



I - THE PRAYER FOR THE BEATIFICATION OF JEAN-MARIE DE LA MENNAIS

For a long time, every month and in all parts of the Congregation, we have been praying for nine days every month to obtain the beatification of our founder Jean-Marie de la Mennais so that his sanctity may officially be recognised.

1 - WHY?

Why do we continue to pursue this tradition? Is it just a matter of habit? Is this beatification really necessary? Is it not a mark of triumphalism that distracts us from our precious ecclesial service? On these questions, a former postulator, Brother Vincent Guillerme, who recently went to heaven, hopefully to ascertain the sanctity of our Father, said: Let us hear what he tells us:

By way of conclusion, I would like to say that the "glorification" of our Founders by their solemn Beatification and Canonisation is not an indispensable element for holiness, for the work of education and for evangelisation of our Institutes, nor is it strictly necessary for the influence of the Church. Let us, however, recognise with all simplicity that it may be a means of giving glory to the Lord for what he has accomplished in them and through them, a means also of arousing a new impetus of faith and generosity in the milieu that was more marked by the example of their life and by their pastoral action. These milieux: the Institutes they founded or

developed, the works, parishes and dioceses where they worked are entitled to it. And it seems to me that we do not have to deliberately refuse this means, on the pretext of escaping from some triumphalism or cliquishness.

Pope John Paul II's emphasis on this aspect of the life of the Church, where models, witnesses and intercessors, now members of the "triumphant Church", continue to play an important role in the lives of those who "Militate" here, should, if it is necessary to support our convictions and action. It can, at the same time, strengthen our filial confidence and stimulate our prayer so that, in a future that we leave to the Lord to determine, Jean-Marie de la Mennais and Gabriel Deshayes may officially be proposed to the veneration and example of the whole Church.

Brother Vincent Guillerme, F.I.C.P. Postulator (1985-1997)

2 -HOW?

Prayer may be spontaneous, intended for a sick person, or for spiritual or apostolic purpose. But to make it more effective, it is appropriate that it is carried out in a group, with the school, with the Mennaisian Family, with the community of Brothers or with other religious Men and Women e.g. Daughters of Providence, with the parish ...

First and foremost to respond to the Gospel: "In truth I tell you once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name I am there among them. " (Mt 18: 19)."

And on this subject, let us still listen to these valuable indications of Brother Vincent Guillerme.

The 'official' prayer (monthly or annual Novena...) is obviously recommended, but don't forget that it must always be a true personal prayer. And it is also a humble confident prayer of each one (the patients themselves and their families, their friends and their colleagues) that the Lord wants to generously respond to. Let us also say that to the

'poor' humans that we are, the Lord does not forbid - and the facts of yesterday and today testify to it - supporting prayer by more 'material' gestures, the manifestation of our inner faith. I think about having the image of the servant of God or other items that remind us of him, making a pilgrimage to his tomb or to one or other of the places he frequented, to the monuments erected in his memory in different countries that have benefited from the apostolic work of his Sons or Daughters. Far from being superstitious when they are understood, these actions both become an expression of our confidence and signs of our humble acceptance of our condition of a creature in a world that is not only spiritual and in which the Son of God himself wanted to belong fully.

3 - WHERE?

We can pray everywhere, especially in places where Father de la Mennais is known, with the people that are recommended, in the undertakings directed or organised by the Mennaisian family.

Here again are a few concrete indications.

In the memorial places where our founders, especially Jean-Marie, have worked. In this case, it's Brittany which is the privileged place (Ploërmel - Auray and not only these).

In each Province/District we should establish a "place for prayer" where one could pray the Lord through the intercession of the Venerable Founder. In this place, prayers, images, portraits, biographies, prayer books and the novena of the month, and the intentions recommended by the young people, children, families ...

It would be nice if there was, in every school or educational center, a "Mennaisian prayer corner", where people could meet for the novena or any other occasional prayer for particular intentions.

For all this to work, there should be a coordinator (consecrated or secular) in each Province/ District who should remain in liaison with the Central Postulation of the

Generalate. Thus to establish a genuine exchange of information, communication of intentions, the request for documents, and the sharing of local initiatives that could be brought to the attention of all the places of the Mennaisian Family could be established.

CONCLUSION

The prayer for the beatification of our founder is a small thing in the ocean of the Mission of the Mennaisian Family. But it has its importance: it is a return to the original charism, it is a source of inspiration always new, it is a sign of the unity of all the Mennaisian Family spread throughout the world (Brothers, Sisters, Laity), it is a source of hope, it is a stimulus for fertility and creativity in the mission.

Fifty years have passed since the proclamation of the heroicity in virtues of the founder and we have prayed so much. Prayers do not end in a vacuum: in a certain way the Lord listens to us. Let us continue to pray with perseverance and creativity. Like the African Francophone Novices of (Saint John Paul II and Saint Paul Districts) did, to mark the anniversary of the heroicity in virtues of the founder, they made a pilgrimage of 41 km on foot, praying, singing , thus testifying to the Mennaisian charism to all those whom they met. Confidence and creative perseverance that the Lord will not let fall into oblivion.

Frère Dino De Carolis

II - TESTIMONY

Within a few years all the Brothers who were responsible for the year of renewal that used to take place in Rome or Castel Gandolfo have all passed away. Let us mention here these Brothers of good memory: Albert Mayrand, Vincent Guillermin, Philippe Friot, Gilbert Olivier, Miguel Ángel Merino and Gérard Chatelier. All were passionate experts of Jean-Marie de la Mennais, some of whom left important works to deepen the Mennaisian charism.



