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A word from the superior general

The favourite spring

*"Before being a missionary,
you must first be a man of prayer" (DS § 351)*

Dear Betharramites,

The true Betharramites that we all remember, with their witness to a life full of mysticism and prophecy, were able to understand the value of prayer and devoted themselves wholeheartedly to cultivating it. They could not live without this daily encounter with God, who was pleased to make himself loved and who sent us his Son, and gave him up for us, so that we may love him (see Founding Text).

The saint of "*Ecce Venio*" used to exhort the first Betharramite companions by saying: "*before being men of prayer, let your life be a continual prayer*" (a phrase attributed to Saint Gregory).

To what secret spring did the founder invite them...? To the spring of the encounter with the One who, we know, loves us. "*It is in prayer that the soul acquires the habit of uniting with God, and that God speaks to our hearts, instructs us, shapes us to all the virtues, and*

disposes us to all devotion. "(DS § 361)

Although spiritual experience is our area of expertise, we know that it is in some way incommunicable. It is the Holy Spirit who performs his silent work, working day and night and without us knowing how he does it...

Saint Michael helped us understand by his words that there is no Betharramite who does not devote himself to prayer: *"The life of the religious must be a life of continual prayer. Let him pass from one exercise to the next, to preach, to confess, to travel in the very midst of the hurly-burly, but he must always pray; it must be so much part of his person that everything in him, his sensations, the movements of the heart and the soul, everything must be transformed into a taste of prayer."* (DS § 328).

My humble experience tells me that, to be praying, we must learn to prefer. This is what many religious and laity taught me by their example throughout life. When I was a formator, it was often a subject of sharing with the novices - some will remember ... *"In the novitiate you will learn many things, but you must learn the art of preferring"*. Prefer what, prefer who ...?

- "To prefer" to be with Christ above all else, even above what interests us most, what conditions us most, what seems absolute and what in general animates the passions.
- "To prefer", to discern our

actions under the inspiration of the Spirit, as a sovereign exercise of our freedom of choice, but not without having prayed and reflected.

- "To prefer" to pray and to act, to reach the happiness of being contemplative in action.

The shepherd of Ibarre said: *"How do we arrive at contemplation? By praying and doing. Moreover, at whatever height of contemplation we have reached, we do not know if we truly love or if we are worthy of love. That is why it is always necessary to be humble and pray, it is the means to maintain oneself in love and to recover grace if one had had the misfortune to lose it."* (DS § 269)

Finally, to prefer Jesus Christ, and to do it out of love, is none other than an act of justice towards this Father of love who has given us his Son: as an attraction, a model and a means to reach the Divine love, to learn to love. This is the condition for prayer, for preference implies friendship. That's what we do when a friend comes to visit us. In general, we leave everything to take care of him. This is what Mary, sister of Martha of Bethany, did when she *chose the best part*: Jesus Christ (Luke 10:42).

For example, the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius are an excellent school of prayer and a precious opportunity to enter the pedagogy of the divine, without losing sight of the present, the here and now of our life. What is called "discernment" is born of a prayer

experience, an appropriate context for "choosing well" (preferring the best for here and now among good things), not mere reasoning. The encounter with Jesus Christ leads us to take a stand in life, to straighten out that which was not directed towards the greater glory of God, to "twist" our disordered desires with the strength that comes from above.

To prefer Jesus Christ and to prefer everything in prayer leads us to self-determination according to the Will of God in our life. It strengthens us to live the constancy and durability of his inspired plans both during the meeting with the Lord and afterwards. Praying before, during and after, internally strengthens us to deal with everything with the necessary integrity and disposition.

"God also prefers": he prefers us just as he prefers his children, his friends ... Jesus called us his friends and asked us to do what he tells us in his Gospel. To make it clear to us, he washed our feet, and took leave of us, promising to come back after having prepared a home for us with the Father. Prefer my Father and me, and we will come to you with the Holy Spirit and will choose to make our home in your hearts!

Let us prefer prayer to our comfort, to gratifications, to diversions, to the deceptive refuge in idols, to isolation... Let us watch and pray not to fall into temptation. Let us then be guided by the Holy Spirit and do not sadden him. Constantly, until the evening of life.

Recently, an elderly sick father said to me with a smile, "*I'm not afraid of death. I prefer to prepare myself by prayer for this longer journey.*" In the decline of his earthly stay, this Betharramite discovered the meaning of his Cross. He had accepted to drink the chalice that Jesus had offered him and nothing else. He had learned to "prefer" in his "here and now" what leads most to the Glory of God.

What a joy I have when I contemplate these religious and lay people of Betharram united in prayer! What a joy to share community prayer!... in each religious community, by singing and praying according to the style of the different cultures where we are present for mission. Young and old, children and adults, in all languages and in one Spirit. The best hug of welcome is the one I get when I'm told, "*Father, let's go to the chapel, it's time for community prayer.*"

It is the place of mission that most prompts us to go out, by grace, filled with Christ, to meet Life. Let us give something of ourselves, and the best of ourselves! But do not let ourselves be tempted to promote ourselves, but to promote Him. To announce to all what we *have known, and that we have tasted and have seen that the Lord is good* (Ps 33. 8) and that we *have drawn water with joy, from the springs of salvation* (Is 12.3).

