

# CORRESPONDENCE

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## of St Michael Garicoïts

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(second period: 1834 - 1847)

### **Second period: TIME OF THE FOUNDATION**

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In this part of the correspondence St Michael Garicoits believes that "people of goodwill would come to share his solitude"<sup>1</sup> in the work of founding a Religious Society, sharing his desire for an order.

With care, study and experience, he sought to recruit members. If someone applied, he would guide him. "If God calls you to the work, you shouldn't ignore his invitation."<sup>2</sup> "If their willingness to join is not permitted by the diocese, he prays that they do not give up and that the designs of God will eventually be accomplished."<sup>3</sup> He also pleads with his Bishop for the admission of an unexpected postulant<sup>4</sup>. He directs a novice who is sick and not very persevering. "God wishes you to enter our little Society."

One finds him at his daily duties, accepting a mission<sup>5</sup>, finding places for students in schools and colleges<sup>6</sup>, directing the reconstruction of the Stations of the Cross at Betharram<sup>7</sup>. Sometimes one finds in his letters sadness and worries: the death of his mother<sup>8</sup>, the situation of the school of Notre Dame on the day after the crime of Elicabide<sup>9</sup>, the organisation of the Brothers<sup>10</sup>.

Among his letters one remarks great energy which animates the founder of the Society of the Sacred Heart with which inspires his disciples. It is the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ<sup>11</sup> who inspires him to accomplish his mission by saying: "here I am!"<sup>12</sup> to submit to the hidden designs of Providence<sup>13</sup> and to "accept all crosses."<sup>14</sup> When this spirit is dominant, religious life, by using the finest Masters of religious life, like St Basil<sup>15</sup> offers a marvelous witness<sup>16</sup> and a guarantee of predestination<sup>17</sup>.

## 10. - To a former student of the major seminary of Betharram

Betharram 14 Jan 1834

My Dear Friend

It is quite a while since I received the letter you intended to write. I felt very touched by this token of your friendship, and you may rest assured that I am always interested in all I hear about you. If I am behind in replying it does not mean that I have forgotten. You are often in my thoughts. How could I forget a young man for whom I always have and always will hold in close regard? All the confusion caused in adjusting to a new way of life<sup>18</sup> and the overwhelming stress of the jubilee<sup>19</sup>, which finished the day before yesterday are reasons for my delay.

You may have discovered that I do not lack titles; from guardian of the former seminary of Betharram to even stranger ones on my letters. Someone wrote Hermit, another chaplain, another Assistant Priest, another Resident Priest, the Bishop writes Superior of the Seminary. It would be more exact to put Superior of four walls of a vast building.

In fact I have no title. This new position which one would imagine, would afford me some rest, requires even more activity<sup>20</sup>, until people of good come to share my solitude, my poverty and my work. M M Chirou<sup>21</sup> and Carrerot<sup>22</sup> will probably be the first two to come.

As regards my former colleagues I have not much to tell you; M Sartolou<sup>23</sup> is Parish Priest at Gan; M Cambot<sup>24</sup> is chaplain to the Royal College at Pau; M Guimon<sup>25</sup> gives short missions in various parishes.

Now you will find, my dear friend, that I am going to speak with my customary frankness about certain things that you mention in your letter. Some of which I cannot understand at all; bitter regrets and gnawing pain in a seminary you described when leaving in the most glowing terms; a place where you were perfectly happy according to your farewell letter; remorse and pain which you carefully hid may I say from your best friends (you will have to admit this sooner or later) even though you always claimed to be totally honest and open; that I do not want to go into. All this is a complete mystery to me.

All I know is that when all is said and done we are put on this earth to do God's wills, and particularly in the matters of a vocation nothing should cause us to sidestep<sup>26</sup> his adorable will in any way, and nothing should deflect us from it.

The only way to avoid these two setbacks is to pray fervently to the God of light and consolation, to examine seriously what causes this trouble and how you feel about it, then discuss it honestly with those whom God has made responsible for guiding us and wait patiently for their decision, then follow it immediately and without any hesitation when it comes. A summary of this would be; pray, reflect, communicate, and obey. All the happiness which we would enjoy above, I would so much wish you to desire; I will not cease to ask the Lord to keep you in it. But I would like you with all my heart to remain completely faithful to this method, it is our greatest and even our unique happiness.

Give your life to seeking this happiness. Spare neither sacrifice nor effort to attain it. Always have courage. Was it not essential to live in a stable, to have a

manger for a bed and work in the workshop of a carpenter for food etc. 'What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and suffers the loss of his soul?'

Farewell, my dear friend. I am not able to do much, but if I can, I will only be too pleased to help you.<sup>27</sup>

G.

## 11. - To Miss Nabarette<sup>28</sup>

1 Oct 1834

My Dear Sister in Christ

I have far too high a regard for you not to speak plainly. They have told me that you are bored at Lasseube<sup>29</sup> and that you are thinking of returning to Lestelle. I feel you are quite wrong to leave your brother<sup>30</sup>. 1.) You will cause him great embarrassment. 2.) You will upset your parents. Are you aware that to do these two things you need good reasons?

You are bored! But you are no longer a child. You have to get over this feeling that the countryside is bad for you. Are you afraid of working out your salvation in Lasseube? It is not as though you have gone to India, or to prison, like Joseph, or to the gladiators and the lions like Felicity and Perpetua. Anyway what is it doing for your salvation by depriving a holy and young priest of a house-keeper and at the same time burden him with household chores. Will a large parish be edified by your good example? Such a great thing to do!

On the other hand I am afraid of a piety which requires a certain countryside and certain people to sustain it; it is the piety of a child. Yours must be that of the valiant woman; ready to make ever new progress even when all earthly help fails. Who knows if you would not become more holy before the end of your days, deprived of the help of priests and your friends, thrown into some lock-up or prison. These things could happen even today<sup>31</sup>.

Learn then to make a lot out of a little; bear little privations in the way you would the greatest sacrifices<sup>32</sup>.

There are some who are addicted to the external comforts of piety instead of going for sound and solid holiness. I hope you will not fall into that illusion. Read carefully chapters 1,8, and 10 of the Spiritual Combat<sup>33</sup> and pray for me.

Garicoits Priest.

## 12. - To his cousin, Jean-Baptiste Etcheberry<sup>34</sup>

24 VIII<sup>th</sup> 1835

My Dear Friend,

I have not answered your letters, which you well know, but you know I have not forgotten you. I often think of you, and it always gives me pleasure to have news from you, especially your last letter. Look after yourself and above all develop with care the ideas and the feelings which you have allowed me to share as a friend.

If God is calling you to the work that you are acquainted with, you should not refuse his invitation, but I am not sure that the moment for you to decide has arrived.<sup>35</sup> Wait for some time, and if you feel something out of the ordinary, you may wish to share it with me. *Expectans expectavi Dominum, et intende mihi.*<sup>36</sup>

Would you kindly let the young student from Ibarrolles know that I have not replied to him because I cannot do anything for him. Tell him I have nothing. I have even gone to the lengths of selling my books after the departure of M Hiriart.<sup>37</sup> I have only my breviary, my bible, and my theology book, and have never been happier than I am now; the more I get closer to basics, to my original nakedness, the happier I am.

Ora pro me. Totus tuus in Christo.

Garicoits Priest.

## 13. - To Sister Marie-Raphaelina, Superior of the Daughters of the Cross<sup>38</sup>

[Nov 1836]

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Read, Reflect, Act.

1. God has placed you in charge of these sisters and you have promised him to care for them, and to guide them before giving your account of it to him.

2. Your Sisters are people of good will; you can expect to work successfully with them, if you are faithful in your duty.

3. Your Sisters are members of a body; you must then try to animate them by the spirit of this body. Galvanise the spirit and the life of your Congregation by making a perfect practice of obedience yourself; obey even as you give orders.

4. Your Sisters are dearly loved children of God; with what respect, love and desire for their perfection you should treat them, and guide them!...

5. God has special plans for them; you must not measure their perfection with a faint-hearted spirit which can come from too much trust in human prudence. Be brave and have trust in God.

6. The Lord has destined them to work in his service, not as slaves, but freely from love.

Begin then by winning their hearts and their trust. Make sure they know how much you love them, that you have for each of them the affection of a father, a mother, a wet-nurse (nourice), a doctor; that you are entirely dedicated to them, following the example of Jesus, Our Lord. Love them without limits, and because God loves them and because they are made to love him, always act with gentleness.

St Vincent de Paul said that he never used hard words to reprove others on more than three occasions and even those few he always regretted, because what he achieved in an unpleasant way he could have achieved with gentleness. So be gentle and friendly even with the most inflexible. Even the convict galley slaves would not be won over in any other way. Act then always with gentleness; love giving little words of encouragement, of friendship, kindness and even praise, so that they may see that everything you do for them comes from the depths of your heart. This means that when need arises you can cut and burn by the same token, so that far from diminishing the love of your sisters, it will increase. They will come to you in their troubles as a child to its mother to draw out a thorn that is pricking her. If you do the opposite you will slam the door on everybody. Do not spare anything to obtain your Sisters' wholehearted trust; kind words, loving attentions, even such tokens of affection as they would receive from their families, far from weakening the rule will contribute in a wonderful way to ensure its perfect observance.

#### **BY LOVE<sup>39</sup>!!!**

By this disposition you will effectively reach your goal; and by gentleness and warmth you will win the hearts and good will of your Sisters. You will guide them with great satisfaction. Just be aware that to succeed, you must rid yourself of favouritism towards any sister...to your own way of doing things, following your own ideas... to anything whatsoever that gets in the way and be clothed in the spirit of your congregation. See how God comes down from his throne and was made man! Made a mortal man....shamefully abused to win our hearts. There is your model... A God who has humbled himself so that we may be raised up... He first loved us. Our Lord Jesus Christ has suffered so much to conquer our hearts. Do your best to follow his example to win the hearts of your sisters.

7. It is up to the Lord who put you in charge of your sisters to shape them to the work for which he calls them. Count neither on your own wisdom nor your own efforts nor on anything created; have a limitless confidence in God...Be a prayerful person, united to God by prayer and holy communion.

8. Make every effort so that your daughters are daughters of prayer for the same reason. It is through communicating with God by praying that one learns to be animated by his love, which prepares our hearts to receive heavenly blessings and that we learn the art of dealing correctly with other people. Without that one would never know how to utter an inspiring word or have any zeal. Put prayer into practice and keep on practicing it.

9. Your rule interpreted and applied by your superiors is the means by

which he intends you to reach your objective in life. Respect it as the expression of the will of God. Observe its prescriptions faithfully, punctually, enthusiastically, fervently and joyfully. The sisters who have been placed in your charge will imitate you and I am certain that God will shower you, your work, and your congregation with the most abundant blessings.

10. Your congregation is so precious even in the eyes of men. Take care not to compromise its good name. Death would be better than bringing dishonor to such a great cause. You will only keep it if you are closely united with your superiors. Perfect obedience, unshakable love; on these depend everything that tends to the good and preservation of the congregation.

I will finish this important subject with the words that St Paul addressed to the Philippians 'If our life in Christ means anything to you, if love can persuade at all or the Spirit that we have in common, or any tenderness or sympathy, then be united in your convictions and be united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing that would make me completely happy. There must be no competition among you, no conceit; but everybody is to be self-effacing. Always consider the other person to be better than yourself, so that nobody thinks of his own interests first but everybody thinks of other people's interests instead. In your minds you must be the same as Jesus Christ. His state was divine but he did not cling to his equality with God, but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are...

#### 14. - To his cousin Jean-Baptiste Etcheberry<sup>40</sup>

Betharram 20 Jan 1837

My Dear friend,

I do not think you should pay your Father's creditors; Aguerre, whom you have told me about is very poor. Charity in his case would be appropriate but you must not forget your mother and your sick sister.<sup>41</sup> I do not know what else I can say to you on this matter.

I am relieved that your health is improving. Make sure you use it on God's behalf. Be brave.

Wishing you and your confrere<sup>42</sup> a happy new year. I must not fail to greet Arberatz<sup>43</sup>, the Missioner who said I was a priest of Bourdeaux. My hope is for a happy new year after this one of contradictions, persecutions, and heavy crosses etc., etc<sup>44</sup>.

All yours in the Lord. Orate pro me.

Garicoits Priest.

15. - To Francois Coumerilh<sup>45</sup>, Parish Priest of Labastide -  
Villefranche

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Betharram 9 July 1838

My Dear Friend

Whether I am able to enjoy long conversations with you or never manage to speak at all, or write to you or not; my feelings for you have never wavered in appreciation and in interest. My most sincere and constant hopes are that this dear friend will not grow lukewarm. O my God, let him do all things through you and for you.

Ask the same grace for me.

Hurry to ask for three Daughters of the Cross from the Superior General. Tell them you have a house and that you will guarantee they can have 600 francs a year for the time being and that later you will work out permanent arrangements. Here is the address of the Superior General. To the Very Reverend Sister Elizabeth<sup>46</sup>, Superior General of the Daughters of the Cross, La Puye, Vienne.

All yours

Garicoits. Priest

16. - To his cousin Jean-Baptiste Etcheberry<sup>47</sup>

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12 April 1839

My Dear Friend

I strongly approve of your views, and I would like to be able to support you; but this is not possible. We have begun an important work here<sup>48</sup> which has already incurred much expense and is not yet finished. It is to establish an elementary school<sup>49</sup>, put it on a firm footing and help it to achieve its full educational potential.

We are for this purpose supporting a priest living at present in a town where<sup>50</sup> he<sup>51</sup> is studying to obtain his teaching certificate,<sup>52</sup> which is required before he can become head of this school. He will take exams in September. All that costs money. We do what we can, not without worry and much pain, hoping that the Lord will see us through, if we do not put any obstacles in his way. Pray and get others to pray for the success of this venture which as we have learnt from experience will be very helpful in giving us the opportunity to find and foster possible vocations. Recommend this to M Garat's<sup>53</sup> prayers and give him and your confreres my kind regards.

All yours in the Lord.

