



Painting by Juan Vladimir Martinovich

Listening to Saint Michael...

Sin is the absence of goodness; it is denial, it is nothingness. To believe that sin is a positive action; it is saying that God is the author of it, because everything positive comes from God. Hatred, for example, is something good in itself; nothing better than the hatred of evil; but to hate God means what? It is the denial of a healthy hatred, and is therefore a negative action; therefore it does not proceed from God. Who are the men who will be punished? They will be those who failed to do good; they will not be punished precisely because they have done wrong, but because they will have failed to do good – being evil the negation of the good.

Cachica Notebook, 16



Societas S^{mi} Cordis Jesu
BETHARRAM

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2016

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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

A WORD FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

114th year
10th series, nr 119
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The way of the glorious Cross

Adiapodoumé, on the 14th of September, 2016
Final profession of
Armél, Valentin, Hermann and Marie-Paulin

Today we are celebrating the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The Cross chosen by Jesus, our Master and Lord as an instrument of death has been changed into an instrument of life. Through his death on the cross Jesus has shown the utmost love by giving up his life which his Father accepted and raising him from the dead. Love is stronger than death. Thanks to the gift of Jesus' life on the Cross, our sins have been forgiven and we share in God's life. On Good Friday this was not entirely evident. It was hidden but what was really happening. The glorious Cross is the place where God's mercy is manifested as God's great gift. "For the redemption of the slave you sacrificed the Son."



400 years old and a few wrinkles



The miracle of the Cross, at the first station of the Way of the Cross at Betharram

(Exultet, Easter Vigil)

It is precisely the way of the glorious Cross that Jesus is offering us all to-day. *"He who does not take up his cross daily cannot be my disciple"*. (Luke 14, 27). It is the path of poverty, humility, of kindness, service, responsibility, forgiveness, and self sacrifice. It is the way chosen freely by Jesus and which in the eyes of the world ended in failure on the Cross. For God the Father it was no failure but a huge success: the Cross is the instrument of triumph for Jesus and his Kingdom. The Father

who could see the intentions of the Heart of Jesus, rewarded him not for the willing and suffering sacrifice but for the love shown by the offering of his life.

There is another path, the path which aims at personal success in all things. The path which means drawing attention to our selves, making mountains of diplomas, our ability in making relationships in search of benefactors who, thanks to their gifts, will help me to develop my personal projects, which will attract attention to me, thanks



Sunday, September 11, more than four hundred people attended the solemn celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Betharram Calvary. The celebration began with the meditation of the 15 stations of the way of the cross of Betharram and went on, in front of the Chapel of the Resurrection, with the Holy Mass presided by Mons. Marc Aillet, Bishop of Bayonne, Lescar and Oloron.

After the meal, the people present could hear the historical account of the building of the different chapels of the Station of the Cross. The day ended with a concert of songs of Béarn. This was a suitable conclusion of a very special day..

From the completion and the inauguration of the Calvary, on September 14th, 1873, to September 14th, 2016, the stations of the Way of the Cross inevitably underwent the ravages of time.

Eventually, after long preparations, the restoration of the Calvary is launched. The Regional Vicar, Fr. Jean-Dominique Delgue scj, reminded us last May in *En avant* (bulletin of the Vicariate of France-Spain): "An important effort is necessary! About four years of works. In four stages. At first we will focus on the most damaged

stations. The total cost is estimated at 1 500 000 €. The association of the "Friends of the Sanctuaries of Bétharram" committed to participating in the financing; the Congregation stood surety.

Everybody is concerned: a beautiful heritage to be embellished so that the walker, the passer-by, the tourist, the pilgrim, the curious can enjoy the peace of the place, find what he is looking for, meditate along the different chapels leading to life. In this Calvary of Bétharram, the Cross is glorious!"

to our parishes you added a piece of that precious icon which was to become our Unity. Whole generations have grown up under the eyes of the Fathers who were ready to take us by the hand and lead us through all the stages of life.