Fr. Gustavo SCJ
SUPERIEUR GENERAL

Homily of Pope Francis at the Consistory for the creation of new Cardinals, Vatican Basilica, Thursday, 28 June 2018

"They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them" (Mk 10:32).



The beginning of this typical passage in Mark always helps us realize how the Lord cares for his people with a pedagogy all his own. Journeying to Jerusalem, Jesus is careful to walk ahead of his disciples.

Jerusalem represents the defining and decisive moment of his life. All of us know that at important and crucial times in life, the heart can speak and reveal the intentions and tensions within us. These turning points in life challenge us; they bring out questions and desires not always evident to our human hearts. This is what is presented, with great simplicity and realism, in the Gospel passage we have just heard. At the third and most troubling announcement of the Lord's passion, the Evangelist does not shrink from disclosing secrets present in the hearts of the disciples: their quest of honours, jealousy, envy, intrigue, accommodation and compromise. This kind of thinking not only wears and eats away at their relationship, but also imprisons them in useless and petty discussions. Yet Jesus is not concerned with this: he walks ahead of them and he keeps going. And he tells them forcefully: "*But it shall not*

be so among you; whoever would be great among you must be your servant" (Mk 10:43). In this way, the Lord tries to refocus the eyes and hearts of his disciples, so that there will be no fruitless and self-referential discussions in the community. What does it profit us to gain the whole world if we are corroded within? What does it profit us to gain the whole world if we are living in a stifling atmosphere of intrigues that dry up our hearts and impede our mission? Here, as someone has observed, we might think of all those palace intrigues that take place, even in curial offices.

"But it shall not be so among you". The Lord's response is above all an encouragement and a challenge to his disciples to recoup their better part, lest their hearts be spoiled and imprisoned by a worldly mentality blind to what is really important. "*But it shall not be so among you"*. The voice of the Lord saves the community from undue introspection and directs its vision, resources, aspirations and heart to the only thing that counts: the mission.

Jesus teaches us that conversion, change of heart and Church reform is and ever shall be in a missionary key, which demands an end to looking out for and protecting our own interests,

in order to look out for and protect those of the Father. [...] At the moment of truth, especially when we see the distress of our brothers and sisters, we will be completely prepared to accompany and embrace them, one and all. In this way, we avoid becoming effective "roadblocks", whether because of our short-sightedness or our useless wrangling about who is most important. When we forget the mission, when we lose sight of the real faces of our brothers and sisters, our life gets locked up in the pursuit of our own interests and securities. Resentment then begins to grow, together with sadness and revulsion. Gradually we have less and less room for others, for the Church community, for the poor, for hearing the Lord's voice. Joy fades and the heart withers (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 2).

"But it shall not be so among you". Jesus goes on to say. "Whoever would be first among you must be slave of all" (Mk 10:43.44). This is the Beatitude and the Magnificat that we are called to sing daily. It is the Lord's invitation not to forget that the Church's authority grows with this ability to defend the dignity of others, to anoint them and to heal their wounds and their frequently dashed hopes. [...]

Dear brother Cardinals and new Cardinals! In our journey towards Jerusalem, the Lord walks ahead of us, to keep reminding us that the only credible form of authority is born of

sitting at the feet of others in order to serve Christ. It is the authority that comes from never forgetting that Jesus, before bowing his head on the cross, did not hesitate to bow down and wash the feet of the disciples. This is the highest honour that we can receive, the greatest promotion that can be awarded us [...]

I would like now to share with you a part of the spiritual testament of Saint John XXIII. Progressing in his own journey, he could say: "Born poor, but of humble and respectable folk, I am particularly happy to die poor, having distributed, in accordance with the various needs and circumstances of my simple and modest life in the service of the poor and of Holy Church which has nurtured me, whatever came into my hands – and it was very little – during the years of my priesthood and episcopate. [...]. I thank God for this grace of poverty to which I vowed fidelity in my youth; poverty of spirit, as a priest of the Sacred Heart, and material poverty, which has strengthened me in my resolve never to ask for anything – money, positions or favours – never, either for myself, or for my relations and friends" (29 June 1954). •

The gift of a year in Avila

At the end of his two terms of office as superior General, the Rev. Fr. Gaspar Fernández Pérez SCJ went to attend a renewal course for almost one year at the International Centre of studies on St. Teresa of Avila and Saint John of the Cross, in Spain.

After a deep study on the Spanish mysticism, Fr. Gaspar is already back in the Bétharramite mission with our scholastics of the international session in Bétharram. Here is his feedback on this invigorating experience in Avila. ●●●

I have had the opportunity several times to admit that I have lived my service as Superior General as a grace. I devoted all my strength to it, but at the end of the tenth year, I began to feel the fatigue and burden of this responsibility. In the past two years, I had promised myself I would ask for a sabbatical year, once my service was over.

A wide range of options were available to me on the internet, but I actually chose a programme that had always attracted me: a Masters in mysticism, to improve my knowledge of Saint Teresa of Jesus and Saint John of the Cross, in Avila itself.

