



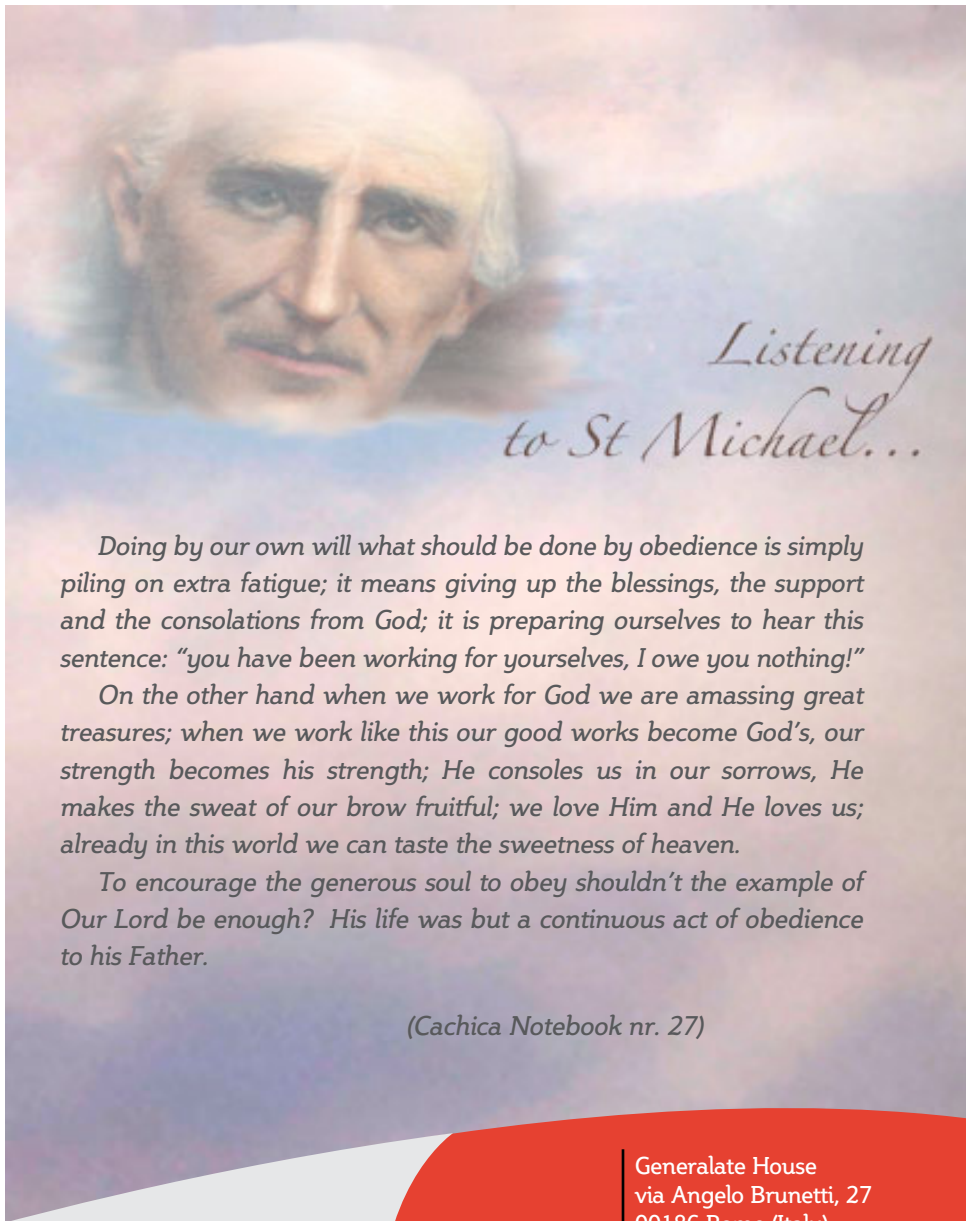
Societas S<sup>mi</sup> Cordis Jesu  
BETHARRAM

107  
2015

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*Listening  
to St Michael...*

*Doing by our own will what should be done by obedience is simply piling on extra fatigue; it means giving up the blessings, the support and the consolations from God; it is preparing ourselves to hear this sentence: "you have been working for yourselves, I owe you nothing!"*

*On the other hand when we work for God we are amassing great treasures; when we work like this our good works become God's, our strength becomes his strength; He consoles us in our sorrows, He makes the sweat of our brow fruitful; we love Him and He loves us; already in this world we can taste the sweetness of heaven.*

*To encourage the generous soul to obey shouldn't the example of Our Lord be enough? His life was but a continuous act of obedience to his Father.*

*(Cachica Notebook nr. 27)*

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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**

**Live in the present with enthusiasm**

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In order to live out our vocation and our Betharramite mission with enthusiasm, it is good – as St Michael Garicoits said – to have the experience of an encounter with the person of the Word Incarnate, "Jesus, emptied yet obedient" who gives a new direction to our life (*Deus Caritas Est* 1). The Rule of Life, since 1969, have expressed this well in reference to the Gospel - to reproduce, to manifest and to continue the generous impulse of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Word Incarnate. Never before had the charism of St Michael been so clearly expressed. Father Etchecopar, who had kept the "Ecce Venio" so well in the rules approved by the Holy See, would have been happy about it. After his death, the motto disappeared from the 1901 rules.

St Michael Garicoits didn't content himself with making an apostolic life association out of the Sacred Heart Society; he wanted an institute of consecrated life, with community life, vows, nothing to hang onto in the way of owning goods, the election of a Superior General chosen by the priests/brothers. However, today, there are also priests and brothers living an individualistic lifestyle: low-key community, unreturned accounts,

goods received after taking their vows handed down to nephews. But there are also communities which schedule, realise and develop the community project and the brothers who make an effort to share what makes up their lives, faith and belongings. And that helps them to commit with enthusiasm and joy to their mission. There are some vicariates that ensure continuous personal development, such as for priests/ brothers who resist taking time out to face up to internal renewal.

What must characterise us is the spirit of obedience ... if that is missing, the reason for us being here is also missing. (RoL 60.) I have met this obedience each time I have had to ask some young priests/brothers for their availability for the Vietnam foundation or to put together some international communities that the General Chapter had wished for. In some vicariates, the lack of obedience is an obstacle to keeping the commitment to local churches. To refuse a change of community, to try rather to go into a community of personal interest, to refuse to go into some communities because there are brothers one does not get on well with, are all attitudes which destroy the life of a vicariate or a region.

