

# Bulletin July 2019

## A new page: Mennaisian and Dehaysian Congregations

The great compass of the contemporary Church, the Second Vatican Council, indicated to the Religious Life some fundamental points of attention: the deepening of the charism, the return to the origins, the spiritual renewal, the revival of the mission and the missions ... Pope St. John XXIII loved this expression: to read the signs of the times. Let us try to look around us, in society and in the Church, as these calls that the Holy Spirit today sends us, by putting them in touch with the intuitions of our Founders.

1- "Animated by the desire to provide the children of the people with firmly pious teachers" (p.4)

The mission is simple and clear: "Strongly pious Masters" means a school, so education, and education, schools to build and administer. But also schools where we evangelise: not with "half-priests" or auxiliaries or sacristans. No, masters with a clear profession, thus endowed with the character of consecrated lay people, but who had to invest in the human, civil, cultural, scientific fields: they had to teach all disciplines, and within these disciplines all had to be informed and transformed by the proclamation of the Gospel.

The figure of the apostle of the "Treaty of Union" has a clear secular character, which bridges civil culture, the instruction that prepares for life, the education that makes it possible to fit positively into the society and the proclamation of faith, evangelisation that illuminates earthly realities and gives the right moral and social direction. Today this secular character is the main orientation of the Church: the laity are called to be new evangelisers, without taking the place of the priests, but according to their own character, that is to say by putting the announcement and the work of faith in secular reality.. « *In these schools we form the entire person, the heart as well as the spirit... My dear Brothers, here is the true purpose of all education and especially the one given by our Brothers in their schools. A remarkable thing that experience reveals every day; our students progress rapidly in human sciences, but even more rapidly in the first of all sciences, the science of human and Christian duty.* » (p. 40)

2- "To the children of the people, especially those of the countryside". (The Treaty of Union)

The mission is always turned towards the "poor": "He sent me to evangelise the poor". Who were these poor? It was the multitude of children wandering the streets of small cities, often without family and without dignity, it was the little ones in the countryside, already at work in the fields, and the little girls at home. Often left in ignorance, prey for speculators, who easily indulged in alcohol, delinquency. A youth without fathers, without families, without guides, without affection, without future and without a true and warm religion, beyond the formal aspects.

This is the paternity of our founders Gabriel and Jean-Marie: they became "fathers" for them. And true fatherhood was to give them guides, guardian angels, elder brothers to share the bread of the Gospel. But an integral Gospel: made of bread, of instruction, of advice, of concern for their future, makes the good news that the merciful heart of Jesus destines them: « *Your Excellency knows the deplorable state of ignorance and poverty that exists in most of our Breton parishes... The only way to overcome this ignorance and the many problems that follow from the lack of pastors, is to increase the number of Christian schools and develop the training of teachers, who are motivated solely by religion to accomplish these difficult tasks. They cost parishes little, but inspire in their pupils' parents a total and highly deserved confidence.* » (p.41)

Even today, the Christian school is an adventure and a challenge. This is the challenge of the new evangelisation: bringing to the heart of the culture and trends of today's society the powerful and illuminating force of the word of God. This is the mission of the "laity", rays of light that dispel doubts, arouse research, guide the desires, carry the hopes and anxieties of the world today, especially young people who are the pillars of the future city. Young people who do not lack desires and hope, but who find it hard to find land and guides. Today, this is to what our Founders call us.