Several types of registration were possible: free listener, expert, specialist, master... At this stage



of my life, it was clear that I was not aiming for a new diploma. However, it seemed to me that in my situation it was very important to keep my mind busy, so as not to think constantly about what I was leaving and about the new directions

taken by the Congregation since the last General Chapter. My wish was granted because I had to deal with nine research topics! This activity allowed me to detach myself from the rest and to concentrate on my chosen subjects, giving me both the happy and more laborious moments that studying sometimes requires.

Our regular group consisted of about fifteen people, although in some subjects there were more of us. The group was characterized by diversity: women and men, priests, religious, laity, people of various ages and varied nationalities ... This diversity has been a source of enrichment, both in personal relationships and in our exchanges. The group of students lived with the Carmelite community that runs the Centre (CITeS - Centro Internacional Teresiano Sanjuanista), in itself very diverse, made up of men and women, of various nationalities, priests and laity, all ages combined... This reality was conducive to an experience of brotherhood, without limiting the freedom of each person; it allowed

a life with a daily ritual of prayer with mass, the divine office and personal prayer; it gave rise to interesting exchanges and offered the chance of spiritual companionship. This fraternal atmosphere did not diminish in any way the spirit of seriousness when it was time to go to work, to remain silent or to fulfill obligations. The mornings were devoted to classes and afternoons to reading and study in an atmosphere of great silence.

In these moments of silence and prayer, I understood that the head can be filled with sterile earth, when study does not allow living the vocation from the source that is encounter with Jesus Christ. How many situations take the appearance of goodness and are masked by the illusion of a false fidelity! Discovering this is a grace because it helps to know oneself better and to face

one's own relationship with Christ in a more vivid and realistic way.

Avila is one of the smallest cities in Spain. Very touristy, it is known as the cradle of Spanish mysticism. Life is very quiet there because of the cold, because in winter in particular, people tend to stay at home and not go out in the street. This winter we had three big snowfalls. But that has a huge advantage for a sabbatical year: it is a quiet city, which does not impose the stressful pace of big cities. You can go out for a walk and soon find yourself in the countryside, without difficulty and in tranquility.

This year allowed me to get to know two great Spanish mystics: Teresa of Jesus and John of the Cross. What profound experiences of Christian life they lived through the love of God! I had already read the whole work of Saint John of the Cross, but now I understand it better.



At the CITeS of Avila

As for St. Teresa of Avila, I had started reading her writings several times, but I had never managed to progress, due to a lack of direction. I see it now more clearly. I was struck to note that these great saints, witnesses of such a radical evangelical experience, have been silenced or even distorted by

a tendency to focus on observance, which reduces the religious life to the ascetic dimension and tries to erase the mystic. It seems to me that this is what happened in our Bétharram family after the death of Father Etchécopar.

Although far removed from any Bétharramite community, I did not feel alone. I received two visits from Fr. Gustavo Agín, once accompanied by Mr. Pirovano and the other by Fr Daniel González. I received many messages from brothers of the Congregation. I could not answer some of them because of the language. I take this opportunity to thank them here.

During this year, I was able to realize in myself what I have so much advised religious people during my service of authority in the Congregation and which can be summed up in these words of Paul to Timothy: *For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, that gift which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. (2 Tim 1, 6-7)*

Gaspar Fernández Pérez scj

My mission? My training...

Born in Benin, Fr. Vincent-de-Paul Worou Dimon SCJ has just returned to Côte d'Ivoire, after a year spent in Pibrac to complete his training in agricultural engineering at the Ecole de Purpan (Toulouse), long-standing partner of the educational farm of Tshanfeto. An important and intense year to live faithfully his commitment as a Bétharram



religious and prepare for an upcoming mission.

•••

In 2012, at the request of the Congregation, I started an Agriculture course at the Songhaï de Porto-Novo Centre in Benin. In 2014, I took a course in Animal Feed Manufacturing at the Engineering School in Purpan, Toulouse. I'm still doing other training courses to increase my knowledge even

further and to help improve the Tshanféto Farm. That's why I came to France this year.

I was delighted to spend the 2017-2018 academic and pastoral year at the Pibrac Community, where I received precious advice and help from my brothers, Father Jean-Marie Ruspil, Father François Tohonon and Father Jean-Luc Morin.

My first mission within the Community was my training at the Agricultural Engineering School of Purpan, Toulouse. I started my training on 13th November 2017, with an aim of *"creating an integrated and modernized vision of the Tshanfeto Teaching Farm, so that it becomes a model Teaching Farm for Western Africa"*. During the academic year, I had lessons in agricultural management and farming techniques, in economics and finance, and in teaching methods. Thanks to the support and availability of the management and teaching staff at the Purpan Engineering School, the year ended very well.

My second mission was to help my brothers the priests in their pastoral duties within the parish. I was therefore able to get to know



15 June: Feast day and pilgrimage for St Germaine of Pibrac

my new surroundings and to meet many of the parishioners. When I had some free time, I celebrated Mass during the week by myself, or with other members of the Community. The priests have a set timetable for the Sunday Mass celebrations.

I assisted the MEJ group (Mouvement Eucharistique Jeunes = Youth Eucharistical Movement), where I benefited greatly from the various topics discussed, and from the in-depth participation of the group leaders and the parents. Most of all, I was delighted to see how interested the children and teenagers are in this Group. I saw that the parents of children who are to be baptised are fully involved in the choice of songs and texts for the service. The "small children's service" was a good example of the faith-based work that the organisers put in place to give the parents and children the basics of a Chris-

tian spirituality. I also assisted the Friends of Tshanfeto and the "Me Voici" group in Pibrac. I was therefore able to say "Here I am" and be available to the religious and parish communities at Pibrac. And as I come to the end of my stay in the Pibrac community, a new challenge appears on the horizon. And in order to face it, I must follow Jesus' example.