The history of our congregation shows how the Holy Spirit has kept alive the missionary dynamic which continues to take us further. We will establish in the next few days our presence in Vietnam. It's all about the grace which allows the charism of St Michael to continue to live and be present in the world.

Today we have difficulty maintaining our great educative works, historical in



*Living the present with the enthusiasm inspired by the Here I am: Fr. Yesudas scj and Fr. Sa-at scj*

Betharram. In Argentina and Paraguay, they continue having a social and missionary function. Thanks to the work of these last 40 years, accomplished together with lay people, we have been able to initiate the charism and mission of Betharram; we have been able to entrust responsibilities to lay people that up until then had been reserved for Priests/Brothers.

In other vicariates, the witness of Priests and Brothers has given rise to an awakening of a desire amongst lay people to share the spirituality of the clergy, drinking from the same source of charismatic experience as St Michael. It is an aid for living out the Gospel with faith in daily life.

Since the Council, the mission is being directed more towards parishes. Many good things are happening in our parishes;

sent us three or four well distinguished gentlemen: Cachica from Orthez, Bernède from Bézingrand and Carrère from Abos. They entered the novitiate. Several brothers also came. There was much need to lend support to our men destined for the New World, to replace those leaving and those that God was calling to himself.

The Council was renewed with the arrival of the men of the Holy Cross and Mr. Chirou replaced Mr. Larrouy and Mr. Cazaban took his place in the administration. The missions continued; momentum increased, and people were moved to act, particularly in the year of the Holy Father's jubilee.

The end of 1855 and the first six months of 1856 were used to create the foundations of the future apostles of America and the two serving brothers Fabien and Joannès, and of Mr. Magendie disciple and relative of Mr. Barbé.

Father Superior found intelligence and wisdom in two young brothers, Quillahauquy and Gaby from Bouilh born in Ainhoa. He gave them and made them receive tuition in Latin. It was a good way to make use of his resources, willing to receive anything that came his way, sent from Our Lady to fill the void that was coming.

When it came to the holidays in 1856, on the eve of the departure for America, the distribution of college prizes was chaired by Fr. Abbadie, priest of St. Pé. Having praised Christian education and described the fortune of fathers and mothers who have the good taste to choose religious institutions and good role models, the President expressed regret to have to say goodbye to Mr. Barbé who he had known for a long time, having been

his assistant in the small seminary of St. Pé. It is true, he said to the students and parents, that you experience a great loss, but the good Lord who takes him elsewhere for his glory always leaves you the protection of Mary and the honour of his choice. Michael Garicoïts had managed to call and use the ones we will lose: with Mary, Michael Garicoïts and his devoted followers, everything will receive compensation, things will even be exceeded and increased as the sacrifice that is made only serves to call on Bétharram new and abundant blessings from heaven.

It was the month of September 1856 Messrs Guimon, Larrouy, Barbé and Sardoy and Harbustan left Bétharram with brothers Joannès and Harbustan; they sailed from Bayonne; the crossing was rather difficult and challenging and lasted almost two months. But it was around Christmas of 1856 that the good news of their fortunate landing was received and of the good reception that had been made by the Bishop and his clergy. They received suitable housing and were assigned a church nearby for the exercise of their ministry. At the same time Mr. Barbé announced that he was preparing a building suitable for a college, because he could immediately be sent a large number of people to help and because he recognised early on that the fruits of their ministry would be more abundant, if he could give the young people a solid Christian education.

Simon Fondeville scj  
(1805-1872)

*(to be continued)*

## FONDEVILLE NOTEBOOK OR BETHARRAM FROM 1790

Accepting the mission in America... New members of the Congregation... Pilgrimages to Betharram are increasing... Getting ready for and sailing to America...

The renewal of the Council took place in the year 1855, and it was then that the Bishop proposed the American mission.

This work was inspired by the spiritual needs of Basque and Béarnais emigrants forming a population of nearly 100,000 souls in Buenos Aires and Montevideo. The proposal was dictated both by the charity and zeal of the bishop of Buenos Aires and of our bishop, who wanted to comfort the heart of the American bishop, distressed at not being able to save this great foreign people.

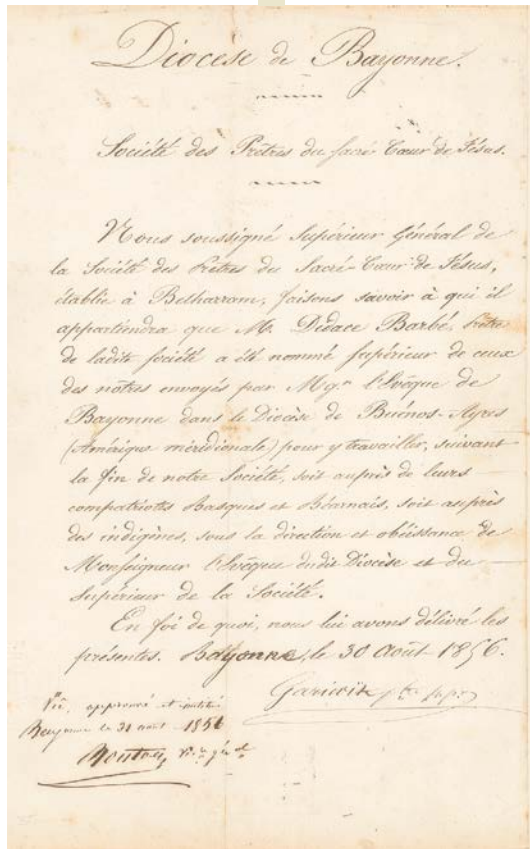
It was not at all a question of obedience or the decision by the Superior that these men had to be sent overseas. It was a gracious re-

sponse to the act of charity proposed. The acceptance was unanimous: it was then up to everyone to ask God for the light to

know his will, to accomplish it. The gentlemen Guimon, Barbé, Larrouy, Sardoy and Harbustan de Barcus, these priests in the Basque Country, presented themselves to move to America.

Mr. Ducasse de Ibos (Tarbes) aspiring to the priesthood was in Bétharram for over 11 years due to his medical condition. He was ordained a priest in 1855 and received into the congregation; he was then sent as a study master to Oloron, Orthez, after having been busy in the institution of Bétharram for several years.

