

## Right of reply to the brothers of St John

The brothers of St. John communicated on November 5, 2019 a "final message of the second session of the General Chapter" involving our family and which was full of untruths. As a niece, I asked to use our legally recognized "right of reply" in my own name and on behalf of my family on unproven charges dating back to ... 1952! To this day, the brothers have not deigned to accede to my request ...

The family of the Fathers Philippe brings certain precisions:

1 / This widely circulated text "reveals" for the first time a "conviction" of Father Marie-Dominique Philippe of 2 years with "ban on confessing". The novelty would be that the father would have been "judged seriously accomplice of the actions of his brother" and that it would be the cause and the origin of the abuses of his brothers of 1970 to date ... The chapter is careful to quote the person who would have had "access to archives" evoked while they are in principle canonically secret (canon 487 and following) except rescript Pontifical. This statement, which is directly related to the

sanction imposed in 1956 on his brother, Fr. Thomas Philippe, can also come from a complainant like Ms. Michèle-France Pesneau who is omnipresent in the media and in particular in the reportage of Arte. Readers can not be satisfied with a peremptory affirmation following "listening to a presentation" on these archives without the Chapter reporting its sources or copies. A violation of Canon Law now seems likely

2 / Father Thomas Philippe was certainly deprived by the Dominican Order of any public ministry from 1952 to December 1963. He was "condemned" by the Holy Office in 1956 to no longer celebrate the Eucharist but "only" for one year and 5 months. The exact reason for his conviction is still unknown because of the pontifical secret. So his priestly activities were not resumed "with impunity" as the newspaper *La Croix* says on November 5, but with the explicit agreement of his Order and the local Ordinary. It should be noted that the lasting isolation of Father Thomas, which he did in total obedience, greatly affected his health (see the XLP report to l'Arche and especially the "letter to Mgr. Desmazieres").

3 / Father Marie-Dominique, contrary to what the Chapter says, was not forbidden by "Rome" to confess nuns ... His Dominican superior would have asked her to stop preaching at the Bouvines monastery. What has nothing to do with this...

4 / Contrary to what the Chapter says, Mother Cécile Philippe, (relieved of course as Prioress of the Monastery of Bouvines in 1956), was never "recognized having had a responsibility in the actions of Father Thomas"! And Father Dehau was not accused of ... anything.

5 / A pernicious amalgam is made by the chapter between the numerous abuses committed and proven by brothers of the community to this day and those "attributed" to Father Marie-Dominique more than 30 or 40 years ago! This comparison is likely to create confusion in an uninformed reader.

6 / Jean Vanier knew Father Thomas at L'Eau Vive in 1950, remained in contact with him without discontinuity, then came to join him in Trosly-Breuil in the Oise to found the Ark in 1964 with his spiritual support . Jean

Vanier knew perfectly well that he had been "sentenced" by Rome in 1956 ... So if Jean Vanier "took the risk" of taking Father Thomas as spiritual director, it is because he certainly felt that the causes the main reasons for this condemnation were not such as to taint his spiritual and sacerdotal radiance. Otherwise, Jean Vanier would never have "taken the risk" of having him as his spiritual director and chaplain of this new community.

We can consult a source of L'Arche (well documented despite approximations) and also important pieces of the file including those relating to Marie-France Pesneau, main complainant to get a better idea of the context.

In conclusion of this "unpacking" to say the least surprising letter, the chapter wants now "to put an end to a drift of at least 70 years"! The Prior General in an interview with *Famille Chretienne* concedes not to understand how this community would have been authorized by the Church and by those who "knew about the father". "We do not know for now," he admits, however!

It is a very strange thing to see this community now, and in this way  
condemning its founder, who has received from the beginning the support of  
his Order, the Roman Dicasteries, many bishops in France, Marthe Robin and  
even in 1982 of St John Paul II himself ....

Marie PHILIPPE