Just like Jesus, I must be the servant and brother to everyone. I need to make myself available

and live simply in a community of brothers, that is of poor people. If I follow His example, the path will not be one of "suffering", but one of "serving". This is a founding principle of Jesus' disciples. We should all be ready to serve everyone. Our world would be a happier place if we all served one another. Always forward !

Vincent de Paul Dimon Worou scj



Young people trained in agriculture and breeding at Tshanfeto Farm
(Adiapodoumé, Vicariate of Ivory Coast)

Start of a new academic year

May is the month of the beginning of the new academic year for the seminarians of the Vicariate of Thailand. It is an opportunity to receive some news about our formation houses from the master of Scholastics, Fr. Luke Kriang-sak scj. ●●●

The young students at Ban Betharram Phayao and Ban Betharram Sampran started the academic year on May 14, 2018 with the Eucharistic celebration. They asked God's blessing at the beginning of this year in order to be ready to follow the footsteps of Saint Michael and to learn about the Charism of Betharram.

This new year, some improvements have been made towards the system of organising our life in our formation house, including the regulations in training the seminarians, and the cooperation between the formators and the parents of the young boys. There is a clear intention to care for them in our seminary, in the school and in the family. The seminary is cooperating with the families, in the different aspects of education and has clarified some issues such as covering the expenses for clothes, school uniforms, etc.

At Ban Betharram Phayao, there are 23 young boys who attend the government school. There are 9 young boys in the first year.

At Betharram Sampran, there are 14 students, coming from different villages.

There are 5 pre-postulants in the first year, and one in the second year, who is getting ready to go to India to attend English classes at Mangalore.

At Ban Garicoits Sampran, there are 14 seminarians, 6 scholastics and 8 postulants. This year there are no students in the first year of philosophy nor in the noviciate.

Those who have finished their fourth year of philosophy, have asked for a break and they have gone home to help their parents.

As for the scholastics and postulants at Ban Garicoits, after visiting their parents, they have come back and are busy in getting things ready to go and attend the courses (uniforms, bicycles...) and in renewing the rota for the different community services.

Actually, no one talks about it, but mainly they come to know Betharram thanks to the pastoral work of our religious who then invite some young boys to join Ban Betharram, Phayao.

In Ban Betharram Sampran, we have 5 new young boys in the first year. They generally come from Betharram Phayao. After seeing the example of some of our religious, they decided to join the seminary to deepen their knowledge of Saint Michael Garicoits.

Ban Betharram Phayao is a small formation house. This year the father in charge revamped the premises to provide a more welcoming house to the young students, by repairing their bed rooms, bathrooms, study rooms... This year they are also wel-

coming some young people from outside and allow them to experience the atmosphere of a joyful family life. But the most important objective of this formation house is to accompany these young students in discerning their vocation.

From the formator's point of view: Formation is a challenge mainly because young people today are very much attracted by the modern media instilling in them the desire to create a comfort zone for themselves. Along the years of formation, the formators are facing the challenge of fostering in the young students the desire for real human and evangelical values.

The formators are called first of all to set a good example in the daily life, highlighting the values of unity in

community life.

Then they are called to help them gradually and consistently grow in all the dimensions of their personality. Nowadays, there are many temptations in the life of the seminarians. The formator has to create an atmosphere in the life of the formation house allowing the young students to be trained in all aspects of their personality. The third challenge is to find the way to cover the cost for all the expenses: food, clothing and necessities of life ...

I would like to invite all the members of Betharram to continue to bear witness to Christ, by following the spirituality of Saint Michael Garicoits in the world today. Our love for Betharram should grow day by



Community of Sampran Ban Garicoits

day, and encourage us to proclaim the word of God and to be open to the needs of other people. In Thailand, we came to know Betharram thanks to the witness of the missionaries who are keeping the spirit of Saint Michael alive.

In fact, in Thailand we never conduct vocation camps; all our vocations come from the villages where our missionaries are working: our witness plays a key role in recruiting

new vocations.

My dear brothers, this is my little experience in the formation field, and I am happy to share it with you. Please keep all of us in your valuable prayers.

Luke Kriangsak Kitsakunwong scj



New academic year in Shobhana Shaakha too

Shobhana Shakha Community of Bangalore started its academic year 2018- 2019 on June 5th with seven philosophy students and a novice.

The community is happy and blessed to have a candidates from different parts of India and abroad. The Shobhana Shakha community is more conducive to Multilingual, Multicultural and Multinationality; therefore our brothers experience a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. During this academic year our brothers get acquainted with the philosophical studies along with a concrete realities of life; for that purpose, they will have an experience of community life with a specific commitments to their individual and collective responsibilities as their initial apostolate.