However the house of Orthez



Document drafted in Bayonne on August 30th, 1856 whereby the missionaries are sent to America, signed « Garicoïts P<sup>re</sup> Sup<sup>er</sup> »

although that poses lots of questions today about our standard pastoral care. In some vicariates, the Bishops have taken parishes from us; in others, we have abandoned them because we are not able to keep them up. In this way, certain vicariates have acquired a more missionary style, by leaving the parishes.

On the other hand, the clergy are more sensitive to missions amongst the poor. In Thailand and in Central Africa, our mission is developing towards being exclusively for the poor. You can say this about the Hojai community in the North East of India as well as about the welcome of children in Argentina or the educational farm in Tchanfeto in the Ivory Coast. The same goes for the PAPETRA project with the drug-dependant in Paraguay, the family house at Monteporzio, the St Michael Centre in Bouar, the dispensary in Niem in Central Africa, the commitment of some clergy such as hospital chaplains in Italy, allowing a missionary presence amongst the sick which is new for the congregation.

In 2012, the range of services in the mission was opened, thereby showing that the creativity of charity is boundless; it is able to find countless new ways of bringing the newness of the Gospel to every culture and every corner of society. (Pope Francis, letter to the consecrated 1,2.)

Today we confront the challenge of a more international life: respecting differences in age, education, culture etc. We are called to build unity from the experience of faith, vocation and mission. This unity allows us to cultivate our identity and our sense of belonging, as it enriches the charism in its embodiment in different cultures.

The international communities are not a new thing. They already exist in mission

countries: Thailand, the Holy Land, Ivory Coast, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil. The mobility of the priests and brothers is growing; other communities are now in existence: those of Olton, Great Barr, Droitwich, Mendelu, Pau-Betharram, Pibrac, Nazareth, Bouar, Montevideo-Tacuarembó. To form them isn't an easy task unless they are built up on the basis of a new direction: that which gave us the experience of meeting with "Jesus, emptied yet obedient".

These last few years, the Lord has blessed us with the perpetual profession of several brothers who were ordained afterwards, especially in India, Thailand, Ivory Coast, Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay. Nevertheless, there are concerns: certain people leaving the congregation, not long after their perpetual vows; in the vicariates of Europe, there are no young people in formation.

We have paid great attention to the initial formation as per the Rules of Life and the renewed *Formation Guide*. In 2007, there was a Formators' Meeting at Adiapodoume; every two years the Betharram session takes place for clergy close to making perpetual vows, each region has its own formation project; there is formation for the Formators, one single noviciate community per region, and a single scholastic centre for the Etchecopar region. In order to go to the essential values, there is an insistence on human maturity, the experience of faith, personal accompaniment, Ignatian exercises, the Gospel Fraternity and mission. In order to strengthen what is there and to review what is not working, all the Formators are meeting in January 2016 in Rome.

Gaspar Fernández Pérez, scj  
Superior General



## SNAPSHOTS OF BETHARRAMITE LIFE

“¡Este hombre es feliz!...”



*“This is a happy man! ...” wrote Fr. Raul Villalba SCJ on discovering in facebook this photo of Fr. Enrique Lasuen SCJ with Fr. Francisco de Assis SCJ. Most recently Pope Francis said: “I can not imagine a Christian who does not know how to smile. Seek to give joyful witness of our faith...” Father Enrique, Mission accomplished!*

Picture published by Fr Francisco de Assis scj on his Facebook page last July 13. Thanks to the photographer!

*we do not know much, and it was difficult to integrate; but over time, with the help of Our Lady of Betharram with the teachings of St. Michael Garicoits and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst, this community took shape in love and joy.*

*The community is our support at all times and we are always united in prayer according to the needs of each and for the FVD movement. Without the community it would have been more difficult.*

*Between us and with Christ we accept to carry our daily crosses. Of course, there have been ups and downs, the problems of everyday life, but all this does not stop us from strengthening our community, and falling in love with the charism of Betharram. I conclude with a quote from our holy founder: “What a wonderful disposition to be always available to God, always ready to say Here I am like Mary as (God willing)*

*simple and happy to be shepherds of flock of the Lord.” (Gonzalo Campos Cervera)*

*“The spirituality of Betharram was present at the first steps we took; over 4 years we were taught obedience, availability and God’s love, values that have allowed us to live a commitment over 11 years during which we discovered that love is summed up in service and the gift self to others. We are part of a community within the FVD movement which allows us to continue to grow in faith, to strengthen our families by this fundamental value: that life with Christ and in Christ drives us to share with others the joy of living our charism. We are called to make a commitment to do the will of God in our life, in our family and with our partners, welcoming with love all that comes as a gift from heaven..” (Lilian Carolina Codas Santacruz)*

### How is the FVD Group structured?

The FVD Group has a top-down structure which emphasizes and fosters obedience, the backbone of the Betharramite charism. The first level is formed by the COUNCIL, that is the SUPERIOR and two other members as COUNCILLORS; these three people are elected by an elective assembly every two years. The superior and his two councillors appoint THE PERSONS IN CHARGE OF THE COMMITTEES which are responsible for the implementation of the decisions and the pastoral orientations.

At present the working committees are: formation Committee, Retreats Committee, Groups Committee, Liturgy Committee, Finance committee, Choir committee, Apostolate committee, Events committee and Missions committee. Every committee and the members of the Council present the work to be carried out during the academic year. Then there are the community facilitators who are elected in each community and provide the link between the Council and the Committees.

The help and the spiritual guidance of the scj priests is essential. They give us their unconditional support: especially Fr Tobia Sosio and Fr Raul Villalba and other scj religious who, besides their specific missions in the works of the Congregation, are ready to meet our needs: their help is crucial for our pastoral work to be effective.

### Pope Francis in Paraguay

**IN RESPONDING TO THE FIRST QUESTION ADDRESSED TO HIM BY A JOURNALIST ON HIS RETURN FLIGHT FROM SOUTH AMERICA, POPE FRANCIS DESCRIBED THE CHURCH OF PARAGUAY AS "A LIVELY CHURCH, A JOYFUL CHURCH, A CHURCH THAT STRUGGLES AND WHICH HAS A GLORIOUS HISTORY ". AND A CHURCH THAT HAD TO WAIT 27 YEARS BEFORE ONCE MORE WELCOMING THE POPE ...! THE EXUBERANT WELCOME WAS THE RESULT OF THIS LONG WAIT. A FEW WEEKS LATER, FR. TOBIA SOSIO SCJ HELPED US TASTE THE FRUITS OF THIS ECCLESIAL EVENT.**

"Welcome to Pope Francis ... Give your life for great ideals." This is what was written on a sign at the entrance of the College of San José Asunción. All spoke of the special affection that the Pope manifested repeatedly to Paraguay. Young people, especially, could not forget the wonderful experience of World Youth Day in Rio.

