



Painting by Juan Vladimír Martinovich

Listening to Saint Michael...

Lately, an Englishman, whom we had here the other day, with the Superior of the minor seminary of Yvetot, far from being distanced from the Church by the bad example of a priest, felt more inclined towards her. After having refused in London a benefice of £30,000, he went to Rome with his wife, to examine at its source the doctrine of the Roman Church, where his conscience told him that truth lay. He visited Saint Peter's one day, and considered everything with the utmost care; a priest was baptising in a side chapel, he drew near; and as the priest performed the ceremonies in a rather distracted and flippant manner, this good Englishman feared that this conduct would scandalise his wife; He immediately turned her away from this place and took her elsewhere. (to be continued)

Cachica Notebook, 10



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BETHARRAM

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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

115th year
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**"Behold, I send you as sheep
among the wolves..."**

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...Be as cunning as serpents, and as innocent as doves.
(Mt 10:16) Nothing will befall you. This is one of Jesus' promises, a missionary sending that should fill us with courage in these times, when we propose to "go out".
'Whoever welcomes you welcomes me' (Mt 10,40).

Dear Betharramites,

We are already in the post-chapter phase and we are beginning to walk together: some "old timers" and a well-nourished troupe of young Betharramites.

I am glad to know that some have begun to reflect on the Acts of the Chapter. It is a useful instrument which expresses something of the Gospel, and invites us to be faithful. It is not a treatise or a useful roadmap that will last six years and then be set aside.

As for the Acts, one brother remarked to me recently: "In the text, the word "Church" (in the sense of a local Church) appears only once ..." Indeed, I was able to verify it (although the word does appear with other meanings). He added: "Does this omission mean that we,



Journey of Fr. Gustavo scj to India on the occasion of the meeting of the Regional Council of the Saint Miriam Region (September 2017)

Betharramites, are not willing enough to enter into a process of inculturation in the local Church ...?"

On the one hand, the Church is not mentioned much in the text. That is true, and that gives us some thought. Perhaps as religious, we are very attentive to "what passes within", between us, by referring to ourselves... For years, we have endeavored to elaborate a synthesis which respects our identity and our mission, which were threatened by the change of time. It was a long and necessary process.

On the other hand, we also see that the word "community" appears repeatedly in the Acts (considered among other things as a condition for changing places and meeting new missionary challenges). It is a way of fighting a pervasive individualism. It stems from the need to remain faithful and united in times of crisis. This is perceived by some brothers as a re-

quirement that puts a brake on the urgency of mission, which delays the "going out", which makes us more concerned with preparations than with a prompt response to the call of the One who sends us. It leads us to prepare "two tunics for the road" (Lk 9: 3) and leads us to postpone in time the proclamation of Jesus Christ where we are most needed.

One might think that the Betharramites are afraid to go outside, or perhaps we believe that "outside nothing happens"... Someone asked me not long ago: what do you mean

when you speak of "peripheries outside and inside"... I replied that it was the peripheries outside our institutions and inside, outside our offices, our sacristies... One of my professors in consecrated life used to say: "The Dominicans frequent the choir very much..., the Jesuits walk through the streets..." I wonder then... what is the habitat of we Betharramites...? that we are missionaries such as St. Michael wanted us to be...?

Let us stop making so many calculations. We should not risk locking ourselves in a cage, when we must rather create the conditions to be able to fly like birds to meet the brother who suffers. "Give me a heart that truly loves. He believes, he tastes the things of God, he runs, he tiptoes in the steps of Our Lord Jesus Christ." (SD § 101).

Apart from all these questions (forgive me, it will no doubt be a reminiscence of childhood with its why?), I am convinced

of Bayonne, spoke of a "young catechist" who accompanied the five priests and the two companion brothers; two years afterwards he asked him to admit him among the clergy, and to confer upon him the various orders. By 20 December 1863 Jean Magendie is a priest (exactly 40 years after Michael Garicoïts).

On 19 March 1858, the young Magendie, still a scholar, was with Fr Barbé and Brother Joannes heroically opening the College of San José in an old leather depot. The missionaries - and even Father Guimon - were in favour of it: they thought they would find vocations there as preachers. But five, six, twenty students in a dirty space was not sufficient: they had to close. The miracle came from the neighborhood: the priest looked to Father Barbé, who never refused to do a service; the police commissioner wanted a good education for the children of the neighbourhood; both became recruiting agents and there were 100 students in late July! Success led to another problem: the need to build, but where? Father Barbé didn't want cheap land but money was lacking! Brother Magendie left his school work and insisted: "We must buy, the money will come!" The answer came: "Be quiet! You are only a child!" Yet the 23-year-old was right: a year later, on 19 March 1859, new premises host the College and Father Garicoïts sends others for teaching!

