



*"Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death will have no power over him anymore." (Romans 6,9)*

*My brothers, having delivered himself to a most shameful death, on the third day Jesus appeared in the midst of mankind, conqueror of death:*

*- To make us inherit blessed immortality;*

*- To give us the hope that one day we'll rise too like Him.*

*But if we want to rise in glory like Jesus, then our spiritual resurrection, our resurrection in the life of grace, in a word, our conversion must be like Christ's resurrection. Since Jesus Christ having risen from the dead cannot die again, so too having been totally converted from sin and the slavery of Satan, we must be totally converted so as not to fall again into a state of grievous sin. Sin must never again strike a deadly blow against our souls.*

*My brothers, such is the fruit which Jesus Christ wants men to retain from his resurrection as we wait to be associated with his glory. It is only on that condition that we can hope to reign with him in Heaven. (M 598)*

*May the Risen Lord foster our joy!*

*Happy Easter!*



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BETHARRAM

92  
2014

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NE

NOUVELLES EN FAMILLE  
NOTICIAS EN FAMILIA  
NOTIZIE IN FAMIGLIA  
FAMILY NEWS

News bulletin of the Congregation  
of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram

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## A WORD FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

### Insulted he did not retaliate with insults

The canticle for the second Vespers for the Sundays in Lent invites us to reflect on the Word of God in 1 Peter 2, 21-24 instead of the canticle of the Wedding feast of the Lamb:

*"This, in fact, is what you were called to do, because Christ suffered for you and left an example for you to follow in his steps. He had done nothing wrong, and had spoken no deceit. He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when he was suffering he made no threats but put his trust in the upright judge. He was bearing our sins in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our sins and live for uprightness; through his bruises you have been healed."*

Jesus therefore assumes our sin in the heart of his humiliation, without ever deflecting from fidelity to the Father. Self sacrifice is one of his most original qualities. Did he not say: *"Take up my yoke; become my disciples, for I am meek and humble of heart and you will have rest."* (Matt 11,29)

Jesus is meek because he is neither violent nor aggressive. When faced with an insult he doesn't give way to movements of revenge which is normally what we do.

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On the contrary, he accepts humiliations making him look to be a loser. In truth, forgiving looks like that: accepting to lose face so as to put an end to the spiral of violence. He who fights evil with evil will only reap more evil. Evil can only be overcome by goodness. In our daily lives we are both victim and torturer. Trying and at all costs to be right doesn't help us to lead fraternal and peaceful lives. Relying on our rights we make life a hell, shutting ourselves in and becoming a nuisance for others. It then becomes necessary for someone to break this spiral of violence, someone ready to lose to the point of giving up his rights.

There are those who think that forgiving means forgetting, and since they cannot forget they come to the conclusion that it is impossible to forgive. It is impossible to forget a personal insult. To forgive is something much bigger and more difficult than to forget. Without meaning to forget, to forgive will always mean being able to avoid dwelling on the wound of a humili-

ation, by overcoming it by renouncing vengeance which simply means rendering evil for evil and only wishing him well. This is the love for enemies which Jesus asks of us in his Sermon on the Mountain:

*"I say this to you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he causes his sun to rise on the bad as well as the good, and sends down rain to fall on the upright and the wicked alike."* (Matt. 5, 43 – 45)

The father of the two sons in the parable is also a gentle soul; he accepts the loss of his rights so as to respect the dignity of his sons (Luke 15, 11 ff) who have no respect for their father's dignity. « *As Thomas Aquinas states in a similar situation mercy is the greatest of all the virtues: taken on its own mercy is the greatest of all the virtues, for it has the right to give to others and to ease their needs. Consequently to be merciful is considered to be an attribute of God and this is the means whereby his power is manifested.* » (Evangelii Gaudium, 17 and note 41)