50,000 young people were prepared to be "servants of the Pope" ... And 30,000 students formed a welcome chain, from the airport to the Nunciature: a young crowd of children had gathered along the road to see quickly passing Papal transport. But it is the meetings and celebrations with Pope Francis, and his ability to communicate spontaneously with his audience that will long remain etched in people's hearts. We religious of Betharram, were fortunate

to receive him in our own school, in the Leon Coudou Sports Hall, for one of the most anticipated events: what message the Pope had it reserved for representatives of civil society?



The Catholic University, organizer of the event, explained that 1,600 groups and associations were invited to attend this meeting, approximately 4000 people. People could still remember that famous encounter with the "builders" of society during the memorable visit of John Paul II in 1988, an event that had been banned by the Stroessner dictatorship, but was eventually held by the explicit will of the Pope. In his ignorance, the dictator had banned ministers and leaders of his party to participate... and the following year he was overthrown.

This second visit was very much expected. Certainly, we are now in a democracy, but the social life of the country is still going through serious difficulties. Hissing against the current President Cartes

was followed, at the entrance of the Pope, by a shattering and spontaneous applause. Applause accompanied each sentence of the Pope, creating a kind of dialogue and marked the



*deepening our faith through the catechism for young people. The FVD helped me change some aspects of my life and gave me the gift of many brothers who help me every day to grow in faith. I remember that by becoming a part of the movement I've been through some very significant experiences and the movement helped me.*

*The blessings I have received*

*"The first characteristic of the FVD Group, which is only eleven years old, is the joy with which everyone works. The Group has been and remains for me a school of life. I have learned to be a more tolerant person; and what constantly prevails in all circumstances, is faith and hope. One of the things I appreciate most in the movement is the fact that charism is reflected in many people who, in turn, trying to live it in their daily lives. I can say my spiritual life has matured, in the movement. It has nourished the prayer life of my family with whom I try to pray every day. This lifestyle also helps me to live Christian values, not only with my brothers in the community, but also with other friends who are evangelized by what I am trying to convey." (Mariana Torres)*

*"With my brothers in community we have created a strong bond of friendship founded on Christ; every Saturday we meet and we devote a little time to reflect on the Gospel of the day and sharing of what each receives from the reading; we let the Word of God resonate within us and we finish by*

*when I started to be part of the community are so many that I can attest that this is a work of God. Through the movement I got to bring my family to the church. My younger sister also became an active member of the Group. Young Catholics need other young people to be encouraged to live a certain lifestyle, to move from theory to practice. Honestly, if I had not had the chance to be part of a community, I would not have got to stay true to this lifestyle for the world assails you and does everything to entice you away from Christ. With the movement, thanks be to God, I am now a confirmation catechist and I had the opportunity to tell other young people that Christ came into my life through the FVD. (Gross Brown Alejandro Bobadilla)*

*"This great love affair began after a retreat during which I experienced my first big encounter with Christ. This moment marked a before and after in my life and, over time, we have formed a community of brothers who really want to follow Christ; this community gradually became my second family. This way was not easy in the beginning:*



total public approval. That may be why the Pope concluded with this friendly recommendation:

*"A word of advice before saying goodbye and a blessing: the worst thing that can happen to each of you when you leave here is to think: "It is good that the Pope said this or that to those people!" If any of you accept this way of thinking – (and sometimes I do myself!) - you must reject these thoughts .... Who did the pope say these things for? - For me! To each, and every one "For me".*

Rather than make a speech, the Pope undertook to answer questions from five representatives of society: a young person, an indigenous person, a peasant, a business executive, and a government representative.

His answers help us understand the social message that characterizes his pontificate, in which he clearly emphasizes the importance of linking faith to commitment for the common good and sustained attention to the poorest. I transcribe verbatim some of his comments:

*It is important that you, the young, ... realize that genuine happiness comes from working to make a more fraternal country! ...Be committed to something, be committed to someone. This is the vocation of young people so don't be afraid to take a risk on the field, but play fairly and give it your best. Don't be afraid to give the best of yourselves! Don't look for easy solutions beforehand so as to avoid tiredness and struggle. And don't bribe the referee.[...]*

*I confess to you that I feel somewhat allergic, and a bit put off as it were, when I hear very eloquent discourses; those who know the speaker end up saying, "What are liars you are!" This is why words on their own are not enough. If you give your word of honour, then make sacrifices each day to be faithful to that word, to be committed! [...]*

*Dialogue must be built on something, an identity. This means that, for there to be dialogue, that fundamental basis of identity must exist. And what is the identity of a country? – and here we are speaking about a social identity – to love the nation. The nation first, and then my business! The nation comes first! That is identity. That is the basis upon which I will dialogue. If I am to speak without that basis, without that identity, then dialogue is pointless.[...]*

*During dialogue there is conflict. ... But we mustn't fear it, we mustn't ignore it. On the contrary, we are invited to embrace conflict. If we don't embrace conflict, saying to ourselves "this is a headache, let him go home with his ideas, and I'll go back to mine with my ideas", then we will never be able to dialogue. This means that we have to "face conflict head on, to resolve it and to make it a link in the chain of a new process" (Evangeli Gaudium, 227). Let us dialogue. Where there is conflict, I embrace it, I transform it, and it is a necessary element of a new process. [...]*

*The poor are the flesh of Christ. When people come to me to confession – and I have less opportunities to hear confessions than when I was in the diocese – I like to ask them: "Do you help people?". "Yes, I give alms to the poor". "I see, and tell me, when you give alms, do you touch the hand of the*

sonally, the FVD Group has been a great help for me and has supported me in my spiritual growth. It is something in which God has greatly surprised me and transformed my life. The Group has been with me during my school life, at University and now in my professional life, helping me to put the Gospel as the foundation of my life. Living the Christian life to the utmost, seeing the signs of extraordinary

conversions convinces me that this is really God's work. We have only to empty ourselves to become his instruments so that the story of faith in the FVD Group will continue to grow and produce conversions and transformations in our families, in our life style and in the whole of society in Paraguay.