Garicoits Priest

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## 17. - To M Taury<sup>54</sup> Superior of the Daughters of the Cross

Betharram 22 Oct 1839

Reverend Fr Superior,

I have heard that the father and mother of Sister<sup>55</sup> St Just consider what they owe to your house at Usteritz<sup>56</sup> to be a sacred debt. But their son, a doctor, does not share their view and is preventing them to some extent from hastening to honour their debts. Since they are so devout, it seems to me they would set aside all worldly considerations, if their Parish Priest, Fr Etcheverry<sup>57</sup> could appeal to their con-sciences. For this to happen Sister Suzanne<sup>58</sup> would need to explain the matter to him and see whether he could help you.

Your humble and obedient servant.

Garicoits Priest

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## 18. - To M Taury Superior of the Daughters of the Cross.

Igon 6 July 1840

Reverend and Venerable Superior

I have received your kind letter just at the right moment. I deeply appreciate your heartfelt sympathy which has consoled me very much and helped dispel fears and worries constantly afflicting me. It has made a very powerful contribution to my peace of mind. Nothing has so upset me as those murders by the wretched E...<sup>59</sup>

I have tried to summon up common sense and faith, but nothing helped to deliver me from these ghastly feelings which have given me sleepless nights and which did not even leave me at the altar. Believe it or not, I could not even master my weakness enough to get a good night's sleep even in the peaceful rooms at Igon<sup>60</sup>.

That is the way I am.

Today I am looking more calmly at this dreadful business, which will do no good to our school. I am afraid that I will have to appear at the Assizes in Bordeaux<sup>61</sup>. Whatever God wishes will happen. Alas! My very dear superior what grounds are here to detach ourselves from this world and attach ourselves to God.

I have had a word in confidence with Sister St Jerome<sup>62</sup> who will be able to tell you fully about Igon and Betharram. For myself I must confine myself to thanking you, in particular for your letter which did me a great deal of good. Please accept the assurance of my profound respect and sincere attachment.

Your devoted servant and friend in the Lord.

Garicoits Priest



## 19. - To Jean-Baptiste Etcheberry, his cousin

Igon 5th Oct 1841

Dear Friend,

It has been some time since I replied to your letters; on the one hand I was waiting for the return of Etienne<sup>63</sup> who has not come back and on the other all my time is taken, especially since the Parish sisters have come back. Do not accuse me of indifference; you will find in my heart no trace of 'the Garicoits characteristic' (Caracoistar ecacholtasuna)<sup>64</sup> Believe me. I think of you with affection every single day.

It is not possible for us to employ your man Helette.<sup>65</sup> How difficult it is to find good people to work in the kitchen. Pray that God might send us a brother who can cook, a Brother to answer the door, a brother who can make clothes etc, etc<sup>66</sup>... as he has sent us a brother sacristan<sup>67</sup>.

Ask the good Lord to bless us and our works.

Garicoits Priest

PS My regards to all your community<sup>68</sup>. Will you please replace Frs Guimon, Perguilhem<sup>69</sup> and myself with Fr Jauretche<sup>70</sup> in the Association of Bon Secours; 1 to establish uniformity between us all; 2 to make sure that in our little Society we can celebrate a certain number of Masses for each deceased member. It is not right that the Association remains incomplete; tell Fr Jauretche not to remove our names until others have replaced them. If you do not see him soon, could you write to him. Adios, amigo.

I am planning to go to Ibarre for a few days. I will be very happy to see you there if providence takes you in that direction. I will see you in due course.

## 20. - To Mlle Marie-Madeleine de Bonnecaze<sup>71</sup>

24 Nov 1842

My Dear Sister in Jesus Christ,

It is a few days since I received your letter of the 24th Oct. Each day I have thought I would reply but I have always had to give way to more urgent jobs which need my supervision; first a reunion of more than 200 Sisters gathered at Igon and later some decisions to be made about the Missions. On top of that sorting out places for pupils who are coming to us in larger numbers than ever. Today I am taking a break from all other business.

I am acutely aware of your situation and the sorrow that you feel from it. I would like with all my heart to help you overcome the obstacles that prevent you realizing your plans which are I do not doubt, the designs of God himself. But I can

only pray and ask for prayers to Almighty God to grant you the grace of overcoming your father's opposition and obtaining the consent you want so much.

While you wait, try to imitate Mlle Lagelouze<sup>72</sup> from Bayonne who is at long last a Daughter of Charity. You know that she only shared this happiness after going through similar trials. You have not forgot-ten that she submitted to them in the same way as Jesus did. How utterly unshakable she was in her intentions. Yet at the same time she remained gentle, considerate, humble and devoted! for example always the first to take her father's coat. She became more and more loved by God and her father.

Do as she did. Like her, behave pleasingly to God and pleasingly to your father and I venture to hope that in good time you will get the same results as she did. Use the same means to win over both, and well! Like her serve both with good grace and ever increasing zeal; above all refuse nothing that your dear and respected sister asks of you; I should like to hope that you will obtain in the fullness of time what she obtained.

The canticle of the new Adam is; 'Here I am.'

Farewell my good Sister. Remember that patience, courage and perseverance will win the day.

All yours in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary

G.

## 21. - To Mlle Marie-Claude Saüt<sup>73</sup>

[before 15 July 1843]

Let me repeat what I have already told you; God wishes that you have no other spouse but him; there is no doubt about that. In spite of too lengthy hesitations, he has given you new proofs of his love in choosing you and in your resolution that you certainly owe him and in the dispositions which have led you to follow him and which are on his part a sign that he approves of your decision. Here are 2 two perceptible favours that you should not forget and which should lead you to say in your heart; Here I am without delay, without reservation, without looking back for love of him rather than any other reason.

Love for love. His love for you has been so great and so constant. Would you ever wish to merit the reproach of repaying his constant fidelity with appalling infidelity.

Love your God who loves you so much! Always be faithful to him; not only when you are on Tabor but when you have to watch with him in Gethsemani and when you must climb Calvary.

For you and me is it not truly a great consolation to accept and carry bravely and joyfully and continually any crosses that come with the situation in which God has placed you seeing that it is a very great calling and that the consolation must be all the greater when the sacrifice is most painful? Do not forget that this truth holds; in your heart you will know this is true; it responds to

the most powerful feelings of your heart which God holds in his possession for ever. Try to understand this, relish it so that it is your rallying cry. Amen Amen!

Pray for me. All yours in the Lord.

Garicoits Priest.

PS Remember me to Mlle de Bonnacaze

## 22. - To Sister Jeanne-Sophie<sup>74</sup>, Daughter of the Cross

Bétharram 3rd Jan 1844

My Dear Sister

I am sending you some advice taken from a letter of Fr Acquaviva and I must draw your attention to nine perfumes that St Bernard recommends for Superiors<sup>75</sup>. I suggest you try them out and so acquire them. Besides the fact that we can confidently trust Fr Acquaviva<sup>76</sup> and St Bernard I am pleased to inform you that I was told at one time by St Elizabeth<sup>77</sup> of blessed memory to distribute copies of their advice. So I have no doubt that the good God will shower you and your work with his abundant blessings according to how far you follow them.

Ah! my good Sister what a wonderful and beautiful work he has confided to you. Your task is to change the hearts of these poor girls into apostolic hearts by the grace of God.

To achieve this, be unpretentious and humble, have no fear of being treated as nothing; but also have a generous heart, open to all, the heart of an apostle. You can do nothing by yourself; but you can do all things through him who gives you strength<sup>78</sup>.

Be brave! You and your companions must work continually at cultivating this spirit of humility which will make you become as 'little children' and lacking in all claims to self-importance. Cultivate that spirit of obedience which unites you more closely to your superiors and the spirit of charity<sup>79</sup> which binds you all together. On this depends your existence, your growth and the success of the Congregation. So my prayer for the Daughters of the Cross each day is and will be that they may be little and lowly through humility that they may be one...through obedience and love. Ask the good Lord for the same grace for the community at Betharram.

I am dear Sister your very humble and devoted servant

Garicoits Priest

## 23. - To A Priest

Betharram 3 Feb 1844

My Dear Friend

I feel sorry that I am not able to help you this year. Fr Guimon<sup>80</sup> is at St Andre in Bayonne and Fr Perguilhem<sup>81</sup> is in Bruges.....

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24. - To Sr Jeanne-Sophie, Sister of the Cross<sup>82</sup>

Betharram 23 June 1844

My Good Sister

Your good intentions will be fulfilled. We will begin to celebrate the Masses on the 2nd July and everyday during the novena, we will light a candle before Our Lady's altar. We will ask our good mother from the bottom of our hearts to take all the girls of Colomiers under her special protection so that they will receive the Lord's abundant blessings. Prepare your hearts to receive them. For the rest my dear Sister ask all you want of God through Mary; the grace to be freed from your present painful misfortunes, but be careful to submit fully to the hidden designs of divine providence. Your Good Father allows you to wish and pray that the chalice, given you may be taken away, but as his daughters you really should give yourselves wholly and entirely into his keeping. That way, you may always remain worthy of being the daughters of such a Father.

I congratulate you, dear Sister, in having made your final vows. There you are for God, although not entirely without delay, but at least without reservation and without return, I hope..Henceforth you will no longer look back, neither to right or to left; always forward to the goal of your vocation.... carrying like a warrior the crosses that go with your situation! ...being careful not to take on extra ones that would hold up your glorious progress. I mean do nothing unwise under the pretext of mortifying yourself.

Be sure my dear Sister and your dear companions that I shall always be devoted to your welfare. Please pray for me.

Garicoits Priest

## 25. - To M Francois Coumerilh, Parish Priest of Labastide-Villefranche

Betharram 23 July 1844

My very dear Friend,

I am writing to say that due to unforeseen circumstances Fr Guimon and myself are going to Bayonne.

With regard to your request<sup>83</sup>, what happens will be whatever God wants. As always I wish with all my heart that all God's designs for you will be accomplished.

Ora pro me

Remember me to the Sisters. May they pray for Igon and Betharram.

Garicoits Priest.

## 26. - To an unknown person

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My dear friend<sup>84</sup>,

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## 27. - To M Pierre Inchauspe<sup>85</sup>, Chaplain to the Dominicans at Nay

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[6 Nov 1844]

My Dear Friend

Read this letter. Please notify MM Labourdette<sup>86</sup> and Dupont one for 200 and the other for 100 francs and tell M Dupont that he will have to look after a small child.

You will ask both to make every effort to profit in all respects. This year is decisive for their vocation.

Do not communicate this letter to anyone; hide it and then return it to me.

## 28. - To The Editor of the 'Memorial des Pyrenees'

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Dear Editor

You have frequently made your readers aware of the restoration of the Calvary of Betharram. This splendid work begun and continued by M Renoir<sup>87</sup>, with so much talent and dedication, has already progressed a long way. Eight bas reliefs adorn the eight first chapels. After the Agony in the Garden and Betrayal of Judas which M Mazure<sup>88</sup> spoke of with so much interest comes the Station depicting the Saviour before Caiaphas, then the Scourging which is followed by the fine Chapel of St Louis with the 2 small and elegant hermitages erected by King Louis XIII<sup>89</sup> and

restored by the generosity of the Marquis of Angosse<sup>90</sup>. There one finds the Crowning with thorns and a little distance away Jesus condemned to death. Climbing further, one comes to Jesus carrying his Cross and finally you come to Jesus being nailed to the Cross, where our artist has surpassed himself.

Much has been done; it remains for us to complete the 3 bas-reliefs and the Crucifixion. An unforeseen accident is at present preventing important work. While making soundings on the walls of the Chapel on top of the Calvary<sup>91</sup> we have learnt that they are in a state of collapse. We have consulted experts who have confirmed our fears and we have sadly come to the inevitable conclusion that the Chapel must be completely rebuilt if we can safely install the bas-reliefs that were intended for it. A considerable sum is needed for this construction, added to the sum also needed for the completion of the Stations which will be in the region of 12 to 15 million francs and we are in no position to realise that sort of amount. For four years of making every sacrifice to pay non-stop huge multiple debts, we are now drawing on our last reserves<sup>92</sup> and in addition we are paying M Renoir a bonus of 3,000 francs, without doubt far below adequate remuneration for his talent and our indebtedness to him, but sufficient to make it impossible at this time to continue the work which we are so keen to accomplish and which interests the whole region.

Fortunately we are assured that it will be completed. With the help of the General Council of the Basses-Pyrenees who have offered us a loan<sup>93</sup>, and a guarantee from some generous souls, the new Chapel will rise from where the other stood; and without any danger the set of stations can safely be erected there; this locality will be endowed with a monument unique of its kind.

M Renoir to whom the region should be for ever grateful is going to Italy to study the major works of art. There at the tomb of the Apostles he will draw inspiration in keeping with the importance of the subjects that remain to be commissioned.

I believe, M Editor, that you intend to continue your kind support. Please accept our sincere thanks for the active part you have taken in this work, and for the interest you have shown in promoting it publicly.

I have the honour....etc...

Garicoits Priest.

## 29. - To a Daughter of the Cross

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Betharram 31 Jan 1845

My Dear Sister,

Do not worry at all about what you said to the Parish Priest; it had to be said. I am quite satisfied that in future he will choose his words more carefully; he would do more good if he were more prudent. You too need to be more prudent

in watching your health. As regards your spiritual welfare, do not torment yourself, I am quite certain that God is not offended through your temptations.

Continue God's work, as a child of God, as a good Sister of the well loved family of the Lord.

There is no point in my giving you news of your village, your brothers keep you well informed.

Accept the assurance, my good Sister and your dear companions, of my affection and my wholehearted devotion. Pray for me.

Pray also for my poor mother whom I have just lost<sup>94</sup>.

Garicoits Priest.

### 30. - To M Azevedo, Prefect of the Basses-Pyrenees.

Betharram 20 July 1845

Monsieur the Prefect

Last year you very kindly presented our case to the General Council for the restoration of the Calvary at Betharram, and I was duly accorded a grant<sup>95</sup> of 1500 francs. All well-meaning people of this locality appreciated the fair-ness and propriety of this gesture. Speaking personally I can only repeat what I have already told you that I shall always remember with the deepest gratitude your efforts on our behalf.