Training is primarily oriented in line with our charism and we are extremely happy to see how these young men respond to their call faithfully and their openness to the timely corrections and guidelines. A disciplined lifestyle and various spiritual exercises help our candidates to keep the spirit of En Avant.

in « Smile », 1st July 2018

Brother Michael Stuart Richards

Birmingham (England), 24 March 1934 – Birmingham, 27 June 2018

In loving memory of Br. Michael |

You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty (Ps: 91;1) is the image from the bible that comes to my mind when I remember about the great Rev. Bro. Michael Richards SCJ, the pioneer of Indian mission.

My memory goes back to when I had met him in 1995 at Shobhana Shaakha. We used to call him as a 'tall brother' who walked with smile on his face and tools in his hand.

Even though I had a chance to live with him only one year, it was a memorable year working with him in different fields and moving everywhere. The art of cooking and maintenance of building and farm, etc...are some of the key areas where brother Michael shared his expertise with everyone. Once he said to me, "It is our land and a new venture, take care of it always".

He was part of every activity, in the farm, construction and taking care of inmates and accompanied us as an elder brother. I was privileged to accompany with him in certain areas and learned a lot in spite of a short time in Shobhana Shaakha. People



used to call him as a 'smiling brother' who were seen everywhere.

It was very difficult for me to understand his language at the initial time but later he

became a close associate in the course of time. Though he was fully engaged in construction and developments of the new mission house Shobhana Shaakha, he accommodated everyone without any misunderstanding or provocation. I was surprised to notice in him the way that he was mingling with the local people and getting things done in a good manner.

My last contact was with him in 2004 September at Olton Friary before I returned to India at the time of the completion of my pastoral year. He spent some moments with me and was so enthusiastic about the Indian mission and its progress. St. Michael Garicoits told us: "Who are those who do good in a community? Generous souls, disposed to pur-

sue the divine work despite a thousand obstacles; who expect to find there, not angels, but men appearing as men and acting like men, and who, in the face of these difficulties, know how to be humble, to live and to die. "(DS § 302). Brother Michael was a good friend and was available to everyone in everything, a perfect

model of an elder brother. I knew that he is watching on our Indian mission from above because we stand on his sweat which he had shed for us. Though I felt sad at his departure, touching on his footprints strengthens me to walk ahead.

Shaju Kalappurakkal scj

Dear Fr. Wilfred*,
I am so sorry to hear of the recent death of your dear Brother Michael Richards. Please accept my sincere condolences for yourself, the scj Community in Olton and across the Archdiocese and for Fr. Michael's family on this difficult time. I will remember Br. Michael's hospitality (and excellent cooking!) from visits to Whitnash.

I shall offer Holy Mass for his eternal joy among the Blessed. Please be assured of my prayers and every kind wish.

Yours devotedly in Christ, +Bernard

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OF BIRMINGHAM

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE
8 SHADWELL STREET
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29th June 2018

Dear Fr. Wilfred,
I was so sorry to hear of the recent death of your dear Brother Michael Richards. Please accept my sincere condolences for yourself, the scj Community in Olton and across the Archdiocese and for Br. Michael's family at this difficult time. I will remember Br. Michael's kind hospitality (and excellent cooking!) from visits to Whitnash. I shall offer Holy Mass for his eternal joy among the blessed. Please be assured of my prayers and every kind wish.
Yours devotedly in Christ, +Bernard

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* Message of condolence of Mgr Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham, to Fr. Wilfred Poulouse Pereppadan scj, Regional Vicar in England



In memoriam

On Thursday, June 21, Mr. Giuseppe Pajno, 79-year-old, brother of Fr. Angelo Pajno SCJ, of the St. Michael community of Albavilla, returned to the Father's house. We join Fr Angelo and his family in praying for the repose of the soul of their dear one.



**CONGREGATION OF
THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS
OF BETHARRAM**

Betharram: From June 20th to July 28th the international session for perpetual profession has been taking place in the footsteps of our Founder Saint Michael Garicoits at Betharram, our place of origins. It has been a great time for encounters, exchanges, deepening spirituality, discoveries and prayer for our brothers from Ivory Coast, Argentina, Burkina Faso, Thailand, Paraguay, Benin, India and Brazil. They are led by formators from Italy, Brazil, India, and it coincides with the canonical visit to the vicariate of France-Spain of our Superior General, Fr. Gustavo Agín. May Our Lady of Betharram and St. Michael Garicoits intercede for our brothers so that they may fully live these moments of grace. We stay in communion of prayer.



REGION ST MICHAEL GARICOÏTS

FRANCE ^{SPAIN}
ITALY ^{IVORY COAST}
^{CENTRAL AFRICA}
HOLY LAND

France - Spain

This year 2018, the traditional feast of St. Mariam at the old Carmel of Pau had a special light: we were celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Transverberation that took place on May 24, 1868 at the Hermitage of Our lady of Mount Carmel in the enclosure of Carmel of Pau.

Fr. Michel Vignau, superior of the

Saint-Michel community in Pau, and Fr. Laurent Bacho, Regional Vicar, organised a triduum for the occasion from May 24th to May 26th.