Father Barbé's first collaborator, Father Magendie was soon to become the trusted counsellor. His righteousness and openness made him a respected and beloved educator. Naturally, on the death of Father Barbé on 13 August 1869, Father Magendie became the director of the college which he was for a long time.

In spite of health weakened by asthma, he put his talents at the service of all his colleagues. At the death of Father Harbustan, they put him at the head: from 1873 to his death he was "Superior of the American Colony", in the words of Father Etchécopar, with whom he maintained a close correspondence. Under his guidance several foundations were started, including those of Rosario, La Plata and Barracas in Argentina, as well as in Asunción in Paraguay. With him, 82 priests and 19 brothers served five colleges, three churches, an apostolate, a novitiate and a community of formation. Several times, his duties brought him back to France: he participated in the general chapters and witnessed the process of beatification of Father Garicoïts, who had been his spiritual advisor.

Faithful to the religious life and the principles inherited from Michael Garicoïts, he also listened to the men and events of his time. He boldly defended the Church against sometimes virulent adversaries; one of them saying: "The man who most troubles me is this monk, and the frail Magendie!"

At the end of a busy life, he died in Buenos Aires on 20 October 1925; he was 90 years old. Is there a biography of this exceptional man? It seems not. Yet he has left documents, some of which differ from those usually used or supplement them...

Beñat Oyhenart scj

1 Explanation from Fr. Etchécopar : « To live a good religious vocation you need to be idoneus, expeditus, expositus. : « Idoneus: fit to fulfil the aims of the institution; « Expeditus: freed from all ties which would hinder progress; « Expositus: exposed to the core before superiors so that they can use him according to his ability.

THE FIRST COMPANIONS OF MICHAEL GARICOÏTS

Jean Magendie: all in the service of the foundation in America

F.V.D.

Bétharram, 3 November 1857

My dear friend,

Yes, yes, with all my heart, I send you the blessing of the old man and the priest; I wish it brings you happiness in life and in death... We are waiting for your little brother, aspiring to be one of us; his father willingly consents and wants to help him be like you. Pray for us and for him, and always be *homo idoneus, expeditus et expositus*¹; it is the infallible means of being forever the joy and crown of your superiors, the Church and even of God.

Amen! Amen!

To all of you in N.-S. J.-C.

Garicoïts, Ptre



Jean Magendie

(24 March 1835 - 22 October 1925)

It is brief, but how precious to have this letter from Michael Garicoïts to Mr. Magendie, his "dear friend"! The word of the "old man" - as he calls himself - to the youngest of those sent to Buenos Aires: a novice and hardly 22 years old when he is chosen for this mission! But what a religious career!

No doubt Michael Garicoïts wanted to ensure the American presence: alongside the first companion, the passionate and fiery Simon Guimon, needing someone quite young who had not completed his training. He thinks first of Brother Pierre Cachica - the one who left a the precious notebook of Father Garicoïts' lessons. But he was the only son of a widow; we could not impose such a painful separation on his mother. So the choice was

for a novice, a volunteer for this mission.

Jean Magendie was born in Beuste (about ten kilometers from Bétharram) on 24 March 1835 (the year when the first community was formed around Father Garicoïts). Between the ages of 16 and 19 he was a student in Bétharram; there his novitiate began on 22 October 1854 (at the time when the mission to America was planned); he made his profession, and on 31 August 1856, embarked with the others: for America! In his letter of recommendation to the Bishop of Buenos Aires, Mgr. Lacroix, Bishop

that Betharramites are renewing themselves in mission. At least, there are clear and encouraging signs in this direction. Some examples :

In the Central African Republic and India... life is threatened today. It is well known that some populations with whom Betharram is present are victims of persecution by ethnic rebel groups or religious discrimination.

Niem is at the heart of these tensions because of the politico-social problems that condition the mission. Communication interrupted, roads blocked, a risk that the armed groups will turn at any moment to violence. Meanwhile, our brothers say their 'Ecce venio' while caring for the wounded and the sick, continuing to serve with perseverance.

