



## O adorable heart of J. C.,

receive on this day our adoration, our thanks, our prayers, our wishes and our offering.

We adore you as the heart of our God.

We thank you for all the blessings you have given us, especially by calling us to your Congregation.

We ask you to make us your true and worthy children, worthy of your name, worthy of your heart, imitators of your gentleness and your humility.

We most ardently desire that the whole world and especially this little Society, will come to know you more and more, love you more and more, serve you more and more, and make amends more each day for the ingratitude of sinners.

Finally, O sweet and tender Heart, (we) are all prostrate at your feet. Receive us all through the hands of our good and revered Superior:

It is to him, O divine Heart, that you inspired the idea of this work.

It is he whom you have entrusted with the heavy task of starting it, of continuing it through all the obstacles.

It is in this heart which formed us, in this sanctuary, our dear and sacred cradle, that all the members of your little family meet today, both those who are far beyond the seas and those who work not far from us.

Thus presented, receive us, bless us, fill us with your strength, fill (us) with your sweetness, fill us with your Spirit, fill us with your love!

Fr. Auguste Etchecopar, conclusion of his homily for the feast of the Sacred Heart, 1861



**Societas S<sup>mi</sup> Cordis Jesu  
BETHARRAM**

**Generalate House**  
via Angelo Brunetti, 27  
00186 Rome - Italy  
Phone +39 06 320 70 96  
Email scj.generalate@gmail.com  
[www.betharram.net](http://www.betharram.net)

# NEF

# Betharram

**Nr 182**

NOUVELLES EN FAMILLE - 121<sup>TH</sup> YEAR, 11<sup>th</sup> series - 14 June 2022

## In this issue

Communicate with  
our life that we are  
sent by the spirit  
p. 1

Assembly experience  
towards the  
Chapter p. 5

Homily, Pentecost  
2022 p. 7

In one sentence, what  
do you retain from  
the year spent in  
the company of Fr  
Etchecopar? p. 8

The Beautiful Branch  
among the young  
p. 11

Pobitro, Avinash  
& Packiaraj,  
three new Indian  
perpetually  
professed p. 14

Notices from the  
General Council  
p. 19

Happy Feast of the  
Sacred Heart! p. 20

## A word from the superior general

## Communicate with our life that we are sent by the spirit

*"Religious life will be all the more apostolic the more interior is the gift of oneself to the Lord Jesus, the more fraternal the community form of life, the more ardent the commitment to the specific mission of the Institute." (VC 72d)*

Dear Betharramite,

Sunrise in Southeast Asia. As I make the official visit to Thailand and Vietnam, memories of the first Betharramite missionaries who arrived in China parade before me. One hundred years have passed since that event and both in Yunnan and here, the generosity of those men accomplished much.

Their missionary spirit had made them heirs to a lifestyle that began in de-Christianised France with popular missions and later with education. In 1856, after a serious discernment, in which Saint Michael involved all the religious, eight

Betharramites left for Buenos Aires. In 1879, during the time of Fr. Etchecopar, three left Betharram, which together with the two who were already there, formed the community of Bethlehem. In 1922, during the time of Fr. Paillas, three missionaries left for China on a mission "ad gentes", two of whom came from Argentina and Paraguay.

Just as Saint Michael Garicoits wanted, the audacity and passion for the proclamation of the gospel were never foreign to those Betharramites. And without a doubt, they are still very necessary for us, their successors in the 21st century.

It is a long itinerary of life consecrated to the Heart of Jesus, founded on courage, but also nourished by the witness of religious who loved their vocation.

The beacon that illuminated the path of the first Betharramites was the holiness of the founder and later that of Fr. Etchecopar. Many of the first companions also lived in fidelity to the first intuition of the Pastor of Ibarre: remaining and persevering in obedience, an essential characteristic of the nascent congregation. This was the yeast that made the Institute grow, blessed by Divine Providence with new members, especially in the first half of the 20th century.