He who does his Father's will can afford to be good to his brother. He can present himself before God without looking for special privileges. The man who is gentle can face others disarmed, defenceless, and vulnerable. He is not like someone looking for his rights, more like someone ready to renounce his rights. Such a willingness to give way is evidence of an unknown and mysterious power. It's like that of the young man wanting to shoulder his brother's burden, who accepts the tasks



16	Happy birthday	Fr. Chanchai Temaroonrung
17	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Mario Sosa
20	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Gaspar Fernández P. José Rovegno
21	Buon compleanno	P. Pietro Villa
23	Buon compleanno	P. Simone Panzeri
2	Happy birthday	Br. Thinakorn Damrongusasin
3	Buon compleanno	P. Ernesto Colli
4	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Elie Kurzum
5	Buon compleanno	P. Antonio Canavesi
7	Happy birthday	Br. Jose Kumar Johnrose
9	10 years of profession	Brs George Anthonyswamy, Thinakorn Martin de Tours Damrongusasin, Yesudas Kutappassery, Jesuraj Mariadas, Peter Nonthaphat Mayoe
10	Feliz aniversario Buon compleanno Happy birthday	P. José Mirande P. Guido Pradella Fr. Shaju Kalappurackal
11	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Guido Eugenio García
12	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Pierre Leborgne

APRIL

MAY

Charism of our Founder St. Michael Garicoits in our parishes. They meet regularly once in a month and come together to celebrate our patronal feast days of our congregation in designated parishes. We have formed a spirituality group looking forward to the future, by aiming to share something of the Spirituality of the Sacred Heart Fathers and Brothers with the people. Last year, the group animated two parish retreats, one within the Friary Parish and another one within the Archdiocese of Birmingham. During the forthcoming year we hope to lead and develop days of retreat/recollection for staff and students within the schools where

we minister as chaplains, we held our first day last year. Mission appeals in different parishes in the United Kingdom have allowed us to raise money to support missions in India and Thailand. These are the occasions to speak to the congregation in the church about our work and also make the invitation to help and support young people in relation to vocations.

Finally, remembering the words of our founder that our presence would reflect, it is God who wants us, commands us and sends us. "Blessed be God. En Avant ; go forward always, with patience and joy. Come what God may want."



*The one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness. (2 Cor 9, 10)*

that no one else wants. There is a particular task belonging to the gentle: the ability to see what is good in his neighbour. (Phil 2, 3; Rom 12,19) even when the neighbour turns out to be arrogant, hostile, hoping that he will improve, even if it's only a glimmer! The gentle individual doesn't try to cause the downfall of someone weakened by his own violence, even if he will suffer unfavourable consequences and drink the chalice down to the dregs. He will take patience, accept the situation and bite the dust if needs be, despite all that keep his calm. Gentleness is the fundamental attitude for a calm dialogue.

All this requires a genuine discernment so as to know when to speak and when to be silent. Jesus remained silent while the others were speaking as we can see him in his Passion. Speaking is not always the ideal no more than to be silent. We must speak or be silent through fidelity to the truth and to love which is seeking the good of others, and not simply our own good. How are we to speak the truth if it means humiliating the neighbour? To speak when I am not in control of myself or when the other is not in a fit state to listen would be a denial of the truth or make use of it for my own selfish ends. To remain silent when I am in a fit state to speak and the other ready to listen, would be a cowardly action depriving him of something good which only my words would get him. It is a good thing to speak out accepting the possible consequences if the other person refuses what I am saying. It is the price of such misunderstanding that Jesus has been persecuted, condemned and finally crucified. Truth reigns supreme and cannot be cancelled. That is the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ

from the dead by his Father.

Jesus, meek and humble, appears to be aggressive in the Gospels when he drives the merchants out of the Temple or when he denounces the hypocrisy of the Pharisees (Mat 23, 1-36) "Then, grieved to find them so obstinate, he looked angrily round at them, and said to the man 'Stretch out your hand' He stretched out his hand and his hand was better." (Mark 3,1-5) The disciple, meek and humble like his master, if he is not like a prophet who humiliates and covers with shame, knows how to be frank and upright when needs be. He doesn't look to results, he doesn't try to appear good but treats violence with the gentle energy of mercy.