In India, in Bidar (State of Karnataka), the place is inhospitable. The power supply is erratic and the summer heat almost unbearable. We work with animist, Hindu, Muslim, etc. It is not rewarding and it is not possible to deliver the proclamation of the Gospel explicitly, working only for human promotion and fraternal love. In exchange, we only receive a precious smile...

Two other missions: in Kerala, there is a Malayalam community which is deprived of a pastor who can accompany him by speaking their language. In Mangalore, an important Catholic institution places at our disposal a house to accommodate abandoned street people.

Thousands of miles away, in America, the historical presences are consolidated with missions carried out in the urban and rural areas. It is a society impoverished in

many respects. Care is taken of those who knock on the door, who must eat, shower, be listened to and counselled... Groups of lay people and religious work to prevent addiction by helping those who are suffering. We leave comfortable parishes, where the prophecy seems to be obscured and ignored, to accept peripheral parishes.

In Italy, at Monte Porzio, the long established Betharramite work for the lives of AIDS patients needs no introduction. A mission that speaks for itself and is shared with lay people and experts.

Attention to Hebrew-speaking Christians in the Holy Land requires the dedication of generous missionaries who learn the language and are ready to serve them. It is not easy to take on this challenge. Brothers from a younger Betharram, such as India, Thailand, Cote d'Ivoire, Brazil, Paraguay, leave their original vicariates to serve where they are sent on mission.

You will forgive me for not being able to mention here the many other missionary gestures that build the Body of Christ in the local Church. Something grows gently among us, something that will never appear in the Acts, something like a sucker that grows by drawing its strength from the old, almost dry tree. It's a sign of Life! An answer to Jesus who sends us out like sheep among wolves...

Eduardo Gustavo Agin scj
Superior General

Saint Michael goes back to school



*Children of the Casa del Niño in Adrogué
have a new smiling companion:
St. Michael Garicoits, whose path to holiness
began from his earliest childhood,
on the ... small snowy mountains ... of Ibarre.*

*On the grey walls of Adrogué's crèche,
adults, children and friends had the wonderful idea
to welcome among them this "little personage"
who will soon tell them the story of a "hidden treasure".*

More than 40 years ago, Betharramite religious, along with some families from the community of Adrogué (Argentina), decided to found the **Casa del Niño** to welcome during the day children of the neighbourhood whose mothers worked in the 'tin factory, located in front of Villa Betharram. Since then, this factory has closed, and the life of the neighbourhood, the situation of families and the needs of children have changed.

But the Casa del Niño has, however, tried to continue to meet the needs of families, and receives about 70 children a year, who are offered basic education, breakfast, lunch and snack, medical, social and psychological (including support and advice to families), and especially a lot of love.

The Casa del Niño is a space suitable for the Encounter, between the needs of these children and all that they offer to us adults. They are deprived of many things, but they are overflowing with tenderness and joy.

Monday 11th, the meeting of the Regional Council started with a Mass officiated by Regional Superior Fr. Austin Hughes scj. It lasted the whole week. This meeting was attended by Fr Gustavo Agin scj, Superior General, who came to Bangalore to give his support and to take a training course with the new Vicars and Superiors.

Joy and creativity filled the home with smiles, incense, candles and flowers.

On Tuesday, the religious of almost all Betharramite communities in India met to share a day of reflection. During the Mass there was a memory of Father Xavier Ponthokkan scj, the first delegate of India.

On Thursday, the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross was celebrated with moments of prayer and adoration. On Friday then the meeting will end.

Maria Kripa's community celebrated Onam's Festival with Fr Gustavo Agin SCJ, Superior General and Fr Arul Gnana Prakash SCJ, Regional Vicar. The Fathers were welcomed by the Mangalore community with all the teachers, benefactors and friends of Betharram. Some of our benefactors were thanked by Fr Gustavo for their selfless and generous service.

During his stay in India, Fr Gustavo took also the opportunity to pay a visit to some institutions. While being in the Betharram scholasticate in Mangalore, Fr Gustavo went to see some religious houses where our Betharram brothers serve as chaplains; then he paid a visit to the "White Doves Destitute", to an Orphanage and to the parish of Kasergod where Fr Jacob Biso SCJ carries out the pastoral ministry with the Malayalam community. Finally, Fr Gustavo called on Mons. Aloysius Paul D'Souza, Bishop of Mangalore.