We could here outline the subsequent stages as follows:

- The consolidation stage: made up of an austere and daring generation, lucid and generous, though not overly enlightened. It was a time of expansion that extended from the beginning of the 20th century to the time when Saint Michael was canonised. Then wars caused forced displacement, but even so, that was a time of institutional consolidation. In this context, Betharramite Provinces and Vice-Provinces were formed.
- Along with the spring of the Second Vatican Council, the Church went through a crisis of transformation. The "aggiornamento" to which we were called raised questions among us: Who are we as Betharramites in this Church that is renewing itself? What do we want to live together as we look towards the future? How can we be faithful to the founding charism without ceasing to be creative and attentive to the signs of the times? Our Congregation seriously carried out, like all the others, the reform of Vatican II, with its lights and shadows: reflection on the charismatic identity, new Rule of Life, changes in formation, new organisation in regions, loss of some members. We arrive with these questions to this day and

## •\• Notices from the general council •/\•

- During the council gathered on May 24, Fr. Gustavo Agín, Superior General, with the advice of his Council, approved the appointment of...

- **Fr. Jude Vijay as Superior of the community of Adigundanahally and Yadavanahally** for a first term from May 30 2022;
- and **Fr. Anthony Siluvai as Superior of the community of Shobhana Shaakha, Bangalore**, for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term from May 30 2022 (Region SMJC, Vicariate of India).



- On June 8, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, admitted to final profession **Brother Fulgence N'Guetta Oi N'guetta** (SMG Region, Vicariate of the Ivory Coast).

- At the request for approval of the appointment of Brother Angelo Sala as local superior (addressed to the Superior General by the Regional Superior last February), the CIVCSVA (Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life) replied on May 30 as follows:

*"By the Rescript of 18 May 2022, the Holy Father Francis authorized the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life to derogate from Canon 588 §2 of the Code of Canon Law. According to this Rescript, it is now up to the Supreme Moderator of a clerical Religious Institute or Clerical Society to appoint a non-clerical member as local Superior, with the consent of his Council."*

Consequently, Fr. Gustavo Agín, Superior General, with the consent of his Council, appointed **Fr. Angelo Sala Superior of the Bouar-Saint Michael Garicoits Community** (SMG Region, Vicariate of Central African Republic) from 8 June 2022 for a 1<sup>st</sup> term.

- On 30 May, the CIVCSVA granted **Fr. Elie Kurzum an indult of departure from the Congregation** in view of his incardination in the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.



## In the Peace of the Lord

On Monday 13 June, **Fr José Rovegno SCJ** pronounced his final "Here I am" and went back to the Lord. Fr José was 90 years old with 72 years of religious life. He was a member of the community of "San Juan Bautista" of Buenos Aires (Region PAE, Vicariate of Argentina and Uruguay).



**We pray also for Mr. Daniel Angui**, father of Fr. Marius Angui scj (superior of the community of Dabakala, Ivory Coast) who died on May 31<sup>st</sup> at the age of 82.

tic period, my knowledge about the Holy Scriptures and the Sacraments were deepened. Theological studies helped me to centre myself on the Word of God and the Eucharist. The community experiences, the pastoral ministries, the retreat and also the recollections which I had strengthened my faith in God. And finally I made my Final Profession on 14 May, 2022 Which already I have mentioned in the beginning.

My journey in the Family of Betharram for ten years is indeed a blessing. I believe that my life as a Betharramite is unique because God has a plan for me and He chose me this Betharram family. This year's of my life was a movement from small family to larger family. Today as I have the new identity, I really feel proud of it. My life in this fam-

ily (congregation) had taught me many things and also blessed me with abundance of gifts and blessings. I fell in love about the simplicity life of our Founder-, his loving obedience and his total availability. I was fascinated by his program of Sacred Heart of Jesus. His Devotion to Sacred Heart really inspired me because that is source from where I can draw all my strength.

As I conclude, I give all my credits to God and our Lord Jesus Christ because today what I am is the reason of God's mercy and compassion. And also a million thanks to the congregation for the support. As God has chosen me, I believe and pray that He will continue to lead me, so that I may remain faithful to my call to this beautiful family. Thank you. ■

continue to discern...

Many fruits were gathered from this missionary sowing. Other congregations are shrinking but we are experiencing a kind of epochal, quantitative, cultural and generational substitution. Betharram is declining in average age and is doing so without losing contact with the heritage received, becoming culturally rich and diverse, but somewhat inert in the face of new missionary challenges.

These are times of listening, encounter and discernment in which as Betharramites we ask ourselves if we really are where we should be or if we need to "leave our land" (securities, personal options, individualism, etc.) to better respond, in community, to the cries of the men and women of today.