Finally, I want to say a special thank you to four people who have helped me throughout my whole life: thank you Father Alessandro – the first “gift” of my childhood and has left me with wonderful memories; he helped me to meet Sister Anna, the joys of the chaplaincy and the long trips in the mountain. I was in CM2 the morning you came into our classroom saying “If you want to reach the Summit you must keep your eyes riveted on the Summit”. Thank you Father Pietro for his strength, his advice and his telling off when I needed it! Thank you because every word encouraged me to get ready

for a God filled welcome. I also want to thank two friends: Father Maurizio who did so much for our parish and for the way he could be close to the youth for whom he always had a special place in his heart. Thank you for all that he gave us. I want to say thank you to Father Simon who was

a sure spiritual guide and good friend. He helped us to persevere in difficult moments. He helped us in the special World Youth Days, the pilgrimage to St James of Compostella, New Years Day in Rome, retreats, music festivals etc. Thank you for being so close to the young people of your time! To each and every one I want to say thank you and promise you that I bear you in my heart and remember you full of joy. I entrust you to Our Lady asking her to accompany you on your mission and that she will keep alive your “Here I am”. I know that we shall be united in prayer and friendship.

Forward march! Straight ahead until we reach Heaven. Thank you for that wonderful dream!

Alessandra Corti



to the power resulting from all that. That's the path leading to personal success. On such a path there is nothing more to come from God. *“They have received their reward”* (Matt. 6,16) so said Jesus.

Armel, Valentin, Hermann et Marie-Paulin, it is before God and in the presence of this Christian community of St Bernard, presided over by Mgr Salomon, bishop of Yopougon, that you have chosen to live in the following of the glorious Cross.

Your poverty, like that of Jesus who had nowhere to rest his head, (Luke 9,58) is your commitment to own nothing yourselves but to rely on Divine providence who will never let you down.

Your chastity, like that of Jesus is your commitment to live love, not just in a family but to be “universal brothers” in community and in the mission. But to rely on Divine providence who will never let you down. Your chastity, like that of Jesus is your commitment to live love, not just in a family but to be “universal brothers” in community and in the mission.

Your obedience, like that of Jesus to his Father, is your commitment not to have great personal projects, but to work for those of the Congregation in the service of the Church. These projects will become evident only when our Creator and Lord of all will have glorified your Crosses. *“Watch and pray so as not to be tempted; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak”*. Today, more than ever before, it is difficult to

be faithful to the projects of the Cross, for we are living in a society which attaches importance only to outward show, to comfort and power to which only a chosen few have access. You will be confronted with subtle temptations which will seem reasonable compared with those suggested by Jesus on the way of the Cross. Seek advice, pray, discern. See the Word of God and consult your superiors; never decide according to your own pleasure but what will make you more like Jesus in the Gospel. Today the community at St Bernard's is praying for your fidelity.

Today, like every other day, be united with Christ as he offers himself to the Father in the Eucharist. Offer him all that you are doing in the Mission. Thank him for all the graces with which he has showered you. Ask forgiveness for your failings. Ask him to grant you the gift of humility; offer yourselves as a gift to God in prayer, to your brothers in community and finally for the Mission. Never forget that Jesus walks by your side on the way of the glorious Cross which he knows so well.

Forward march on the way to heaven! So says St Michael Garicoits. In heaven our cross will be glorious. Let us bless the Lord because he is good to us and because his Mercy extends to all generations! Amen.”

Gaspar Fernández Pérez scj
Superior General

SNAPSHOTS OF BETHARRAMITE LIFE

Not only the tears... but also the smile of the bishops



During his short stay in Rome, Mons D'Souza was invited to have lunch in via Brunetti. This was an opportunity to thank him once again, to renew the bond of friendship and to let him know a bit more about our congregation.

In 1999, our Congregation established a community in the Mangalore Dioceses where our young brothers in formation are given the opportunity to have some pastoral experience in the city and to attend the Theology course in the seminary.

THE LAITY AND THE CHARISM OF BETHARRAM

To the Fathers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Brothers

THIRTY YEARS AFTER HAVING TAKEN UP THE PASTORAL CARE OF MONTEMURLO (ITALY), THE LATTER HAS JUST BEEN GIVEN BACK TO THE DIOCESE OF PISTOIA. LACK OF PERSONNEL, NECESSITY OF RESIZING OUR PRESENCE TO ASSURE A SIGNIFICANT RELIGIOUS LIFE... SUCH ARE THE MAIN MOTIVES LEADING TO THE DECISION OF CLOSING A COMMUNITY THAT, SINCE 1980, PROPOSED A PASTORAL LIFE INSPIRED BY OUR SPIRITUALITY TO THE PARISHIONERS AND MADE OUR SAINT AND HIS VIRTUES BETTER KNOWN.