Thailand

Assembly ► On September 20, during the visit of the Regional Superior, Fr Austin Hughes SCJ, the religious of the Vicariate held a meeting in Chiang Mai.

This was an opportunity for the religious to spend some time together and to present to Fr Chan their best wishes for his new mission as Regional Vicar of Thailand. During the Eucharistic celebration, Fr Chan made the profession of faith and the oath of fidelity before the Regional Superior. Then, Fr Austin visited some villages in the mission area of the Ban Pong community.

In memoriam...

Mrs Bruna Limonta, mother of Fr. Gianluca Limonta scj, parish vicar in Langhirano, died at the age of 69. We feel close to Fr Gianluca and his family through our prayer and we put all our hope in God the Father and in His mercy.

On Tuesday, October 3, **Mr Gaetano Villa**, 90 years, brother of Fr Davide Villa SCJ, passed away. Please let us hold Fr. Davide and his family in our humble prayers during this sad time.

October, 7, **Mr. Franco Cavazzini**, Mrs. Mariagrazia's husband, has gone to the Father's House. Mrs Mariagrazia is a most valuable administrative advisor in our General House. We entrust Mr Franco to the Father of Life and we express our prayerful sympathy to Mariagrazia and her family.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CONGREGATION

Region



France-Spain

Assembly ► During the celebration of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14th), the Vicariate lived at Betharram its first meeting after the General Chapter. First of all, the Vicariate welcomed both Fr Vincent Worou SCJ and Br Habib Yelououassi SCJ.

Fr Jean-Luc Morin SCJ, with the help of a video projection, presented the six priority points on which the General Chapter had focused its attention. Then a collective work was carried out. So everyone could emphasize the important elements to be accomplished in the Vicariate. The Eucharistic celebration was officiated by Fr Laurent Bacho SCJ, the new Regional Vicar; Fr Jean-Luc said the homily. After the fraternal lunch several considerations came out and were shared all together; the Council of the Vicariate is proposing a project at the next Assembly. At the end some information about the Congregation was given. The Vespers ended the day.

Cote d'Ivoire

Spiritual Exercises ► From 3rd to 7th September, the religious of the Vicariate lived the annual spiritual exercises, that were preached by Fr Beñat Oyhénart SCJ, and held as usual at the formation community of Adiapodoumé.

Holy Land

First profession ► Under the protective gaze of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus and of St. Mary of Jesus Crucified, the Vicariate had the joy of celebrating the First Profession of Br Kaban Patrice SCJ, in the Chapel of the Carmeli-

te Sisters of Bethlehem on October 1st. Let us pray for him and for the betharramite family in the Holy Land invoking the intercession of Our Lady of Betharram and of our Father St. Michael Garicoits.

Region



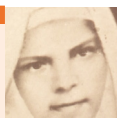
Argentina-Uruguay

Anniversary ► On October 1, the Vicariate celebrated the 150th anniversary of foundation of the College Los Vascos, as the Inmaculada Concepción College in Montevideo is known. The day began with the Eucharistic celebration, presided over by Mons Martín Pérez Scremini, Bishop of Florida, a former novice and scholastic of Betharram, and very attached to our Congregation.

Then the college staff, the students, many alumni and some local prominent people joined the celebration. The presence of representatives of the Betharramite colleges of Paraguay and of Argentina was greatly appreciated. The presence of Fr Daniel González SCJ, Regional Superior, was particularly meaningful.

A very simple, unpretentious but heartfelt celebration, where everybody could reminisce about their own personal story lived in our institution.

Region



India

Special days ► The Bangalore community experienced a week of joyful fraternity. On

A MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP OF ROME

Bring your cry to the shepherds



"MAKE YOUR CRY HEARD, LET IT RESONATE IN THE COMMUNITIES AND BRING IT TO THE SHEPHERDS". THIS IS THE RECOMMENDATION POPE FRANCIS MADE TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE LAST JANUARY BY HANDING THEM THE PREPARATORY DOCUMENT OF THE NEXT SYNOD OF BISHOPS TO BE CELEBRATED IN OCTOBER 2018 ON THE THEME: YOUTH, FAITH AND VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT. IS THERE CLOSER ATTENTION TO OUR

CONCERNS IN OUR PASTORAL MINISTRY?

THIS "COMPASS WILL GUIDE THEM THROUGHOUT THIS JOURNEY". IT IS GOOD THAT AS SHEPHERDS, WE ALSO USE THIS COMPASS TO BETTER LISTEN TO THEIR VOICE, THEIR SENSITIVITY, THEIR FAITH, TO HEAR THEIR DOUBTS, EVEN THEIR CRITICISMS.