The time has come, Monsieur the Prefect, when I need to withdraw money from this account. I await your approval to begin work on the Calvary, which I was obliged to suspend through lack of funds. With the grant of the 300 francs and other help that I have already received I am about to put in hand the work of replacing the former chapel, now in a state of collapse with a new one<sup>96</sup> which is intended to receive the three bas-reliefs that are to be made.

May I convey my profound sentiments of respect and gratitude. I have the honour to be your very humble servant.

Garicoits Priest.

### 31. - To Sr Zephirin-St-Blaise<sup>97</sup>, DC

LSNSJC

Betharram 7 Aug 1845

Dear Sister

It is a busy day, but all the same, things will have to wait. A priest from Toulouse will be passing here on the stage coach at 11 o'clock and I do not want to let him leave without writing this short letter for you.

Your letter, my dear Sister, tells me everything you wanted me to know and more besides. Generally speaking I must urge you with every fibre of my being to live **constantly** in the joy of the Lord, and let it shine through everything you do, in all your relations with God, your neighbour and your innermost self as Mary did. I am saying do this **constantly** and in every situation. In whatever the situation **always** be at fault in this because **you are always in God's loving gaze**, which rests on you sending you the light of his grace so as to purify, protect and fill you with blessings. In view of His **saving, protecting and indulgent care** should you not be aware that you possess this happiness and always make it obvious to others? So should you not have good cause to be constantly filled with joy? You especially should be aware that He has chosen you and led you so obviously along the path of your vocation to this day. So repeat with-out ceasing; 'My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour'<sup>98</sup>, because Our Sovereign Lord, this Good Father is watching over me. Nothing, no nothing at all; not even my sins can ever discourage me from now on.

Do not give any credence to those negative thoughts, all this reasoning prompted by the evil one; they have disturbed you far too often. Grace does not act in this way. What grace does, is to make us **feel** or recognise our needs, to make us **think** of the Father who never ceases to watch<sup>99</sup> over us and makes us run to him and so find peace and calm, just as Mary Magdalen felt and accepted her sinful life, thought of Jesus, ran to him, and found in him unalterable peace. The rest you know.

Put this way of life into practice and preach it at all times; strengthened by faith, trust, and love of God and your neighbour, with gratitude for your vocation and for whatever it holds. Let the Magnificat be your favourite canticle and the faithful expression of your feelings; and you will glorify God because you will be always at peace. I shall always keep reminding you of this because I sense in you a deep rooted negative voice hostile to that peace, which is so pleasing to the Lord and so enlightening for our neighbour to observe.

Here is something to think about; I have not time to go back over this; if you cannot read my writing, you can guess what I mean. I wish with all my heart the peace of the Lord to be always with you and foremost in your life. What a vision for heaven and earth would this be; with all the daughters working and suffering in peace, living and dying in peace, and in whatever situation always be at peace. I wish this peace especially for all the sisters at Colomiers<sup>100</sup>. I would like to name you all but I have not time. Please re-member me to Jne Sophie<sup>101</sup>, Zebine<sup>102</sup>, Damien etc,etc

Peace and joy in the Lord.

G.



32. - To Sister Zephirin-St-Blaise DC<sup>103</sup>

[Sept 1845]

.....

a) The remedy would be to take no notice of all these impressions when you experience them, leave them alone and ignore them as if they were cul de sacs.

Another way of acting would be based on your superiors views of how they see your dealings with others; on the other hand it is quite unnecessary and even harmful to speak openly about these **confused perceptions of yours**<sup>104</sup>.

What you should remember in these matters is to take no notice.

Let everyone know what you are doing; then keep to what your Superiors have told you to do.

.....

b) Beyond that, it is certain that if there is anything for which you can find no remedy, it is God's will for you; this is your most precious cross which should confirm you all the more in your vocation and attach you all the more to your responsibility.

God is making you aware of this so clearly within yourself by allowing you to experience these numerous trials as the instruments used by his divine providence to root out yourself love.

.....

c) You have in no way deceived us, I assure you; but I do not doubt that you have at least exaggerated things by speaking openly about your feelings (as you have always done) without confining yourself, above all to your confessor of the moment, **to the things you have done**, being aware that in doing them they were sins. There is no need to mention anything of these thoughts and feelings, lively and persistent though they were which, with the instruments of di-vine providence, make your cross; they are definitely not subjects for confession.

This is why you have distorted the direction of your present confessor and as a result you have made so many mistakes which are in no way a matter for confession. I advise you to tackle this not by acts of contrition but by receiving holy communion for this intention, etc.

.....

d) This fruit is precious...Worth more than all the others.

e) It is the most obvious sign of predestination, the grace of graces.

.....

f) Do not obtain anything by empty promises. When anything is gained by unlawful means let it prompt us to say 'O God, be my strength.'

.....

g) Take no notice of what might happen. Keep to the facts! Your mistake is to worry over what might happen...

.....

h) No, this is not your imagination. Your delusion is in getting involved and losing your way and so acting on what is not true, which is **unfortunate rather than seriously wrong**.

Be careful not to conceal by a show of humility, charity and **boundless generosity**, all the confusion, pretexts and ill-feelings in your heart and in your conscience while at the same time condemning it.

May you not be a holy hypocrite. So this inner muddle, the **sole cause** till now of mistakes and worry, must be treated by you from now on with the contempt it deserves and kept well controlled, at least as much as the other trouble we shall not go into; it should become a precious and fruitful source of holiness for you.

.....  
i) This is very true...!

.....  
j) always keep to the point! and go forward.

**I think...Perhaps..**God knows how; go ahead, throwing yourself into the hands of the divine mercy.

.....  
k) Good! My God I abandon myself to you.

.....  
l) It is right and correct.

.....  
m) True; but it is of little consequence whether you are disturbed or not, provided that you keep to what I said to you above in **h** relating to this inner turmoil.

.....  
n) True!.. What grace to recognise this! Be faithful to it.

.....  
o) I see just a little too much preoccupation in providing for what you are doing.

.....  
p) Neglect nothing and do not be put off by anything.

.....  
q) Very good.

.....  
r) Go ahead! Go ahead! A precious sign of likeness to Our Lord.

.....  
s) In order to make things run smoothly; know what you want to say when you make your feelings known. Only say what is true and speak with love and discretion, even when it concerns yourself speak as if you were speaking of a third person.

.....  
t) Regarding this, keep to what I have written in letters **c** and **h**.

.....  
u) The same.

.....

v) Do not go out of your way for this. Whatever happens will be what God wills... The sacrifice is only worth it, if God requires it.

.....

x) All the better!... All the better!...

.....

y) What a grace to realise this truth.

.....

z) Without doubt, if one is not faithful to what I have said in letter **a** above.

.....

aa) Go ahead always! It is up to you.

.....

bb) I certainly believe it. It is precisely this which should strengthen your resolution all the more.

.....

cc) What you call falling, I call rising. What you call rising, I call falling.

.....

dd) We would be quite wrong to do otherwise.

Adieu, adieu, a very happy and honored Daughter of the Cross. Make the best of your precious responsibility and pray for Betharram.

Garicoits Priest.

### 33. - To the Blessed Jean-Marie de La Mennais<sup>105</sup>

Betharram 25 Oct 1845

Reverend Vicar General,

Your kindness in answering my confreres<sup>106</sup> inquiries has encouraged me to send you this letter; as I would appreciate your advice which I hope you will not refuse.

I am the head of a society of missionaries which includes religious brothers<sup>107</sup> among whom are some who are able to teach. Even for others who apply to us in quite good numbers, it would not be difficult for me to urge them to do the same, bearing in mind that we have a Primary School directed by a priest in our establishment. In this way enough teaching brothers would emerge prepared to combat to some degree the evils which the young teachers coming from the universities fail to destroy. Everyone agrees with my project. For a long time the Bishop has been urging me to implement it. There is one obstacle stopping me. Generally speaking I realise that these young men being poor and also not qualifying for State Exemption will be subject to the law of conscription<sup>108</sup>. Because

of this I am in danger of losing them after maintaining and training them for many years, just when they would start to be useful.

I am asking you, Reverend Vicar General<sup>109</sup>, if you could advise me how I can overcome this problem. At first I thought of the possibility of affiliating them to the Brothers of Christian Schools; I have already received information on this point which has led me nowhere. Hence I have been advised to consult you. Would you please for the greater glory of God give me your views on this matter and advise me what means I should take to succeed in this enterprise, either in the way described above or in whatever way you think best to achieve the desired result. In a word I would be grateful for all the information that your care and experience can provide.

I have the honour to be your very humble and obedient servant.

Garicoits. Priest.

### 34. - To a Daughter of the Cross

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Betharram 14 Oct 1845

My Dear Sister<sup>110</sup>,

I have received the two letters that you have kindly written to me. I have read and re-read them with all the concern and attention you can expect from me. I have no desire to doubt what you say. Everything sounds good and edifying, but there is one detail I am sorry to say I cannot find in them. You have not said; I am strong and my illness is over. I am well enough to return 'to the place of my repose.' Is 66, 1. Act 7;49. My dear Sister, leave no stone unturned, health-wise, to put you in the position of being able to write back to us in words to that effect. Please, whatever it is, write to me without delay about how you are.

Here your family<sup>111</sup> is always going ahead, .growing considerably, .founding new enterprises, receiving new and ever more numbers of postulants. How it is blessed by God! Love it always; it is worthy of our respect, our love and our esteem.

Your humble servant

Garicoits

My best wishes to your Aunt.

PS You sometimes see dear Sr Sophie<sup>112</sup>, do you not? Remember me to her and ask her to remember me in her prayers. Do I need to ask for yours?

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### 35. - To George Higueres<sup>113</sup>

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[1846]

My Dear Friend,

I have prayed for you very much and recommended you to Our Lord and His Holy Mother.

After having examined everything, I believe that you are called to live and die among us. I am convinced that you should come back here, and that in spite of your weak health, the advice of the doctors, your parents fore-bodings about your welfare, and all your own feelings of reluctance; in spite of flesh and blood<sup>114</sup>, in spite of all the decisions others have made on your behalf. My unwavering advice is that God wants you in our little congregation.

.....

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### 36. - To a Superior of the Daughters of the Cross.

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L.S.N.-S.J.-C

Pau 2 Jun 1846

My Dear Sister,

I should have replied long ago to your 2 companions which I am doing today, addressing my reply to you which I ask you to transmit to them.

I take this opportunity to urge you once again to allow yourself be led more and more perfectly by the Spirit of Our Lord Jesus, that Spirit which inspired Him to say constantly from the very beginning of His Mission; 'Here I am.' That Spirit<sup>115</sup> which made him love each and everyone and correct their evil tendencies as someone who loved them always. It was great! It was irresistible! Superbly done! It is what we should do, you and I, in our position, and the Holy Spirit will help us do it.

Please accept my sincere regards and give them to<sup>116</sup> Sister St Tacien; may she be humble and brave.

Garicoits Priest.

### 37. - To Mons. Lacroix, Bishop of Bayonne<sup>117</sup>

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Betharram 22 June 1846

Monsignor,

I seem to have some recollection of having suggested for the attention of Your Excellency the matter of Don Ignatio de Paleres<sup>118</sup>, canon, secretary and companion in exile of the Bishop of Barbastro<sup>119</sup> and measures proposed for his joining us at Betharram. I understood that he had changed his mind so I was not expecting to see him in our house when I returned from Bayonne.

However he came while I was away and begged so desperately to be admitted that they felt they could not deny him at least a temporary shelter. We have considered this in council and concluded that we should ask your excellency to allow us to continue our hospitality to this respected priest who deserves so much for many reasons<sup>120</sup>.

He is a very holy priest. Only his remarkable fidelity kept him beside Mgr Barbastro during his long years of exile. Everyone has a story to tell of the endless good he has done since coming to stay in Pau. It would be no expense to us. As soon as people knew that he had retired to Betharram, goodness knows how many good souls offered to pay his expenses.

I would be grateful, Monsignor, if you would let me know your wishes on this matter. If you agree we will keep this good man here though I would not be able to predict at this moment for just how long. If this does not meet with your approval I shall, of course, comply with your intentions.

I am you very humble and obedient servant.

Garicoits Priest.

### 38. - To Mgr Lacroix, Bishop of Bayonne

To M Jean Pujoulet<sup>121</sup>, Parish Priest and Dean of Coarraze

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We, Michel Garicoits, Jean-Louis Larrouy<sup>122</sup>, Pierre Bellocq<sup>123</sup>, Alexis Goalilhard<sup>124</sup>, Jean Casau<sup>125</sup>, Missionaries of the House of Our Lady of Betharram, declare the following;

1) The heirs to the late M Palengat<sup>126</sup> of Bayonne, after informing us that he had intended to set up a fund to provide a mission every ten years in his native parish of Coarraze, explained that he had made them this bequest. They have asked us to arrange this and we have made a firm agreement to do so, accepting their offering of 1500 fr for this purpose.

2) We declare we have received the above sum and agree to give a mission every 10 years to the said parish of Coarraze.

3) This agreement will be entered in our registers along with the above sum of 1500 fr agreed for this purpose. This has served to purchase a little estate in the country at Montaut which we have acquired at the cost of 1500 fr.

Agreed at Betharram; 5th July 1846

Signed

M Garicoits  
J-L Larrouy  
P Bellocq  
A Goailhard  
J Casau,

Missionary Priests

*We Bishop of Bayonne approve that a mission be given every 10 years in the church of Coarraze in agreement with the above declaration which will be registered by the Bishop. We and our successors will faithfully undertake to carry out this contract.*

Bayonne 26 July 1846

Francois, Bishop of Bayonne

### 39. - To Sr Saint-Jerome, DC<sup>127</sup>

L.S.N-S.J-C.

Igon 6 Oct 1846

It is good, in fact it is excellent, my Dear Sister St Jerome, that you are taking up your new career, or as you rightly call it 'your 2nd career,' corde magno et animo volenti<sup>128</sup>. That particular text gives me great pleasure; but understand it properly, in order to cultivate it and follow it at all times.