There is a change of background scenery that launches new calls in the service of the missionary church. Today, after the pandemic, new cries are raised. For example: in many parts of the world contact with refugee migrants is felt, but along with a new category of "climate migrants" who escape from areas where there is no longer water, or food, or heating or cooling system. The common Home is still at risk and governments seem not to have understood the urgency of a profound structural change. It is probable that the Church is not really taking on board that these situational characteristics will be prolonged and aggravated for some time. This whole world becomes our place of mission so that charity may shine, and so that as the People of God on the road, we convert (ourselves) to the gospel, not only expressing dreams and desires, but going out to encounter these new forms of poverty that cry out to heaven.

In times of synodality, meetings and patient listening abound but, although this is important, the synodal process has as a condition that we accept the need to convert. For there to be a synodal experience, pastoral (and personal) conversion is almost its condition of possibility.

We are part of the consecrated life of the third millennium, we have a rich history, many lay men and women show signs of feeling and living the charism with the same intensity or even greater intensity than we, who are called to be its guarantors. The charism of Betharram is not only of a spiritual nature (knowledge, virtues...), but also implies making human and transcendent values incarnate in a concrete mission together with the People of God.

Finally, I wonder if in our religious family we are preparing future



*On May 14, in the chapel of Shobhana Shaakha, Brothers Budu Murmu and David Alexander made their first profession for one year. They are surrounded here by our three perpetually professed and Fr. Arul on the left (Regional Vicar) and Fr. Vipin on the right (Master of scholastics).*

Betharramites for a scenario like the one I have tried to outline. What theology is taught in the faculties? Does it help to understand the current reality? Does it impel to assume a pastoral embodied in reality, or are we reproducing old formulas? Are officials or pastors trained?

Meeting and listening must lead us to a permanent discernment, discernment almost as a lifestyle. Otherwise, the desire to be effective will prevail again, but looking only at our square metre (individualism).

For this, perhaps we need to express more gratitude towards everything that the Lord is doing in our lives. Not only in the life of each one, but in that of the brother who walks with me, so that everyone feels included and more motivated. Let us share less criticism and more joy.

Let us imitate those missionaries before us, who with a good dose of generosity, were able to see the horizon more clearly and continue to walk ahead despite all the obstacles.

A new Pentecost is coming, let us open ourselves to hope!

***Fr. Gustavo Agín scj***

Superior General

ing because of the experiences I had from the priests and nuns. I had great admiration for the priests and nuns for their selfless service they rendered to the people. After completing my sixth standard, I wanted to join the Seminary because many of my companions joined the Diocesan Seminary that year. But my parents told me that I was too young to decide. After this, I lost the interest of joining the Seminary. But after my Pre-University studies, once again the desire to become priest became more strong. Therefore, I was looking for an opportunity to join the Seminary, but not in my Diocese but somewhere far.

It was on Sunday, after the Mass I happen to meet an ex-Betharramite brother who introduced me about this congregation. He started sharing his experiences in the family of Betharram, about the person of St Michael Garicoits, about the community life there. But he couldn't make it out because of family issues. Listening all these I was taken up, deep within me I felt a kind of joy. Without much thought, I made up my mind to journey towards my dream. There was a kind of excitement because I was to move from small world (village) to a larger world (city).

It was in the year 2012, I joined the Congregation of Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram. I had my aspirancy at Maria Kripa in Mangalore. My first year was really a challenging

one because I had to adjust to this new family with new faces, different cultures and also with the time table. But I had total trust in God that He will help me to overcome all the challenges. During this period I was introduced to a new way life- "A Betharramite Way of life". Thereafter I was sent to Bangalore Community for my Philosophical studies. I did my Philosophical studies at Kristu Jyoti college which helped me to widen my understanding about myself, World and the different religions. I entered to the Novitiate on 29 June, 2016 on the feast of Peter and Paul. Novitiate was the period where my spirituality progressed, prayer life and my faith was strengthened. I had better understanding about the Religious and community life and also about our Founder- St Michael Garicoits and his motto. The 30 days of Ignatian Retreat was indeed a foundation for my discernment. I was able to build a relationship between myself and God. Regency in our new mission at Simaluguri, Assam too helped me to discover within me the missionary spirit. I learnt the simplicity of life and dealing with the children in the school helped me to cultivate the virtue of patience.