IN THIS PHASE OF PRE-SYNODAL CONSULTATION, THE DOCUMENT COVERS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE FUNDAMENTAL PASSAGES OF THE PROCESS OF DISCERNMENT TO WHICH THE ACCOMPANIMENT BELONGS, AND ON WHICH WE PROPOSE TO MEDITATE.

4. The accompaniment

Three basic beliefs underlie the process of discernment, beliefs which are ingrained in every human being's experience understood in the light of the faith and Christian tradition. The first is that the Spirit of God works in the heart of every man and woman through feelings and desires that are bound to ideas, images and plans. Listening carefully, the human being has the possibility to interpret these signals. The second belief is that the human heart, because of its weakness and sin, is normally divided because it is attracted to different and even contrary feelings. The third belief is that every way of life imposes a choice, because a person cannot remain indefinitely in an undetermined state. A person needs to adopt the instruments needed to

recognize the Lord's call to the joy of love and choose to respond to it.

Among these instruments, the Church's spiritual tradition emphasizes the importance of personal accompaniment. In accompanying another person, the study of the teachings on discernment is not enough; one needs the hard, personal experience of interpreting the movements of the heart to recognize the action of the Spirit, whose voice can speak to the uniqueness of each individual. Personal accompaniment demands the constant refinement of one's sensitivity to the voice of the Spirit and leads to discovering a resource and richness in a person's individual character.

It is a question of fostering a person's

relationship with God and helping to remove what might hinder it. Herein lies the difference between accompaniment in discerning and psychological support, which, when open to transcendence, oftentimes has a basic importance. The psychologist supports those in difficulties and helps them become aware of their weaknesses and potential. Spiritual guidance re-orientates a person towards the Lord and prepares the ground for an encounter with him (cf. Jn 3:29-30). Jesus' encounter with the people of his time, as recorded in the Gospels, highlight certain elements which are part of the ideal profile of the person accompanying a young person in vocational discernment, namely, a loving look (the calling of

the first disciples (cf. Jn 1:35- 51); an authoritative word (teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum, cf. Lk 4:32); an ability to "become the neighbour" (the parable of the Good Samaritan, cf. Lk 10:25-37); a choice to "walk beside" (the disciples of Emmaus, cf. Lk 24:13-35); and an authentic witness, fearlessly going against preconceived ideas (the washing of the feet at the Last Supper, cf. Jn 13:1-20). In the task of accompanying the younger generation, the Church accepts her call to collaborate in the joy of young people rather than be tempted to take control of their faith (cf. 2 Cor 1:24). Such service is ultimately founded in prayer and in asking for the gift of the Spirit, who guides and enlightens each and everyone.



Young betharramites at the Mission 2017 - Group FVD, Paraguay

- The task of creating a formation team is still a challenge.
- As the schools have been handed over to the diocese, the biggest problem has always been the lack of financial income to support the expenditures of formation.

Our experience taught us how God loves us and takes care of us. Therefore we are called to be more faithful in our daily activities, working with love, enthusiasm and responsibility.

Improvements are always possible because perfection is not of this world. Ban Betharram is the Minor Seminary created to train young men at the stage of the secondary school up to high school. For this it is important to be set in a good environment.

Ban Betharram is situated in a very large Christian Community, the parish of Saint Peter at Sampran.

The community welcomed the house of formation and supported its growth all the time since the beginning. Some of the young men continue as pre-postulants.

It is always a challenge to carry on the work of formation to convey our simple way of life, to create a fraternal atmosphere and to help the young men to discern their future, whether to go on or to choose a different way of life.

Of course a trained formator is an important element to be considered. His duty is to live with the young men to accompany them with a good heart, being a living example of the life they are invited to live.

Chan John Kunu scj



We live the present with a spirit of simplicity and meaningfulness for what we are and do as Betharramite.

We look ahead with hope to do better and continue to be witnesses among the people under our care.

We are deeply grateful to all the missionaries who labored so hard to sow the seed of faith. We are the fruit of their work and we have to continue the mission according to the signs of our time. Mission is the goal, the seminary is the training field, to be ready to live a simple life, to work among the people who are entrusted to us without discrimination of culture and language in co-operation with the diocese and other congregations in the spirit of the *Ecce Venio*, I come to do your will.

