Authorization of the Superior General and his Council, can appoint a Vice-Postulator in each Country: he can be the Mennaisian Animator, indicated by the Provincial or District Council, to take care of this delicate and Precious Work.

2- THE GREAT NOVENA



We have entered the GREAT NOVENA of November. We know that this Novena will be celebrated with many Initiatives in every Community, School, Province or District. We follow the Great Current - for more than a Century - of Devotion, Prayer, Knowledge, Love towards Father de la Mennais. Filial Devotion that has borne many Fruits of Mennaisian "holiness" among the Students and their Families, the Daughters of Providence, and the Brothers. It has also led to the recognition of the Heroic Nature of the Virtues of the Father, despite many obstacles. We are a little impatient because we do not see his Beatification very close and that the recognition of an inexplicable healing seems difficult to obtain. We encourage the MENNAISIAN BROTHERS ANIMATORS to take Special Care of this Novena, to send Suggestions and Achievements on the WhatsApp group of the Animators.

MATERIALS AND INDICATIONS FOR THE NOVENA

- PRAYERS: You will find a Good Selection at the beginning of the Religious Calendar: Prayers of offering, for Vocations, to Providence, Prayer of the Mennaisian Family, Missionary Prayer, Prayer for the Beatification of Father de la Mennais...
- READINGS: There are the Albums of the Biography "The Corsair of God", Comic Strips, Collections "Brothers Witnesses of Hope"
- INTERNET: Videos on Lamennais.org, News from the Congregation, Our Founders, Mennaisian Chants
- PILGRIMAGE: it is the moment to Highlight a "Mennaisian Home": Marches, Songs, Prayers, Tickets, Questionnaires, Parties with Games and Cakes...
- YOUNG PEOPLE: MEETINGS WITH BROTHERS, Testimonies, Prayer Celebrations, Moments of Friendship...

3- PRAYER INTENTIONS

We continue to pray for Our Little Sick People who, despite the Seriousness of their Illness, are alive and well and their health even seems to be improving: **Tommaso and Alessandro**. Let us also pray for the two mothers: **Liliana** (Belgium) and **Caroline** (Uganda). Let us continue praying for the Healing of **Br Alain Josselin** and the other Sick Brothers. Let us also pray for the Intentions indicated by the Mennaisian Animators in each Province.

4- FAVORS RECEIVED

Mrs Power's Recovery - Liverpool, England

Mrs. Power, Mother of two Brothers of Christian Instruction, had been suffering from Cancer for some time. Her condition worsened and she was taken to Hospital for an Emergency Operation. The Surgeon who took charge of her, seeing the Dangerous Advancement of the Cancer, considered the Operation Impossible and closed the Wound. One of the patient's sons, Brother Joseph, who rushed to his mother's bedside, found her in a state of extreme weakness and received this painful confidence from the Director of the Nurses: "It is only a question of hours."

Then a Relic of the Venerable de la Mennais was sent to the Sick Woman and Fervent Prayers rose up to God through his Servant. Now, from that moment on, a Noticeable Improvement took place to the Great Surprise of the Doctors and Nurses.

Three Weeks have passed since this change; the sick woman, returned home, feels no pain; she eats as before her Illness and seems in Perfect Health. She came to Our Novitiate at Cheswardine where she attended, almost the whole time on her knees, a Mass of Thanksgiving with the Community. She then had a Good Lunch, while repeating that she feels cured. She is convinced that she has been operated on, because her family has not yet told her that she is suffering from Cancer.

Mrs. Power's Cure would not be confirmed until after a delay of several years, which Rome does not fail to demand when it comes to cases of Cancer. It would then be easy to provide Convincing Testimony, even if the Surgeon refused his own. (Liverpool, 1950) (In the Harvest of Brother Jean-Charles Bertrand, La Prairie, Canada, 1985)



Cheswardine Novitiate

Healing of a father of students in Rome (2024)

We record, with few details at the moment, an important healing of Sergio M., a father of two Former Students of the S. Ivo School in Rome. The family asked for prayers for his healing: the mother and the daughters asked for healing through the Prayer of the Novena to Father de la Mennais, sent by WhatsApp.