On 8th April, 2018 on the feast of Divine Mercy Sunday I made my First Profession. Living with the vows was really challenging but not impossible because God's grace was always with me. During my scholas-



gave me a greater joy and fresh missionary zeal to follow Jesus more closely and faithfully as a spiritual commando. Theological studies, accompaniment by my formators, spiritual director, confessors, my community Life, family and friends contributed to me to be a true Betharramite who is always happy and shares the same happiness with others in order to save the souls for Christ.

As I complete my seminary formation, I feel my personal prayer, daily Eucharist, and my community life give me courage to say that *"I Can Do All Things through Christ Who Strengthens Me"* Phil 4:13. I strongly believe that one, who has called me, never leaves me alone but He will be with me always.

I, as a Betharramite, who experiences the Divine assistance, may regenerate the impulse of Jesus Christ to wherever I go and whom-ever I meet. I bear witness by my life to the joy of consecration.

I say especially to the youth that "Jesus Christ continues to walk with us by his gaze; he calls us with love to follow him. He who lets himself be seduced by God's gaze, full of tenderness and He who accepts with generosity to embrace promptly the consecrated and missionary life, will find true joy. This first fascination will never end if it is accompanied by an attitude of faith and zeal for the things of God" (R.L), as St. Michael lived. ■



*"You did not choose me but I chose you....."* (John 15:16)

With great joy, I would like to share my life Journey in the family of Betharram. I am indeed grateful for this opportunity to disclose my history, my background, my story and also to share my godly experiences to the family of Betharram. I am **Br Pobitro Minj**, I had just recently made my Final Profession on 14th May 2022- on the Feast of our founder- St Michael Garicoits. It was a joyful occasion for me, for the congregation and also for my family.

Talking about my root- I was born and brought up in a Catholic family and a small village called Ranipur in Assam. Assam is one of the north-eastern state of India. The state of Assam is composed of diverse Cultures, languages and tribes. I belong to a tribe called Oraon and the language is Krukh. During my early days itself, I was introduced to prayer life by my parents. As for my schooling, I was admitted to a Catholic School -St Mathew's E.M School run by the Diocesan priests (Bongaigaon Diocese). During the course of time, the desire for priesthood was progress-



## Assembly experience towards the Chapter

P. Laurent Bacho scj

Our Vicariate of "France-Spain" entered like others into preparation of the Chapter. Thus two assemblies covered the first two stages while waiting for the third.

I remember taking part in this preparation without much enthusiasm. But I admit that I have made good progress and I realize that these exchanges are very positive and promote a shared awareness of the Vicariate. I see once again how attentive and benevolent listening to others in assembly is good for everyone. It is not just a matter of hearing what the other person says, but of listening to it with the heart, in order to understand it in depth, without worrying about responding to it. Thus this quality listening allows us to share in progress made without pride and in any dissatisfaction without shame. In this search for truth I do not present an appearance to others, a façade, but I present what I am. Sharing progress and difficulties,

doubts and hopes puts me in my right place. This termly preparation in three stages aims to develop a deeper understanding, so that the regional chapter marvels at what grows and accepts with humility the questions and worries.

I am delighted to witness how our meetings in community, council and vicariate assembly are based on the Word of God, the writings of the Founder and, this year, the reflections of Fr. Etchecopar. This stimulates us to be convinced that our Congregation takes its source in the Heart of Jesus and that it is up to us to deploy the energies of this Heart.

In assembly, we have recognized our thanksgiving for the experience of multiculturalism in our communities; we are becoming more sensitive towards our brothers and sisters. Our Vicariate rejoices in this youth that comes to us from elsewhere.

We are, however, lucid about our aging, which sometimes slows us

down in our desire to be missionaries because of our weariness. Advancing in age also allows us to deepen our vocation.

We recognize that we have not sufficiently accepted the synodal dimension of the universal Church and that we have not been bold enough in our initiatives towards the laity "drinking from the same source". Corrections will be made for this third stage. We would also like to be a little more motivated by them.

We want to move forward in our discernment in order to improve our presence in the places where the congregation originated, in order to amplify what is being done, but also to be more effective in our mission and to dare to open possibilities to young people. Our common suffering remains the lack of vocations; we are not consoled by seeing this elsewhere or jealous of those who go elsewhere.

Our communities have advanced in transparency and financial sharing; this widespread detachment is doing us good, while the responsibility of property is increasing!