We would like to present **Brother Miguel Ángel Merino**, who is known to the whole Congregation, for he was an Assistant General from 2006 to 2012. He studied Mennaisian spirituality with passion, he was also a religious

endowed with a concrete mystic and with a great human warmth.

Messages received on the occasion of Bro. Merino's funeral at Nanclares de la Oca, on 15 February 2014.

I think he was mostly a man of faith, of deep-rooted faith, of a faith translated into trust in a God-Father who loves us and calls us to love others.

The reading that we heard said: "God has commissioned us to teach and to bear witness" (Acts 10:42). If we have heard something from Miguel Ángel, all we have received from him, we must share it, to give it to others. His faith, deepened and worked, has been helpful to many to bring us closer to the Word and through it, bring us closer to God. Let us ask the Lord that this path traced in the lives of so many Brothers and Laity continues to grow, so that it may be a way of life, a path of fidelity to the Mennaisian project which our Brother loved so much.

He was also a man for whom family and brotherhood counted, with warm and radiant contact, a man of listening and empathy, well acquainted with human weakness and entirely devoted to others. How many of us who are here have received a word of encouragement from him.

A fervent man of the "Mennaisian", a disciple of Jean-Marie,

not by re-reading a bucolic past, but by being called to live today, in today's society the Mennaisian intuitions for the benefit of children and young people, as a search for ways of loyalty and commitments still current.

A man committed to the service of young people and fellow Brothers until the disease deprives him of his strength. He spent years of his life devoting himself to the Brothers, as the Director of the Scholastics, the year of renovation ... as Assistant. The courses, the interviews, the meetings, ... always putting quality and warmth, bringing his words and his reflection, sharing research and life. Many years to sow in others.

Thank you Miguel Ángel for your committed life,
Shared, given and restored

With the simplicity of someone who knew how to meet others
... with humility, the strength of his life,
... with Love, his inexhaustible source,
... with forgiveness, an inexhaustible generosity

With the brotherhood of someone who knew how to give the best of himself,

Without hiding or rounding angles

... weaving links,

... healing the wounds,

... offering his time, his reflection, his presence, his kindness

Thank you Miguel Ángel, to remind us

That every day we must learn to become brothers.

In the study and reflection

discreet and shared service

... which broadens the look,

... opens the hearts,

... suggests the gestures.

Thank you Miguel Ángel, for your passion for the Word which brought us closer to Jesus and his plan for us.



In the shared faith of the one who opened us to the Mennaisian Spirituality and Pedagogy,
... who encouraged us to create bonds of love and mercy
... to discover in each child and in each young person the presence of God,
... and which makes us the gift of the most beautiful temple: the human being.

Thank you Miguel Ángel, for taking us by the hand
And made visible to us the project which Jean-Marie de la Mennais once dreamed of.

We remember a man who, in the style of Jesus, has passed into our lives doing good.

III -FAVOUR OBTAINED THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF JEAN-MARIE DE LA MENNAIS

HEALING OF A RELIGIOUS IN UGANDA

I want to thank the Venerable John Mary de la Mennais and draw the attention of the sick to the prayer addressed to God through the intercession of the Servant of God, Venerable John Mary de la Mennais.

On February 27, 1960, a tumour developed inside my upper lip. First of all, I paid little attention to it, thinking it was a

temporary discomfort. However, on the 2nd of March, around 4 o'clock in the morning, the condition of my lip became alarming: I felt cold and unable to swallow anything. The swelling, very painful, 5 cm in length, reached my eyes, which it almost completely obstructed. It was then that I remembered the Servant of God, John Mary de la Mennais. I applied his image with the relic on my lip, and in the morning I began a novena to the Venerable Servant of God.

I was first taken to the Medical Sisters of Mary Hospital and taken to the Government Hospital almost immediately, as an operation seemed to be necessary. The waiting for the doctor was long; and I was preparing to die ...

The doctor came at last, and at once asked me what had stung my lip. My negative answer made him pensive, especially since a new excrescence appeared then, hanging on my lip already so sick. After consultation, the doctors agreed to carry out an operation as a matter of urgency though, they whispered to each other, "She might not wake up in this world". They made this reflection in English, unaware that I understood that language.

This verdict of the doctors alarmed me very much. I commended myself with new fervour and confidence to the Venerable John Mary de la Mennais, begging him to cure me and thereby avert the risky operation. A few minutes before the surgeon arrived to operate my poor lip, the tumour opened by itself, letting an abundant pus flow and thus giving me immense relief. Until that moment I could not swallow anything, not even liquid; I asked for water and swallowed it without any pain. I immediately I thanked Father de la Mennais through whose intercession I had obtained my cure . At the same time, the surgeon came forward, announcing that he was going to proceed with the operation.

- But, I do not feel the slightest pain and the swelling has disappeared, see!

"What have you done to your lip?"

"Nothing, the tumour has emptied itself." The surgeon could not hide his great astonishment. He even went to look for other doctors in the hospital to see for themselves the strange phenomenon.

Thus I was cured thanks to the intervention of the Servant of God Venerable John Mary de la Mennais. Four days later I left the hospital. Since then, my trust in the Servant of God is very great, and I am happy to recount the favour which he bestowed upon me. His image has since been destroyed, would you, please, procure me another one? Thank you in anticipation for your assistance.