St Michael Garicoits says that mercy is the trade mark of Our Lord distinguishing him from Elias or John the Baptist. They were both full of the spirit of rigour, pain and punishment. John the Baptist was well equipped for severely correcting sinners. Whereas Our Lord had a spirit of mercy, humility and goodness which didn't inflict punishments; on the contrary he encouraged those who wished to imitate him. Pope Francis, quoting Benedict XVI says that the Church doesn't grow through proselytism but by attraction. (E. G. 14.)

Article 9 of our Rule of Life is convinced that mercy is part of the Betharramite style of our mission: Her mission continues the action of the Heart of Christ, the Incarnate Word, offering Himself to the Father to accomplish his will of salvation: to reveal to the people of our time the compassion, mercy and the loving face of God the Father.

Gaspar Fernández Pérez, scj

## New horizons: Northeast of Minas in Brazil

AFTER A TIME OF DISCERNMENT IN COMMUNITY GATHERINGS OF THE BETHARRAMITE VICARIATE OF BRAZIL AND APPROVED BY THE REGIONAL COUNCIL, A NEW MISSION FRONT HAS OPENED AD EXPERIMENTUM AT SETUBINHA IN TEÓFILO OTONI DIOCESE, NORTHEAST OF MINAS GERAIS.

Setubinha is one of the poorest areas in the state of Minas Gerais. The municipality was created here less than 20 years ago in a country area: a third of the population lives in the town; the rest in the countryside, in 25 dispersed settlements marked by poverty. In early January 2013, Fr. Eder, while still a deacon, and Father Paulo César Pinto visited a young person there who was thinking of a vocation. The Bishop, a former assistant in Belo Horizonte, learned of their journey to Setubinha. To a colleague he confided how difficult it was to send a priest there: few are willing; and the place is remote, poor, with many settlements ...



Little house in the countryside and chapel of the Divine Holy Spirit

In February the vicariate assembly listened to their report and began a discernment. Two religious, Bro. Juan Pablo and Fr. César Paulo Pinto, were sent there for Holy Week. They spent a night at the house of the Bishop, Aloisio Jorge Pena Vitral, who gave them a fraternal welcome and a presentation of the situation. Then they spent a week at Setubinha with Father Ageney, the parish administrator .

At the same time, Bishop Aloisio again visited the regional seminary of Belo Horizonte, he shared the concerns and hopes of his Diocese of Teófilo Otoni . In July, the vicariate discussed the project . All religious were consulted and listened to – in person or by letters and e-mails - the majority responded favorably to the call of the bishop and the people of Setubinha .

On 26 August 2013, the Regional Superior, his Vicar, Father Chiquinho, (then a deacon), and Father Paulo César went to Setubinha. They stopped at Teófilo Otoni for lunch with Bishop Aloisio : an opportunity to restate their respective hopes for the Mission .

with Father Wilfred Perepadan scj

Its Present  
and its future...

It really is a pleasure to note down the present life of the English Vicariate. In the last few years, the face of the Vicariate has changed. On the whole I feel the Vicariate is in good health. I feel our presence (15 of us) in five pastoral areas of the Arch Diocese of Birmingham is fruitful. Betharram Fathers and Brothers here in England may feel we are a small community of religious. Our Founder St. Michael Garicoits retorts this humbleness in this way "We must realise that God is the author of the society and has preserved it. He governs it. 'The Lord is my shepherd' (Ps 22:1), and He will continue to preserve it. This hope must be the immovable rock on which we must set ourselves up and face up to all trials." Seeing in this regard, this hope in our lives here inspires us to listen to the author, the interior master. In this way placing ourselves to hear His voice and initiate His guidance to have right thoughts to put them into practice. As a result, we are trying to respond in a Betharramite way to the needs of the Church at the present day. We are very much integrated with our parish ministry and ministry to young people. Thanks to

the Chaplaincy work of our Brothers to the local Catholic Schools.

