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## Father Barbé's log (4)

keeping his laws. Speaking with all the oratory for which he is famous, he began to speak to the sailors. "My dear sailors" he said "for you it is a duty, a pleasure even, to carry out you dear captain's orders, and you are quite right; but above there is a master, (I don't know if he didn't say a captain) who gives orders in heaven. It is his Will to be obeyed on earth, on the sea, and to the very depths of hell; it is his Will that his commandments are obeyed. Etc.

Try pronouncing these words with all the feeling of which M Guimon is capable; imagine an audience hanging on to the preacher's every word and listen to the roaring of the sea, and say to yourself: Isn't this beautiful? Tomorrow I hope to be able to tell you other than with words that I wasn't the only one to be deeply touched. Patience! Let's pray!..

(to be continued)

## On the schedule of the General Council

23<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> april 2006:

On the occasion of his visit to the communities of Holy Land, the Superior General will attend the priestly ordinations of Br. Butrus and Br. Eyad in Amman.

1<sup>st</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> May: Visit of the Superior General to the Vice-Province of Thailand.

28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> April: Fr. Enrico Frigerio will take part in the meeting of the Betharramite laity of Latin America in Passa Quatro (Brazil).



*Alleluia!  
The Christ  
is risen  
from the dead...  
He is risen  
indeed !*



104<sup>th</sup> year, Nr. 4

April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006

# Family News

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



**A word from  
the Superior General**

## God so loved the world

As Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the celebration of the Easter Triduum has enabled us to contemplate the pierced Heart of Christ, to be united to his sentiments so as to be penetrated more deeply with his Love (cf *Deus Caritas est*, 12), and so be able to persevere and put it into practice in our everyday lives, like new born creatures.

God is love. Within the Trinity, the Father effaces (kenosis) and abandons himself to the Son in the Spirit. He achieves the plenitude of his fatherhood at the precise moment when he receives total obedience and sacrifice from the Son who empties himself (kenosis). The Gospel shows us this relationship of Jesus with his Father and the Spirit. The Father lives for the Son and the Son for the Father. The Spirit is the life stream flowing between the Father and the Son. In God's eternal plans, each person is himself only what he is through his relationship with others, not otherwise. And in this way, communion is created, a reflection of that unity within the Trinity of persons.

No one has ever seen God; it is only the Son who has revealed him to us (John 1/18). For a father there is nothing more precious than a son. It is worth noting how the bountiful Father loves his beloved Son, Jesus (kenosis). Abraham also cherished Isaac, because he was the son of the promise. And yet he was ready to sacrifice him to recognize that Yahweh, the God of the promises is more important than the promises themselves.. And so to prove our worth in his eyes, the Father of all goodness delivers his beloved Son to us; he gives him to us, so that

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**Happy  
Easter!**



we may have eternal life. *God so loved the world!* (John 3/16)

The beloved Son lives only for his Father and for his plan, the salvation of mankind. To prove to us what we are worth, in order that we may lead worthwhile lives, to cure us of our selfishness which is the cause of murderous hatred, confrontations and divisions. The Son empties himself and makes himself one with our human nature through his incarnation (kenosis). And as if that was not enough, he devotes himself entirely to the service of mankind, curing the sick, forgiving sinners, bringing consolation and restoring a meaning to broken lives, washing the feet of his disciples, he their Master, offering his life on the Cross for the multitude (kenosis). *God so loved the world!*

*In the  
footsteps of  
the beloved  
Son,  
changing  
into new  
creatures,  
stimulated  
by love*

And this is not all. The beloved Son includes us in his offering; he has carried us along in the dynamic of love by changing us into new creatures, stimulated by love. "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. This is my commandment, love one another as I have loved you. (John 15/9 and 12) We have been created for love. This is where it all takes place – individualism or communion, success or frustration, sense or nonsense, life or death, heaven or hell. Do you feel that it is a lesser evil to live a life deprived of love, when we have been created for love? Love means much more than feeling fine beside the beloved. Love demands that we transcend all sentimentality and romanticism, not to mention eroticism. Following the example of the Father and Jesus, we must stop thinking about ourselves (kenosis) and seek only what is best for the Father and the Son; they seek what is best for all mankind and mankind in everything. *God so loved the world!*