Along these 30 years, there have been specific stages.

After co-operating in building the local church of Chiangmai Diocese for 33 years, the Superior General Rev.Fr. Pierre Grech, entrusted to Fr. Mirco Trusgnach, superior of the Delegation the duty to start a formation house in Thailand in spite of opposition from other religious who felt not ready to take over the task of formation. Once started, the religious gradually accepted and supported the idea of having a formation house.

In 1984 a first group of young men were welcomed and began the secondary school in Maesarieng under the supervision of Fr. Pierre Caset, the parish priest. After two years they moved to Sampran where in the meantime Fr. Mirco bought the land and built a house to receive

them. They studied at St. Joseph Seminary.

The first formation house of Sampran has been inaugurated on January 20th, 1987 by His Eminence Cardinal Michael Michai Kitbunchu. Bishop Lucien Lacoste and the Nuncio, Archbishop Renato Martino were present along with other priests, religious and many faithful to witness that historical event.

In 1999 the first two priests have been ordained, Fr. Paul-Mary Subancha Yindeengarm and Fr. Michael Tidkham Jailertrit.

A Major Seminary was needed. During the construction time the young seminarians have been received at St. Joseph Minor Seminary, to give room at Ban Betharram for the major seminarians.

Today 2017 we only have 3 foreign missionaries left, but we have 18 Thai priests, 2 deacons and other young men in different stages of formation. Therefore it is our duty to express our heartfelt gratitude to God for His constant assistance through various people and events.

No roads are sprinkled with rose petals. In 30years of Betharram Seminary we have experienced both ups and downs.

- The lack of trained formators have been a great challenge,
- the same as the continuous changes, trying to find the best way to accompany the young seminarians in different stages of their formation.

Orientations 1 & 2

WHILE THE PRINTED ACTS OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER TRAVEL TO YOUR COMMUNITIES, WE HAVE ASKED SIX OF OUR BROTHERS - WHO WERE DELEGATES TO THE GENERAL CHAPTER - TO TELL US WHAT HAS MOST MARKED THEM - STRENGTHS OR NEW ELEMENTS - IN THE REFLECTION OF THEIR RESPECTIVE WORKING GROUPS ON EACH OF THE SIX MAJOR ORIENTATIONS CHOSEN BY THE CHAPTER (TWO ORIENTATIONS PER MONTH UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR).

NOT AN EXPLANATION OF THE TEXT, LEAST OF ALL A REPORT OF INTERNAL DEBATES - LET US NOT FORGET THAT THIS MATTER IS UNDER THE SEAL OF SECRECY - BUT A PERSONAL REACTION TO THE FRUITS OF A COLLEGIAL REFLECTION.

1st Orientation | To go out to drink from the same source

The General Chapter allowed me, among other things, to make the following observations on the subject under consideration:

Betharram is a small family, but it is scattered over 4 continents. It forms a beautiful kaleidoscope of colours, landscapes, cultures, languages, traditions, flavours, temperaments, ways of thinking, interpreting and confronting life... all this being a concrete expression of a Betharram open to the world, a Betharram already "going out." Betharram finds a source of enrichment



in the good and the values of the various cultures in which it is found and in which, faithful to its charism, it is incarnated. Today we are more sensitive and more willing to value and integrate

these local assets.

This beautiful kaleidoscope, joyful and full of life, added to the generational renewal, confronts us with the challenge of the authentic communication of the Charism which, like Evangelisation, risks according to me two dangers:

- Confusing the Charism with the cultural and contextual elements which originally enveloped it, and expecting it to be lived today throughout the world as “it was at the very beginning and for centuries and centuries.”
- Devaluing the Charism by adapting it to the present place and time, falling into the trap that Pope Francis warns us about: «instead of us incarnating the charism, we simply become worldly.»

Betharram also wants to respond with courage according to its possibilities, its identity and its originality, to the challenges and calls launched by the new geographical and existential peripheries.

This is why the General Chapter saw clearly that:

- ... *to live and transmit with faithfulness the Charism, which is a gift for the whole Church,*
- ... *to form a single religious family and not to dissipate ourselves, nor to disperse ourselves in the vast ocean of cultural and territorial diversity, in which Betharram has its place,*
- ... *to develop our own Identity and not to remain mute or disconcerted in*

the face of the tyranny of individualism and the absolutism of individual interpretation, and finally ... to meet the new challenges from our charismatic identity...