Thirty-six years ago a dream was born when men of good will decided to stop at Montemurlo. One fine morning they buried the seed in the soil of our Region; it began to grow at once. Here is the story of this dream.

Thirty-six years ago: do you realize? Besides the times gone by, think of all those people whom you have known: there were births, people have grown up, have met and got married. Their children were born, you christened them. People were happy, were unhappy; some died and were reborn. Faith is often faced with painful moments. God seems to be silent, hidden, there is no reply. Do you remember the grain I have been talking about? Let's go back to the beginning.

Mother Teresa used to call Jesus the "great absent" precisely because he is silent, hidden; God hides, but where? I think I have found out. When I was young I noticed with the passage of time that there was a little miracle. God was hiding in your eyes, your hands, your feet; he had come to take up residence in your "Here I am, Lord", your "Yes" which St Michael said with courage. Thanks to your words and example I could enjoy the precious gift of the Faith: life like a path and our fate as

pilgrims longing for the Beauty of God.

I understood that Life is a passion; it needs to be cultivated and cared for from beginning to end. I learned that Life is a community; we are destined to share the joys and sorrows, the thoughts, desires, expectations, difficulties and misunderstandings.

To my utter surprise I realised that Life is friendship; during these past years not only did I find priests sent to the service of our parish, but I also found friends.

I found out that following Jesus was the same as joy, because joy is what we receive when we open our hearts to Christ. St Michael whom you helped us to get to know has become part and parcel of our daily lives as a humble example and easy to follow. He is not just a saint but a friendly saint with a special place in the heart of each one of us. Our years spent here have become important for our lives; we have become a family. With the passage of time our Community has taken modal on yours and the strength of your charism and spirit of service also. We have grown up together; we are like a colour post card which God has placed in your hands and which you have completed successfully. When you came

Region



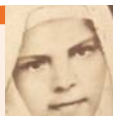
France-Spain

Pilgrimage ► On September 14, the members of the Assembly of the Vicariate, which took place in Betharram, organized a Day Pilgrimage to Lourdes on the occasion of the Jubilee of Mercy. They crossed the threshold of the Holy Door of Mercy on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. After spending sometime in personal prayer, they celebrated the Holy Eucharist and ended the day with a fraternal meal.

Italy

New community ► Saturday, September 17th, the Betharramite community residing in the Parish of St. Andrea in Antognano in Parma moved, at the request of the bishop of Parma, Mgr. Enrico Solmi, to Langhirano Parish. For this occasion, Fr Aldo Nespoli (Regional Vicar), joined the Frs Angelo Riva, Angelo Bianchi and Gianluca Limonta. The Eucharistic celebration, which marked the beginning of this new service, was presided over by the bishop himself in the presence of the mayor and the representatives of the various associations of the area (Public Assistance, Scout, Alpini, etc.). The church was packed with people who came from the various communities belonging to the "New Parish of Langhirano" (consisting of 12 parishes) and with a delegation of faithful from the parishes of St. Andrea in Antognano (Parma) and by the parishes of Beduzzo (previously served by the Betharramites). The celebration was followed by a convivial social event.

Region



India

Thanksgiving celebration ► The Community of Maria Kripa celebrated the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Onam festival. Both these events are marked as the feasts of harvest and thanksgiving. The community also had the gathering of deacons, who are the classmates of Bros. Reagan and Shamon. The Vicar General of Mangalore, Rev. Msgr. Dennis Prabhu celebrated the Holy Eucharist.

Thailand

Economics ► From 26 to 29 of September Fr Graziano Sala, General Bursar, was in Chiang Mai community (Thailand). He gathered the superiors of the different communities and the religious ready to learn about the administrative system of the Congregation. Fr Graziano was supported by Mr Luigi Pirovano, who has been working, for quite a few years, with the General House for the economic and administrative matters of the Congregation. All the religious present were quite cooperative and available and were helped to focus on some aspects of the economic issue: first, the need to return to the Rule of Life, where we learn how to live the vow of poverty; then, on a practical level, how to draw up a budget and to keep the monthly accounting of the Vicariate and of the communities.