André Balansa

## The FVD Group



The FVD Group (Fiat Voluntas Dei) is an Association of lay people who have felt the call of "Me Voici" in their hearts won over by the Betharramite charism and who are part of the same family; they are driven by the desire to increase and are inspired by our Founder, St Michael Garicoits. The group was founded in 2003 by 12 former pupils of the San Jose College in Asuncion in the desire to add to the religious education received in the College. On the strength of such a fine decision they decided to form the first community on the spiritual foundations

given by St Michael and to call it FVD. Taking their inspiration from St Michael the group, from the beginning tried to deepen the meaning of God's Will in the life of the individual. Today there are 180 active members in the Association in 12 ecclesial communities. After meeting the Lord in prayer they decided to adopt a life style in keeping with the Betharramite charism and to progress with the community. They meet once a week. The FVD Group has three main objectives:

1. Deepen their knowledge of the charism and make it known.
2. Support Betharramite pastoral and the situations needing our help.
3. Foster religious and priestly vocations especially for Betharram.

From the beginning the FVD Group lent support for youth pastoral by organising spiritual retreats for the students at the San Jose and Santa Clara Colleges. From 2013 the FVD Group has begun offering retreats for University students. As part of the Church we are working in the San Jose parish. Under the guidance of the missionary spirit and faithful to its vocation the group is leaving for a mission in the town of La Colmena; it started action in 2013 with a close link with the local Church. Right now the group comes to the aid of the school financially each month, has an apostolate with some of its members who, now and again go to La Colmena to live with the people, give simple medical care, catechise the children, the teen agers and the adults.

The FVD Group is fully aware that there are new challenges facing its members both in family pastoral and social projects.

## THE LAITY AND THE CHARISM OF BETHARRAM

### A generous and communicative vitality

**"DEEPEN THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE CHARISM ... SUPPORT THE MINISTRY OF THE BETHARRAMITES ... ENCOURAGE VOCATIONS TO THE BETHARRAMITE CONSECRATED LIFE". THESE THREE MAIN GOALS OF THE PARAGUAYAN LAY MOVEMENT, FVD, SAY CLEARLY HOW MUCH THESE LAY ASSOCIATES ARE ROOTED IN THE PAST, WITH THEIR HEART OPEN TO THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THE EYES TURNED TOWARDS THE FUTURE OF THE CONGREGATION. BY LISTENING TO THE EXPERIENCE OF SOME OF THESE LAY PEOPLE WE REACH THE HEART OF THE BETHARRAMITE SPIRITUALITY WHICH, ONCE AGAIN, PROVES TO BE EXTREMELY ALIVE AND RELEVANT FOR THE CHURCH AND THE SOCIETY TODAY.**

The spirituality of the laity according to Betharram to which as members of the Association FVD we try to be faithful can be expressed by the availability of "Me Voici" of the Word Incarnate, who did his Father's Will even to death on the cross. To deepen our charism we try each year to practise a virtue of the Sacred Heart, a devotion which has its origin in our charism

The young Betharramite is someone free, open and joyful; he is aware of the social reality of Paraguay, leads a humble and simple life, and has devotion to Mary, Our Lady of Betharram whom Saint Michael calls "The House Mistress". Not only does he try to seek God's Will, but he studies it and puts it into practise. Both spiritually and intellectually he deepens his faith so as to be in line with the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. The Lord surprises us when he shows us that the charism, far



from being reserved for the religious, is there also for the laity who are not necessarily engaged in the colleges and good works of the Betharramite religious. It is there for people of all ages, all situations and professions to whom the FVD Group turns so as to offer them a choice of Christian

life as they wish. This is proof also that the Betharramite charism is not just for those who have attended the colleges of the Congregation but it is there for everyone as a gift from countless young people far from Betharram.

The life stories of the FVD Group are many; faith is not kept hidden under a bushel but is there for all to see, it enters families, renews and transforms them. It is worth noting that God's Will penetrates the family, thanks to the children and, like the mustard seed multiplies its fruits even among friends and acquaintances. Per-

person you're giving alms to or do you throw the money to them?" We are speaking of attitudes here. "When you offer alms, do you look into their eyes or do you look the other way?" This demeans the poor person. [...]

Those charged with promoting economic development have the responsibility of ensuring that it always has a human face. Economic development must have a human face. We say no to an economy without such a face! They have in their hands the possibility of providing employment for many persons and in this way of giving hope to many families.



To receive the Pope among us was certainly a privilege, but it also represents a commitment and a challenge. How to awaken in children and the young the desire to act for the common good? How do we witness to a genuine love for the poor, to the point of being evangelized by them? How to fight against this social evil, so diffuse and dangerous, that Pope Francis has defined as the "gangrene of a people", namely corruption? And how to overcome the great divide between faith and life, a temptation always present in every Christian? The Pope defined in clear terms during his visit to one of the suburbs of Asunción:

*"A faith that does not make solidarity real is a dead faith or a false faith. 'I'm Catholic, I go to Mass every Sunday. 'But tell me, sir, madam, 'What is happening over there at \*Bañados? [\*A very poor district of Asuncion]' - 'Oh, I do not know, yes ... no ... I do not know [but ] ... yes, I know there are people out there, but I do not know...'. Despite more Masses on Sundays, if you do not have a heart attached, if you do not know what is happening with people around you, your faith is very weak, or sick, or dead. It is a faith without Christ. Faith without solidarity is a faith without Christ, without God, without brothers. "*

Tobia Sosio, scj  
General Councillor

## THE SPORTS VILLA

# LEON COUNDOLE





**Father Leon Coundou** (1921-1967) was born at Tarbes. He had his secondary education at the Apostolic School in Betharram and his priestly education in Nazareth and Bethlehem. He was ordained priest in 1946 at the age of 25, was named for the San Jose College at Asuncion where he arrived at the beginning of the following year and where he was to stay until his death.

If he gave himself over fully to teaching, Father Coundou was not only a master who taught, but he was also a priest and a priest who could turn a Boy Scout's camp or football camp into a means of approaching God. As national chaplain to the Scouts in Paraguay he knew how to mingle with the campers in such a way as to discover their problems and make himself available for

all their needs. The Football Club at Asuncion Cerro Porteno was proud to have him as their chaplain. But as a sportsman he had a soft spot for Deportivo San Jose. It can be said that he gave the best of himself to it. Unfortunately he didn't see the end of the construction of the sports hall nor enjoy the facility fully. However, today the sports villa is proud to bear his name.