... it is urgent and necessary to “go out, to drink from the same Source”, in a permanent movement. The Acts of the Chapter bear witness to this.

It is by drinking from this Source that our Identity is nourished and strengthened, and it is from here that our Mission emerges as a creative response of the Congregation to the diversity of appeals. We will thus avoid a pick & mix identity and mission by simply adapting to the whims of our clients.

Each Betharramite must constantly drink from this source, to know how to live and express the charism with the elements of his own culture and the one in which he finds himself.

We confirm that we go together, religious and laity, to drink from this Source, Gift of God.

We must act so that the charismatic sources (the Writings of St. Michael and Betharramite spirituality, the Rule of Life, history, etc.) are accessible to all Betharramites wherever they may be. I also believe that it is necessary to carry out an updated study of the life and spirituality of Michael Garicoits.

Betharram is determined to go out to meet life. We have been enriched by the new life of many countries in which



chem from where they could radiate to the Karen and Lawa villages spread on the mountains. Later they came to know the Akha who were coming from Burma to Thailand in the province of Chiang Rai. Conditions were very difficult but they tried to gather in Chiang Mai every two months to spend time together, sharing their experiences, praying and relaxing, according to the suggestion of R.Rev Joseph Mirande, General Superior.

The 30th Anniversary of Ban Betharram Sampran tells us that God can even write straight on twisted rows. In fact nobody was ready to take over the formation task, having worked hard in a completely different field. But God had his own way for Betharram in this land of smile. Once He conceived this family of Betharram through St. Michael Garicoits, He continues to take care of it through various people and events, dri-

ving it even through uncertainties to a safe haven. He is at the helm.

God will make a way where there seems to be no way.

St. Michael Garicoits used to say: “*How difficult is to give birth to a Congregation, but once it is born, God will take care of it.*” It has been the same for the Formation House in Thailand.

We look at the past with gratitude to God’s providence, who took care of the seminary through countless people in various ways.

We are thankful to those who had the vision, to those who worked hard to start, founding and funding, the seminary, making the vision to become reality, to all those who had shared and accompanied the young at the top of their ability. We are grateful to all our benefactors who have supported us in different ways all the time. It’s a sense of a deep gratitude from the core of our hearts which find no words to describe.

LIFE OF THE CONGREGATION

Ban Betharram, option for formation

THE SAMPRAN BETHARRAMITE SEMINARY CELEBRATED ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY LAST JULY. THE PRESENCE OF HIS EMINENCE CARD. MICHAEL MICHAEL KITBUNCHU AT THE CELEBRATION OF THIS ANNIVERSARY SPEAKS VOLUMES ABOUT THE SOLEMNITY OF THE EVENT! ANNIVERSARIES ARE OF COURSE THE OCCASION TO REJOICE IN THE GOOD HEALTH OF AN ACCOMPLISHED AND VIGOROUS WORK. BUT IT IS ALSO THE TIME TO LOOK AT THE "UNDERSIDE OF THE EMBROIDERY" AND TO MARVEL NOT AT THE DRAWING AND THE COLORS, BUT AT THE SOMETIMES STRANGE AND COMPLICATED JOURNEY OF THE THREAD.

FR CHAN KUNU SCJ, REGIONAL VICAR OF THAILAND, HAS KINDLY TRACED FOR US THE HISTORY OF THIS FOUNDATION, STARTED FROM SCRATCH, AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS CHOICE OF TRAINING FOR BETHARRAM IN THAILAND.

During the explosion of communism in China, some of the Betharramite missionaries found refuge in Thailand, with a deep hope of going back as soon as possible. It was at the end of 1951. Mons. Louis Chorin, Bishop of Bangkok assigned Chiang Mai as their place of residence, initiation and study of the language.

They could cooperate with the M.E.P to continue building up the local Church among the Northern Thai people in Chiang Mai, Viang Pa Pao, Muang Phan and Lampang.

Other missionaries joined the first group in 1952-53. Coming to know of the presence on the mountains (South and South-West of Chiang Mai) of Karen and Lawa minorities very similar

to the Catchin they were working with in China, they started to make contact with them and learn their language.

When they received the official recognition and the M.E.P. went back to Bangkok, they opened new posts: Chomthong, Maepon, Maesariang, Maetho, Mae-



Inauguration of the seminary in 1987

we find ourselves; this very life full of youth must grow and forge its identity by drinking from the same source of our fathers; on the other hand, it is this young life that awakens the enthusiasm of the older life, frees it from the weight

of years and challenges it to drink, not from the source of habit, but always from the original authentic source.