Vessels of mercy

TO REAWAKEN OUR CONSCIENCE, TOO OFTEN GROWN DULL IN THE FACE OF POVERTY. AND LET US ENTER MORE DEEPLY INTO THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL... TO BECOME A MORE EFFECTIVE SIGN OF THE FATHER'S ACTION IN OUR LIVES. IT WAS FRANCIS' WISH AT THE OPENING OF THE JUBILEE OF MERCY. FAR FROM GETTING LOST IN WORDS, AND AS A GOOD GUIDE, THE POPE OFFERS US CONCRETE EXAMPLES TO BE MEDITATED UPON, WHERE THE MERCY IS SOMEHOW THE ACTIVE ELEMENT OF A CONVERSION OF THE HEART.

Our saints received mercy

We can benefit from contemplating others who let their heart be re-created by mercy and by seeing the "vessel" in which they received that mercy.

Paul... Peter...

John... Augustine... Francis... Ignatius... Curé d'Ars... and the parish priest Brochero

Blessed José Gabriel del Rosario Brochero, the Argentinian priest – my countryman! – who will soon be canonized. He "let his heart be shaped by the mercy of God". In the end, his vessel was his own leprous body. He wanted to die on horseback, crossing a mountain stream on the way to anoint a sick person. Among the last things he said was: "There is no ultimate glory in this life". For me these words are striking: "There is no ultimate glory in this life". Towards the end, when leprosy had left him blind, he said: "I am quite happy with what God has done with me regarding my sight, and I thank him for that. While I could serve other people, he kept my senses whole and strong. Today, when



I can no longer do so, he has taken away one of my physical senses. In this world there is no ultimate glory, and we have our more than enough misery". Often our work remains unfinished, so being at peace with that is always a grace. We are allowed to "let things go", so that the Lord can bless and perfect them. We shouldn't be overly concerned. In this way, we can be open to the pain and joy of our brothers and sisters. Cardinal Van Thuan used to say that, in prison, the Lord taught him to distinguish between "God's business", to which he was devoted in his free life as priest and bishop,

and God himself, to whom he was devoted during his imprisonment (Five Loaves and Two Fish, Pauline Books and Media, 2003). We could easily go on talking about how the saints were vessels of mercy, but let us turn to Our Lady. After all, we are in her house!

EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY
Spiritual retreat given
by his Holiness Pope Francis
on the occasion of the jubilee for priests
Second meditation
Basilica of Saint Mary Major - Thursday, 2 June 2016

Jose Gabriel del Rosario Brochero (16 March 1840 – 26 January 1914) was ordained to the priesthood in the diocese of Córdoba (Argentina) on 4 November 1866 at the age of 26. He was known to travel long distances in Argentina on the back of a mule dressed in a sombrero and a poncho to serve the needs of the Christian faith throughout his huge parish. He cared for the sick during the cholera epidemic of 1867 and contracted leprosy during his travels, from which he suffered throughout his life. He became well known to his parishioners and made efforts to improve all aspects of their involvement in church life. He became blind and deaf towards the end of his life. He is known for his extensive work with the poor and the sick. He became affectionately known as "the Gaucho priest" and the "cowboy priest". He was beatified on 14 September 2013 after a healing was recognized as a miracle attributed to him.



"Father Brochero was a 'gaucho priest'. He was very close to his people and used to travel on the back of a mule from place to place, working so that there were work, schools and dignity", said Mgr. Olivera, postulator of the Cause of canonization.

Pope Francis approved the second miracle attributed to Brochero on 21 January 2016 and confirmed the date of the late priest's canonization which will be held on 16 October 2016.

In the meeting of the General Council on October 13th 2016, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, decided to present Br. Juan Pablo García Martínez (Region Fr. Auguste Etchecopar, Vicariate of Argentina-Uruguay) to the priesthood.

