

The session of the General Council was preceded by a three day meeting with the recently appointed Superiors of the Province of Jean de la Mennais and the Vice-provinces of Japan – Philippines and Central Africa.

As usual, the ordinary General Assembly of the Union of Superiors General was held at the end of the month of May. On this occasion the Congregation for the Institutes of consecrated life and the Societies of apostolic life presented a document « The service of authority and obedience ».

At the end of their meeting the Council spent three days at Castelgandolfo, a time of formation.

This issue of the Echoes brings the following information and decisions to the knowledge of the whole Congregation.

1. Animation of the Congregation :

1.1 Life in the Provinces and Vice-Provinces :

The different visits made by the Superior General and his Assistants made it possible to study the situations in the Province of St. Teresa (Uganda), of the Province of Notre Dame de Pilar (Spain) and the Mission of Indonesia.

A report of the Assembly (general and chapter) of the Vice-Province of West Africa, held at Lomé at the end of March 2008, was made to the Council. But the texts voted on will be examined only after their adoption by the Provincial Chapter of the Province of St Jean-Baptiste, which should take place next October.

The Council discussed again the question of the choice and preparation of the future Formators in the different sectors concerned.

In the spirit of the General Chapter the Council is also pursuing its reflection on the animation and government structures of the Congregation and on the possible evolution of certain administrative units.

1.2 Session on the shared mission from 18 to 26 August 2008 :

The Council consecrated some time to make a detailed preparation and definitive organisation of this session. Following the different reports from the Provinces and Vice-Provinces, the Council revised and amended the « the framework document » and the formation guide, which will be studied in the course of this meeting.

The session will consist of 45 Lay persons and 34 Brothers from all the sectors of the Congregation, thus giving to this meeting a true international dimension. This session is meant to be a time of communal reflection on the framework document of the shared mission, but also a time of personal and communitarian formation, of sharing and of prayer. The programme therefore alternates with these different activities : conferences and formation workshops, work in groups and joint assemblies centred on the proposed documents, and times for praying together.

Being at Ploërmel will also enable the participants to follow the footsteps of the Founders, be it at the Mother-House itself or during the pilgrimage at St Malo, La Chesnaie as well as at Auray.

After this Assembly the General Council will go over the text enriched by the different contributions. It will be their responsibility to propose to the Congregation the significant steps in order to respond better, Brothers and the Laity, to the calls of the Holy Spirit.

1.3 Sessions and meetings planned for 2009 :

- The next meeting of major Superiors will take place at Kisubi in Uganda from 19th March to 2nd April 2009. Three years after the last Chapter, this session will be the **General Conference** as requested by the Rule of Life.
- The **meeting of the provincial and vice-provincial Bursars** will take place at Kisubi in Uganda from 1st to 4th April 2009. The whole day of 1st April will be a day of joint work with the General Conference. This will permit the participants, among others, to study the propositions of the Commission on Solidarity.

1.4 Ongoing formation :

As indicated already in the previous issue of the Echoes, « **the Brother's identity** » will be the new theme of the year proposed to the entire Congregation. A leaflet of the presentation of the theme, sent to each Brother, should reach the provinces and Vice-provinces next September. This leaflet will state the different stages of the theme which will be divided into several booklets throughout next year (October 2008-June 2009).

1.5 Communication in the Congregation :

Mr. Michel TANGUY, Director of communication, has presented to the Council a document describing the principal orientations and evolutions concerning the review and the Internet Site of the Congregation.

An experimental phase will be put in place in the course of the year in such a way as to progressively arrive at a definitive formula by July 2009. And finally, to constitute an international network of correspondents in liaison with the person responsible for the communication services, the Brothers and the Laity will be requested in the different sectors of the Congregation.

Michel Tanguy has his office in the Mennaisian College of St Stanislas de Saint-Renan, France (m.tanguy@ficplm.org).

1.6 The 150th Anniversary of the death of Father de la Mennais :

The Council has considered different possible initiatives for underlining this anniversary, an occasion of making Father de la Mennais better known and to strengthen our communion with the Founder.

1.7 Father Gabriel Deshayes :

With the initiative of the Montfortains Fathers, a meeting about Father Gabriel Deshayes was organised on 12 April 2008 at St Laurent sur Sèvres. The dioceses of Vannes and Luçon as well as all religious Congregations connected with Father Deshayes were represented. The purpose of this meeting was to find out what had already been done or what was being done concerning Father Gabriel Deshayes.

At the end of the meeting each Congregation was requested to designate a delegate to be in liaison with and facilitate the co-ordination of the Association of « *Amis de Gabriel Deshayes* ». Brother Hervé ASSE, Assistant Provincial of the Province of St Jean-Baptiste, was named to represent the Brothers of Christian Instruction.

2. Decisions of the Superior General and his Council.

2.1 Nominations :

Brother Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has appointed as Director of the Scholasticate:

- For the Province of St Teresa of the Child Jesus:

Brother **Denis KATUSIIME**,
for a mandate of three years
with effect from
September 2008.

- For the of Province Notre Dame de Pilar :

Brother **Rafael PEREZ PEREZ**,
for a mandate of three years
with effect from September 2008.