Daniel González scj

2nd Orientation | Going out to share

Niem, 1st October 2017

Dear Brothers,

At the General Chapter of last May, I was part of the group "Going Out to Share".

When we discussed the theme of sharing, we chose to focus on two specific issues:

aspects of Congregational Government and the economy of communion.

I won't present to you the proposals which emerged from the work of the group or the motions voted by the Chapter. These can all be found in the Acts of the Chapter.

I would rather offer you some thoughts that emerged from our group sessions and from my experience as a religious who has lived in the Republic of Central Africa for 25 years.

As we celebrate World Mission Day this October, why not begin with a quotation from the apostolic exhortation *The Joy of the Gospel*, that Pope Francis proposed for this day:

"The mission of the church is animated by a spirituality of constant exodus. It is about getting out of one's own comfort and having the courage to reach out to all the peripheries that need the light of the Gospel." (EG 20)

Sharing at all levels is a daily challenge that affects all of us because it costs us a lot to give up our comfort, the routine of everyday life.

«This is mine, and beware anyone who touches it!» ... a knee jerk reaction as relevant to government as to economic matters, and obviously also in all other areas of our religious life. But if we truly desire to be disciples of Jesus Christ and the sons of St. Michael, we must have the courage and above all the spirit to keep nothing for ourselves.

This is precisely what the "Here I am" says. We often behave like people who rely only on our own strength. We believe that we never deceive



ourselves, that we always have the right solution ...(for others naturally!) That is why, when faced with a new proposal, an invitation for a new mission, a new responsibility, we try to resist.

Thus, without even noticing it, we become more and more critical, more and more acid, we lose our ability to listen, to welcome, to be kind to our brothers... and we slowly die, even if we can be seen in full activity, busy 24 hours a day. And yet to look at our brothers with benevolence, to rejoice in their "successes" and to weep with their "setbacks" should be part of our spirituality; it should be "natural" to us. I believe that this must be the basis of any community project, on which the chapter has been so insistent and that every community, no matter how big

or small, has the duty to develop and live.

We must have the courage and be quick to trust our superiors, especially when we do not always agree with them, when we do not see things very clearly. At our meetings, in our assemblies, we all often repeat the chorus «Here I am Lord to do your will». Perhaps it would be better and it would be more honest to keep the volume down here and just re-read the pages of the *Spiritual Doctrine* on Obedience. These are undoubtedly pages that we like to read, but defending one's own comfort is a reflex that unfortunately often prevails, and we stop at the minimum necessary, thinking only about functionality and completely forgetting grace.

In recent years, we have been talking

more and more about the "Economy of communion", and indeed, through participating in the Chapter, I have witnessed a real and growing solidarity developing in the Congregation. I think of the formation of a Fund for Formation, not to mention a practical solidarity between Vicariates and Regions.

Thanks be to God, we are not a religious family with huge economic resources. Yet we often work both little and large miracles of solidarity. I can testify to that as a member of the Regional Council of the Saint-Michael Region.

It is precisely for this reason that we mustn't waste our scarce economic resources. Hence the need for clear and accurate balance sheets and budgets. And this is not only a task for the bursars at different levels, but it concerns every religious, especially at the end of each month...

All of us at all levels, need training in the 'accountability' field, beginning in the time of initial formation. We cannot pretend to be infallible administrators. If training programs in this field are foreseen in the near future, the assistance of external professionals is increasingly necessary and even indispensable.

All of this is very good, but it mustn't stop there, for we are religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The economy of communion cannot stop at

solidarity between General House, Regions, Vicariates, communities. It must challenge each one of us in our daily lifestyle. In our way of living the economy on a daily basis, we must not forget that "*Jesus Christ had no place to put his head*" (Lk 9:58). We must live in a spirit of personal renunciation, be able to emerge from our comfort, not to live a heroic asceticism but more simply and concretely for the good of my brother, my community, my vicariate, my Congregation, the Church whose servants we are.

It is only through this spirit of poverty and the welcoming of the other – in whatever margins and the context that characterizes it - that we can go out to encounter life, real life, which will open for us the doors of eternal life, where, at the end of our earthly exodus, we will live forever in the peace and joy of God the Father.

In the Lord,

Tiziano Pozzi scu