Sant Ivo School - Rome

5- THE SANCTUARIES OF THE VIRGIN MARY AND THE BROTHERS OF CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION

Introduction :



Our Founders Jean-Marie de la Mennais and Gabriel Deshayes left us a Great Love for the Virgin Mary as a Legacy. Father de la Mennais never tired of recommending this Tender Devotion to Mary: "The Most Tender Devotion to the Most Holy Virgin is recommended to the Brothers. Let them strive, by imitating her Virtues, to attract the Blessings of her Divine Son upon themselves and upon the children entrusted to their care... Always carry the Rosary with you, for it is the Livery of the Servants of Mary and the Mark of her children... The Brothers will have Recourse to her as to their Mother." Father Deshayes was nourished by Montfortian Spirituality, which made Mary the Shortest and Surest way to reach Jesus: "Ad Jesum per Mariam". At the Mother House, the Chapel was dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. After their Religious Profession, the Brothers placed themselves under the Protection of Mary in a Touching Ceremony. Jean-Marie followed the Marian Apparitions closely and he had encouraged the Brothers of Lourdes to inquire in detail about the events related to Bernadette, whose brother attended Our School. Unable to accompany the Missionary Brothers to their distant Countries, he recommended them to the Virgin, "especially the Brothers of the Colonies". Even today this Tradition is fully Alive in Our Institute. We note that in every Country the Virgin is particularly Honoured and Prayed to: this Devotion gives Fruits of Holiness, in full Harmony with the Spirituality inherited from Our "holy" Founders. On the Occasion of the Jubilee, the Postulation wants to offer a Panoramic View of the Sanctuaries of Mary scattered throughout the World, particularly those that are in close proximity to the Brothers. In this way, each Month, we would propose to carry out a Real Pilgrimage for the Provinces/Districts

where the Sanctuary in question is located, and a "Virtual" Pilgrimage for the Entire Institute, in the Spirit of the Holy Year 2025. Footsteps of Mary: with the Mother of Hope we will find New Lights and Energies for Our Mission in the Church and in the World of young people and children.

We place our feet in the

The Novena bulletin would therefore present each Month one or more Marian Shrines from each Region. However, they would be published as soon as possible on the