The atmosphere in our Vicariate is truly welcoming and brotherly. We have now been blessed with young priests, two from India and one from Thailand. They have fully immersed with the life and mission of the English Vicariate. We are grateful to the Vicariates of Thailand and India for their support.

Overall, the parish ministry here in the Birmingham Archdiocese seems to prosper and the credit must be given to the missionary and pastoral zeal shown by our Fathers and Brothers in this regard. Lay companions of Betharram are actively sharing our spirituality and



# THE ELEVEN VICARIATES OF THE CONGREGATION

## Vicariate of England

### its roots



The Betharramite presence in England arose in the context of the expulsion of religious from France. It results from a decision of the Congregation which at the 1903 General Chapter held in Irun in Spain, opted for a foundation in a new country. Three reasons led to the foundation in England: the hope of St Michel, who according to the witness of Fr Casedepax, had expressed a desire to do something for England; the opportunity to prepare English teachers for colleges in Europe and America; the certainty of finding a safe location, with a stable government which wasn't anti-clerical, away from the dangers that threatened the Church and the Congregation in France .

At the end of the Chapter, Fr Abel Costedoat was entrusted with caring for the new foundation . He arrived in London November 7, 1903. He was responsible for the beginnings of the Betharramite English mission, with the founding of small communities for spiritual accompaniment of female religious communities and assistant priests . Thus were born missionary centres at Woodchester, Bicester, Princes-thorpe, Leamington, Moreton Paddox, Monk's Kirby ( Newnham Paddox) Cleobury Mortimer (Mawley) , Banbury and finally Droitwich, where in 1908 , at the request of the Congregation Bishop of Birmingham entrusted to Betharram, not a work already in place, but the foundation of a new Catholic parish. At Droitwich, the religious Betharram would run the parish, the Apostolic School , and later, the Sacred Heart College. In addition, from the beginning, they welcomed young people to learn about religious life: the first English Betharramites were Fr Eric Robert Basey and Bro. John F. Griffin who died prematurely in 1918.

It was only with the division of the Congregation into Provinces in 1947 and the birth of the Vice Province of England that the English work began to develop. It was at this time that communities were founded for the training of seminarians Fritham, Caerdon, then Farchynys and Sambourne. The Droitwich college however absorbed most of the resources of the vice- province and long remained the only English Betharramite activity. From the 70s, communities responsible for pastoral care in parishes were opened at Bridgemary, Worcester, Lee -on-Solent, Guernsey and Alderney, and finally Olton and Great Barr.

In the 90s, the English communities have become an essential element for the development of the work of Betharram in India. Finally, the new administrative division of the Congregation led to the creation of the Blessed Mary of Jesus Crucified Region, comprising the three vicariates England, India and Thailand, where ongoing exchange of resources and personnel will promote the growth and affirmation of the work of St. Michel in these countries.

Roberto Cornara



Meeting of coordinators of rural communities

Father Ageney accompanied the group to Setubinha. The next day, he visited the communities nearest to the town, while fathers Mauro and Gustavo returned to Belo Horizonte.

At the request of Bishop Aloisio, Father Ageney stayed the whole of September, a time to get acquainted with the communities.

During this period, Chiquinho was ordained priest in his hometown, Conceição do Rio Verde, by his compatriot Guilherme Porto, Bishop of Sete Lagoas - MG .

Then came the time to prepare for National Youth Day in early November. Taking part were Brothers Davi, Eudes and Jeferson as well as some young Betharramite lay associates from Belo Horizonte, Sabara and Passa Quatro: more than 500 young people between 15 and 25 years old took part.

Now comes the challenge of organizing and training this large group. At the start of this year, the priests held meetings with pastoral groups and associations, listen to them, and with them plan activities for the year (beginning in February).

*"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers."* Already young people are affected by the witness of religious life: they require attention and accompaniment along the path of vocation. Still in preparation is the Mission of the Brazil Vicariate to Setubinha . We hope to gather a hundred missionaries from Belo Horizonte, Sabara , Passa Quatro , Conceição do Rio Verde, and São Paulo Paulínia .