While I wait for your news of this fresh venture, and possibly the opportunity to expand on that theme, if necessary, I will remind you for now; do not forget to say to God and your Superiors through your conduct; 'Here I am ...without delay, yet without undue haste; without ifs and buts, but without being rash; without any looking back, yet being willing to change; Corde magno et animo volenti with peace and joy

I have finished my scribbling; it is 10.15pm etc

Your sincere servant

Garicoits Priest

PS My best wishes to Sr Madeleine<sup>129</sup>. Pray for us. Greetings to M Terrason<sup>130</sup>. Ask him if I can keep the rule of St Bazil<sup>131</sup> till the end of the holidays or whether I should sent it to him by our amiable<sup>132</sup> friend M Merigot.

#### 40. - To a Sister of the Cross

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L.S.N-S.J-C.  
18 Dec 1846

My Dear Sister

You ought to handle both the pain that you feel and the temptations that you experience in the same way.

1. Treat them with contempt, do not heed them.

2. Concentrate more and more on doing your duties properly with gratitude and love for Jesus who has loved you so much and who is so lovable; and try to understand that in this way you will become more pleasing to God and more edifying to your neighbour. Please God and be a good example to your neighbour. This is true greatness and goodness.

Be brave, my dear Sister. Do not listen to temptation; run away from it; pray and act.<sup>133</sup> with the grace of God you will do what is great and good. So be it, for you and your dear companions whom I greet in the Lord.

Garicoits Pt



<sup>1</sup> letter 10

<sup>2</sup> letter 12

<sup>3</sup> letter 15

<sup>4</sup> letter 87

<sup>5</sup> letters 20, 38

<sup>6</sup> letters 20, 27

<sup>7</sup> letters 20, 30

<sup>8</sup> letter 29

<sup>9</sup> letter 18

<sup>10</sup> letters 19, 33

<sup>11</sup> letter 36

<sup>12</sup> letter 39

<sup>13</sup> letter 24

<sup>14</sup> letter 21

<sup>15</sup> letter 39

<sup>16</sup> letter 31

<sup>17</sup> letter 32

<sup>18</sup> St Michael was alone at Betharram. Since 1826 the Seminary at Betharram was being slowly closed. In 1834 all the students had been recalled to the former seminary at Bayonne which had been vacated during the Napoleonic War for fear of an English invasion.

A little school was now opened to give a Catholic education to local children.

From November the 6th 1826 the major seminary of Betharram was condemned to disappear. In this decision the bishop of the diocese had announced the extension of the seminary of Bayonne to take in all the seminarians. Mgr D'Astros had to leave without achieving his plan. It was taken up by his successor Mgr D'Arbou. In 1831 the extension was completed. At the beginning of the 31st October there were only 57 students at Betharram; all those studying philosophy had gone to Bayonne. Even those who were studying theology who were to be ordained subdeacon during that year were recalled to Bayonne.

The Bishop wanted to meet them and know them. As a result the ordinations at Betharram ended after the 21st December 1833 as there weren't any seminarians left. The Bishop turned the residence of Betharram into a church school where children between 8 and 10 years could learn the principles of Latin. (Letter to the Ministry of worship bishops archives of Bayonne).

<sup>19</sup> The Jubilee proclaimed by Gregory XVI at the beginning of his pontificate took place in the diocese of Bayonne from the fourth Sunday of Advent from 22nd December 1833 to the 12th January 1834.

<sup>20</sup> St Michael had care of minor seminarians and some students a chaplaincy to 50-100 novices at Igon and care of the shrine and pilgrims and Parish of Lestelle.

At the beginning of 1834, a small number of students there with the addition of minor seminarians from elsewhere who were either ill or living at home. These received lessons in philosophy or theology. In addition to this, St Michael had to spend long hours in the confessional with pilgrims who came each day to the sanctuary. 4 km away there was the convent at Igon that he ministered to. Fortunately the Daughters of the Cross could fit in with his timetable. "On Sunday, said St Michael, I said Mass in the chapel, after that I heard confessions of the pilgrims. Sometimes it was about 11 o'clock when I made my way to Igon where the sisters who had been fasting awaited me. I said mass for them and gave them holy communion." (Duvignau Spiritual Doctrine page 233).

He was alone in all these tasks, even though two priest were there; Fathers Guimon and Lamaysounoube, the latter was parish priest at Lestelle and the former was preaching missions. Saint Michael felt alone, even though some priests were sent by the Bishop for various reasons: Fr Giraudy as a punishment, Fr Paradis for convalescence, M Chot-Plassot to do studies in theology. (Bishops archives).

St Michael was searching for a way to fulfill his inspiration by reading the writings of St Vincent de Paul and St Ignatius, in his search for evangelical perfection. During this time there were priests who wanted to join him. Fr Costedoat from the parish of Labastide-Montrejeau asked the Bishop who replied fourth of December 1833; "I cannot permit you to enter because I have no one to replace you with." Fr Lamaysounoube who was living with St Michael at Betharram said on 5th of January 1835; "the situation in the diocese doesn't allow me at the moment to fulfil my wishes." Fr Garat parish priest of Pontacq was asked by the Bishop to reconsider his wish to enter Betharram on the 26th February 1835; "your project is holy but it's important to consider very carefully before undertaking it."

Others presented themselves to Saint Michael. Pierre Lalanne, parish priest of Mirepeix. The bishop wrote to him on the 9th January 1836; "I will put no obstacle stopping you from retiring to Betharram." Fr Jerome Laborde ministering at Borce had asked the Bishop who replied on 31st May 1837. "I have agreed to your request to become a missioner and I leave the decision to Michael Garicoits and his companions to see if you are suitable for this work." Fr Pierre Louise curate of Arthez d' Asson was given a similar answer in 1837: "It is for Michael Garicoits and his companions to judge if Providence has given you the necessary qualities."

There were others who had asked to be enrolled: Frs Iriart de Macaye, Jean Cazanave ministering at Sedze, Fr Jean Baptiste Etcheberry, cousin of Michael Garicoits, see letter 12,

Fr Eugene Segalas, superior of the College of Saint Palais, Emmanuel Inchauspe, future became Vicar General of Bayonne. See letter 318

<sup>21</sup> Jean Chirou born at Pontacq 25th of February 1808, pupil at the seminary of Betharram (the register of ordinations doesn't mention the date of his tonsure and minor orders that he probably received at Tarbes or Saint Pe. He was ordained sub-deacon at Betharram by Mgr D'Arbou 1st May 1831, deacon at Bayonne and in the same year ordained priest 17th December 1831. Curate at Morlaas 15 January 1832, ministering at Louvigny 13th of July 1833, curate at d'Urt 10 August 1834, entered Betharram Sunday the 31st of August, professed into the Society of the Sacred Heart 10th of September 1841, elected councillor of the founder 11th June 1845, bursar of Betharram 2nd November 1846 on the death of Father Cassou, assistant to St Michael 5th July 1848, then Superior General 16th of May 1863, died 29th August 1873.

Fr Chirou was a holy priest due to St Michael Garicoits. Before St Michael initiated the spiritual reform of the major seminary there were many abuses, which as this young seminarian was enticed into. St Michael saw that his vocation was in danger. One day he spoke to him: "Leave these friends," he said. "Give yourself entirely to the Lord. He is calling you." He took this advice and from then on was directed by St Michael. As time went on they became friends. St Michael spoke to him about his plans for the foundation of a religious society. The young man decided to follow him and even before St Michael was able to begin his work as he was rector of the seminary, the young Chirou asked the Bishop on the 27th of May 1833 to join Betharram. He made another request in July 1834, and on the 31st of August he arrived in the evening to be the first companion of the founder. Without ever pretending to be eloquent he was a good preacher and confessor, full of kindness and with solid moral knowledge. He became a missionary but we only have two dates referring to his work; in Artigueloutan in 1838 and in Larreule in 1856. With his zeal and taste for apostolic journeys, his character was quite ordinary and lacked a certain amount of vision. He scarcely regarded the present or the future need for Christian education of the young and opposed the founder who had added education to the work of missions.

Between him and St Michael "whom he loved more than anyone in the world." as he said, there was a conflict which became serious during the time of Monsignor LaCroix. St Michael was constrained to distance himself from his first companion and sent him to the residences of Sainte Croix and Sarrance. He was not enthusiastic about the founder's ideal of Christian perfection which St Michael proposed for the religious life of his disciples. He believed that it wasn't necessary to preach holiness to all, and in the Society of the Sacred Heart he accepted without doubt the vows of religion, but in the way that Monsignor Lacroix wanted them; that was to be facultative and temporary.

This situation prevailed after the death of the founder when he was chosen as Superior of Betharram by the Bishop of Bayonne who left him at the head of the society for 11 years until the election on the 23rd of August 1873. In this position he presided from the ninth to the 16th of September 1869 on the commission designed to adapt the rules of St Michael to the will of the Bishop and to make the vows of poverty less rigorous. The 17th of August 1870 these changes were included in the constitutions that Monsignor Lacroix would present to Rome on the occasion of the first Vatican Council.

The continual modifications which followed under his term of office distanced the community from the primitive ideal. Fr Chirou felt it and regretted it as it became clear for presenting religious life and vows to the young: "Poor Fr Garicoits, how he suffered our opposition! I see it so clearly now... he had a hundred reasons to oppose us." He accused himself of being responsible for these changes: "I have done nothing, and wished to do nothing."

He no longer opposed the original rule. But as a result the Society entered into a period of decline. Quite alien to the founder's teaching of "seeking perfection for yourself and for others." This situation alarmed the first companions of St Michael who still survived. One of them Fr Larrouy complained in a letter to father Chirou. "The spirit of the founder has been extinguished and the ideas of the founder destroyed."

The time of father Chirou was a time of transition. With some prudence and goodwill he prepared for his successor the Venerable Father Etchecopar. Letter 239. The Society owes to him solid administration, organised recruitment and the development of Betharram as a College, the Chapel and the Way of the Cross.

<sup>22</sup> Antoine Carrerot L 399.

<sup>23</sup> Jean Sartolou L 5, see notes.

<sup>24</sup> Pierre Cambot born at Castetnau- Camblong (B-P) 29th October 1796 ordained priest 13th of March 1823, Professor at Larressore with St Michael Garicoits from 1821 to 1824, professor of philosophy from 1824 and theology in 1825 at the major seminary of Betharram, chaplain to the college in Saint Palais and of the Royal College in Pauin 1833 incardinated into the diocese of Paris.

<sup>25</sup> Simon Guimon L 66

<sup>26</sup> Enjamber.. an expression often on St Micheal's lips or in his letters meaning to block or ignore the Will of God. ' You should not side step (enjamber) Providence, but follow its indications with all your heart... We should never stop (enjamber)the designs of Providence.' (summarium of Beatification and Canonisation Rome 1908 p168 390) This is borrowed from one of his favoured spiritual writers, St Vincent de Paul. During the annual pilgrimage of the seminary of Dax to Notre Dame de Buglose he would have passed the birthplace of a St Vincent. In 1827 in three thick notebooks he summarised his life from the four volume is by Monsignor Abelly the work that he had always at hand on his desk. See letter 103. St Vincent wrote: "do not stand in the way of Providence by your behaviour.... those who follow it and do not stand in its way give supreme honour to Our Lord " Ne pas enjamber sur la conduite de la providence... Ceux la honorent souverainement Notre Seigneur qui la suivent et n'enjambent pas sur elle.' (Pierre Coste St Vincent de Paul 1 Correspondence)

<sup>27</sup> Financial help could be implied as he paid for the support of certain seminarians when they were in need.

<sup>28</sup> Nabarette a family living in Lestelle, friends of St Michael, the daughter went to confession to him and sought his advice

<sup>29</sup> A town of 3000 inhabitants at this time where the Dean lived Fr Subielle.

<sup>30</sup> Casimir Nabarette born at Lestelle in 1810 pupil of St Michael at the Major seminary of Betharram ordained 24th of May 1834, curate at Lasseube 1st January 1835 at Orin, ministering at Rebenacq 28th of January 1837, at Lucq-de-Bearn 28th of November 1846, died 19th of March 1869. he remained a friend of St Michael and in 1840 he offered his own home as the school of Notre Dame.

<sup>31</sup> Prov31

<sup>32</sup> St Micheal was acutely aware of the anti-religious outrages of 1830 and entertained the possibility of wide-spread persecution.

<sup>33</sup> He was particularly attached to Sainte Francis of Sales who writes: "we must apply ourselves to double, not our ideas nor our exercises, but the perfection with which we do them, in this way gaining more by a single act than undoubtedly we will do by a hundred others according to our likes and interests.(Vray entretiens VII)

<sup>34</sup> Jean-Baptiste Etcheberry was a cousin of Sainte Michael Garicoits, born at Ibarre 2 December 1806. In the age of four some parents without children his uncle and his godmother adopted him. He lived with them in their home at Ibarrolle. He, a clever child, went to the school in the village and learnt everything there was to know. He knew the whole catechism by heart in Basque.

At 12 he was a Shepherd; a good neighbour taught him a trade. Suddenly his uncle for whom he watched the sheep fell ill. His death bed he asked the young man: "to want to be a priest? If you wish to be a priest, I will even enough money in my will for your studies."

He had never thought of being a priest. But with some thought he decided to be one.

Perhaps it was the call of God. It would be banned to turn a deaf ear to it. So let us try." They found a place for him in the school at Saint Jean-Pied-de-Port. He made astonishing progress. St Michael who was interested in his cousin's progress, intervened and brought him to Cambo where he was admitted to a boarding school at the age of 17, in the fourth year He Went to the Minor Seminary at Larressore, he welcomed him after his secondary studies to the Major Seminary at Betharram is a pupil of philosophy and accompanied him up to the priesthood.