On October 14th, 2016, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, decided to admit to final profession the following brothers :

Michael Bistis Fernando (Region Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified, Vicariate of India)
Vipin Joseph Chirammel (Region Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified, Vicariate of India)
Edwin Joseph Manavalan (Region Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified, Vicariate of India)
Jestin James Marottikkal (Region Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified, Vicariate of India)

He also decided to present to diaconate the following brothers ... :

Marie-Paulin Yarkaï (Region Saint Michael Garicoïts, Vicariate of Central Africa)
Michael Bistis Fernando (Region Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified, Vicariate of India)
Vipin Joseph Chirammel (Region Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified, Vicariate of India)
Edwin Joseph Manavalan (Region Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified, Vicariate of India)
Jestin James Marottikkal (Region Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified, Vicariate of India)

In the same meeting, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council (cf. RdV 307) and with the assent of the Bishop of Albi (France), granted to Fr. Emmanuel Congo Winonga another year of exclaustation, starting from October 10th 2016.



deeper grasp of the pattern of spiritual growth and for a deeper understanding of humanity. All these needs have been a stimulus for religious attending courses in scripture, spirituality, liturgy and Ignatian Spirituality. I am often lukewarm when religious want to follow courses on Counselling as I feel that the desire to find solutions for others is often a means of escaping from one's own inner conflicts. But even this can be turned to good, if the Counselling Course in question demands an inner personal journey. This is why the Formators' courses in Bangalore are so good: they demand that formators reach a deep self-awareness. Pope Francis in Cracow this summer asked that we train priests and religious in discernment and accompaniment, not so much to give people instructions, as to help them come to their path themselves. This is only possible with critical self-awareness. Back in 2000 in the England Vicariate we suffered a serious crisis of confidence with the departure of our former Provincial, a man much loved and respected. But the initial sense of catastrophe was a stimulus for us to find a new way of sharing and supporting one another. Led by two religious sisters of the Selly Park Congregation we came to way of sharing at our Vicariate retreats in a way that we mutually supported one another and derived strength through weakness. The pattern of this sharing, learnt through pain and tears has been continued and developed over the last 15 years and has made so many other things possible ... lectio divina ... Ignatian meditation.. sharing about St. Michael's letters etc..

God does indeed form us in mysterious ways.

This leads me to a final point: we should never overlook the hidden blessing of a crisis in order to seize a chance to grow in the spirit. Sometimes it is only when we are desperate, after a bereavement... a time of depression... an experience of falling in love... a realisation that we have an addiction problem ... a nervous breakdown.. that we become open to receiving help from others and gain a new opportunity for ongoing formation. St. Paul was very familiar with this. His plea to God to escape from pain (2 Corinthians 12) when he was in deep torment received a calm assurance that 'my grace finds full scope in your weakness'. Our human failings are God's window of opportunity. If we have a sense of this we will always be open to ongoing formation, a pathway of Conversion.

Austin Hughes scj
Regional Superior

New finally professed

AT THE FOOT OF THE GLORIOUS CROSS, ON SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2016, VALENTIN, HERMANN, ARMEL (FROM THE IVORY COAST) AND MARIE-PAULIN (FROM CENTRAL AFRICA) PRONOUNCED THEIR FINAL VOWS IN THE CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS OF BÉTHARRAM.

THESE FEW PAGES DEDICATED TO THEM GIVE US THE OPPORTUNITY OF SENDING THEM OUR BEST WISHES FOR AN EXEMPLARY LIFE, FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS CHRIST, AND FOR A FRUITFUL AND JOYFUL MINISTRY.

VALENTIN N'ZORÉ I got to know the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram thanks to the Sisters of the Christian Doctrine who have a community in our parish. They led us in a group of vocational searching. So, when I expressed to them my desire to enter into religious life, they recommended to me the Adiapodoumé Community. I began my journey in 2006. It was in 2008 that I went back as

a postulant to the training house. What struck me about the Bétharramite religious life was the prayer, the simplicity, the availability and the humility of the brothers and fathers who welcomed me. Additionally, the noviciate was for me the most important time of my training, as I spent a year scrutinising the life of Jesus in the Holy Land. Moreover, the international session has come to deepen my faith, in such a way that after



From left to right: Br. Armel, Br. Hermann, Br. Marie-Paulin, Br. Valentin

having experienced the country of Jesus in Bethlehem, I spent 40 days discovering the founder from the cradle to his going to Heaven.