2.2 Admissions to perpetual profession :

Brother Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has admitted to perpetual vows, for the Vice-Province of Kenya-Tanzania :

Brother **Anthony KAHMUHANDA**, Brother **Evodius KABWOGI**, Brother **Peter KARIUKI**,
Brother **Joseph MALLYA**, Brother **Gilbert MBAE**, and Brother **Benedict ODHIAMBO**.

3. Mission of Indonesia

The community of the mission of Indonesia has actually undergone some changes. After spending four years at Larantuka, Brother Alberto SOLAUN returned to his Province of origin in Spain. His contribution in the establishment of the structures of Pusat la Mennais and the new apostolic dynamism of the Centre was important. The mission of Indonesia is grateful to him for all his availability in the service of the children and youths and most especially in the vocations ministry.

Brother Salomon HEDIBLE, originating from Benin and belonging to the western Vice-Province of Central Africa will join the community of Larantuka at the beginning of October 2008. We wish Brother Salomon a safe journey and a happy stay!

The different construction projects started by the community nearly two years ago are nearing completion. The ensemble of buildings - the Pusat la Mennais for the formation courses and workshops, the polyvalent hall for the animation activities and the aspirants - is now completed and a great part of it is already in use. Only some bits of work on the layout of the compound remain to be done. The Brothers now have the premises well adapted to carry on the education mission and the evangelisation of the children and youths.

Another challenge to contend with is that of the vocations ministry and the formation of some young Indonesians who are contemplating of joining our Congregation. The eventual pursuit of their vocation will necessitate putting in place the formation structures and the presence of Formators. A reflection on the best way of embarking on this exercise, considering the existing realities and the specific situation of our congregation in Asia.

4. Vote of thanks to Brothers Philippe Friot and Louis Balanant

• Departure of Brother Philippe FRIOT from Rome

On Sunday, 1st June, the Brothers of Casa Generalizia and the two communities of Italy gathered around Brother Philippe Friot to share the Sunday Eucharistic celebration and a fraternal meal. In fact Brother Philippe left Rome on the 11th June.

On this occasion, Brother Superior General, in the name of the congregation expressed his thanks to the Brother for the work he accomplished in the domain of the historical research and publication of the Mennaisian sources.

During the first two years of his stay in Rome, Brother Philippe followed a course in spirituality at the Gregorian University. In 1991 he published a book on Jean-Marie de la Mennais : *La Spiritualité d'un homme d'action*, which is still considered a reference book on the subject today. In 2001-2002, he produced, in 9 imposing volumes of 600 pages each, the *Correspondance et les Sermons* of our principal Founder.

Responsible for the historical review of the Congregation *Études Mennaisiennes*, he succeeded in getting many collaborators, but he himself contributed to the realisation of 11 publications consecrated especially to the school work of Jean-Marie de la Mennais, drawing his materials from the Archives of Casa Generalizia but also - as a hobby in his free time - from the national Archives, District Archives, Diocesan Archives, or Archives of different religious congregations in France. Some other issues of the *Etudes Mennaisiennes* will appear before the new formula becomes functional.

Brother Philippe Friot has also left a good impression on the Generalate with his twenty years of presence. Always discrete, with a balanced sense of humour, he won the esteem of his confreres of the community as well as that of the house employees.

- **A Change in the management of the Chronicle :**
Thank you to Brother Louis BALANANT

As announced in the previous issue of the Echoes, with effect from the 1st June 2008, the management of the different reviews and the general communication system of the Congregation were entrusted to Mr. Michel TANGUY.

It is the opportune moment, therefore, to thank Brother Louis BALANANT for all the work accomplished during the 7 years in this responsibility of Director of the Chronicle. Like all his predecessors Brother Louis used all his Mennaisian tenacity to succeed in publishing always on time some 20 issues of the review of the Congregation! Each reader must have appreciated the diversity of the subjects treated, the care of a clear and agreeable presentation and the positive tonality of the ensemble of the articles.

Brother Louis is also the initiator of the Internet Site of the Congregation. This Site, now renewed, continues its growth and should progressively attain the desired stage, that of presenting the languages used in the Congregation. In all these domains, be it for the review or the Website, Brother Louis will keep on rendering his services in collaboration with the new management under Mr. Michel Tanguy.

Calendar of the members of the General Council

Brother Yannick HOUSSAY

4 July to 1 st August	Visit of the Vice-Province of Kenya-Tanzania
18 to 27 August	Ploërmel : session on the shared Mission
End of August	Perpetual Professions at Moshi
10 to 30 September	Rome : session of the General Council.

Brother Miguel Angel MERINO

June - July - August	Rome, Castelgandolfo, Ploërmel :
	• session of young Brothers preparing for perpetual profession
	• session on shared Mission
10 au 30 September	Rome : session of the General Council

Brother Gerard BYARUHANGA

4 to 22 July	Philippines
18 to 27 August	Rome, Ploërmel : session on shared Mission
10 to 30 September	Rome : session of the General Council

Brother Gildas PRIGENT

June – July -- August

Rome, Castelgandolfo, Ploërmel

- session of young Brothers preparing for perpetual profession
- session on shared Mission

10 to 30 September

Rome : session of the General Council

N.B. : The next Council meeting will take place in Rome from 10th to 30th September 2008.