On the day of his funeral countless friends came to pay him a final tribute. The ambassador of Paraguay to Colombia, who also happened to be an old boy, wrote to his brothers in community: "Father Coundou, specialist in education, friendship, joie de vivre and sporting happiness is a living example for the rising generations who knew him both in college and out of college. His name and his life will always be a light for those of us who were his friends. How much more so for those who had been his students and who received all the joie de vivre which he communicated in his own way. His was a Christian way of self giving for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ."



for a man who was so unsteady during a maths lesson, he could be patient and resourceful outside the classroom explaining one or other problem.

It is no wonder that he waited till the 1st September, beginning of the academic year and World Day for the Protection of Creation, to bid farewell to this world. Father Berhouet was a lover of Nature. He was not a religious far removed from all things in Nature. He was rooted in his native land ( l'Amikuze) and in his adopted territory (the Limousin). But he was a religious who had lived for a long time outside community life so as to be able to continue his mission for the young.

By his presence he made Betharram and Ozanam rime even though the Congregation had already withdrawn. The pupils would crowd round him like a swarm of bees during recreation time just to learn how to make a racket or to meet a Father who took them seriously. Father Berhouet knew the Limousin thoroughly from the visits he paid there on Sundays. He loved driving or being driven as he chose. He could share his joy with a friendly family or with his brothers in community.

This nature followed him to Betharram where he chose to live out his retirement. He found a sedentary life a burden but he made up for it by long sessions at table, at the aquarium or on the doorstep. When he heard the footsteps of some visitor his face would light up again, a smile and he was no longer tongue-tied.

Now following in the footsteps of St Paul



writing to the Colossians let us return to the communion of saints: let us ask the Lord to help us know his Will; let us ask for Wisdom, spiritual knowledge and conduct worthy of our vocation. May he give us his power to progress in doing good, persevering and patient to bear fruit. Full of joy let us give thanks to God the Father who helped Fr Alexander all the heavenly host of Betharramite religious to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light of eternity. Snatching them from the power of darkness He placed them in the kingdom of His Beloved Son. In the name of this same Son He will have mercy on us. He will be our pardon, our resurrection and our everlasting peace. His world will now that it is loved and redeemed.

Jean-Luc MORIN, scj.



Christ among us anointed by the hands of the Grand Master.

We all, of the College São Miguel, staff, students, teachers, principals and Betharramite religious, are very saddened by your departure, dear master, friend and comrade ... We will miss you a lot, as we will miss your very unique outlook on life.

Today, Very Reverend Father, we feel as orphans, deprived of your presence and your company ... but we will never feel orphaned by your teachings, your virtue, your dedication to the Congregation of Betharram, to education and your fidelity to the priesthood. (...)

Prof Anibal (professor at the College São Miguel)

### Father Alexandre BERHOUEZ SCJ

Luxe-Sumberraute (France), 28 August 1921 - Bétharram, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015

Bétharram, 3 September 2015

Funeral of Father Alexander Berhouet, SCJ.

Luke 5, 1-11. Today the liturgy provides us with "our daily bread"; the where with all to make us grateful and full of hope as we are here with Father Alexander. The heart of the message is a lesson in faith, meaning that we can and must trust the Lord, wherever we are and whatever he asks of us. That's how he makes fishers of men from the sinners that we are. In the gospel story Simon-Peter had every reason for sending Jesus back to his studies – or rather to his carpenter's plank – when he asked Peter to pay out the nets further afield, Peter the expert fisherman! But on his word Peter didn't hesitate for a moment.

The lesson for us is as clear as the waters of the Lake of Genesareth; one can have the feeling of being incompetent, of having reached summits that were dizzying or sunk to depths that were killing, when the Lord sends out a signal impossible to

hide! Even though we don't feel the courage we must still launch out into the deep and trust will work miracles. Believing is to take a step into the unknown. It is then and then only that the Word will affect our lives; real wisdom consists in accepting God to be our guide. To have faith means putting ourselves into his hands so as to live life to the full.

Father Berhouet could tell us a thing or two on that particular chapter. He willingly gave up an easy life style with personal projects. He did this through obedience which is the most authentic proof of love when one is a religious. He willingly renounced his beloved Basque country to go to unknown territories: Bethlehem, Bel Abbes, and Limoges where he left his mark on many generations. He taught practically every subject on the curriculum even some where he wasn't too happy. He came face to face with whole classes even where he made the pupils laugh, pupils who as we know can be merciless for the weaknesses of their teachers. Yet

### Sons of saint Michael Garicoïts

**TWO YOUNG BETHARRAMITE RELIGIOUS OF THE IVORY COAST VICARIATE SHARE IN THE FOLLOWING LINES THEIR JOY IN BEING ORDAINED PRIESTS. GIVING THANKS TO THE LORD WHO HAS CALLED THEM, THEIR FORMATORS WHO GUIDED THEM AND THEIR BROTHERS WHO ENRICH THEM BY THEIR WITNESS, THEY TELL US OF THEIR JOY IN BEING SENT BY THE CONGREGATION TO PUT THEIR LIVES IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR BRETHERN IN THE CHURCH.**

« "The Son of Man came, not to be served but to serve and to give his life for the multitude" (Mk 10.45)

On 18 July 2015 in the parish church of St Teresa at Godomey in Cotonou (Benin), I received from the hands of the Papal Nuncio in Benin, Mgr Brian Udaigwe, the mission to announce the Gospel and care for the Church. This priestly ministry has made me a priest of Jesus Christ forever. I adopt the words of our Founder, St Michael Garicoits: God, our Father, it is you who calls us; and you call us with all that you are. Totally faithful to you, my God, and with all the power of my life I say: Here I am with all that I have and am for love of you". May the Lord make me a priest according to his Sacred Heart. May it be a long route in the presence of the Lord, a route full of expressions of faith, trials but also of joy, happiness and gratitude. In the light of this great mystery may I never tire of expressing my unworthiness and the great mercy of God as I progress in my life. My vocation to religious life in the Betharramite family is a mystery for me the re-



I was born on 27 September 1977 at Save in the Benin. I began my journey towards Religious Life in community in November 2004. Two years later I entered community for the two years of philosophy at the Major Seminary of St Paul at Abajin Koute. Two years of novitiate, first the canonical year in Bethlehem and the second year in our community in Dabakala prepared me for first Religious profession on 28 July 2010. On the 27 July 2014 I made my final vows in the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram.

ality of which I meet every day. In fact , day by day, I discover the constant wish to consecrate myself to the promotion of all men and the whole man. I have

always wanted to be the Lord's instrument so as to strengthen the hope of life's desperate and to set man up. My project is to open up to God's grace , to

the action of the Holy Spirit and of my superiors as fully as possible. Forward march!