He was ordained in July 1833 and appointed curate at Helette very receive this letter. In 1837 he joined the Society of the Adorers of the Sacred Heart at Hasparren. In 1843 he became chaplain to the provincial house of the daughters of the cross at Ustaritz, where he died on the sixth of October 1898. He had been appointed an honorary Canon in 1894.

He published several writings in Basque: History of the Old and New Testaments, month of Mary, abridged life of Saint Michael Garicoits. In 1848 he published an almanac which went on for another 50 years and which would make him well-known in the Basque country. His aim was to develop the true faith in the language of his own people with interest and humour.

St Micheal took a direct interest in his studies for the priesthood. At the invitation of St Micheal stayed at Betharram for a break each year. Monsignor Jauffret has sketched this portrait of him: "in appearance he resembled the Venerable Cure of Ars. His emaciated appearance reminded one of a hermit living through a rigorous and permanent Lent. Little dark twinkling eyes animated and lit up his whole appearance." As a priest he was very edifying and gentle, and that's how people knew him throughout the country as someone once addressed a letter to him as 'Monsieur Saint Homme'.

His detachment and his charity knew no limits. Although poor he gave very generously to all who had needs. All the beggars of the area knew his address. No one went away empty-handed. Once in his life he became very rich. His book The History of the Saints became a bestseller and he made a thousand golden francs. He had never seen golden coins before unless he had noticed them through the windows of the bank. He gave most of it away to the poor.

<sup>35</sup> An allusion to the work Saint Michael organised at Betharram of which his cousin had already become aware when he was a student at the major seminary.

<sup>36</sup> I have waited for the Lord, he will turn to me.

<sup>37</sup> A servant at Betharram whose financial affairs led him into debt in excess of 1000 francs which St Micheal without any obligation settled.

<sup>38</sup> This is a key letter of St Micheals spirituality linked with that of the Daughters of the its Cross who were founded in 1807 by St Elizabeth Bichier des Ages. this letter was sent to new superiors of the Daughters of the Cross and also to priests of the society of the Sacred Heart. See letter 258 to Pierre Barbe.

The Daughters of the Cross or the sisters a Saint Andre were founded in 1807 at Chateau Molante in the diocese of Poitiers for the education of young girls and care of the sick by the parish priest of Maille, Andre Hubert Fournet(1752 to 1834) and by his collaborator St Elizabeth Bichier des Ages(1773 to 1838). The new religious society spread rapidly throughout France where it formed a link with Sainte Michael in the five provinces of La Puye, Paris, Igon, Ustaritz and Colomiers. Its mother house was at La Puye in the Vienne. St Micheal was Chaplain from 1828-1863 and directed over 1500 sisters at Igon. After St Micheal's death the Congregation spread to Italy, Spain, Canada, Argentina, Uruguay and the Congo etc. Several copies of this letter remains in the archives of the Sisters.

The good father Michael Garicoits by his work in the provincial house of Igon where he remained chaplain from 1828 to 1863 merited to be inscribed in their necrology in this way: "The good father Garicoits, Superior and Founder of the Priests of Betharram died at Betharram on the 14th of May 1863 on the feast of the Ascension at the age of 65 years. A priest living according to the heart of God, endowed with outstanding discernment, sound teaching, admirable simplicity, and a his devotion without limits. He was appointed as director of the sisters as of Igon from the time of their arrival. He contributed more than any person by his holy life, his wisdom, his teachings and influence in the development of this important house. The Congregation has never had a closer, truer and more dedicated friend. He never ceased to promote in soul and heart the spirit of our founders and their successors. His death was lamented by all, as he left behind the reputation and the works of the Saint.

<sup>39</sup> St Michael proclaims the primacy of love in is the spiritual life. "Love that is what these and their, there is a secret Spring which is necessary to discover.. there is the divine seed to develop in their hearts. If it is lacking you can do nothing. Spiritual doctrine page 112.

<sup>40</sup> At this time he belonged to the Society of the Adoreres of the Sacred Heart. Letter12.

<sup>41</sup> St Michael's aunt and cousin made themselves responsible against his prodigality which had become disturbing in his old age

<sup>42</sup> Jean-Pierre Hyppolyte Deyheralde of the same Society. Born at Hasparren 14th of August 1803, ordained 9th March 1828, parish priest of Espelette 12th of March the same year, ministered at Larressore from 1 January 1829 to 11th of August 1833. He became superior of the Society of the Adorers of the Sacred Heart from 1839 to 1881 the date of his death.

<sup>43</sup> Little Basque Parish near the PP. M Bentem was a former Diocesan Missioner.

<sup>44</sup> In 1837 St Michael opened the School of Notre Dame. These were some of his trials; some members opposed entering into education of the young; the anti-catholic University tried to kill his project by forbidding latin and having boarding pupils; he had to sack the first headmaster Vincent Elicabide for stealing from his pupils.

<sup>45</sup> Born at Lescun (B-P) 21st of November 1807, pupil of the seminary of Betharram and ordained first of May 1831, curate at Coarrazze the same year, ministering at Anoye in 1832, at Labastide Villefranche in 1833, at Lestelle in 1844, entered the society of the Sacred Heart at Betharram in July 1846, died 23rd of July 1878.

He had been a pupil philosophy of Sainte Michael Garicoits at the major seminary. When he received him into the society he let him retain the parish of Lestelle. A little later he sent him to Spain after 1857 to do research on local sanctuaries and the chaplains of Sarrence and to search for the ancient statue of our Lady of Betharram stolen during the wars of religion.

<sup>46</sup> Sister Elizabeth later St Elizabeth born on the fifth of July 1773 at the Chateau des Ages in Berry, took as her confessor the parish priest of Maille, St Andre Hubert Fournet and his collaborator during the time of the Empire and the restoration and founder of the Daughters of the Cross in 1807. She was their superior general up to her death 26th of August 1838 at La Puye.

She was beatified by Pius XI 13th of May 1934 and canonised By Pius XII 6th July 1947 at the same time as Saint Michael Garicoits. See letter 22.

St Michael was greatly influenced by her and the tributes to her his conversion which is to say his resolution to be a saint and to found the Society of the Sacred Heart. As he said: "It is she who has done everything."

They lived about 400 km apart she at La Puye in the Vienne he in the Pyrenees at Betharram. However they had known each other about 12 years in different ways. The first meeting it seemed was Bayonne on the 22nd to the 25th of April 1825 in the presence of Bishop d'Astros. Their meetings multiplied either at the Betharram where St Elizabeth went on pilgrimage or at the convent at Igon where she stayed and where St Michael went twice or three times a week as chaplain and confessor to the community Perhaps he met her at Ustaritz, although rarely.

Here are some of their contacts

1825 and the 22nd to the 25th of April at Bayonne

1827 to 1828 from the end of December and to the end of January at Igon and at Betharram

1828 at the beginning of May to the end of June at Igon and Betharram

1829 the 19th of March to the beginning of April at Igon and Betharram

in July at Igon and Betharram in December at Igon and Betharram

1830 1831 from the 23rd December to the 20th of March at Igon and Betharram 1831 to 1832 from Christmas to Easter at Igon and Betharram

1834 in April and May at Igon and Betharram

1834 to 1835 from the end of December to the end of February at Igon and Betharram 1836 to 1837 of the 25th of December to the 18th of January at Igon and Betharram

1837 from the eighth of October to the end of December and Igon and Betharram.

<sup>47</sup> See Letter 12

<sup>48</sup> The legislation of 1830 promised freedom for schools. The law of 28 June 1833 (Guizot) only applied to primary Schools; it took away the monopoly of the universities. A number of bishops invited their clergy to found primary schools. According to the law of 1837 it was necessary to get authorisation from the director of the Academy to be requested in writing supported by a letter from the local council of the town and area, plans of the building approved by the Mayor and the curriculum of the school. Saint Michael Garicoits followed this advice from the bishops and profited by this law. In November 1837 he opened the school of Notre Dame of Betharram. He put the direction of the school in the hands of lay people: Vincent Elicabide from 1837 to 1839, Jean Lacazette in 1839. After this he realised the unsuitability of appointing laypeople and he appointed a priest of the society: the first one being Didace Barbe.

<sup>49</sup> the primary school of Notre Dame of Betharram became a higher primary school (Primaire superieur) on the fifth of November 1840 when it received its official authorisation from the Academy at Pau.

<sup>50</sup> This was Aire at the Royal College where St Michael completed his secondary studies.

<sup>51</sup> Didace Cazanave-Barbe was born at Beuste(B-P) 15 to February 1813. Curate to Fr Poure of Arudy who is responsible for his formation. To complete its they sent him in 1830 two the junior seminary of St Pe de Bigorre where he followed the course of rhetoric and philosophy. The superior. Mgr Lawrence future Bishop of Lourdes kept him on as a teaching seminarian with the intention of keeping him in the diocese. In 1832he taught holy Scripture, in 1833 the seventh of the eight grade. At the same time he followed a course in theology. St Michael Garicoits came from Betharram several times a week to give it. A friendship grew between the master and pupil which became affirmed later when he asked to join the society. He was ordained deacon by Monsignor Lacroix at Bayonne 9th June and priest 22 September 1838. He took his vows as a member of the Society on 22 October 1842. He was a born teacher. Saint Michael intended him to be the headmaster of the school of Notre Dame which he founded after the disastrous experiment with two lay Masters. In preparation he was sent to follow a course at the Royal College in Aire sur L'Adour. He took his exams at the Academy in Pau and obtained a certificate to teach at primary and secondary level. He was appointed headmaster. Under his direction the school of Notre Dame developed. The number of pupils increased. In 1840 he began the higher primary course. In November 1847 three years after the law Fallou he began the secondary course, in 1855 his first pupils passed the baccalaureate. Thanks to the wisdom of St Michael the school had developed considerably over 10 years. Requests came from surrounding towns for foundations; from Orthez, Mauleon, Asson, Oloron...

Fr Barbe also contributed to the development of the Society in many ways as well as in administration. He was elected councillor in 1846 and in 1851 Saint Michael chose him as his assistant.

In 1854 when the government of Argentina requested the Bishop of Bayonne for Basque priests, he turned to Betharram. The General Assembly of the Society unanimously voted to accept the mission of South America. Fr Barbe was chosen; he didn't speak Spanish, but he became a teacher of catechism to the Basques. In less than 18 months after their arrival in Argentina, he opened a school on the 19th of March 1858. He acquired an abandoned leather warehouse which he had rebuilt and extended. He had scarcely any books for the pupils, but eventually had some printed from those he brought over. The university had the monopoly over education and placed many obstacles in his way, but he overcame them when his pupils very successfully passed the State exams. See letter 351.

Without diminishing his efforts in missions in the pampas, he made the church of St Juan a centre of spirituality in Buenos Aires at the end of 1856, and on 1st March 1861founded another centre of spirituality at Montevideo in the Basque chapel of the Immaculate Conception. In this town on the first of October 1867 he founded a College for the young in Uruguay. He fulfilled all sorts of duties besides teacher, invigilator, preacher and confessor, headmaster and superior of the community; all sustained by a deep interior life. This impressed both teachers and pupils who held him in great respect. he was a man of intelligence and of kindness. His ceaseless work eventually impaired his fragile health. The last days of his life he dragged himself to class on crutches. he died on the 13th of August 1869, leaving behind a reputation of holiness. His successor to the College of Betharram, Fr Romain Bourdenne described him at the end of his book "La vie et lettres de R.P.M Garicoits". Saint Michael Garicoits loved and respected him and thought of him as his successor, even while was still alive he was ready to have him as his replacement. Between them there existed a correspondence only some fragments remain. Fr Magendie said that sometime before his death, Fr Barbe destroyed all his correspondence from St Michael. Some years later a few letters seem to have come into the hands of Fr Etchecopar which are found in the Pensees, even these are now lost.

<sup>52</sup> Brevet de capacite was the equivalent of an actual teaching certificate. Strictly speaking it wasn't necessary for a headmaster of primary school if it if it was a church school or one run by a religious order. It seems that St Michael wished to have this certificate as an official guaranty of competence to satisfy par-ents. it is possible that he urged to Fr Barbe to gain this certificate at secondary level so that he could transform the primary school to a higher primary school. (Primaire superieure).

<sup>53</sup> Jean-Baptiste Garat. L 9.

<sup>54</sup> Fr Taury was born at Vivonne, Vienne 2 April 1791. During the restoration he was professor of theology at the major seminary of Poitier. He was later appointed Dean of St Pierre de Chauvigny.

St Andre Hubert Fournet in January 1833 obtained permission for him to become his collaborator with the Daughters of the Cross. The death of the founder 13th of May 1834 he became Superior General of the community. He was appointed the 29th of October 1844 archpriest of Niort. It was there that he died 21st of August 1859 of a heart attack after giving a homily on the words of the Pharisee in the Publicis. His heart would be carried 9 May 1860 to the chapel of the cemetery of the Daughters of the Cifross after the mass sung by Saint Michael Garicoits who was on his way to La Puye. See letter 258.

A certain contact existed between these two men. Fr Taury came several times to the Pyrenees to visit the Daughters of the Cross. He was at Ustaritz 6 November 1835, at Igon 19 November same year. He returned there in November 1836. Saint Michael welcomed him at Betharram in October 1835 and 1837 for a lengthy rest. St Michael visited him in 1844.

Fr Taury said to Mgr Pie of Saint Michael: "He is the best director in the diocese of Bayonne and the principal instrument of blessings that God has given to the Daughters of the Cross in central France."

<sup>55</sup> Sr Saint-Just whose name was Marie Aphalo born in 1803, joined the daughters of the cross in 1830, died in 1832. She had taken the name of the patron saint of her parish which was also that of St Michael since the concordat. He knew the family very well. Their son had been in the same class as him at college. See letter 190.

<sup>56</sup> Ustaritz, a town of 2400 inhabitants at the time of Saint Michael, the ancient capital of Labourd. 29th of July 1829 after leaving Igon, St Elizabeth founded a residence for the daughters of the cross which became very prosperous and was soon to become a provincial house. Saint Michael Garicoits often went there for confessions and the long time was extraordinary confessor to the religious and for giving them retreats. He was welcomed there in 1845 by the sister of Fr Chirou whom he had formed at Igon, Sr Theodosie, his cousin John Baptiste Etcheberry who was chaplain to the convent ( see letter 12) and his sister Marie and brother Paul who had retired there.