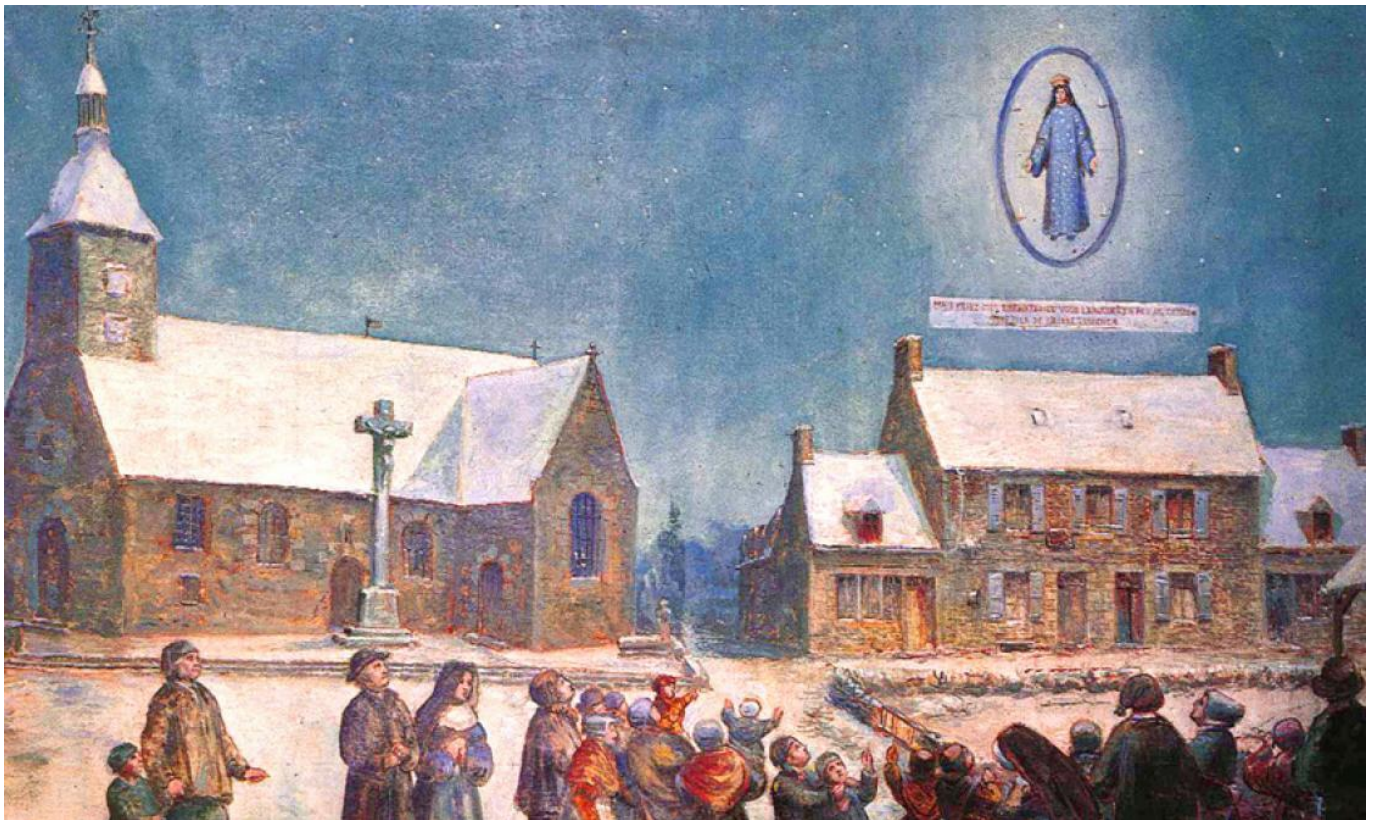


site www.lamennais.org. It would be desirable that in each Province, the Brothers could send Local Comments: Accounts of Pilgrimages, Prayers, News of the Sanctuary, Historical Supplements, Participation of the Brothers, etc. SEND THESE SUPPLEMENTS TO THE POSTULATION IN ROME. (frateldino@tiscali.it)

We begin this overview with "minor" Apparitions, such as those in Pontmain, France. These Apparitions are very much in the style of Mary's simplicity. The Brothers have been present in this Marian Village on Several Occasions. These Apparitions have brought a Message of Peace and Tenderness from the Heart of Jesus in a time of War and Violence.

PONTMAIN (France, Mayenne): JANUARY 17, 1871

“PRAY, MY CHILDREN, GOD WILL ANSWER YOU IN A SHORT TIME, MY SON LET HIMSELF BE TOUCHED”



*** THE CONTEXT: A TIME OF WAR AND MISERY**

“It was in the Middle of Winter and in the Middle of War that the Virgin Mary visited her people plunged into Anguish, in a Tiny Village in Mayenne very close to Brittany. Paris was under siege, the Prussians were at the gates of Laval and were overflowing throughout France. Among the French soldiers there was Disorder and Panic.” The young people were called up for Military Service. Pontmain, out of 500 Inhabitants, saw 38 leave. Added to all this was Illness and Poverty. In the midst of this peril, France began to pray. The Priest of the Parish of Pontmain for 35 years was Father Guérin, a Holy Priest who did a lot for the village. During these Tragic Days he called the Faithful to Church: made the discouraged Parishioners Sing: “Mother of Hope, whose Name is so Sweet, Protect Our France, Pray, Pray for us!” January 17th is an Ordinary day. It is very Cold and Snow covers the Ground. Around 5 pm, in the Barbedette family, the father and two sons, Eugène (12 years old) and Joseph (10) prepared the gorse for the animals. They prayed for Auguste, their older brother who had been enlisted in the Army. After a while, Eugène came out of the barn - a fit of tears? - and he is struck by a Great Light in the Sky dotted with Stars: above the House opposite, in the Middle of a Blue Oval, he saw a Lady of Ravishing Beauty.

She was dressed in a Dress studded with Gold Stars. A Mourning Veil frames her Face. She wore a Golden Crown. The Lady smiled: Eugene was delighted. Shortly after, his father and brother came out, who also saw the Beautiful Lady. A few moments and it was the turn of Mother Victoire, who would call the Sisters of the School: Sr. Vitaline and Sr. Marie-Edouard. They brought the Orphans of the House and other children of the Village. Almost all the Inhabitants were gathered in front of the Barbedette barn. Also arrived the Priest, who began to perceive that the Lady seen by the children was the Virgin Mary: “If the children saw the Holy Virgin, it was because they are more worthy of her than we are.”