Paulo Cesar Pinto scj

## EXPERIENCES

### Recollection of the scj laity of England

#### HUMILITY AND COMPASSION: TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN?

For several years now we have held our annual SCJ Companion's Day of Recollection at Widney Manor, a Columban property in Knowle. For the same number of years we have had a visiting speaker to lead the day. This year things were different – due to unforeseen circumstances Widney Manor became unavailable and the visiting speaker was prevented from joining us because of illness. The short straw fell on Father Austin to lead the day on home ground in the library at The Olton Friary. Perhaps we should have been more compassionate towards him. Do I detect some of God's humour in this arrangement?

The day started well with about 40 people arriving at Olton laden with a wonderful assortment of food for a shared lunch. SCJ Priests, Brothers and Companions came from the SCJ parishes at Olton, Balsall Heath, Great Barr, Droitwich, Leigh and Whitnash. They greeted each other warmly and enjoyed refreshments before taking their places in a large circle to start the day's reflection. It was good to leave cares and concerns behind and look forward to a day of prayer, hope, friendship and inspiration.

Father Austin started by informing us that he intended to cover two areas of love which Jesus expressed, that of COMPASSION and that of HUMOUR. We began by focussing our thoughts on our need for companionship as members of family, community, church, etc. and the importance of living in community with others.



We must make allowances for the fact that none of us is perfect. We are all flawed and we must accept traits in others. We do not know people's life stories and we should not judge them. However, it is necessary to make snap judgements as we go through life, but in doing this we must show compassion. We are all needy people. The letters of St Michael are full of compassion – he referred to people as 'sheep without a shepherd' – but his love was not just sentimental. He would confront people with the consequences of their actions. Sometimes it was necessary to show 'tough love'. He was very firm but communicated love. This is the love that emanates from the Sacred Heart – compassionate love that

Pope Francis was led by Fr Angel Perez, a Clar-etian; two more items were on the agenda: evaluation of the project of the Vicariate, and election of Delegates to the regional Chapter to be held in July this year in Paraguay.

#### Ordination to Deaconate

▶ Saturday, March 15, in Puente Remanso, during a Eucharistic celebration presided by Mgr Ignacio Gogorza SCJ, Bishop of Encarnación, Br Osmar Cáceres Spaini SCJ was ordained as a deacon. Let us share the joy of the Church and of our Betharramite family.



## Region



### India

**St Michael Garicoits in India** ▶ The Community of Shobhana Shaakha (Bangalore) keeps on carrying the relics of our Founder in different communities to expose them for public veneration and to make the spirituality of St Michael known. The relics of St Michael Garicoits, were even taken to Arunachal Pradesh (North India) where Fr Shaju is doing his mission. The veneration of the relics is always proposed for the spiritual nourishment of the faithful.

## NOTICES FROM THE GENERAL COUNCIL

### Decisions of the Superior General and his Council

- The Superior General, with the consent of his Council gathered on March 25 and April 4, presents **to the minister of priesthood the Daecons Rojo Thomas Kaviyil, George Anthonyswamy, Yesudas Antony Kuttappasseril, Jesuraj Mariadas** and to the minister of diaconate **the Brs Sathish Paul Raj Joseph and Jude Daniel Vijay** of the Vicariate of India;



Dn. George



Dn. Rojo



Dn. Yesudas



Dn. Jesuraj



Br. Sathish



Br. Jude

- The Congregation of the Religious (CIVCSVA) granted to **Br. Andrew Athit Niyomtham** (Vicariate of Thailand) the **indult for leaving our Congregation**;
- The Superior General, with the consent of his Council granted to **Fr. Jair Pereira da Silva** (Vicariate of Brazil) a **3-years time of exlaustration** in the diocese of Montes Claros.