The programme? First a conference on Transverberation by the Rector of the Major Seminary of Bayonne, then a sung torchlight procession from the chapel to the Hermitage, (place of transverberation) and then to the High Cross in Carmel Park, to recall the link between the arrow of the transverberation and the spear that pierced the crucified Christ. Then came a celebration of Vespers, sung by the Little Choir of Saint Michael Garicoits, a vigil of adoration and praise, with songs carefully chosen to evoke the precious words of St. Mariam. On Saturday, a solemn Mass, presided over by the Regional Superior, Fr. Jean-Luc Morin, was celebrated with simplicity and fervour. A glass of friendship has closed this triduum in conviviality. (as in the photo report of Mr. Jean Leid)

Central Africa

From June 21 -22 2018, Betharramite aspirants and pre-postulants had their end-of-year retreat at the Saint-Elie convent of the Discalced Carmelite Brothers of Bouar. The exchanges and sharing of experiences followed the central theme «Accompaniment and spiritual growth», presented by Fr Gilbert, scj.

Saturday, June 22, 2018, the Mass celebrated at the Saint-Michel de Bouar Formation House closed the 2017-2018 academic and community

year. The community has given thanks to God for these five young brothers, who will begin the postulancy stage in Côte d'Ivoire next year.

Finally, from July 13th to 21st, a vocation week will be held in Saint-Michel on the theme «discernment-choice» with several angles of approach. a. follow my aspirations, like Abraham from Chaldea to Canaan, b. with Jesus, reflect and act, c. my call, a prophetic choice, d. to be spiritually accompanied e. A Christian & his sexuality, f. Discernment g. The Betharramite religious vocation. (Speakers: Father Armel, Father Arsène, Brother Angelo, Brother Arnaud). Some themes will be illustrated in the evening by the projection of films and an evaluation is planned in community.

Holy Land

From June 8-17, the Superior General, Fr. Gustavo Agín SCJ, visited the communities of the Vicariate of the Holy Land, a place of formation and apostolate.

The religious of Betharram have been present in Bethlehem and Nazareth for more than 100 years and they continue to offer to the local Church a testimony to Jesus humiliated and obedient, in a challenging context for our brothers who want to keep alive the spirit of religious life.

The local bishops appreciate this effort and rely on the collaboration of our small family. Our Superior General has confirmed and encouraged the religious, inviting them to look to the

future with realism and hope, waiting for new apostles to join them in being a testimony to the local Church. The smile of the novices brightens their everyday life. Let's go forward always!



REGION V. FR. AUGUSTE ETCHEPAR

ARGENTINA URUGUAY
PARAGUAY BRAZIL

Argentina-Uruguay

On 1st June, three Betharramite religious (Fr. Alcides, Fr. Osmar and Fr. Leandro) and two laypeople (María Eugenia M. and Gorgina Vaiana) met at the Adrogué formation community as the team charged with the vocational awareness promotion of the Vicariate. Various issues were on the agenda, including how to develop pastoral care for vocations. The team found some ideas and some possibilities. The next meeting, scheduled for August 19 and 20 in Rosario, will have the objectives of scheduling meetings, defining a method of work and preparing material.

Paraguay

On June 4 and 5, a community meeting was held at the San Bernardino Spiritual Retreat Centre in the presence of the Regional Superior, Father Daniel González, who has resumed his canonical visit to the Vicariate begun in May.

Regional Novitiate | Adrogué

On June 8th, Feast of the Sacred

Heart of Jesus, first-year novices Canuto Benítez and Leonardo Tenorio began the canonical novitiate. The beginning of this stage was marked by 5 days of spiritual retreat and the communal Eucharistic celebration. On Saturday, Canuto is in pastoral service at the « Showers Project» in Barracas, while Leonardo Tenorio is involved in the pastoral care of «Vicentinos» of Adrogué.

On June 23, the 2nd year novices, Oscar, Anibal, Thiago and Leonardo, completed the canonical novitiate stage and are now beginning to prepare for the stage of the apostolic community experience. From August to October, they will do this experience outside the house of the regional novitiate.

Regional Scholasticate | Belo Horizonte

At the regional scholasticate there took place the first Louau Joven (meeting at the full moon), with the participation of several groups of young people from entire parish of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Belo Horizonte. This activity began at 19h by the reception of young people on the forecourt of the chapel Saint-Joseph and a warm animation. Eucharistic adoration was celebrated in the garden, by moonlight and by candlelight. It was then around a campfire that the presentation of the work and mission of the various groups of young people was made. The meeting ended with a delicious cassava broth and a feijão (traditional bean dish of the region).

On June 2nd and 9th, brothers Mariano and Sergio gave a lesson on Mary to the laity of the parish of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

This course was meant to help evangelise and understand the role of Our Lady in the life of the Church and her people. «Mary is greater than God, but she is indeed the first missionary disciple of Jesus Christ.



REGION SAINT MARY OF JESUS
CRUCIFIED
 ENGLAND INDIA
 THAILAND

Thailand

On June 16, the Sampran community organized a meeting for the alumni in the Bangkok area.

The purpose of these meetings is to intensify the links between the former members of the Betharram formation houses and the present young people in formation in the Vicariate of Thailand.

Fr Mongkon SCJ was in charge of this event. The day began with the celebration of Holy Mass during which the former students thanked the Lord for what they had received from Betharram and prayed for the present young people in formation. The traditional football match and lunch followed. These meetings offer everyone the opportunity to share their experiences and to help each other to be faithful to the vocation that each one has received from the Lord.