He went there each year here are some of the dates. 1834 9 December 1850 January

1855 25th December

1856 after 25th of March

1856 27th of August

1858 July

1860 between 28th of May and 2nd June

1861 mid-February

1860 to 19 March celebrated the feast of St Joseph

1862 18 August

<sup>57</sup> Raymond Etcheberry borne at Harembels 2 January 1767, ministered that Oses from 1806 to 1812 and from 1812 to 1844 parish priest at Saint Just Ibarre. It was to the presbytery of Fr Etcheberry that St Michael came as a seminarian and would be normally welcomed during his holidays when he was not invited by the family of Saint Jayme.

<sup>58</sup> The superior of the convent of Ustaritz.

<sup>59</sup> Pierre Vincent Elicabide was one of the most notorious criminals of the 19th century. He was born at Gotein (B-P) in 1810. He entered the seminary Betharram, he was a very clever student, passed to the major seminary of Bayonne where the directors who hesitated to admit him to holy orders, sent him on leave. He became a tutor at Bordeaux. There he obtained a teaching certificate. It was at the time when St Michael had opened the school of Notre Dame. He invited him to be headmaster and presented him to the rector of the Academy as the official headmaster.

In the opinion of the founder during the years 1837 to 1838 he showed himself very committed. See letter 108. But the following year because of his behaviour and extreme severity, it was necessary in October 1839 to ask him to leave. He left for Paris.

He had known a young widow from Pau, Marie Anizat who had two children. He hoped to marry her. He had one of the children at Paris come to him under the pretext of furthering his education. He struck him dead at La Villette on the evening of his arrival 14th of March 1840. He invited the mother and her daughter from Paris to join him in Bordeaux. During a walk at Artigues he killed both of them 9 May 1840. He was arrested at Bordeaux where he appeared before a commission to be interrogated on 10 Sept 1840. He was found guilty, thrown into the prison of the Ha, was condemned to death 11th of September and executed by guillotine on the 3rd November 1840 at the Place d'Aquitaine, Bordeaux. Saint Michael Garicoits went to visit him in prison and wrote several letters to him. Unfortunately they have been lost.



<sup>60</sup> Igon was at this time a village of 750 inhabitants. In the little farm of Canon Procope Lassalle, Superior of the Seminary of Betharram, the first convent to the Daughters of the Cross had been founded on the 25th of April 1825 by St Elizabeth Bichier des Ages who brought with her from La Puye sisters St Basil, Berthile, Valentin and Zozime. Saint Andre Hubert Fournet came there from 27th of April to 5th May 1826. They received postulants through the influence of Monsignor D'Astros in 1826 and opened novitiate in February 1827. This convent opened other houses in the region: at St Pe de Bigorre on 12th of January and in Bayonne 8 June 1828, at Bagnere de Bigorre on 19th of March and at Ustaritz 27th of July 1829.

The foundation of Ustaritz brought about the closure of the novitiate at Igon for a time. But because of the growing numbers of postulants they were obliged to re-open it in 1830 at Igon. Foundations continued: at Pontacq 9th February 1831, at Arudy, Ozon, Argeles in 1834, at Tarbes 16th of November, at Colomiers 1st December 1836. In less than 40 years the convents of Igon and Ustaritz had established 80 houses which formed a Providence. In 1903 there were 114 houses.

In this outstanding achievement Saint Michael Garicoits played a considerable part by his direction of the sisters' formation. Their schools were renowned. It is thought that over 1200 sisters benefited from his direction. Many of which took positions of high responsibility in the congregation like Sr Saint Roger and Sr Saint Sabinien. The Ministry of chaplains to Igon in the beginning ensured that the major seminary was at Betharram. This ministry was entrusted to the bursar. At this time M Charles Labarrere was bursar. Saint Michael succeeded him, although he acted as chaplain in 1828 but was officially appointed in 1831. See letter 389. He would continue in this ministry till the 14th of May 1863. It was thought that this ministry was incompatible with being rector of the major seminary.

In August 1832 The Vicar General Canon Claverie appointed Fr Guimon as chaplain. He proved unsuitable and was tending to discourage the novices and the postulants. St Elizabeth complained to the Bishop and obtained permission for St Michael resumed the role as chaplain.

At the beginning, the convent was composed of a small number of sisters. But it expanded rapidly with the influx of postulants. In 1845 there were between 40 to 50 young women in the novitiate. They were formed with great care. Saint Michael held long instructions in the confessional and gave lengthy conferences. At the gatherings of the sisters it was necessary to say Mass, hear confessions and give solid instruction twice a week, with the occasional meditation. New demands were added in the primary school. There was an orphanage and a boarding school which required a course of catechism. The role of the chaplain became more and more exacting.

The former priest only spent some hours on a Sunday and Thursday the convent. St Michael had at first did the same, but he soon realised that two days were no longer sufficient and from 1850 dedicated three days a week: Sunday Wednesday and Thursday.

In 1850 Monsignor Lacroix with the agreement of the superiors asked Saint Michael to engage another priest to help him. He chose Fr Lassus from April he initiated him into this ministry' but he was not successful with the sisters. At Betharram there were some who thought that the founder spent too much time at Igon.

In their name, Fr Larrouy at the General assembly in 1854 presented a request that the Bishop release the superior from the chaplaincy. But the motion was not passed. But from the month of August 1859 they found in Fr Mouthes a suitable collaborator who was occasionally joined by Fr de Bailliencourt. So St Michael fulfilled up to his death this spiritual ministry to the Daughters of the Cross confided to him by St Elizabeth their foundress. See letter 22, 15.

<sup>61</sup> St Michael was called as witness to a preliminary tribunal in Bordeaux 10th September.

<sup>62</sup> L59.

<sup>63</sup> Etienne ..not known

<sup>64</sup> Basque phrase means that the Garicoits were said to be very reserved and were not at all demonstrative in their feelings in fact rather cold which St Micheal denies. This phrase seems to have applied to the people of Ibarre in the past. See letter 6. Parish of 1,200 at this time where his cousin had been Parish priest

<sup>65</sup> St Michael Garicoits at the beginning of the foundation, having been preoccupied with running the society, had need to employ domestic staff. He made many unfortunate choices. His choice of personnel seems to show that he had little experience of the world. A certain M Hiriart (see letter 13) ran up a bill of a 1000 francs of debt, another was asked to leave after he had stolen a leg of ham.

<sup>66</sup> As a result of this St Michael resolved to form a community of brothers as he had seen when the Spanish Capuchins were staying at Betharram. In the beginning he found this very difficult to realise. One who came from the Ger was good and religious, but not very practical and of unsound mind. When one of the priests Fr Bellocq remarked: "This is not well swept!" he left the house and was wandering around Calvary for two days. Another who was made cook who know nothing about cooking. The community paid to him to learn recipes from a chef in Cautelets. But while there a woman working nearby in the butchers took him for a husband. See letter 33.

<sup>67</sup> Brother sacristan, was Arnaud Gaye. He was born at Saint Pe de Bigorre in 1815, entered Betharram as a boarder at the school when he was 25, 24th of March 1840, professed 9th October 1843, died 16th June 1894. This former Shepherd had been for St Michael a very precious and almost indispensable helper. He was very generous, and had extraordinary and practical intelligence and ability. He was asked to do anything that was needed; from sacristan to invigilator of the school, cook and infirmarian, the laundry and linen. He accepted everything he was asked to do and did it well. Often he was overwhelmed with work and business, yet he spent time in prayer and making the way the cross. St Michael considered him in material things his right-hand man. When he was unwell or sick Br Arnaud cared for him with love and devotion. He did this up to St Michael's last breath on the night of the 14th of May 1863.

<sup>68</sup> Society of Adorers of the Sacred Heart.



<sup>69</sup> Pierre Perguilhem born at Sainte Suzanne (B-P) on the 15 January 1798, ordained priest 21st December 1821, died at Betharram 22nd December 1872. Here are some dates of his life.

1822 to 1830 member of the society of the Adorers of the Sacred Heart of Hasparren 1830 living at the church of Saint Martin in Pau.

1831 preached the Stations in lent at St Pierre of Orthez gave retreat at the major seminary at Betharram

1832 31st July... parish priest and dean of Labastide Clairence

1833 20th September built of the stations of the Cross at Labastide.

24th October reorganisation of the conferences of the deanery at Labastide mission at Urt

1834 January preached at the Jubilee at Bidache and at Salies de Bearn

15th January reorganised the parish ministry at Labastide July parish priest at d'Urt until the arrival of father Chirou.

August obtained a third curate.

9th September asked permission from Monsignor D'Arbou to join Betharram and to be replaced as Dean of Labastide.

November preached mission at Aire sur Adour. December renewed his request to enter Betharram

6 December preached mission in the Landes.

1835 15th of July arrived at Betharram

September changed his will at the bank of Lorimond in favour of the sanctuary of our Lady of Betharram.

1836 11th January constructed the stations of the Cross in the church of Espoey.

1841 10th September religious profession

1841 to 1848 General Councillor

1844 preached mission at Bruges.

1849 to 1850 superior at the residence of Orthez

1850 January preach missions at Buros, Montau, Bordes, Angais.

1859 11th September Received the Emperor Napoleon III and the Empress at Betharram.

1862 January Took the Donation of Saint Michael for the Building of the Sanctuary of Lourdes to the Bishop.

1863 May to September General Councillor

1868 10th of May Received a Pension from Napoleon III.

Pierre Perguilhem had been a missionary all his life. He had preached a considerable number of missions. The many dates of which have been lost. There are some accounts of his mission during Lent at Nay with Fr Guimon and his retreat at Notre Dame du Refuge where he had his niece, sister Isabelle, the future superior general of the Servants of Mary. Without the severity of Jansenism in the confessional, he showed himself a good missionary. He spoke with a warm and harmonious voice and was an effective preacher. St Michael who had the gift of recognizing peoples talents and choosing the right person for the right place confided to him the task of welcoming important visitors to Betharram. Pierre Perguilhem was particularly happy in receiving Monsignor Plantier, Bishop of Nimes, and the Emperor and Empress, Napoleon III and Eugenie on the 11th of September 1859.

His many qualities eminently suited him for the parochial ministry which he later put at the service of the society of the Sacred Heart.

<sup>70</sup> Jean Jareuche born at Cambo 30th of May 1792, ordained in 1816 curate of Hasparren in 1818, appointed to their mind is seminary of Larressore in 1821 where he was successively professor, bursar and chaplain up to his death in 1873. This good servant of God was endowed with five talents: piety, discernment, eloquence, zeal and an artistic qualities. He was a man of prayer. His direction was gentle and engaging. At Larressore he attracted especially the young to whom he became a friend and confessor. He he showed them how to do meditation. He sought out good vocations. He was a born orator. He knew how to touch people's hearts by teaching them Christian truths. He was an apostle. He became the head of various devotional associations which he organised in different parishes. He planned his days very carefully. The seminary at Larressore owed him its classical chapel, inaugurated on the 24th of January 1829 and Fr Garat confided to him the construction of the Oratory of the Missionaries of Hasparren. He wrote in the Basque magazine entitled the Month of Mary. It was at Larressore where he was professor that St Michael knew him. When St Michael was curate he called him to Cambo to preach and give retreats. They collaborated in the editing of a manual for the confraternity of the Sacred Heart in Basque. It was edited in 1825 and published in Bayonne. Together they set up the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart in Cambo.

<sup>71</sup> Marie known as Maria at home, was born the 15th of March 1817 at Wassy (Haute Marne) entered the daughters of Charity 15th of July 1843, as sister Vincent, died 25th of February 1888 at Pont-Saint-Severin. She was already engaged when she went to spend a holiday at Nay near Betharram at her uncles, Abraham-Timothie de Bonnecaze. She was taken by her cousin Marie-Claude Saut with two friends Mlle Lassere and Mlle Camus on a walk to Betharram.. After looking around the Sanctuary the cousins not having anything planned, went to confession to St Micheal. Marie followed but while in conversation with St Michael whom she had never seen before he was called away. He promised to return in 2 hours. It is not recorded what transpired. She waited and stayed in the Chapel in prayer. This time the meeting lasted more than 2 hours. At the process of canonization she said; 'Before meeting Fr Garicoits I was entirely focussed on a worldly way of life and was about to get married; something my family was looking forward to. After this meeting I was completely changed. I felt no taste for the world I knew and in spite of the cost I decided to do the will of God whatever that was. Her life changed. She went to daily Mass and communion, gave up her former leisures and vowed herself to works of charity. She looked after a lady with cancer whose condition drove most people away; she dressed her wounds and cared for her soul. Before this meeting she only dreamt of marriage; now only of God and the religious life.

She made a decision to make a retreat at Betharram. To avoid alerting her uncle or her family, she with her cousin asked her uncle if they could spend 2 weeks at Arudy 20 kilometres away. Not suspecting anything he agreed and got them 2 horses. They set off but rode to Igon where they told the Sisters of their scheme. The Superior Sr St Jerome who had been informed of their plans agreed to contact St Michael.

They both disguised themselves as peasants and arrived at Betharram dressed with great head scarves over their hair. St Michael knew nothing about their plans but when he recognised them he could not stop laughing.. He found them lodgings with the family in the farm Matheou opposite the monastery. Without wasting any time they began their retreat. Their programme was quite rigorous; mass and communion,<sup>4</sup> daily meditations, 2 examinations of conscience, and a visit to the Blessed Sacrament. He put the exercises of St Ignatius in their hands and prepared each of them briefly each morning, then received them in the confessional twice a day. After a week Marie-Claude, the cousin decided to enter the Daughters of the Cross and Marie Madeleine the Sisters of Charity. The family at first opposed Marie-Madeleine. St Michael supported her in her resolve and wrote to her father who finally agreed. She finally became a Sister of Charity and worked in Egypt and Chile. St Michael opened her life on a path, dedicated to the poor for Christ. From Alexandria she wrote in 1849. 'O Betharram can I not say with the prophet 'O let my right hand wither and my tongue cling to my mouth if I do not remember you.....I can never find words to express the gratitude to the dear Fr Michael Garicoits.' In another letter she adds; 'I am so filled with happiness to know that he remembers me at the altar...Assure him of my love and gratitude. Every day I repeat with so much pleasure the prayer that I have taken from him and which you must know ; Here I am.'