**Father Jean-Paul KISSI Ayo, SCJ**

I was born on 30 July 1979 in Dabou, a town situated at 40 km to the south of the capital of Ivory Coast. It was thanks to a friend I had known in school that I got to know the Betharram congregation in Adiapodoume. In our chats I told him about my wish to become a priest-religious. He therefore suggested that I should make my way with the Betharramite Congregation. Then I shared my wish with the Fathers in the parish. One of them who had been helped by the Congregation, namely Father Duvernet put me in contact with the leaders of the Betharram community in Adipodoume. I went to see them and there

I found some very happy people. That's how I began to journey with the Betharramite religious so that, I too should experience the joy and happiness which was enjoyed by young religious full of life.

I therefore took my first steps in the Betharram community in 2006 as an aspirant. This helped me to discover little by little the spirituality of St Michael. I was particularly impressed by "Here I am" of the Son to his Father as is pointed out by St Michael in his commitment and in his writings. I found out that for him Christ's disciple must be an offering for his brothers and sisters. He must offer himself without counting and above all for love of them. Consequently the words "Here I am, without delay, without reserve for love's sake" are forever engraved in my heart. I saw Fathers and Brothers who offered themselves, who have given their lives, who were close to the men and women to help them discover the face of Jesus who became incarnate in our midst.

I was also marked by my years of novitiate in the Holy Land. There I discovered another treasure of Betharram – a treasure left behind by the Fathers and Brothers who dedicated their whole lives and remained faithful. I am not forgetting to mention the session in preparation for final vows in Betharram. In the course of this session I came close to the greatest treasure of Betharram. We had the grace of meeting our senior Fathers who gave us a lesson and encouraged us by their deep experience of Religious Life. Here was something which filled me with the desire to offer myself constantly in fidelity but above all in love for others. Consequently the two years spent in Jordan where I was ordained deacon have made a lasting impression on me. They helped me to discover another culture, another race, another language and the need for the Betharram mission.

During my formation with the help of the Fathers and Brothers who accompanied me –allow me to mention a few: Frs Theophile and Sylvain during the postulancy, Father Herve during the novitiate and Fr Laurent during my years

**Father Joaquim Soares de Moreira SCJ**

*Cristina (Brazil), 14 July 1929 - Passa Quatro (Brazil), 8 July 2015*

*Very Reverend Father Joaquim, well-loved Master, Dear Friend and Brother Betharramite, Who would have thought that St. Michael Garicoits, like a seed sown in the fertile fields of Ibarre, would have passed through the heavens, continents and the oceans to bear fruit at the foot of the imposing Mantiqueira mountains of Brazil?*

There must be a hidden wisdom in the heart of the mountains, a connection, willed by heaven, between the hills of Bétharram and Passa Quatro, a superior wisdom that brings order out of chaos, in the most difficult moments of human experience.

Saint Michel dreamed, transformed the dream, then laboured and made disciples... (who would) attract, lead, give instruction, culture and civil values... Transforming the youth into good men, spreading the Gospel in all places and among all peoples, walking with young people by following the footsteps of Christ ...

Divine Providence has sown the seed of Betharram at Passa Quatro for 80 years now. Several generations were shaped by the hands, the advice and spirituality of those priests who by their presence and their action gave life to the College of St. Miguel, by developing a formation based on knowledge and Christian love. This college and the Betharramite Fathers are the source of our sense of justice, our culture and our civil values. It is a heritage of our city.

Of these 80 years, Father Joaquim has spent 57 working according to his disci-



plined nature, humbly with open hands and a heart full of love, to strengthen weak hearts and always reaffirm the purposes of God among us.

He was a professional and strict teacher! Many of us could tell an anecdote about this outstanding figure of Betharram! A particular trait? His blunt honesty! Even to the point of giving offence. His homilies, often drew blood! But they were sincere; he drew blood in order to heal.

Fr Joaquim knew how to tell stories, enjoy good wine, and mock ignorance. He could move from a passionate tone in his homilies to a quiet popular simplicity; a «Father Antonio Vieira» able to mix classical language with popular speech to illuminate the foolish minds and wild hearts. He was one of the last to pray and sing in Latin, and he would invite us to join him.

«It is the living to whom we should pay tribute and not the dead!» Father Joaquim was a man, a teacher, a friend, a counselor, a brother, a father, a representative of



## BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CONGREGATION

### Region



#### France-Spain

**24 July** ► For the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in succession a meeting among “religious and lay people” was held at Betharram in order to encourage and improve reciprocal knowledge. Along with the members of the “Fraternité MeVoici” other lay people working closely with the religious were also present: the Association *Au cœur du monde*, *The Friends of Tshanfeto*, the *Little Choir St. Michael Garicoits* and many people who gather regularly in the sanctuary of Betharram and in the house *Saint Michel* at Pau, as well as the group *Words* inspired by the spirituality of the founder.

Fr Bacho scj highlighted the importance of these links between religious and laity. Everyone could say how Betharram has been a source of life for them. A “Lectio Divina” followed starting from a letter of St Michael Garicoits. Later on, in the chapel of the *Maison de retraite*, a session of community prayer followed based on “the year of the consecrated life”.

**Fraternity “Here I am”** ► The weekend of the Fraternity was as usual a rich time with, among others, a talk on the Psalms given by Fr Hourcade scj; a talk by Fr Tobia about the Betharramite life in Paraguay, along with a report on the visit of the Pope and on the active role played by the laity in the pastoral Betharramite activities; a “lectio divina” on one Letter of St. Michael; the Way of the Cross conducted along the chapels of the Calvary, a picnic on Saturday evening; a talk on the theme of next year, “Bearing fruit in the footsteps of the merciful Jesus”, inspired by the pilgrimage to the Holy Land, planned from 9 to 19 March 2016.