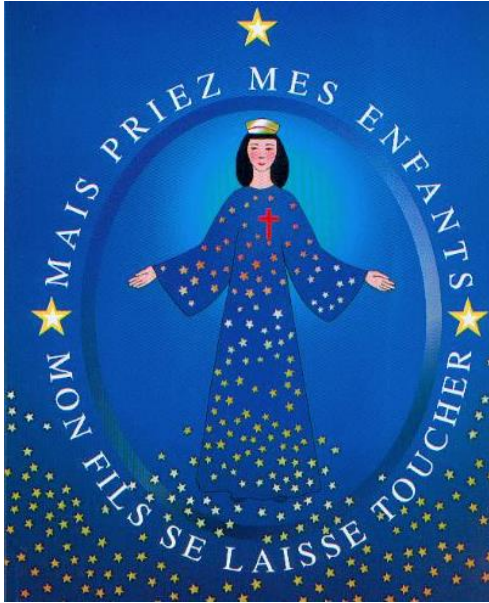


Pontmain, the Apparition Barn and the Barbedette House

The Seers were the two Barbedette children, two Orphans, Three Little Ones: they would illustrate to

those present what they saw. These followed the Apparition by reciting the Rosary, by Intoning the Marian Chants with Great Fervour, despite the Harsh Cold.

First, a Blue Oval with 4 Candles surrounds the Figure. Then a White Banner unfolds at her feet, with letters that make up three sentences: BUT PRAY MY CHILDREN/ GOD WILL ANSWER YOU IN A SHORT TIME/ MY SON LET HIMSELF BE TOUCHED. The Faithful were moved: they had the hope that the War



would end in a short time; they were certain that it was Mary who appeared, Mother of Jesus (my Son) and that she would listen to their prayers in that Tragic Moment. The Vision continued: the Beautiful Lady held a Small Red Crucifix, with the writing JESUS CHRIST. Then a star lit the 4 Candles. During the Apparition the Virgin alternated the Smile of Tenderness, the Pain of War and the Maternal Call to return to Faith and Prayer. It was 9 p.m. The Priest had the Evening Prayers recited. Finally, a Large White Veil covered the Virgin, who greeted the children with her Joyful Smile. The Vision was over : It lasted about Three hours.

Immediate consequences of that Apparition: The Prussian Armies that were going to return to Laval and that were to invade Brittany, would stop at 5:30 p.m. (same time as the Apparition in Pontmain, a few kilometers from Laval, and would not enter the City: the Commander, General Von Schmidt had received

the Order not to conquer that City. The witnesses of the time were convinced that the Intervention of the Virgin put a mysterious end to the Terrible War of 1870-71. Joseph Barbedette, who became OMI, reported words attributed to the Prussian Commander: "We could no longer advance (towards Laval); an Invisible Lady was blocking Our Way." The French General of the Armies of the Loire, Chanzy, expressed his astonishment on seeing the German Troops make an Inexplicable Retreat. At the same time as the Apparitions in Pontmain, the Faithful of the City of Saint-Brieuc, in the Chapel of Notre Dame de Hope made a Vow to the Virgin for Liberation from the Prussian Invasion. At the Church of Victory in Paris, people sought help from Our Lady, offering her a Silver Heart. Finally, on January 28th, the Armistice was signed. The 38 young people from Pontmain, who had left for the War, all returned home, without Death or Injury.



Our Lady of Hope in St Brieuc



Eugène and Joseph Barbedette, Jeanne-Marie Lebossé and Françoise Richer, the Visionaries of the Apparition of the Virgin at Pontmain, on January 17th, 1871.

A Diocesan Investigation into the Apparitions was immediately organized. After a year of study by the Historical, Medical and Theological Commissions, the Bishop of Laval, Mgr Wicart, was able to Affirm: "We declare that the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God, Truly Appeared to Eugene and Joseph Barbedette, Françoise Richer and Jeanne-Marie Lebossé, in the Village of Pontmain". Pope Pius XI confirmed the Title of Our Lady of Hope, in particular to invoke Peace. Pontmain was the Sanctuary for times when we must ask for Mercy through the Son of Mary who allowed

himself to be "touched" by Our Misery. It became even more so when a Statue of the Virgin of Pontmain was brought to Lebanon, to Beshwat. In that Small Village, Healings and Favours obtained for all, Christians and Muslims, were attributed to the Virgin. The Virgin of Pontmain has become a Centre of

Reconciliation and, on this Earth where War and Hatred cause so Much Pain, she carries the Hope of Peace.

* THE APPEARANCE OF PONTMAIN AND THE BROTHERS OF CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION

At the time of the Apparition, in Pontmain, there were only one School, run by the Sisters of Rillé and attended by the children, boys and girls, of the Village. The Brothers were called very early to give a Higher Level of Education to the pupils, especially the boys. The History of that School has been Intermittent. It was opened between 1885 and 1903, then in 1917-19, finally between 1946 and 1961.