### Our departed

On Saturday, March 29, **Mr Thomas Boyle**, 87 years, brother of Fr Brian Boyle scj, passed away. Please let's hold Fr. Brian and his family in our humble prayers during this sad time.

## BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CONGREGATION

### Region



#### Holy Land

**1-2 April** ► The Vicariate Assembly was held in Zarqa with the participation of Fr Gaspar Fernandez Perez SCJ, Superior General, and Fr Jean-Luc Morin SCJ, Regional Superior. Exchanges and sharing helped the religious to draw the picture of the situation of our presence and to foresee the future of Betharram in this part of the world so rich in human and spiritual values.

**Solidarity** ► Thursday, March 27, a fund-raising event was held in the evening by the parish in favor of the poor. This event was attended by people coming from Zarqa and nearby areas. All enjoyed games, auction sales and raffle.

### Region



#### Argentina-Uruguay

**1-2 aprile** ► The religious of the Vicariate held their annual meeting at Adrogué with the presence of the religious who are missionaries in Uruguay; they reflected together on the spirituality of the "Flying Camp": "The unit which continues to fight" (see *Evangelii Gaudium*, 96). They also elected the delegates to the next Regional Chapter and gave their contribution to the reflection based on the guidelines proposed by the Region during the last three years. The meeting was capped off with the celebration of the 44th birthday of Fr Daniel González scj. The Regional Vicar

was touched and thanked the community for the gift of a thermos flask for drinking *mate* (similar to the one received by Pope Francis at the beginning of his pontificate): a fruitful meeting, with a ... "rioplatense" taste.

#### Brazil

##### Youth meeting

► Every second Sunday of the month Fr Aurelio Riva scj calls a meeting for young people from all communities of the Parish of Our Lady of Betharram, Paulinia, for an evening of conviviality. As soon as they came to know about the initiative through facebook, the youth of Vila Matilde (San Paolo) decided to participate. On March 9, they had an opportunity to spend a great evening: they met new friends and brothers and reflected on the topic: "Christ set us free, so that we remain free" (Gal 5:1). From here came the idea - welcomed with joy by everyone - to make a youth camp at Paulinia on the occasion of the closure of the Jubilee Year of St. Michael, in the month of May. We pray that the young people we minister may be more and more at the service of the Church.



#### Paraguay

**24-25 March in Lambaré** ► The religious of the Vicariate gathered at the retreat house of "Our Lady of Betharram" for their Assembly. 16 religious were present under the guidance of the Regional Superior, Fr Gustavo Agin scj. The Assembly was marked by several events: the keynote speech was delivered by Fr Javier Irala, Regional Vicar; a reflection on the Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Gaudium" by

flows from the Father through the Son. This is the emphasis of the Betharamites understanding of the love of Jesus in the Sacred Heart as opposed to others who interpret the Sacred Heart primarily as a means of reparation for sin. It was noted that Michael Garicoits did not leave us with any books, only letters, and therefore the Betharamite charism has been passed down through the generations mainly through example.

Over lunch we were able to chat to members from other parishes whilst enjoying the delightful meal that was set before us. This meeting up with Companions from other areas is a valued part of our Recollection days.

In the afternoon we considered the humour of God with reference to the Old and New Testaments. The psalms give us insight into God's humour – Ps 2:4 'The One enthroned in heaven laughs'; Ps 37:13 '...but the Lord laughs at the wicked? Num 22:28 ... 'Yahweh opened the mouth of the donkey ... ' God's humour is a discreet hu-

mour and it does not make fun of people. We reflected on how unusual it is to see a picture of a laughing Jesus, but a lovely one was provided for the central display. It was also noted that the gospels tell us about Jesus crying, praying, getting angry, sharing, etc. He was fully human but nowhere in the gospels do we hear of him laughing. He must surely have done so. There are humorous passages in the gospels – 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' etc, St Theresa of Avila is known to have said, 'A sad nun is a bad nun' Humour and laughter are essential parts of community and they draw people closer together. Our Day of Recollection closed with Mass for the second Sunday of Lent when the gospel reading was of the Transfiguration. In many ways our day of Recollection had changed us. We left Olton very jovially to return to the cares of the world after sharing a wonderful day together. Thank you Father Austin.