### Region



**Meeting** ► On July 20 – 22, the Superiors of the different communities of the three vicariates met at Lambaré, Asunción, for sharing new insights about the role of the Superior. During the meeting, the Superiors were guided by Mgr. Pedro Jubinville, Bishop of the Diocese of San Pedro (Paraguay) to reflect on “how we live the vows”. The religious shared about their positive and negative experiences concerning the vows of chastity and poverty and how they affect the community life day by day. They also discussed about the community experiences and how they strengthen and boost the sharing in the community. On July 22, the meetings were guided by Frs Mauro, Angel, Daniel and Gustavo: strong and weak aspects of the different communities were taken into consideration in order to outline the road ahead in the Region.

### Region



#### Thailand

**Time of planting** ► June is the annual season for planting rice to sustain the life of the mission of the Catholic Center of Maetawar. Fr Peter Chaiyoth scj, Parish Priest of Maetawar and Fr Peter Nonthapath scj thank all the people of the surrounding villages who helped the community to do the work, along with the students of the Catholic Mission of Maetawar.

in the scholasticat – and of course those who helped me by their presence and their advice. I thank God for them and for the path of love and sacrifice in the footsteps of St Michael, our Father. With them I offered myself to Christ and just like St Michael to say to God “Here I am, Lord”; Here I am to be yours, to show forth the love of the Incarnate Word. In other words, here I am to be witness to God who became poor, humble and one with us, for the whole of mankind, without distinction of class, tongue or culture.

*“It is not you who chose me, but I who have chosen you.”  
(John 15,16).*

For me to be a Betharramite means offering myself with Christ in the unending “Here I am” with all that we are, to establish his presence wherever he wants us to be, where he wants us to be a witness to his Gospel. It means to be witness to his love at the heart of the world by be-

ing rooted in his Sacred Heart. It means getting for others the joy he has given us himself. My dream as a young priest is to make better known the spirituality of St Michael and to strive for many religious vocations for Betharram in the Holy Land.

## NOTICES FROM THE GENERAL COUNCIL

### Notices from the Superior General and his Council

In the meeting of July 10<sup>th</sup> 2015 of the General Council, the Superior General, with the advice of his Council, **approved the appointment of Father Biju Panthalukkaran scj as master of novices and Father Stervin Selvadass as master of the scholastics** (Region Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified)

In the same meeting, the Superior General with the advice of his council **approved the appointment of Father Stervin Selvadass as Superior of the community of Mangalore** for a first mandate (Region Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified, Vicariate of India).

### In memoriam

On July, 21, **Mrs Isabella Pozzi**, 54 years old, sister of Fr Tiziano Pozzi scj, the Regional Vicar of the Vicariate of the Central African Republic, died in Lissone, North of Italy. We express our sympathy to Fr Tiziano and his family and we promise to keep them in our prayers.

### Carrying on the educational work of the Founder

**IN 58 YEARS OF RELIGIOUS PROFESSION AND GOLDEN JUBILEE OF PRIESTHOOD (CELEBRATED THIS SUMMER), FR. ARIALDO SCI WORKED IN FOUR CONTINENTS: AFTER HE LEFT EUROPE HE SPENT 12 YEARS IN CHIANG MAI, 2 YEARS IN BELO HORIZONTE, 6 YEARS IN KATIOLA, BEFORE BEING ENTRUSTED WITH THE NEW BETHARRAMITE PROJECT IN CENTRAL AFRICA IN 1985.**

**IN THE MIDST OF THE BUSH, THE RULE OF LIFE SOON RAISED A QUESTION: ARTICLE 118 IS FINE, YES, BUT HOW DO I LIVE IT HERE? NOT TO WORRY! FR. ARIALDO SET HIMSELF TO FIRST LISTEN... TO THE VILLAGE HEADMEN AND THEIR NEEDS. THEN HE ROLLED UP HIS SLEEVES... AND LO AND BEHOLD... ARTICLE 118 OF OUR RULE BECAME INCARNATE IN THE VILLAGE SCHOOLS OF CENTRAL AFRICA.**

Our mission in the service of education is an important part in our Rule of Life. The first push in this sense was given by our Founder himself, St Michael.

When I arrived here thirty years ago in this new mission in the Central African Republic I was confronted with this problem: how to evangelise an illiterate population lacking in education? From this was born the school's project.

I had no intention whatsoever of setting up important structures, simply the foundation so that the people could have a minimum of instruction. I was greatly helped in my project by the existence of a very rough and ready system: the "village schools". When the village chieftains wanted to educate their children they would look for an educated individual on the spot, who was paid a tiny salary in money or in kind and who would then be available for their children. They would build a little school often quite simply a shed in straw and bamboo where the pupils could gather.

When I arrived I found two such sheds which more or less did the job; they man-



aged to make do for three or four months of the year, then when the work in the fields began in February or March, school was over. I then came to the conclusion that we needed something stronger and long lasting. It was at this point that I began to meet the village chiefs to organise a different kind of school.

Today the mission supports fifteen schools with 2500 pupils. I looked for young people who had been to school to a satisfac-

tory level – the Bac or at least Primary or Secondary level. By offering them training sessions we were able to have competent teachers able to run the schools with results appreciated by the Inspectors and even by the Minister of

Education of the Central African Republic. There are now 55 teachers receiving a correct salary according to the regulations of the National Education. The salaries are funded by a small contribution from the parents together with adoptions by many benefactors who each contribute about €60 per pupil. We also supply school material such as slates, copy books and pens at prices acceptable by the pupils. The



*Article 118 : Ever since our foundation, education has been part of the mission of our congregation. This mission is always desired and encouraged by the Church: it is always a necessity, a priority. Realised in educational institutions, and in other forms of teaching or social development; it happens too in innovative pastoral approaches.*

*We have a vision of humanity to share, illuminated by our faith in the Son of God made man. In order that our educational mission can really touch children and young people, our pastoral outreach should also involve all our partners in education, especially parents, teachers and educators and all those close to the young.*

schools belong to the villages and not the diocese nor the Congregation. I hope that in the not too distant future they will become Primary Schools of the Central African Republic and will be financed by the Minister of Education.

I am happy that during those 25 years I have contributed to the education of thousands of children who have made their way to the Universities at home and abroad. The results are good! There are many adults holding diplomas in telecommunications, law, business studies, languages and nursing. It is perhaps only a drop in the ocean but there is the satisfaction of knowing that there are people trained and capable of helping the country to believe in a better future.

I think that what we read in Article 118 in our Rule of Life finds its realisation in the parishes lost in the bush of the Central African Republic where the state school is completely forgotten and below standard.

I want to thank all those who generously helped by supporting this project.

Arialdo Urbani, sci