<sup>72</sup> Dorothy Lagelouze born Dax 14th of January 1810 entered the Daughters of Charity 23rd of October 1836 died at the hospital of St Leon in Bayonne 2 March 1845.

<sup>73</sup> Marie Claude born at Buzy (B-P) about 1823 residents at Arudy where she died at the age of 75 28th of April 1898. She accompanied Marie-Madeleine to Betharram; they were cousins. Neither knew St Micheal before this occasion. She came from Buzy near Betharram and eventually tried her vocation with the Daughters of the Cross but had to leave for ill health. She lived at Arudy and continued seeing St Michael as her spiritual guide till he died.

<sup>74</sup> Sr Jeanne-Sophie Jacomet born at Ossun (H-P) 8th September 1807 Entered the Daughters of the Cross 17 October 1839, died 3 January 1898. At this time she is in the house at Colomier where she will be soon Provincial Superior, before being elected Assistant General She had a particular gift in recognizing vocations to the religious life. "My child, I do not want a few to decide about this at this moment. Go to the sisters in Poitier."

She went there. She was there ever six weeks, when Andre Fournet sent for her and asked: "What have you been doing such a long time?..."

An old Chateau was closed or bought: the work began. Some children were gathered, looked after properly. New sisters went to help the enfeebled people: they were very moved with this help and encourage to find their children cared for and brought up properly.

The work had popular support. But there was always problems and contradictions. One day the priest spoke to the sister about a new headdress. It was a matter of wearing a cornet. The sister submitted and wore the same as everybody else.

However this course a dreadful outburst: her uncle condemned it up to the point of bringing it before the church tribunal. But she only saw one thing, the will of God. She became more courageous, more attached to her work and the most contentious means. The work progressed but always in very difficult and contradictory conditions. She had to travel a long way to hear Mass and receive communion. And when she asked to receive communion. "No, said the priest, you are abusing the sacrament!" She was deposed and replaced in the control of the house, she didn't show her displeasure in fact she asked all her sisters to obey blindly the Father. "Do whatever he says as if the Virgin Mary spoke to you." And so this heroic soul marched between success and failure, in popularity on the outside, and with humility within. She went forward without complaint. She read the providential signs in accepting vocations and founding houses. She experienced many times of darkness, clouds of opposition, and obstacles. Yet the work went forward in spite of difficulties on the road to Calvary.

The poor sister suffered an injury to her side which became cancerous. She had to have a terrible operation which showed her courage and her virtue. After this, she made the foundations at Issy and Igon.

<sup>75</sup> Fr Claude Acquaviva 1543 to 1615 was the fifth superior of the Society of Jesus. He was responsible for two works the Directory for the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius published in Florence in 1599, translated into French with the title of Guide for Directors; then he wrote the *Industriae pro superioribus eiusdem Societatis ad curandos animae morbos..* published in 1600 and appeared in French as the Manual for Superiors which Saint Michael recommends in letters 49 and 55. In 1895 it appeared under the name of Industries for the cure of illnesses of the soul to be used by superiors of the Society.

<sup>76</sup> See letters 129,243.

<sup>77</sup> St Elizabeth Bichier des Ages.

Saint Michael has left us this portrait of the founders of the Daughters of the Cross.

All her life has been a continual contradiction. In the Chateau of her brother, Elizabeth who had 150,000 francs in her dowry took more pleasure in washing-up the dishes and chatting with the domestic staff, eating the black bread of the poor so as to serve our Lord Jesus Christ. During the night when the child of her sister-in-law was crying she would get up, pick it up and rock it to sleep.

However she felt herself called to the life of the Trappistines, which at that time scarcely existed in France. Awaiting the moment of divine providence she fulfilled perfectly the duties of her position and went forward in doing good, guided by her conscience and by the Holy Spirit. With her desire to be a Trappistine, she was already doing all the works of the Daughters of the Cross. She went to confession, third Mass and went communion when she could, as the priests were in exile or imprisoned or obliged to hide themselves.

One day, at five or six leagues from the Chateau, she saw a line of peasants: "Where are you going?"

They replied: "To Mass and you may come with us."

They led her into a barn transformed into a chapel. The priest, Andre Fournet was preaching. Touched by his zeal and his holiness she asked to go to confession to him. He received her coldly:

"See if these women want to let you come through."

She followed the priests of the confessional: "Father I want to become a Trappistine."

"My daughter, it is not that. Everywhere this wretchedness, ignorance: people need bread, instruction and then to save their souls."

Her chosen desire having been rebuffed she gave equal weight to the opinion of a director. Up to that time she had been guided by herself. Now that she had a director she would think no longer of offering herself in accomplishing the good pleasure of God. It took some time before she gave herself entirely to God. When she arrived at Igon she found the house in such a dilapidated state that she was tempted to return with her companions. However her strong character, her virtue made her say to Fr Darbelit: "I trust that this community will prosper."

In so far as the work developed, setbacks did not diminish. But fixed in obedience, this incomparable Daughter of the Cross immolated herself to the will of God up to her last breath. Up to her last days, she was still pursued by her desire to become a Trappistine. She made a retreat and consulted a venerable old priest, but this desire was never realized.

<sup>78</sup> Philip 4:13.

<sup>79</sup> The spirit of humility, the spirit of obedience, the spirit of charity are expressions which St Michael returns to again and again when other people would use the word humility obedience and charity. In this way he confirms his thoughts. He always prefers the spirit to the letter, the substance to the form.

<sup>80</sup> See letter 66

<sup>81</sup> See letter 19

<sup>82</sup> She was from Ossun(Haute-Pyrenees) and later became provincial superior and assistant general. Had a gift in finding vocations. A humorous allusion to her late entry at 32 into the Congregation.

<sup>83</sup> Permission from the Bishop to join Betharram.

<sup>84</sup> Fragment of a letter from the archives at Betharram. Writings of Michael Garicoits exercise book 398.

<sup>85</sup> This letter is written on another from Abbe Segelas Headmaster of the College of St Palais who agrees to take 2 students from Notre Dame. These teachers and Church students from Notre Dame were sent and paid for by St Michael as his school was not permitted to teach latin. It seems that these 2 boys were paid for according to what could be afforded. M Dupont has to look after a small child may be a way of paying his fees. 'Notify' may refer to the contents of the enclosed letter or to the payment of their fees which would allow them to begin studies at St Palais; it is not clear what is meant.

Pierre Inchauspe born in Abense-de-Haut (B-P) 20th of October 1798, ordained 18 December 1824, missionary after Serb the action at in the society of the Adorers of the Sacred Heart of hasparren, in 1830 chaplain to the Dominican sisters at Nay up to his death in 1856. He had been the principal artists and in the foundation of the monastery of these sisters at Mauleon in 1857. He had confided the direction of his conscience to Sainte Michael Garicoits and went punctually to confession to him at Igon.

<sup>86</sup> Joseph Labourdette born at Nay in 1824, pupil of Notre Dame in 1840, in the College of Saint Palais in 1844. He returned to Betharram for his ecclesiastical studies, ordained priest in 1854, admitted to the Society as a spiritual co-operator, professed in 1862. See letter 366. He didn't renew his vows and became parish priest of Aressy up to 1887. He is found at Betharram on the 13th of May 1863 and it is to him that St Michael before his sudden death gave his last absolution.

<sup>87</sup> Published at Pau Alexandre Renoir born at Gray sur Saone in 1811 was a young sculpture, a pupil of Ramey and Pradier whom the Abbe Combalot sent to Betharram for the restoration of the Calvary. He worked there from 1840 to 1845. Lack of funds of which he speaks in this letter obliges him to stop this work. After a journey to Italy Renoir returned to Paris where he died in 1855. The work was completed under Fathers Chirou and Basilide Bourdenne between 1867 and 1874. The artist wasn't pleased with everything that was written by St Michael in this letter as the following indicates.

Dear Editor I have just read in your newspaper a letter from the Superior of Betharram which contains remarks about me that I believe are too flattering; an error that I must correct. Fr Garicoits after having spoken of the expenses that have been made by his house when these stations were made for the Calvary added that the 3000 francs which had been given to me in recompense made it impossible for him to continue the work.

It is quite painful to me, sir, after having sacrificed four fruitful years of my life on this work, that they had to attribute a motive of personal gain for the suspension of the works that I would have been very happy to complete. This sum which had never been asked for by me, had been offered a long time ago and as a result was not regarded as an obstacle preventing the construction of the final chapels at that time.

I would be grateful if you would publish my letter in your next edition...

Believe me..... etc

<sup>88</sup> Author of *L'Histoire du Bearn et du Pays Basque* (1839) and had written on the works of art found in Betharram

<sup>89</sup> King Louise XIII showed an interest in the work of Hubert Charpentier founder of the congregation of our Lady of Betharram, and had a chapel could be destroyed on the slopes of the Calvary with two small rooms dedicated to St Louis. He bequeathed to the sanctuary before he died £3000 (French pounds).

<sup>90</sup> Armand-Mathieu, Marquis of Angosse, Field Marshal, Deputy of the general estates in 1789. He was mayor of Corbere where stands his family Chateau. He was general counsel of the Basses Pyrenees, Deputy in the French parliament and a member of the nobility. He had in 1843 the gift of 1200 francs. He gave Pieta to the Calvary. His daughter married the Count of Luppe.

<sup>91</sup> This is the chapel of the Resurrection which St Michael thought of restoring. See letter 59. His remains were buried there until they were transferred to the present chapel of St Michael.

<sup>92</sup> The community had already paid out 20,000 francs for the restoration of the Calvary destroyed by the revolution in 1794, and 5 million francs in 1956.

<sup>93</sup> In 1844 the Prefect of the Basses Pyrenees, M Azevedo, had passed a resolution for grant of 1500 francs.

<sup>94</sup> His mother, Gratianna Etcheberry died on 8th Jan 1845 at 70. She was born 13 October 1775 daughter of Guillaume Etcheberry and Jeanne Etcheto. See letter 101.

<sup>95</sup> The grant was paid in 5ths; 300 at a time; in all 80,000 fr.

<sup>96</sup> This is now the Chapel of the Resurrection built between 1866-1868 by his successor Fr Chirou from the design of Fr Pailloux SJ and decorated by Br Jean-Marie Pujol SCJ. The statue of Christ is by Fabisch who made the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes in the Grotto from St Bernadette's description.

<sup>97</sup> Sister Zepherine-Saint-Blaise born at Emmanuelle Penin at Ossun (H-P), in 1821 entered the novitiate of the Daughters of the Cross presented by Saint Michael Garicoits. Before doing this, see letter 392, she was sent to help the new community at Colomiers. She remained there until 1847: she then became the mistress of novices at La Puye, then superior of the house at Chinon, Rome, Paris: in 1873 she became a member of the general administration and died at La Puye in 1875. With sister Saint Jerome she benefited from the friendship and advice of Saint Michael Garicoits. See letters 32, 50, 107, 114, 134, 237, 3 to 3, 360, 392.

<sup>98</sup> Lk 1:46-47

<sup>99</sup> Dieu tient son regard arrete sur vous... Following the French School of Spirituality St Michael used the word 'regard' as meaning 'rayon de grace'; grace being like a ray of light resting on someone.

<sup>100</sup> Residence of the Sisters near Toulouse where St Michael made a canonical visit on Sept 1839 and visited from time to time as extraordinary confessor.

<sup>101</sup> See L 22

<sup>102</sup> Sr Zebine born Jeanne Frechou, 19th September 1820 at Bagnere de Bigorre entered the Daughters of the Cross 1st September 1839, died at Igon 9th April 1875.

<sup>103</sup> Sr Zephirin Sainte Blaise. See letter 31. St Michael in order to save time wrote his reply between the lines of a letter (See letters 371, 462) or on another piece of paper numbering it with the same numbers on their letter as he seems to have done here. See letters 46, 59, 113.

<sup>104</sup> Brouillamini d'impressions is a coined word which seems to imply tiny foggy hazy.

<sup>105</sup> This letter is in the archives of the Brothers of Christian Instruction Jersey. Further correspondence followed this letter but has not been found. J-M de la Mennais 1780 born at St Malo, ordained priest 1804, V G of Diocese of St Brieuc and founder of the Brothers of Christian Instruction, died at Ploermel in 1860.

<sup>106</sup> The Headmaster of the Municipal College at St Palais, M Segalas, had already written asking for information concerning the conditions for admission to the Order and the possibility of them coming to the Basque Country.