After my perpetual profession, I was appointed bursar in the formation house at Adiapodoumé where I also exercise responsibility for the reception centre. I give thanks to the Lord for all his goodness in my life. I rely on the intercession of Our Lady of Betharram and of our father, St Michael Garicoits, to stay faithful to Christ my whole life.

MARIE-PAULIN YARKAÏ I am from Central Africa. I have known Betharram since I was in college in 2003. I came from the Diocesan Seminary, and I always had the desire inside me to consecrate my life to serve Christ, by serving my brothers and sisters. It's a desire that I've carried with me since my childhood. It's when I joined the JEC that I got to know Fr Mario Zappa, at that time Diocesan Chaplain of the said movement. Over time, a connection was built up between him and me. He would later become my spiritual guide until I joined the group of Community aspirants. At the end of three years of exchange, of listening and of discernment, I was called to begin my Betharramite experience in the Fatima Community in Central Africa. It was on 16th October 2006, the day after I passed my Baccalaureate. After this, I was admitted to begin the postulancy in 2007. The same year, I started my degree in Philosophy at the St Laurence of Bouar Major Seminary. On 2nd September 2008, after having taken the entry test to the St Paul of Abadjin-Kouté Inter-Diocesan Major Seminary, I tread upon the soil of the Ivory Coast for the first time, in order to continue this experience following after Christ, as a Postulant and as a Philosophy student. This 'Here I Am' that had urged me on and attracted me from my first contact with the community 'like an all-consuming fire', continued to ring out in my heart, so giving me perseverance in my journey towards following Christ. That is how, in September 2010, I was received into the noviciate at Bethlehem. On 25th

March 2013, day of the solemnity of the annunciation, I took my first vows in the congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram. After a Theology Degree, completed in June 2015, followed by a year off, I received the grace to make my perpetual profession on 14th September 2016 in Abidjan. I am continuing my training in nursing care in a health institute in Abidjan.

HERMANN DJISON BAHÍ I am Brother Herman Djison Bahi of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram; I am a national of the Ivory Coast, more precisely from the West of the Ivory Coast. It gives me great joy to share with you my 'Here I Am' to follow Christ in the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram. Indeed, I started first as an altar server in the parish of St. Bernard and that's exactly the place where I met the Fathers of Betharram. These were for me tireless missionaries always saying 'Here I Am' for the missions others didn't want. This availability to the task, to the mission with gentleness, love, humility, in the service of others, was the fundamental element which created a desire in me to join the congregation in order to show others the same impulse of happiness and joy. From there I gave my 'Here I Am without delay, without reserve, without turning back, for love' to following Christ, in the steps of St Michael Garicoits, since 2006. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the experience that made me feel I belong body and soul to the Betharramite family is the experience of the Noviciate where I really learned the fundamentals of religious life and more importantly the fundamentals of the Betharramite life. Currently, I am working at the Tshanfeto Educational Farm on the premises of the Saint Bernard d'Adiapodoumé. Parish. Onwards as always!

ARMEL DALY VABIE I was a small boy when I saw and heard of the religious brothers and fathers of Betharram. They were in charge of the parish of St. Bernard of Adiapodoumé. That is why I could visit

at Shobhana Shaakha, and in England 5 times a year at Nympsfield. In all vicariates we are appreciated by the different Dioceses for the work we do, often taking missions that Diocesan priests have been reluctant to accept. But we still have work to do in persuading bishops not to fragment our communities. This pressure can come from a Bishop's decision to divide a successful Betharram mission into separate parishes, or a diocesan policy to pay for only one priest in a community. Our Rule of Life §§171-175 encourages ongoing formation and gives superiors and their councils an overseeing role in making these a reality. In all three vicariates there are national or diocesan programmes for ongoing formation for priests and religious, and our religious in Thailand especially have taken advantage of these. The church in India with its larger numbers has a multiplicity of formation programmes to choose from, and these attract participants from other countries. Every week in The Tablet there are adverts for Religious Renewal programmes in the UK, run by Redemptorists ... Jesuits ... Claretians and others, and a few members of our England vicariate have taken advantage of these over the years. But my own experience has been that no one will take to a programme of formation with enthusiasm unless they perceive the need for it. An organised programme no matter how good, will be a waste of time unless the participants feel the need for it. So what makes people feel the need for ongoing formation? Firstly we will be open to formation