True love demands kenosis, abandonment, self sacrifice, and humiliations accepted for the benefit of one's neighbour. This is the rule within the Trinity. And so it is with Jesus in the incarnation and redemption. *"In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus: His state was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God but*

Betharramerica  
1856-2006



**On board the Three-Master  
L'Etincelle en route for  
Montevideo (4)**

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September** - Last night was awful. At about 10pm an awful storm arose. Our boat was tossed about on the high seas, in all directions. There was nothing but bumps and leaps beyond description. In our little cabin the furniture was sent crashing around. A few of our number went outside. As you can imagine M. Guimon was not the slowest in going out on deck. For a moment he believed that all the demons in Hell were let loose; he made a sign of the Cross and said some words which resembled strangely the words for an exorcism. (...) As for me, what was I doing? I'm sorry, I'm even embarrassed to have to admit it, but I was sleeping. I slept such a deep sleep that I neither felt nor heard a thing (...)

God had his plans; Blessed be his Holy Name. It's true that he treats me as if I were a child; something which makes me feel very humble... With all my being I bless him and more fervently than ever I say: *fiat voluntas tua*

Obviously the eye of the Lord watches over us ... and if God is with us, who can be against us?

*Be fearless, my little boat...*

*In their anger, what can our enemies  
do against us? ... God has only to speak,  
And behold them at his feet.*

Poetry! Poetry! And why not? Full steam ahead! May I not express, come what may, what I have in my heart? And now for the first bit of good news. We have sailed round Cape Finisterre and we are now on the direct route for Montevideo.

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September** - After Mass M. Guimon spoke to us. Here is a sample of his little speech. It was all about the Great Commandment of love of God, consisting in

For the fourth  
consecutive time,  
and with renewed  
pleasure, we join  
again the  
Betharramite  
sailing camp sent  
in reconnaissance  
to the new world.



2006

APRIL

15	Happy birthday	Fr. Chanchai Temaroonrung
17	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Mario Sosa
19	Feliz aniversario	P. José Antonio da Silva
20	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Gaspar Fernández P. José Rovegno
21	Buon compleanno	P. Pietro Villa
23	Buon compleanno	F. Simone Panzeri

MAY

2	Happy birthday	Br. Thinakorn Damrongusasin
3	Buon compleanno	P. Ernesto Colli
4	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Elie Kurzum
5	Buon compleanno	P. Antonio Canavesi
7	Happy birthday	Br. Jose Kumar Johnrose
8	Happy birthday	Br. Peter Krtisada Songsi
10	Feliz aniversario Buon compleanno Happy birthday Joyeux anniversaire	P. José Mirande P. Guido Pradella Br. Shaju Kalappurackal F. Arnaud Richard
12	Happy birthday Feliz cumpleaños Joyeux anniversaire	Fr. Cyril Hazlewood P. Domingo Miner P. Pierre Leborgne
13	Feliz cumpleaños 5 years of profession, Congratulations !	H. Guido Eugenio Garcia Br. Jose Kumar Johnrose Br. Anthony Masilamani Br. Pascal Ravi
14	Joyeux anniversaire Buon compleanno 55 th of profession 10th of profession congratulations !	P. Paul Baradat P. Antonio Riva Fr. Edward Simpson Br. Pairot Nauchachawan Br. Jiraphat Raksikhao Br. Viravit Sasai
16	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Juan Antonio Morales
17	20° di sacerdozio, auguri !	P. Graziano Sala P. Antonio Riva
19	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Roberto Amarilla
22	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Henri Nadal

*emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave.....He was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross.” (Philip 2/6-8) Abba, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as you, not I would have it. (Mk 14/36) The Master has the courage to suggest to his disciples what he had undergone himself. “If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself, take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake and for the sake of the Gospel, will save it.” (Mk 8/34-35) This continues to take place today in the Church and the Congregation. God so loved the world!*