◆◆◆ In the meeting of the General Council on June 5th, 2018, the Superior General, Fr. Gustavo Agín, with the consent of his Council, granted an indult of departure from the Congregation to Br. Wilbur Mark Dias, temporary professed of the Vicariate of India, Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified Region (cf. RL 311).

◆◆◆ In the meeting of the General Council on June 21st, 2018, the Superior General with the advice of his Council approved the requests submitted by the Regional Superior of Saint Michael Garicoits Region for

- the closure of the community of Anglet/Saint-Palais (RL 206/f)
- the closure of the community of Fuenterrabia (RL 206/f)

in order to erect

- the **community « Côte basque »** composed of two houses, Fuenterrabia and Anglet, (RdV 206/b), and the **community of Saint-Palais** (RdV 206/b).

The Superior General and his Council also approved the appointment of *Fr. Joseph Ruspil* as Superior of the community of Saint-Palais and the appointment of *Fr. Gerard Zugarramurdi* s Superior of the community « Côte basque », from July 1st, 2018 (RL 206/a).



From young girls of Cambo to Daughters of the Cross

Michael Garicoits was ordained priest on the 20 December 1823. Was this the end of his training? Certainly not! For a long time the seminarian was left to train himself and be transformed by the people he met. He continued at Cambo and Betharram. ●●●



A curate listening attentively to a young parishioner

It is a certain fact: As curate to a parish priest with limited mobility, Michael Garicoits ran the parish in every sense, with an ardent passion! Not only that: he knew how to listen to those with a spiritual thirst.

She was 17 years old; the parish priest, not being very sensitive to her originality and freshness, turned her away; she revised her project downwards, and showed it to the curate: after all, you never know. This young parishioner was Jeanne Dagorret. She had read a book on the Sacred Heart; she told the young priest about her desire, no longer to create a 'Society of the Sacred Heart', but to be affiliated to one that was already in existence. Michael Garicoits' reply can be summed up as: 'What if we created one in Cambo?' She responded 'Amongst my relations, I could find 16 members!' By that evening, the list was 100 names long... A simple parishioner persisted and obliged St Michael Garicoits to develop this spirituality...

he prayed, took counsel, brought together other priests, consulted with Monsignor d'Astros about it... the project took shape. On 5th February 1825, the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and

Mary was born. At the end of the year, abbot Jauretche published a book written jointly: *Amodiozko deia Jesusen Bihotz sakratuac guiristino leialei*¹. The name of Michael Garicoits did not appear, but in the text, Basque from his region predominates. The curate was already far away although he did not hurry to Rome. The pope had granted a lot of indulgences to the association established at the Church of Santa Maria ad Pineam; it was good to become affiliated, and then to wait! The canonical formation of the Congregation at Cambo took place on the 2nd February 1826². The 'Holy Priest', "aphez saindua", had been in Betharram since November, sent there by Monsignor d'Astros.

1) One can translate by *The Call of Love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to faithful Christians*.

2) At the time of its creation, the official name was 'Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus'; the name of Mary was no longer used. A great register of the Congregation began on 2nd February 1826, the day of the canonical formation: Michael Garicoits, already in Betharram, was not present. This large book is at the town hall in Combo-les-Bains: it was in the presbytery when the planning work meant that anything old and useless was thrown out, including this document...; A resident with a discerning eye discovered it in a rubbish skip and hurried to take it to the town hall: 'Why did you not show it to the Betharram fathers?' ... You are not thinking it through! They would have kept it for themselves!

Jeanne Dagherret and Anne Fagalde

Their names have to be mentioned! They led Michael Garicoits to the novitiate: theirs and his! Anne was the friend of Jeanne, her disciple. The Congregation of the Sacred Heart was hardly envisaged, let alone established, yet they were already thinking about religious life. There was no convent in the Basque Country; in Béarn, in 1807, the Dominicans, coming from a rather comfortable background, got back their convent in Nay; in 1808, the Ursulines arrived in Pau to educate girls from good families. And 4 kms from Betharram, in Igon, Monsignor d'Astros (who had heard about it in Paris) set up a new congregation: The Daughters of the Cross.

The curate of Cambo would have been attracted by the latter: so much good was said about it! But nothing was worth a visit. On horseback, at a gallop, around the banks of the River Gave! There was total disappointment in Igon : absolute poverty, in a gloomy farm...; but a good welcome in Nay, in a real convent. Conclusion: *"Don't go to the Daughters of the Cross, they are idiots ; they don't even know how to speak French. Go instead to the Dominicans in Nay!"*

Sure of their vocation, Jeanne and Anne would become Sister St Timothy and Sister St Ignatius at the Daughters of the Cross³... Later, Michael Garicoits

3)When they arrived in Igon, you can imagine the former curate was really happy to meet them and to speak to them in their common language. In 1829, Sister Perpetua, the founder's cousin, named Sister St Timothy as the head of the

admitted: "My sisters have been wiser than me, their confessor, and have entered in your congregation!"

Monsignor d'Astros was not wrong to send the curate of Cambo to Betharram to *"be the director of all (his) nuns."* Very quickly, as chaplain at Igon, Michael Garicoits understood the motivation that brought this community to life! His meeting with its founder converted him!