if we have a spirituality of strength-through-weakness. We all know the lines of St. Paul 'When I am weak then I am strong' (2 Corinthians 12.10) but to live this in practice runs counter to modern culture, which in all our three vicariates stresses independence and self-sufficiency. Happily, even though by culture and temperament we may feel self-sufficient, life experience soon teaches us a different story. We learn early on in our ministry that despite the high marks we obtained in our moral theology courses we do not have all the answers to people's situations. We learn quickly too, that the routine of prayer and meditation we found so easy to maintain at seminary was harder to maintain in a pastoral setting and that our spiritual condition could easily deteriorate. We learnt after a while the need for deeper study of scripture, for a

Ongoing Formation: a pathway of conversion

THE MONKS OF THE ORDER OF ST.BENEDICT TAKE ONLY TWO VOWS: STABILITY AND CONVERSION. STABILITY MEANS THAT THEY WILL BE FAITHFUL TO THE RULE OF ST.BENEDICT IN A PARTICULAR MONASTERY. CONVERSION MEANS THAT THEY WILL NEVER STOP STRIVING FOR HOLINESS, LEARNING FROM THEIR MISTAKES OR GROWING IN WISDOM. SO CONVERSION IS THE BEST WORD I KNOW TO DESCRIBE THE BETHARRAMITE PATH OF ONGOING FORMATION.

Article 171. This formation is a lifelong necessity; each one remains the principal agent of it. It fosters progress in the spiritual life, confronts personal and contemporary problems in a constant conversion to the Gospel. It encourages renewal in apostolic activities.

The days are long gone since we thought that formation finished with final vows. The whole of our life story is a tale of formation, of learning from mistakes, of gaining wisdom and knowledge and deepening our love of the charism of St.Michael. The founding fathers of the old England Vice Province that we all remember with so much love ... Fr.Jack Waddoups ...Fr.Frank Dutton ...Fr.Percy Collier.. all considered themselves to be 'in formation' until their dying day. For the young religious in the years just after final vows, ongoing formation is an exciting time, with new liturgical skills to pick up, new ministries to master and new challenging mission posts to tackle. I have been in admiration of my younger brothers in both India and Thailand as I see them rise to the challenge and give themselves wholeheartedly to new assignments, often with a new language to learn and a new culture to grasp. The example of young Thais who have gone

to serve in India, Vietnam or Europe has been inspiring, as is the example of young Indians who have gone to serve in Vietnam, Israel & Europe. Since India is such a vast country, even the journey to Assam with its many tribes and tongues is like a venture to another country. The new superiors in each vicariate have responded to their tasks with generosity. This in itself is a kind of formation. Back in the old days when communities were very large, only about 20% of religious ever became Superiors. Today with much smaller communities, about 80% of all religious will at some point serve their community as Superior. To their credit the superiors have tried to prioritise community life in their houses... common prayer... common purse... common mission... and sharing of experiences. At Vicariate level there are regular meetings for prayer and sharing. In Thailand they meet every two months at Chiang Mai. In India they meet nearly every month

them, and the lives of some priests, including Fr Gabriel Verley, impressed me a lot. He always gave the best of himself in his apostolate; it was with conviction that he proclaimed the Gospel message. He got close to the 'little people' (especially the poor and invalids); he organised the parish youth well, to whom he passed on the taste for sport. Rightly so (with the admiring look from the little boy that I was back then), these remain for me the great missionaries. Over time, I became close to the Betharramites. Their speciality, as religious brothers and fathers, more than impressed me. I found it was pretentious of them to consider themselves as mystics of the Incarnation (intimately close to the Sacred Heart of Jesus) and to want to 'reproduce the impulse of the Word Incarnate'. But, curiously, that was what struck me most. And, in 2006, I began the postulancy; it was, from that date until today, a great adventure where I

only had to discover the surprising faithfulness of God towards me. I really don't deserve anything. All Glory and Honour to Him. A (recent) experience that left its mark on me. Last year, I was asked to follow the aspirants of the Central African Bouar Formation House. I said yes; but I had some doubts. But, I was sure that these new and demanding experiences were going to contribute more to my configuration to Christ and to my love of Betharram. My joy today, is what reinforces my convictions and makes me live out my consecrated life joyfully. I am discovering what it is to surrender to God.