How well St Michael understood the Gospel! For love’s sake rather than for any other motive! (DS 209) Which amounts to the same thing, it would seem. *God, God alone and me in my place!* (DS86) I have nothing to lose and everything to gain. I trust the gift of my brothers. Should they abandon me, there is someone, the Father, who loved me first and who continues to shower me with the gift of his offering. He never abandons me. The Resurrection is obvious proof of this.. The Father remains faithful to those he loves and who love him in return and who practise justice, even if it seems that he is abandoning them; even if circumstances seem to prove him a liar. *God so loved the world!*

Gaspar Fernández Pérez,SCJ

*Father Etcheppar writes... to his sister Julie, Charity Sister, April 10<sup>th</sup> 1885*

*I am more and more convinced of one thing: the foundation of all true holiness is feeling the need of Our Lord; it is to be aware of our nothingness and our wretchedness, it is to have recourse like lost souls to the love of our Crucified Lord. Progress in holiness is measured by our gratitude for his great love; perfection consists in remaining patiently on the Cross, in all humility and abandoned saying “Father, not my will, but thine be done!”... Since Our Lord died and rose again from the dead, we too must die like him, so as to rise again like him.*

*For love’s sake rather than for any other motive*

SPECIAL  
CHAPTERPROVINCE OF  
RIO DE LA PLATA

**Elected Provincial Commissions:**  
 « Community in mission »  
 FF. Martin and Daleoso  
 « Pastoral activities in a spirit of communion »  
 FF. Ramos, Gouarnalusse and Gonzalez  
 « Economy in a spirit of communion »  
 FF. Martinez, Badie and Gavel

\* Familia Laical  
 BEtharramita  
 (Family of the Betharramite Laity)

Adrogué, 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> December 2005

### Overview of the III<sup>rd</sup> session

At the suggestion of the Provincial, Fr. Enrique Miranda, the work was focused on the following issues:

**1. COMMUNITY AND MISSION ■ Setting-up of formation meetings for the Religious** (monthly or every two months depending on the area), and every three months for all the communities ■ Reorganisation of the communities and the Province in view of the regionalisation ■ Focus on the spirituality of communion, through exchange of religious in the works, and creation of intercommunity places ■ For the religious: courses and formation programmes, workshops, one-week retreats, e-teaching.

**2. VOCATION PROMOTION ■** To improve the image of the Congregation starting from the principle of Incarnation ■ To heal personal wounds and those with the Congregation ■ To promote communities where *the Brethren pray together, where they live like brothers, where they give a meaningful service* ■ To favour a culture for vocations through the dynamics of the experience of God and straightforward witness, through a project of life combined with the catechesis, through retreats for the youth (uniting vocation promotion, youth activities and mission activities), through fundraising events for the works and the creation of a team for the vocation promotion.

**3. LAY AND RELIGIOUS walking together along the way opened up by the General Chapter and the Rule of Life ■** Ecclesiology of communion and participation ■ World of the youth: formation of animators; spiritual formation and individual guidance: project of life; community life ■ World of education: catechesis on the charism, teachers days (formation on Christian life starting from their own vocation) ■ Lay people: to ensure training through the new media (spirituality leaflets), Falabe\* meetings, opportunities offered by the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the mission.

Fr. José Luiz Arantes

### IN MEMORIAM

Continues from p. 7

In 1980 he survived a car accident without a scratch. Mgr Antonio Afonso de Miranda, bishop of the diocese of Campanha, asked Fr. José Mirande, then Vice provincial of Brasil, to send him to Conceição do Rio Verde as a parish priest. Next stop: Belo Horizonte, for about one year in the study house, and finally many years in Passa Quatro.

Fr. José Luiz worked a lot in rural areas. He enjoyed the most difficult ministries. He liked to arrange walks for groups praying the rosary, not to mention the processions he loved so much. Who does not remember his megaphone fixed at a stick, and his steady voice starting the song: "With the Church, we will go up..."? Who has forgotten his hopping movements at the altar which intrigued the children?

Devoted to Our Lady, his radio was always tuned in to Radio Aparecida. He would prepare at length his homilies and read them with a gentle and fervent voice.

