
CONGRESS OF THE SHARED MISSION

Ploërmel, 19th to the 24th August 2008

A Conference on the shared Mission will be held in Ploërmel from the 19th to the 24th August, 2008.

Brothers and lay persons met in Paris on the 3rd and 4th November, 2007, in preparation for that Conference.

Mrs Sophie Lapointe represented Canada at that meeting. The impressions which she shared with Brother Robert Smyth at the conclusion of that meeting give us an insight into what the conference itself will be about. Here are extracts from her interview.

What did that preparation to the Conference consist of?

There were four associates, three of whom were gentlemen. I was the only representative of the fair sex... There were seven Brothers, three of whom were Assistants.

In the first place, we worked on the proposed document which, although more detailed, is, in many respects, very much like our associates' handbook. I did not feel out of place or at a loss at that meeting. I was happy to see that much of what we are living at home concurs with what the Congregation is in the process of setting up. The broad lines of the proposed programme of formation correspond to several of the formation sessions which we have held. One should note, however, that this formation programme advocates a process which brings about a fuller integration of the elements

of the charism, namely, the spirituality, the mission and experiences of community living.

Community living?

The document which we worked on uses the expression "community" to talk about certain notions which I would rather call "communion". To my mind, "community" connotes the idea of living together under the same roof, whereas "communion" denotes times when we share, pray, work and undergo training together. This is the sort of distinction which the Conference may have to shed light upon.

Any other impressions on the Paris meeting?

First of all, other than the work which we carried out together, the international character of the meeting was both interesting and enriching, although in-depth communication with some associates was impossible due to the language barrier, and that proved somewhat frustrating. And then, we did not have time to really get to know each other.

In the second place, I felt very much at home and welcomed at the Brothers' residence, 9 rue du Commandeur. It was as if I belonged to the family. I was touched by the Brothers' thoughtfulness towards me.

Sophie Lapointe and Brother Robert Smyth

Pope Benedict XVI receives the Associations of Men and Women Superiors General of Rome

On Monday February 18, Pope Benedict XVI, at their request, received the Associations of Men and Women Superiors General of Rome for discussions, in the form of open dialogue, which lasted for an hour and a half.

The participants, among whom was Brother Yannick Houssay, who is also a member of the Associations' executive council, very much appreciated the relaxed atmosphere and the openness of the meeting. In attendance were Cardinals Bertone, Secretary of State, and Rodé, Prefect of the CISCVA.

You will find the address of the Pope in Brother Yannick's "blog" or in the site of the Congregation: ficplm.org



At the end of the meeting, each participant could present himself to the Pope.

Brother Yannick in the company of Cardinal Rodé