The First Brother Appointed to Pontmain was Br Ferréol-Marie Rouault. But already in April 1885 the Br Superior General, Cyprien, wrote to a Brother (Edmond-M Bouroullec



or, more probably Br Salvador Sohier): "I told you that I was sending you to Pontmain. This Post was one of the Venerated Sanctuaries of the Virgin Mary.... I thought I would have been agreeable to you: But it seemed that I was Mistaken. Besides, things were too advanced for us to be able to turn back today. Go there, with Good Will and Confidence and if reasons for changes arise, we would make them in due time. You would not be dishonored by your stay in Pontmain. It was possible that you would not be in Order for the Easter Term. See you nevertheless in Pontmain on May 3rd. You would be able to take the Class there, with Brother Ferréol covering the Class until you are in Order." (Letter copied and abridged by HC Rulon)



Pontmain. Around the Virgin, an intact fervour

Brother Ferréol remained in place until 1887 and was succeeded by Brother Salvador Sohier who had time to prepare and "put himself in Order". That Brother was born in Plédéliac (Côtes d'Armor) on April 4th, 1844, and had returned to the Novitiate of Ploërmel in 1863. He was 44 years old when he took over the Direction of the School of Pontmain. He spent his Greatest Educational and Apostolic Resources in the shadow of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Hope, leaving an unforgettable memory. At his death, after more than 12 years of Service to the

children, the Annals of the Sanctuary could write: "The Parish of Pontmain gave Brother Salvador a Magnificent Funeral. These honours were well deserved. For more than 12 years, he had devoted and sacrificed himself for the good of the children of the Parish. Despite his Poor Health, he would never have wanted to abandon his beloved School. He would rather die at the Post of Toil and Devotion! He therefore devoted all his strength to it until exhaustion and his life until his last breath" (Menologe p.103) The fame of the good done by Brother Salvador was still very much alive even after many years. In 1924, the Parish Priest of Pontmain Fr. Brault, begged the Superior General to send him Brothers, wrote: "The School had two Classes... a Chapel. It would be very pleasant for me to entrust it to you and I know that the Bishop would be very happy to see you return to Pontmain, where the memory of Brother Salvador was still very much alive.

The request was not well received: these were the years of the Secularization of Schools and the persecution of Religious Teaching Institutes. In fact, the School of Pontmain itself had been closed in 1903, after the Interim of Brother Armandin Trochel (1901-1903) because of the Laws of Secularization. Sometime later, in the midst of the World Conflict of the "Great War", in the years 1917-19, the Small School of Pontmain was reopened, by Brother Adole Le Cam. That was perhaps one of the Signs of

Recourse to the Holy Virgin, to ask her to Renew her Protection over the Nation and over the Whole World, in the face of that Immense Tragedy, which was destroying Humanity.



Pilgrims to Pontmain

The School resumed its Course in 1946, the day after the end of the Second World War, as a return to the Maternal Home to obtain Peace. Several Brothers were entrusted with the Direction, in particular: Brother Lemarchand Daniel-André (1946-1952), Brother Rottier Jean-François-Régis (1953-1957), Brother Andouard Bernard-Michel (1958-1961). At the same time, Assistant Brothers were present there: (Brothers Bernier Gabriel, Piton

Maurice, Chaussée Bernard, Loret Cléomène ...) Let us report the satisfaction of the Director of Diocesan Education at the announcement of the reopening of the School, in a letter to the Superior General: *“Very honoured Brother, I am very Grateful to you for confirming to me that you would be able to take charge of the Direction of the Pontmain School next October. I communicated the Good News to the Bishop. I think that your Brother Visitor would get in touch with the Parish Priest of Pontmain. It was a Great Joy for us to greet your Entry into the Diocese on the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the Apparition of Pontmain. Please accept...”* (The Director of Diocesan Education, Laval, June 3rd, 1946). Let us also add the words of thanks from the Bishop of Laval: *“I would like to express my Deep Gratitude to you and assure you of the Very Paternal Welcome that I wish to reserve for your Dear Sons...”* + Paul, Bishop of Laval.

SOURCES: Archives of the Rome Brothers, Carton FRANCE Pontmain - ALBUM on the Pontmain Sanctuary, by the OMI Fathers of Pontmain