At the São Miguel secondary school, he looked after the vegetable garden; one could always see him, pruning shears in the hand, cutting and trimming plants. His spiritual life was rooted in the visit to the Holy Sacrament. How much time he spent alone, in silence, in front of the tabernacle, filled with his faith in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist! His favourite word was: *My Lord and my God, I believe, but make faith grow in me!*

When he got ill, he stayed for a while with his family, in Cruzilia. Feeling better, he ministered at the parish of Our Lady of Aparecida, in Tres Pontes. He stayed there for two years and a half, then he came back to Conceição do Rio Verde and worked for five years and a half. Struck again by the disease, he had to be hospitalized in Sao Paulo. He left last year the hospital and went to Passa Quatro, welcomed with affection by all the residents in the house of Velinhos, the seminarians of Betharram and FF. Joaquim and Vicente. The people of Passa Quatra will never forget him.

Father José Luiz was a family-minded priest. He loved the Church. He was a man of the Here I am. A man of God. He moved into his eternal "house" on March 13<sup>th</sup>. He will be remembered as a model of holiness. (Various authors)

### WE PRAY ALSO FOR

- A brother-in-law of Fr. Henri Nadal (Betharram-Notre Dame)
- A sister of Fr Carlos Escurra (Asunción)





hospitality I had seen. In this Parish we have many priests staying from Africa, Pakistan and India who are very interested in our work and not only take part in it, but say they will take some of our ideas back to their own countries.



There is a yearly interfaith walk round Churches, Mosques, synagogues and Temples. Merely walking together is a simple exercise in conversing with members of other Faiths.



With some of my parishioners I spent a day in the Orthodox Synagogue of the City, listening to Jews and Christians speaking about their conceptions of holiness. On this occasion, I discovered that the book of Leviticus that I personally rated very low in my reading, rose considerably in my estimation.



In *Nostra Aetate*, Declaration on the relation of the Church to Non Christian Religions proclaimed by Pope Paul VI, we are reminded to respect other religions and their practices; at times this can be quite taxing. Sometimes an innocent suggestion like having a meal together might seem to be a good idea, but in fact it can be like entering a minefield, especially for orthodox Jews, with all their food and culinary proscriptions.

But from these encounters and in other ways we learn to appreciate the richness of another's faith; the Muslims' fast at Ramadan and their commitment to prayer five times a day, contact with Muslim women of faith and their deep commitment to God. We have been uplifted and calmed when the Buddhists have led us in meditation.

We have learned over these years of dialogue and working together to understand to some degree the religious significance of each other feasts, but we still have a long way to go. It is noticeable since we began to meet how each Faith has learned from the others, and in the course of time people have changed, but we are still challenged by the Spirit not to flag but to press on.

Dominic Innamorati, SCJ

**4. ECONOMY IN A SPIRIT OF COMMUNION** ■ To avoid concentrating the whole information in the same hands, to regularly review the community accounts ■ To follow a common format for the colleges/parishes/communities accounts ■ To produce a detailed report of the receipts and the expenses at a community and provincial level.

#### **Notes from a journey in the Republic of Centrafrica**

#### **Between enthusiasm and discouragement**

Mission of Bouar-Niem, Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006. Visit to the school village of Pakam. Meeting with the teachers, talking with the headmaster and his wife, both teachers, about the hard political situation. Because of the bandits and rebels lurking around the area, they can stay in the village only in the daytime; in the evening they lock the house, and move out to spend the night into the bush together with their children, taking along with them some educational materials and registers: Being among the few people who receive a salary, they fear to be attacked, beaten up and robbed of everything if they stay at home. This is the climate of insecurity and precariousness in which the people and our Brothers live. Political instability, banditry, guerrilla do nothing but increase the already precarious conditions of people's life.

The two volunteers who accompanied me in this journey helped Fr. Tiziano to put in order the dispensary of his crowded hospital. In the meantime, together with Fr. Arialdo and Fr. Benjamin, I visited some of the 25 "village schools", scattered throughout 4500mq territory, which enable 2160 children to free themselves from illiteracy.

My task is to ensure contacts between the "schools of village" of the parishes of Niem and Bouar, and the 50 volunteers who have already given a helping hand on the spot and the 2000 people in Italy who support the project, by means of "scholarships" and who, pooling their efforts, bring about an authentic miracle of the solidarity.