I am also pleased to see that our elder brothers, well aware of the thanklessness of this present time, are encouraging us to move forward to overcome this aridity. All these shared questions make us more humble in our daily lives, in fidelity to our vocation as consecrated people. We also encourage ourselves to hope by emphasizing that the Lord continues to work in our weaknesses and our poverty. ■



and life so that I can say that now I am more aware of what I am doing, what I am, what I can be. My experience has helped me to understand the values on which I built my life and need to build my life. This helped me to become more aware of *what Avinash is and what Avinash will be*. ■

help of my parish priest I continued my studies from 9th to 12th std. My Parish priest was an inspiration for me to become a Holy Priest who is always ever ready and available to do the Will of God. During my journey of life, I have experienced the divine touch of God, at the same time I encountered lots of miracles in my life, which I strongly feel as the God's Providential care in my life.

I, **Bro. Joseph Packiaraj Kurushmi-chael SCJ**, 34 years old, come from Christ the King Parish of Tuticorin diocese, Nanguneri. Tamilnadu, India. I have five brothers, a sister and I am the youngest in the family. Both my parents passed away before my teenage, since then I was looked after well by my eldest brother.

After the loss of my father I discontinued my studies. But a year later with the



After completing my graduation I joined seminary in the year 2012. Different stages of formation helped me to know our founder's charism and the Betharramite way of living as a family. It helped me to nourish my spiritual life and fan the flame of the spirit within me, and say Yes to do the will of God instantly, unreservedly and irrevocably.

One year of regency strengthened my discernment,





*"What 'I am' is a gift of God and what I become is my gift to God", says St. Augustine. Everyone created in God's image is always a sacrament of His presence; it is true that our search for deepening the knowledge of creature, of a person, of a soul can never be exhausted. I believe this to be true to all including me.*

I **Avinash Sahayaraj** was born on 8th December 1988 in silvepura, Bangalore. I joined the Congregation in 2010 through Fr. Stervin and Fr. Enakius. At the beginning of my formation in Mangalore, I came to know more about Betharramite way of life and eventually I fell in love with it and I committed my life to the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram, to be an instrument in the hand of Christ who is the source of my life. The Indian Betharramite community life is like a joint family where I found

lots of joy, love, happiness, care and concern etc.... My life in Betharram as an aspirant, as a puc and philosophy student, as a novice, as a consecrated person and as a scholastic, it is my pleasure to speak about which I have nourished in my life. They have boosted me to have a best experience of human values and my spiritual life that which lead me to walk in the footprints of our Father St. Michael our founder.

The study of philosophy, inter-novice classes and theology played a vital role to widen the horizon of my intellectual, reasoning and reflections, this helped me to throw me more closer to God and motivated me to reflect and live my life according to Christian values in my daily activities. Together with this, the valuable assistance and kindness of my formators helped me to be matured in my thoughts



## Homily, Solemnity of Pentecost

St Peter's Basilica, Sunday, 5 June 2022

[...]

The Holy Spirit wants us to be together; he makes us Church and today – here is the third and final aspect – he teaches the Church how to walk. The disciples were cowering in the Upper Room; the Spirit then came down and made them go forth. Without the Spirit, they were alone, by themselves, huddled together. With the Spirit, they were open to all. In every age, the Spirit overturns our preconceived notions and opens us to his newness. God, the Spirit, is always new! He constantly teaches the Church the vital importance of going forth, impelled to proclaim the Gospel. The importance of our being, not a secure sheepfold, but an open pasture where all can graze on God's beauty. He teaches us to be an open house without walls of division. The worldly spirit drives us to concentrate on our own problems and interests, on our need to appear relevant, on our strenuous defense of the nation or group to which we belong. That is not the way of the Holy Spirit. He invites to forget ourselves and to open our hearts to all. In that way, he makes the Church grow

young. We need to remember this: the Spirit rejuvenates the Church. Not us and our efforts to dress her up a bit. For the Church cannot be "programmed" and every effort at "modernization" is not enough. The Spirit liberates us from obsession with emergencies. He beckons us to walk his paths, ever ancient and ever new, the paths of witness, poverty and mission, and in this way, he sets us free from ourselves and sends us forth into the world.

[...]

Let us sit at the school of the Holy Spirit, so that he can teach us all things. Let us invoke him each day, so that he can remind us to make God's gaze upon us our starting point, to make decisions by listening to his voice, and to journey together as Church, docile to him and open to the world. Amen. ■





In one sentence, what do you retain from this year spent in the company of Fr. Etchecopar?