A new community in India

WITH THE CANONICAL FOUNDATIONS OF TIPTUR (KARNATAKA) AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR AND MORE RECENTLY OF ADIGONDANAHALLI (IN THE OUTSKIRTS OF BANGALORE), 2016 HAS BEEN A FRUITFUL YEAR FOR THE VICARIATE OF INDIA. THE FIRST TWO COMMUNITIES OF ORIGIN, CENTERED ON FORMATION, GAVE FRUIT: THERE ARE NOW THREE SCJ COMMUNITIES COMMITTED TO PASTORAL ACTIVITIES IN INDIA.

AND LET US NOT FORGET THAT EVERY TIME A COMMUNITY IS SET UP, IT IS ANOTHER PART OF SAINT MICHAEL'S DREAM COME TRUE: A GROUP OF RELIGIOUS MEN WHO FAITHFULLY OBSERVE THE SAME RULE AND FOLLOW THE SAME MODEL OF PERFECTION, THE TRINITARIAN LIFE. *UNUM SINT!*

It was in 2010



Sunday January 10th was a day of joy when Fr. Britto Rajan scj. was installed as Parish Priest of Adigondanahalli St. Joseph Church having a sub station at Edevanahalli (St. Antony's Church).

Fr. Michael, Chancellor of the Bangalore Archdiocese represented the Archbishop Bernard Moras and conveyed Bishop's wishes for Fr. Britto. Fr. Moses the Dean of the Begur Deanery presided over the installation ceremony. The church was indeed packed and people were so excited and joyful to see the new Parish Priest. At the same time, Deacon Valan and Bro. George (Regency Brother) came to join Fr. Britto to be witness to the people. Kindly keep them in our prayer so that they may be really an instrument of love among the people and fulfil the mission we've been entrusted by the Archdiocese of Bangalore.

(News pubblicata sul sito della Congregazione)

St. Joseph's, Adigondanahalli has been a part of the Betharramite world since 2010 but this year it has been elevated to the official status of a Betharramite community. The Bishop invited us 6 years ago to this small poor parish on the edge of the Bangalore Diocese near the Tamil Nadu border and asked us to develop and build it up. Fr. Britto was our first parish priest here, followed after

three years by Fr. Valan.

In that time the parish has grown and flourished, and the Betharramite religious there have encouraged the faith of the people with mission-retreats, built up good relations with the two communities of Sisters in the area as well as with a nearby Jesuit House of Formation. We have used St. Joseph's as a pastoral training base for our students & novices and the Shobhana

Shaakha community has always supported any large parish events there. We heard from neighbouring clergy that it was not a popular posting for Diocesan priests but the work of Betharram has changed all that in the last few years.

The Bishop asked us to take on three developments: the first was the building of a new parish house at St. Anthony's Yadavanahalli a neighbouring sub-station and then to build a new church at St. Joseph's itself to cater for a large housing development nearby. Then the bishop asked us to make St. Anthony's a new parish. So in a very short time the new house was built and the new church is near completion. Fr. Enakuis is soon to become the new parish priest at St. Joseph's (as Fr. Valan moves on) and Fr. Rojo is the new parish priest of St. Anthony's. He is also the new superior of the new community formed by the two houses (2km apart). Fr. George Anthony has joined Fr. Rojo as assistant, and one of the finally professed will soon join Fr. Enakuis. Both households pray together and share meals on a regular basis.

About half the Christians in the parish are of Tamil origin, but language is such a sensitive question in the Diocese that only the Kannada language is used in

the Sunday liturgy, so both Rojo and Enakius and Britto and Arul before them all worked diligently to speak Kannada in true Betharram missionary spirit.

Now the parishes once in a forgotten corner of the Diocese are eyed enviously by the local priests!

Austin Hughes scj
Regional Superior



*The members of the community at the moment
Frs.. Enakius, Rojo, Valan and George Anthony*