In memoriam. Brother Gabriel Some (1957–2026)

It is with deep sorrow but with Christian hope that Brother Rodrigue Toeppen, Visitor of the Lasallian District of West Africa (DILAO), has announced that on Monday 24 August 2026, at the age of 69, **Brother Gabriel Some** passed away. He served as a General Councillor of the Institute between 2007 and 2014, during the second term of Brother Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría as Superior General.

Brother Gabriel's death occurred at 5:58 pm (local time) at the Sauro Sanou Hospital in Bobo-Dioulasso (Burkina Faso), where he had been admitted on Friday 21 August to receive medical care due to his fragile state of health.

"Brother Gabriel served the Lord and his neighbour with exemplary dedication, leaving a lasting impression on all those who crossed his path through his great humility and missionary zeal," said Brother Rodrigue in a letter in which he also stated that "in these moments of mourning for our Institute, we turn our gaze towards the Risen Christ. We dare to implore your benevolent prayer for the repose of his soul, as well as your spiritual consolation for our District in mourning."

Brother Gabriel was born on 27 August 1957 in Dergané, in the south-western region of Burkina Faso, to Gratien Somda and Henriette Some. He attended primary school in Tovor and completed his secondary education in Toussiana.

He entered the Novitiate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in 1977. On 13 September 1979, he took his first vows as a religious, and on 29 December 1988, he professed his Perpetual Vows.

Between 1979 and 1982, he undertook his formation at the Scholasticate in Sakabi. He then worked in Lasallian ministries in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso (1982–1986), before travelling to Abidjan, in Ivory Coast, to pursue academic studies (1986–1990).

Throughout his long vocational journey within his District, the Lasallian Region of Africa (RELAF) and the Institute, Brother Gabriel exercised significant leadership

that left its mark on various Lasallian works in Toussiana and Bobo-Dioulasso, amongst others, as well as in the formation of the Brothers — he was director of the St Michael Scholasticate in Abidjan between 2000 and 2006 —, in pastoral ministry of vocations (2006–2007) and on the General Council of the Institute for seven years, from 2007 to 2014.

We give thanks to God for the fruitful life and witness of Brother Gabriel Some, and we join in spirit with his family and the Brothers of the Lasallian District of West Africa and RELAF.

His funeral will take place on Wednesday 2 September at 10.00 am at St Paul's Church in Toussiana. Prior to this, a wake will be held at the parish of *Notre Dame du Cénacle* from 8.00 pm on Tuesday 1 September.

We share below the testimony of Brother Anatole Diretenadji, General Councillor of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

A life dedicated to the Lord

The sad news of the death of our dear Brother Gabriel Somé has plunged many of us into deep sorrow. However, beyond this grief, it is also an opportunity to give thanks to the Lord for the precious gift of his life: a humble and simple existence, entirely dedicated to Christ, to the Institute and to his Brothers.

My first encounter with Brother Gabriel dates back just over twenty years, when he was Director of the Saint-Miguel Scholasticate in Abidjan. I discovered a man who was at once unassuming, approachable and deeply human. Later, when he became a General Councillor, he invited me to join the Regional Office, where I had the good fortune to serve as Regional Bursar.

We worked together for several years, until the end of his term of office. This professional collaboration gradually developed into a genuine fraternal friendship, which endured well beyond his official duties.

We stayed in regular contact and were delighted to meet up almost every time I travelled to Burkina Faso, particularly during the Conference or my visits to the Novitiate. These meetings were always characterised by simplicity, brotherhood and warmth.

With Brother Gabriel, there was often a joke, a touch of humour, a smile or a little

anecdote to lighten the atmosphere. He loved to make people laugh and joke around. But this simplicity was never superficial. Behind his humour lay great human depth, a solid faith and an unwavering commitment to his vocation as a Brother.

Brother Gabriel shouldered great responsibilities without ever putting himself forward. He always remained approachable, close to others, and brimming with brotherly love. Even in the face of difficulties or trials, he strove to maintain his composure, dignity and optimism. It was this attitude that left a deep impression on all those who were fortunate enough to know him. For many, he was a brother, a friend, a true companion on the journey. For me, he also represented an elder and a role model.

His career — Director of the Scholasticate, General Councillor, Brother in community and Head of School — illustrates a life dedicated to the service of Christ and the Institute. I particularly remember my last meeting with him, in April 2026, in Bobo, in his hospital room. Despite his illness, Brother Gabriel still sat upright. He was able to respond, react, engage and take part in the conversation with that simplicity which characterised him so well. We talked as we always had, unaware that this would be our final exchange. I give thanks to the Lord for this last opportunity to see him again, to speak to him and to share a final moment of fraternity with him.

The words of Saint Paul: 'I have become all things to all' (1 Cor 9:22) resonate deeply in the witness of his life. With his simplicity, his willingness to help, his humour, his brotherly spirit and his commitment, Brother Gabriel knew how to draw close to everyone. He gave so much, without ever seeking to put himself in the spotlight. His passing leaves an immense void within our religious family and in the hearts of all those who were fortunate enough to know him. But a life consecrated to Christ does not come to an end. It continues to bear fruit through the people he met, the communities he served, the young people he guided and the brothers he encouraged.

Brother Gabriel dedicated his life to Christ. I am convinced that the Lord, whom he served and loved with such faithfulness, now welcomes him into His presence, and that his life finds its fulfilment in this encounter with his Lord and in eternal peace.

Dear Brother Gabriel, thank you for your brotherly love, your humility, your smile and your witness of faithfulness. Thank you for all that you have meant to so many brothers and to our Institute. You have fought the good fight, you have finished your race, you have kept the faith. Although your journey amongst us has come to an end, the witness of your life lives on.

Rest in peace, dear Brother Gabriel.

Brother Anatole Diretenadji