Fr. Etchecopar is fascinated by Fr. Garicoits and his rich charism. He didn't want to lose anything of his teaching so as to bequeath it to his family in Betharram. Michael Garicoits and Auguste Etchecopar, two sides of the same coin in the service of the Church. | F.B.

Reading what appeared in the "NEF" or in "Presenza betharramita", I was struck by the link with Fr. Garicoits (who I certainly already knew), but above all by the link with the Sacred Heart. "Let us enter ever further into this divine Heart where we find: salvation, consolations, glory (St Bernard). Let us enter into this Heart which is always open, opened by us, opened for us."\*

\*Circular Letter to the Fathers and Brothers of America, 18/12/1880. | A.R.

Father Auguste Etchecopar leaves us a message that fills me with enthusiasm. Man, religious and balanced priest that he is, his life of prayer and work allowed him to combine "action and contemplation". His "face of light" reveals his deep inner life. It remains a reference and a witness for us, today and tomorrow: mystical and active, it drives us to move forward. His love of humanity, of the Church and of Betharram retains all its freshness, without forgetting his commitment.

| J.R.

It was exciting to 'live' in the company of Father Etchecopar! This was an occasion and an invitation to renew the charism of Betharram. | E.C.

an active part.

I should like to share one or two of my most moving experiences: I come across pupils from every walk of life. There are pupils who are practising Catholics, those who are believers, and also non-believers but who have respect for religion. I appreciate

that some don't want their peers to know they are believers. There are not large numbers of pupils in the catechism classes but at the same time, they are keen to get to know God better. They are open-minded, welcoming and listen to us attentively. They often ask very interesting questions such as: "God created us but who created God?", "Jesus came to save us all but why does He want to save me? I'm doing fine".

I've noticed how the young respect the notion of freedom of choice. Everything works through suggestion or proposition and not by obligation. And yet there are pupils who do want to be open about their faith.

Here is one such testimony by a sixth-former who told me of the joys she has found in following Christ. Her father is Muslim and her mother Christian. She has been brought up by a foster family ever since she was little. It was in this foster family that she learned about the life of Jesus and the Gospel. She knew quite a lot about the life of Jesus. She writes Christian songs of praise and loves singing. She is joyfully awaiting baptism



and has just registered. Another time, a young lad in the sixth form I'd been playing football with came and asked me if he could be baptised.

I thank the Holy Spirit for being so active in the hearts of our young people.

At the beginning, everyone called me Sir; nowadays I hear pupils calling me by my first name Reegan, or calling me Father or *Padre*!

The mission to the young is pleasing and enjoyable but means I cannot just stand still but must remain dynamic. It reminds me to be like Jesus, who welcomed children with open arms. Simply put, I just have to share my joy, like our Father St Michael inspired us to do.

"Love children and treat them with consideration and esteem; always, always act towards them as would a person who loves and appreciates them; talk to them, instruct them, reward them... that is how your role model and mine, Our Lord, always acted." (Letter of 9 April 1847, St Michael Garicoits) ■





it simple. They help me find songs, sometimes with instruments, little games, stories, anecdotes and films. I realised that quite simply, the mission I had lived with pupils in schools and parishes in India was a huge help to me in getting closer to the young people over here. The community, the school leadership and chaplaincy team give me lots of support and encouragement to go forward.

I often get involved during playtimes in the primary school and in the breaks between lessons in the middle school, chatting with the pupils. I am not very good at sport but I do take part in games with the pupils such as basketball, table tennis and football.

I am not the only one involved in pastoral support. We have a team of pastoral care assistants who work together. There are five female volunteers who teach the catechism with Br Fulgence and prepare the children to receive the sacraments. We are united by the same spirit of Betharram. They have told us that

this happy collaboration with us suits and pleases them.

We held a day of recollection for the confirmation candidates at the *Accueil Notre-Dame* and they were able to discover more about and better understand Betharram and its heritage. Eight pupils received the sacrament of confirmation this year and soon there will be three baptisms, three 11-year olds will make their solemn profession of faith and six pupils will be receiving their first holy communion.