<sup>107</sup> It is said that St Michael had the idea for Brothers from the Capuchins who took refuge for 2 years in Betharram from persecution in Spain in 1835. They had a strong contingent of Brothers who freely provided valuable material help in their Community. In time St Michael replaced the lay domestics with Brothers and also associated them with the apostolate. The community doubled. At his death there were 90 Brothers and 107 Priests. From 1837 he added education to missions. but he did not want schools to affect the work of the Missions. He trained some brothers as supervisors, others as teachers. Many generations of young in France and South America witnessed the dedication and holiness of these men. St Michael kept a balance between the needs of the mission and the schools. Many were skilled in trades and crafts. St Michael encouraged them in their skills. Around him were farmers, gardeners, builders, millers, bakers, cooks, confectioners, masons, carpenters, cabinet makers, cobblers, weavers, tailors. The young were apprenticed to these brothers who gave a Christian formation in those irreligious times. St Michael wanted to set up technical and agricultural centres, the peasant families were only too pleased to send their children to his schools. These brothers passed on their skills and formed their souls. Helped by Fr Cassou, St Michael created a community of brothers distinct from the priests, intended to be 2 Societies. He bought the Farm of St Marie for them. They had their Superior, their organizers, their rule of life, times of prayer, a recreation room at the foot of the Chapel of St Louis, a common room, and a library. They were divided into 4 groups; 1 those in temporary vows, 2 the professed, 3 those in the schools as supervisors, 4 those who lived and worked like the brothers.(convers)

<sup>108</sup> After 2 years noviciate they took the 3 vows and became(Coadjuteur Approuve) temporary professed brothers,. St Michael made it easy to reach this stage, but he was more exacting in admitting them to full profession(Coadjuteur Forme); it needed 10 years probation and over 30 years of age. The Supervisors(regents) wore a large black gown(redingote) and were addressed as Mr with their surname. The 4th category wore a smock and were addressed as Mr with their first name.eg Monsieur Pujo, Arabehere, and Monsieur Marthe (regents). Br Jerome, Br Marc and Leonide... (professed brothers). Some were revered as saints. e.g. Br Alphonse Rodriguez

<sup>109</sup> The Brothers of Christian Schools were attached to the University of France by an imperial decree in 1808 which exempted them from military service. The Law of 9 July 1845 exempted all Religious Orders from military service but the Society of the Sacred Heart was not at that time legally recognised. To benefit from this exemption, St Michael was trying to affiliate them to the Christian Brothers.

<sup>110</sup> This letter seems to be addressed to a postulant who became ill and was living outside the convent.

<sup>111</sup> Her fellow Sisters

<sup>112</sup> Sr Sophie born Marie Gaye at Saint-Pé-de-Bigorre admitted to the Daughters of the Cross the 21 October 1838, died at La Puye 30 November 1884.

<sup>113</sup> Canon Eugene Segalas 1806 to 1851 rector of the major seminary of Bayonne then was appointed Superior of the Municipal College of Sainte Palais. He noticed certain priests going into the parish and then enrolling themselves in the community of Betharram. He appealed to Saint Michael Garicoits the one responsible about this.

Michael Garicoits was a little like Saint Bernard, the terror of parents. Was he not responsible for the two daughters of Bernard Peyrounat, and three of Monsieur Camus' daughters, the chemist at Nay becoming nuns, three of the son's of Monsieur Dupont of Nay becoming priests, and from members of the Souverbielle family of Coarraze, the eldest son entering Betharram and five of his sisters entering the Daughters of the Cross.

The young George Higuere was an example of this. He was born in 1822, entered the noviciate in 1845 was ordained in 1847 in May and professed in August. died at 70 in 1892. St Michael decided his future on 2 occasions. It began when he was at the junior seminary of Oloron. During a recreation period he saw a priest he had not seen before. 'There's Fr Garicoits. He's a saint,' said someone. After his tonsure he with a friend went on pilgrimage to Betharram. They met St Michael in the confessional. After Mass and communion he welcomed them and invited them for a meal. He served them lunch; such kindness greatly impressed them. Sometime after St Michael celebrated Mass at the major seminary. The students were struck by his holiness and recollection as was George Higuere, a subdeacon, more so than the rest.

He sought an interview which he obtained after lunch and expressed a desire to enter the Society of the Sacred Heart. 'I will speak to the Bishop,' said St Michael, And I will write to you presently.' During the holidays George with the Bishop's approval entered the Society at Betharram. During his noviciate, he became seriously ill. His brother took him to the Spa at Eaux-Bonnes. Two prominent doctors declared that he was unfit for the monastic life. The family consulted their Parish Priest who said; 'You are not cut out to be at Betharram.'

<sup>114</sup> His parents were pleased with these opinions and even George was not opposed to them. But before taking a decision, he felt that he must write to Betharram. St Michael replied with this letter. When he read it, he reviewed his situation and without listening to the disapproval of the family, the advice of the Parish Priest, he returned to Betharram. He expected to be reproached by St Michael but he welcomed him with charity and understanding as the Father welcoming the prodigal son as he himself said. He refound his vocation and would never leave again. He became one of the most respected missionaries of the Bearn; 'the apostle of the Bearn...' for 40 years of missions, preaching and saving souls

The end drew near when he fell at the foot of the altar at Montaut when preaching at Adoration. His strength left him. "I thank God that he has given me time to prepare for death." Up to his last breath he had his rosary in his hands and ask forgiveness for any hastiness and rigour with sinners. To the Bishop who visited him he said; "Monsignor, embrace a dying man."



<sup>115</sup> "Our Lord has come to teach us to please his Father by accomplishing his will." *ibid* page 109. Such ideas and sentiments give rise to deeds; "the heart will not be able to will, or know how to live, fight, love and act except in union with Our Lord Jesus Christ." Letter 390 St Michael returned continually to this theme. He expresses this wish: "May the spirit of Our Lord Jesus Christ reign in your hearts for ever." Letter 100. He made this prayer: "My God, give us that spirit of your Divine Son Our Lord Jesus Christ." Letter 163. "Animated by this divine spirit you will be holy." Letter 88. It is his greatest desire: "I have each day a fervent desire... but the most ardent of all is that you never live for yourself but for Jesus who lives in you." Letter 43. "May the spirit of Our Lord Jesus Christ be the soul of our souls always." letter 69. Living by this spirit raises our life to the life of God. "Animated by this divine spirit you will become divine." letter 88. The spirituality of Saint Michael Garicoits is that of the French school of spirituality which tends to realise the union of a Christian with that of Christ. It is attached to the interior life of Christ, to the spirit of Our Lord Jesus Christ who animates and gives life to our souls. It is the ardent desire of Our Lord Jesus Christ that we are animated by the sentiments of his heart. (Spiritual Doctrine page 51).

<sup>116</sup> Sr Tacien, Justine Cazeaux born at Ossun (HP) 16th October 1820, entered the Daughters of the Cross around 1845, died at Igon 11th of August 1886.

She owed her vocation to Saint Michael. She wanted for a long time to be a Daughter of the Cross, but her mother wouldn't give her consent. Towards 1843 Justine made a pilgrimage to Betharram. She found Fr Garicoits in his confessional and spoke to him about her desire while informing him of her mother's opposition. The mother also went to see St Michael and through his counsel changed her mind. *Summ* page 389.

<sup>117</sup> Mgr Francois Lacroix born at Entraygues(Aveyron) 16th of November 1793, a member of the Society of St Sulpice, successively professor at the major seminary of Toulouse and at St Sulpice, Superior of the Seminary at Rodez, appointed Bishop of Bayonne 10th of August 1837, consecrated on the 22nd of April 1838. After 40 years as the Bishop he retired in 1878 and died at Bayonne on the 11th of October 1882. His tomb is found in the chapel of the Cathedral of Bayonne. At first he was against the work of Saint Michael and tried to withdraw him from Betharram by appointing him rector of the Seminary at Bayonne: this did not come about. Then he tried to replace his community by creating at Oloron, The Society of Higher Studies which was not successful. After this failure, his relationship with Betharram became more favourable but he never accepted the ideal of the founder of community life bound by permanent religious vows. Besides missions he put them in charge of the Parish of Lestelle in 1846, the Chapel of St Louis at Pau and the Sanctuary of Sarrance in 1851, the work of St Croix in 1855 at Oloron and that of Our Lady of Refuge in 1868, the primary school at Orthez in 1849 and that of Asson in 1851, the College of St Francis at Mauleon in 1849, Moncade at Orthez in 1850 and the Minor Seminary at Oloron in 1855; then the Mission in South America in 1856.

<sup>118</sup> Canon Paleres remained at Betharram and died there in 1847. This canon made a gift to the sanctuary of Betharram of a marble altar dedicated to our Lady of Compassion.

<sup>119</sup> The bishopric of Barbastro which was suppressed by the concordat of 1851 and joined to that of Huesca had been re-established then. Monsignor Jayme Fort y Puig who occupied the see from 1832 to 1846 was exiled in France and lived at first in Pau. He wished to retire to Betharram which didn't seem ideal to Monsignor d'Arbou as indicated in this letter to Fr Darbelit, archpriest of Saint Martin. "I ask you to give my respects to the Bishop of Barbastro for contacting me. You may tell him that he can use his powers in accord with Canon Law that he deems necessary. I ask him to wear his purple cassock throughout my diocese. The house of Betharram would certainly be at his disposition if he wished to stay there; but I ought to point out that this venerable prelate will be certainly unwell in that house. You may warn him to expect some ailments as at his age he has need of care which you will not find there in spite of the goodwill of these gentlemen. You know that it is an isolated place where he will not have the necessary amenities in these circumstances..."

<sup>120</sup> The council consisting of the Saint Michael, the Superior, Fr Cassou, Assistant and Fathers Guimon and Chirou, Councillors had already decided on the admission of the Canon in a meeting on the 9th of May 1846. "His great merit, his devotion to his Bishop, his former position, his fervent piety urge us to make him an exception." The Canon died soon after on April the 10th 1847 and was buried in the chapel of the Resurrection. St Michael told the Bishop of Barbastro about this, he replied. "With tears and a sad heart I read your letter on the death of my dear secretary and companion in exile.. Words will not express my gratitude to yourself and your community for the care you have shown to my dear secretary during his long illness and in the last days of his life. May God reward you." St Michael's letter to the Bishop is no longer in the archives; presumably destroyed during the Civil War in 1936 to 1939

He chose him as his director and confessor affirming that he possessed the integrity to enlighten him in his pastoral duties. He mentioned one situation which he spoke to St Michael about: "if I speak strictly as a confessor must, I risk being shot." St Michael replied: "let them shoot you".

<sup>121</sup> Jean Pujoulet born at Lannusse (BP) 16th April 1800, ordained 22 December 1829, served at Lasclaveries from 15 February 1832, at Asson 14th of July 1835, Dean of Coarraze. After several attempts to persuade his bishops, entered the Society in 1863, became a missionary and Superior of the House in Pau. Died at Betharram in 1884. During the time he was at Asson he wrote to join Saint Michael and his community. To one of his requests Monsignor d'Arbou replied 20th June 1837: "I haven't forgotten your wish that you expressed to me on several occasions... but it appears that God must manifest vocations by giving those he calls a more than ordinary facility for the ministry of mission, which I do not believe you have. Divine providence does not call you to this work." In the hope that he would forget this idea, the Bishop moved him far away to Theze to help the Dean, M Fanget, with these recommendations: "The priests at Betharram are holy and wise men: I have no doubt that you have found in their advice new reasons to go where were the glory of God calls you.." Bishop d'Arbou left the diocese without giving him permission to enter the society of the Sacred Heart. His successor had no reason to change it. He was promoted parish priest and Dean of Coarraze. He had excellent relations with Saint Michael and confided in him unreservedly. "You may not have the infallibility that you would get from God and his angels; but on earth you cannot have a more sure guide than Michael Garicoits."

<sup>122</sup> see letter 15

<sup>123</sup> Jean-Pierre Belloq born 4th June 1808 at Benejacq(B-P) pupil of St Michael at the major seminary of Betharram, ordained 24th May 1834, curate at Labastide-Villefranche, in January 1835 at Lestelle, entered the Society in 1840, Chaplain to the School, spiritual director to the Minor Seminary at Oloron(1863-64), Chaplain to the Sanctuary of Our Lady at Sarrance 1882-86. Died on 8th March 1892.

He was an excellent liturgist. Saint Michael appointed him to oversee how members kept to the rubrics. Infractions were marked in his notebook which he gave an account of to the founder. He was the first chaplain to Notre Dame. In this capacity he was confessor to the pupils and each morning at 5.30 he celebrated Mass in the community. As a confessor of the priests he sometimes imposed as a penance reading 20 pages of Bourdaloue.

"this venerable priest was not only a model of regularity but the living rule itself. Always praying or studying, pen in hand or speaking about the things of God, hard on his own body, but wanting always to be kind... it was by the practice of heroic virtue that this Father will have achieved his reward," read obituary from the Religious Bulletin of Bayonne.

<sup>124</sup> See letter 278.

<sup>125</sup> See letter 305.

<sup>126</sup> From a well known family in Coarraze. One member was Lord Mayor and a friend of St Michael. At the presbytery where he'd stopped on his return from his last visit to Bishop Monsignor Lacroix at Mirepaix, where he called on the Dean, Fr Marchan. On parting on the evening of the 13th of May with the words: Ad multos annos In Coarraze the good Dean had taken root, but in his soul there was this urge towards a life of perfection in the religious life. But his body habituated to easier ways delayed the decision. He finally took the advice of his director. "I wish and I do not wish to enter Betharram. Then I am good for nothing, neither in preaching nor other things. And yet I desire to enter Betharram. Let us do one thing I will put myself behind the door of Betharram. You can close it and I will stay there."

"No, replied Saint Michael categorically: no, you must want it." And that was the situation for more than 10 years.

<sup>127</sup> She had just been recalled to the Mother House at La Puye. See letter 59

<sup>128</sup> With a generous mind and a willing spirit. 2 Mac 13 Here we note some very important reflections of St Michael on obedience...

<sup>129</sup> Sr Madeleine born Madeleine Moreau. See letter 105.

<sup>130</sup> Vincent Terrason born 25th of May 1813 at Saint Geneste(Vienne) ordained 27th of May 1836, entered the Oblates of Saint Hilaire, 1842 to 1850 chaplain to the Daughters of the Cross at La Puye, entered the Vincentians in Paris 12th September 1858, rector of their Major Seminary of Chalons-sur Marne in 1862, Superior in Tours in 1865, of Notre Dame de Lorette (Gironde) in 1871, of the Berceau de Saint Vincent de Paul(Landes) in 1872, of the Major Seminary of Amiens in 1874, recalled to Paris where he was made Assistant General in 1875 and General Secretary in 1883; died in Paris 6 April 1896. It was while giving retreats at Igon that he met Saint Michael Garicoits. He would be a witness at the process of his beatification.

<sup>131</sup> St Basil of Caesarea 36.

<sup>132</sup> Pun on his first name.

<sup>133</sup> Prayer and action are the two springs of spiritual dynamism in the thoughts and life of St Michael Garicoits. See letter 242, 253 etc. and in the spiritual doctrine pray in fact page 180.