Piero Trameri, SCJ



#### **Post scriptum:**

I have just come to know that Fr. Arialdo run into a group of rebels: he was robbed of the few things he had and beaten with the butt of the rifles because the aggressors suspected he had hidden the satellite telephone. Fortunately nothing serious happened, besides heavy pains in the joints, some fear and much anger for the situation experienced by this beloved country so severely devastated



## 5 MINUTES WITH... BROTHER BUTRUS

On April 27<sup>th</sup> in Amman, Eyad Bader and Butrus Alhijazin will receive from the hands of Mgr Michel Sabbah, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, the priestly ordination. They will be the first Betharramite Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus from Jordan. A few weeks before this event, we interviewed Br. Butrus, student at the Salesian University in Rome.

**Nef - Where does your vocation to religious life come from?** - Before the call to religious life, it is the vocation to priesthood that grew in me, supported by my life environment: my family, the Catholic school, the Church. There, I met people who were true educators; they enabled me to grow up, not only by means of words but also through their example, their dedication, and, as regards my parents, through their very simple faith.

My vocation to religious life came afterwards, in an environment which encouraged me to experience the three vows. Material poverty made me discover another form of poverty, a spiritual one, which consists in always trusting in the Lord, Master of the destiny of every man. Then, the obedience which I understand as a submission to the will of the Lord; He is the only One who knows what is the true good for man. Finally, chastity which originates in the fear of the Lord, is based on the love of the Father, and leads to fraternal love towards the neighbour, like in a big family.

**What was more remarkable in your formation and in discovering the ministry?** - It is the fidelity to the Lord. During the past 9 years, He never ceased to guide me, even though I felt as if he was sleeping at the back, in the boat of my life. But I was always convinced that He was there.

**As a Christian from the Eastern Church, how do you see the Church here and over there?** - I grew up in a materially poor environment, but fortunately rich from a spiritual point of view, with a deep and committed faith, in spite of the challenges coming from the dominant culture and the Islamic tradition. Here, on the contrary, the Church enjoys material wealth, but generally speaking, it is lacking in spirituality; religion is lived without deep conviction, especially by the young people.

## A Multicultural England

### Building Bridges

Ten years ago, I would not have imagined myself distributing ashes on Ash Wednesday to Christian, Sikh, Muslim and Hindu children in my two Catholic schools. Looking back, I think this is where interfaith began and still continues; meeting children and parents from non-Christian faiths.

For six years we have been meeting with the Muslims in two areas of my Parish. Gradually we are growing to understand each other and build up trust through monthly meetings. We arrange discussions and workshops, each faith giving their teachings on such subjects as pilgrimage, fasting, works of charity and renewal. Over the last two years Buddhists, Jews, Bahais and Hindus, have asked to join the Moseley Interfaith Group.

As a result of our contact, last summer, we were invited to the Central Birmingham Mosque to hear Muslim religious leaders and others condemn the terrorist attacks in London and prepare a public interfaith demonstration in the City Centre against terrorism. The invitation was a unique occasion to meet people from all persuasions or non, uniting together in condemnation of killing innocent people and at the same time expressing disapproval against our government for leading us into war with Iraq, and for present injustices in the Middle East.

At local level our meetings enable us to appreciate our common humanity; to share a joke, a laugh, an act of kindness or generosity when we are working together. In these informal ways we can learn about each other and build up trust. Invitations to celebrations after Ramadan and to the great Sikh Temples enhanced my understanding of hospitality; much more generous than any Christian

Interfaith in SCJ Parish of Ss John and Martins in Moseley and Balsall Heath, Birmingham

end of 2001, gave in his resignation for health reasons. On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, the General Council accepted his resignation and thanked Fr. João Batista for his service to the Congregation. As a consequence, the religious in Brazil are now being consulted for the appointment of the next vice-provincial - that is, the new Betharramite "captain" in the biggest catholic country of the world.

**Latest "News"** ■ Have you heard the latest? A real titbit: the *Family News* has got a new edition in Portuguese. Translated in Brazil, edited in Rome, the issues of January and February 2006 have just been published, with a slight delay, in a light blue livery. Long life to the *Notícias em família!*



Blessed Mariam  
Region

### Province of England Delegation of India

**Ahoy Companions!** ■ On March 18<sup>th</sup>, lay Betharramite, known as *Companions of Betharram*, and religious members gathered for a retreat at the manor of Widney. Sr Jackie, religious sister of Saint-Paul, facilitated the spiritual gathering. There was a perfect combination of prayer and chants throughout the day: to sing is to pray twice!