To support the boarders and older children in the evenings, Br Fulgence helps me direct groups of reflection. Pupils come along voluntarily and we share our thoughts and feelings on current affairs and topics in the news and their lives. Throughout the school year, celebrations, times of prayer and masses are held for the children in the primary and middle schools and the sixth-form colleges. The numbers coming forward are not high but those who do come take

The thoughts of Fr. Etchecopar particularly occupied my mind at the end of each month, when I had the task of reviewing the Italian translation of the "Prayer of the month", which endeavored to propose one of those thoughts. It was hard work to capture the pearls of his thought, wrapped in a very particular style, sometimes made of twists in logic, sudden flashes, suspensions, including repetitions to emphasize the essential, and express by all means his love and veneration for Saint Michael and the fundamental objective of his life: to ensure that the work undertaken by such a great witness is organized and recognized by the Church, to always remember to all the beauty of the *Ecce venio* of Jesus and Mary. | P.T.

Etchecopar loved the Founder and his foundation. He worked with all his being for his recognition. Confidence, that's what I remember from the right arm of Michel Garicoïts. Maintain confidence to the end in order to continue to promote the work of Saint Michael. | N.A.R.

**The year Etchecopar, launched by the Superior General and the Council of Congregation, ended on May 30.**

**The NEF, the official bulletin of the Congregation, will nevertheless continue to propose the writings of our second founder and the reflections of our brothers on his faithful and meaningful testimony.**

I lived the Etchecopar year as a year of profound encounter with the charism of Betharram, reading, praying, meditating and praying in the footsteps of this high priest, a faithful reflection of the *Here I Am* in all its dimension. A man lost in God, as it says in his biography. An intimate friend of God, with an ardent and pious heart. | S.B.

The reassuring and joyful discovery of an elder brother who confirms us in our betharramite journey. | E.C.

**On June 4, 2022, the community of Sampran celebrated a special mass on the occasion of the closing of the year of Venerable Fr. Auguste Etchecopar associated with the inauguration of the new pavilion and the statue of the SACRED HEART OF JESUS.**

The Eucharist was presided over by Father John Chan Kunu SCJ, Regional Vicar of Thailand, in the presence of the Very Reverend Father Gustavo Agin SCJ, Superior General on a canonical visit to Thailand, and Reverend Fr. Enrico Frigerio SCJ, Regional Superior. Thank you to all the benefactors who participated in the construction of this project!

This happy event closed the year dedicated to Venerable Fr. Auguste Etchecopar; a very special year for our community since it was able to reflect, get to know Fr. Etchecopar better and follow more closely in the footsteps of Saint Michael Garicoits, our Founder, through his life.

In the afternoon, members of the community competed in a football match to win the "Fr. Etchecopar Cup".



Supplement of June

*Fr. Etchecopar and the signs of his time*

| R.Fr. Gaspar Fernández Pérez scj

Soon available in pdf on [www.betharram.net](http://www.betharram.net)

•\• Missioning with... •/\•



...Fr. Reegan Vincent  
Nagamani scj

The Beautiful Branch  
among the young

I am very happy to share some of the joys and experiences of pastoral care I have encountered while living with the youngsters in the *Beau Rameau* cluster of schools. This group is composed of a primary school in Igon, a middle school in Betharram, a General Sixth Form and a Vocational Training School also in Igon. In total there are around 500 pupils and 90 boarders. The schools are run by a teaching and learning team over which Mr Romain Clercq holds the role of leader and coordinator.

Our establishment is open to all and the project draws its inspiration from the values of the Gospel, the lives and writings of the founders SS Michael Garicoits and Jeanne Elisabeth, albeit adapted to today's world.

Our Congregation has oversight over the group of schools as a whole and a SCJ religious provides the pastoral support. So, I am very happy to be the chaplain of this heritage which our father and founder himself set up in 1837.

I owe a debt of thanks to all my

predecessors who have done such good work for the glory of God, in imitation of our founder. I note how dynamic Fr Habib was and what a very positive impression he has made on the young. I took over from him in September 2021.

My mission is to bring the youngsters together for catechism and to support the boarders every evening. At first it took me some time to adapt to the rhythm of the young and their activities.

Every day that goes by teaches me how to connect to the young. I was worried about the French language and culture because I am from elsewhere. However I am obliged to communicate in French and to use the right words and phrases adapted to their ages, and thus learn to "speak their language".

I am English-speaking and Indian, would the young be able to accept me? Latterly I have come to understand that I can't change a thing in other people but I can get them to share my presence and joy in being a child of St Michael.

I decided to be creative, but keep