Jeanne-Elisabeth Bichier des Ages

When the founder met Michael Garicoits in 1826, it was in the confessional. *"His discernment is favourable: he has been sent by Providence!"* So spoke Sister Mary Magdalene, Daughter of the Cross. However, it was he who came away enriched by their meeting, and those that followed.

Born in 1773 on the borders of Berry and Poitou, Jeanne-Elisabeth Bichier des Ages belonged to the nobility. The Revolution led to her spending three months in prison. At the age of 24 years, she fled her privileges and consecrated herself to God. The piety of the young girl encountered the care of the poor which motivated the priest of Maillé, André-Hubert Fournet: together they founded the Institute of the Daughters of the Cross in 1807. Fifteen years later, the young congregation was present in twenty dioceses⁴.

Ustaritz Novitiate ; she was 22 years old ; Sister St Ignatius was her assistant. Both died in 1831, one month apart.

4) In a footnote in letter 22 (volume 1 of Correspond-

To go from privilege and wealth to radical poverty, was to follow the reverse path from that of Michael Garicoits. He allowed himself to be converted by the 'Good Sister', as the Daughters of the Cross were known. He admitted: *"I thought of myself as a little character. I, who had looked after my mother's flock, having lived in poverty, had allowed myself to put on airs and to get noticed in elegant shoes, to replace my shepherd's clogs. That's where I was when I had the chance to get to know the Good Sister. In seeing the holiness of this noble soul, her religious life, her poverty, I reflected, and I understood that I had taken the wrong path."* He recognised: *"It's the Good Sister who has done everything ; I was only the executor of her advice (...). I am indebted to the Good Sister for any good that I have done."*

« You will be the founder. »

The first to speak of the project of the religious community was not Sister Elisabeth, but her cousin and confidente, Sister Mary-Perpetua⁵, the leader of the Daughters of the Cross in the South. In 1830, in Arudy, Michael Garicoits lamented the absence of monasteries for men devoted to the idea of religious life ; she went one step further :

ence), Father Miyyaa gave the portrait of St Elisabeth Bichier des Ages, accepted by Michael Garicoits.

5) Marie-Elisabeth Perpetue Goudon de la Lande belonged to the former nobility of Poitou ; having become Sister Mary-Perpetua, she was appointed leader of the communities of the South. Her body lies in the chapel of the Daughters of the Cross in Ustaritz.

"Also for them, a community like Daughters of the Cross has to be established."

"Yes, certainly ... but where ?", he answered.

"Betharram, that the seminarians are going to abandon for the town of Bayonne."

"And who will be the founder?"

"You, Mr Garicoits."

The priest refused the idea : he got up, paid his respects and left. He fled. To be a religious brother, yes, but the founder of an institution? That's a different matter !

However, there was no shortage of appeals. The departure of the seminarians allowed time to read and meditate. It was convenient to wait, without going forward with anything.

Beñat Oyhénart scj



Michael Garicoits and Jeanne-Elisabeth Bichier des Ages

In 2013, the pupils at the school, St Ursula's College in Pau, gave a show to mark 150 years since the death of Michael Garicoits ; The religious of the community in Pau actively took part. A passage showed the two founders⁶ in dialogue, in the format of a slam (written by Christine Coste):

6) Brother Emile Garat as Michael Garicoits and Sister Bernadette Bouguinat (Daughter of the Cross and sister of Father Firmin Bourguinat scj) as Jeanne-Elisabeth.

...Slam

Michael Garicoïts

and

Jeanne-Elisabeth
Bichier des Âges



– I was born poor and I know it
I was born a poor peasant lad
The Basque Country is my land
And Garicoïts is in my blood.

*– I was born rich and wealthy
I was born rich with plenty of money
In a castle near Poitiers
And I have blue blood in my veins.*

– I'm one of the poor
Who has to work hard,
And study while fighting
To climb up and gain ground.

*– I'm one of the great people
Who was born privileged
And whose life was fixed
According to their rank.*

– Then life went on
Full of wrong situations
As servant and schoolboy
And a boss with no role.

*– Then life went on
And then the Revolution
When I was sent to prison
Staying faithful to my religion.*

– Then in life I progressed
Got into Mathematics
Philosophy and Bossuet
No limit to my progress.

*– Then in life I progressed
and guided by Abbot Fournet
I made a vow of poverty,
Of obedience and of chastity.*

– And to this day, I am here
With my pretty fine shoes
Poverty is so far away
And it's a shock to see you.

*– And to this day, I am here
To teach and to relieve
So that God be glorified
By all the poor who arrived.*

– Today I search for my way
To be the ever ready soldier
To love without delay.
Oh my God, shine on me

*– Yes, I have at last found my way
I have devoted myself to God
A new congregation is born
Called The Daughters of the Cross.*



As to the manner of hearing, interpreting, and observing the rule, one must hold on to obedience. (...) So that all our words are gentle, benevolent and peaceful. If we let loose some harsh words, let us recognise it immediately, and humbly ask forgiveness from God and men. If on the other hand someone addresses us with some offensive words, let us not reply, nor try to make him feel his fault. Show him a gentle, caring attitude and let's just answer him a word or two ... (...) Let us love each other and be humbly united to each other by charity and benevolence, and let nothing come from us that could hurt others either by word or gesture nothing that could make us strangers to each other. | M 383 (3)



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