June Arran



### of Br. Angelo Sala scj

Superior of Bouar-St Michael Garicoits community in the Centralafrican Republic



*"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but that through him the world might be saved." (John 3, 16-17)*

*"Does not the idea of creator imply the idea of father? Creation is rather an act of love than an act of power and wisdom... Yes, God is our Father, and all that human fatherhood can offer in the way of gentleness and sweetness is only a pale image of the tenderness and amiability of our Father who is in heaven..." (MS)*

*"[Be happy] also at times of spiritual dryness, during pain and unhappiness whatever their causes and while being tempted; console yourself by looking with trust and love at the Heart of Jesus; just looking at him and not attempting to tackle these things head on. Keep even your desires for perfection moderate and calm so that everything in your heart united as it is with the heart of Our Lord may also be calm and peaceful..." (Corresp. letter 4)*

#### SILENCE

**"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but that through him the world might be saved."**  
(John 3, 16-17).

In the light of what I am going through in this country where I am living, I find this passage of the Gospel very pertinent which has been proposed to me for a narratio fidei.

As I live out my mission in a country where, because of the political upheaval, hatred, violence, and revenge reign supreme, I find these lines from St John's Gospel essential in view of what I am trying to understand and what I am called to live as a religious. Right now I feel myself challenged to adopt a courageous position in the difficult situation in which I find myself by trying to give

some meaning to what I believe in and which I am doing where I am. In this new experience I feel that I am being called more than ever to be faithful to the ideal of the Gospel so as to have an ever deeper meeting with Christ. This is difficult to realise because of the short time available and because of the difficulty in entering into deep communion. My choice of life style includes a commitment to wanting what I must do each day. And what I must do, to do it in the spirit that Saint Michael had set down for himself, namely: be united to God in prayer as far as possible to obtain the source of all goodness and a huge share in his grace. Be full of zeal for my neighbour and for my community; be full of goodness for all; no harshness, with strength of soul and care in whatever I undertake and determination to carry it out. To be faithful to such an ideal supposes

courageous and daily confrontation with my community, with the laity and religious working with me at the Aids Centre.

The evangelist John helps me to reflect on the great love of God for mankind and for the world, to the extent that he gave up what was dearest to him, namely his only Son.

God has loved mankind from all eternity, and as part of humanity I have received this love and feel that I must share it with others.

I feel that in order to receive this huge gift of God's love I cannot live without the One who has loved me first, I feel poor and need his mercy.

Fidelity to this great gift of love helps me to rediscover the meaning of life and never to grow weary of thanking God by listening to the Word and good works. It should be a love which helps me to love those I meet, do them good, and suffer with them.

If God loves the world from all eternity, he is always there beside mankind no matter what he is doing even if man is unaware of God's existence for God's love for mankind is boundless.

To be called upon to live out this ideal through my religious profession involves my entire being, especially if I am faithful not by necessity but freely and gratuitously. It should be a faithful love, that is a love which does not shrink nor change but stems from a heart seeking the good of the people I meet each day in my mission.

It should be a creative love, generous in forgiveness, especially when it costs us; a love which must not be only in words, but by a life sacrificed for the person met, loved and respected so that that same person can en-

joy the effects of this love.

This is transmitted through the person of Jesus Christ in his Incarnation, on Calvary and in the Eucharist. To receive and pass on this God given gift I must be freed of everything; it is only then that I am free to love and to do everything knowing that I am but a simple servant, aware that crosses are to be expected. And we, missionary brothers and priests, through our words and actions must preach the obligation to bear them with love. (DS)

On this road which is not easy to follow there will be many "potholes". This requires a constant confrontation with myself, with the brothers and with all those whom I am called upon to collaborate with and in the presence of whom I am trying to bear witness to my choice of Betharramite religious life.