**Roots and branches** ■ Fr. Austin Hughes, Provincial of England, was in India from March 25<sup>th</sup> to April 12<sup>th</sup>. He started his visit by preaching the retreat to our students in Bangalore. With its 33 members, Shobhana Shaaka is the biggest community in the Congregation (ahead of the retreat house of Betharram with 26 Fathers and Brothers). *Shobhana Shaaka means beautiful branch* in Sanskrit - just like *beth arram* in Bearnese. Here is a trunk which does not lack of growing shoots...

### Vice-Province of Thailand

**Young religious for the youth** ■ On March 18<sup>th</sup>, the Council, gathered in Chiang Mai, appointed Fr. Chan Kunu superior of the study house in Sampran. At the age of 33, he is leaving Bethlehem to succeed a master of scholastics who is slightly older than him, Fr. Tidkham Jailertrit. Another comeback, after many years in India, is for Fr. Suthon Khiriwathanasakun. For the young Province, a great formation team in view!

### Which aspects of the charism and the mission of Betharram give more inspiration to your commitment?

- The most remarkable aspect which attracted me towards the priests of Betharram and continues to spur me on this road, is the mission as a participation in the very mission of Christ who came into the world. In other words: the *Here I am*. I am glad to see that this is the core of the experience of other Fathers.

### What are your feelings at less than a fortnight from your ordination?

- I put myself in the hands of the Virgin Mary, and with her I repeat her canticle: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord". Because I gave my life to him. Because I am convinced that he will keep in me, until the end, the gifts he entrusted to me and will entrust to me in the future.

### IN MEMORIAM

#### Brazil

#### Father José Luiz Arantes Vilela

Father José Arantes Vilela was well-known as Father José Luiz. Born in Aiuruoca on June 9<sup>th</sup> 1931, he studied at the São Miguel school from 1945 to 1949. In 1952, he entered the Fathers of Betharram: after one year noviciate and three years of philosophy in Passa Quatro, he attended the theology courses in Argentina. He was ordained a priest on December 22<sup>th</sup> 1959.

The young seminarians admired his prayer life. Shortly after his ordination, he worked at Vila Matilde (São Paulo) and stayed then at the São Miguel college, where the young boarders called him by the nickname of Luizão. His family always called him Fr. Zeca. He liked fishing and going for a stroll with Fr. Evaldo.

He worked in Conceição until the Seminary was closed down. He then went to Caxambu, where he ministered in three feminine communities, and in another one in Baependi, while being the parish priest of São Tomé das Letras.



## Generalate House

**The new Rule has made a good progress** ■ In the line of the General Chapter, a team was set up for the revision of the Rule of life, starting from the guidelines of the Chapter and the suggestions from all the religious. The Fathers Beñat Oyhenart, Jacky Moura, Pietro Felet and Bruno Ierullo gathered at the Generalate House from March 13<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. They worked in a fraternal spirit, with the inspiring presence of Fr. Gaspar Fernandez. The result of their work has been passed on to the (vice)provincials at very short notice, together with an introduction letter. As soon as it will be translated from French, all the religious will be invited to take it up and send their remarks to the General Secretary, by the end of 2006. All these contributions will help the team to draw up the definitive text of the new Rule of Life. This is an individual, community and ecclesial road of renewal which seems to have got off to a good start.

**A community in the desert** ■ On March 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> the Generalate House got empty. Taking advantage of the liturgical inputs and the hospitality of the Sisters of Bethlehem and of the Assumption of the Virgin (well-known in the area of Saint-Pé), the community of via Brunetti arranged a Lent recollection at the abbey "Madonna del Deserto", 230km from Rome. Silence, solitude and prayer were guaranteed, in a remote area of Umbria. "We'll come back", said the 3/4 of the retreating members, while the 1/4 stayed a few more days. A good opportunity to foster the inner strength before resuming the routine of the "Vita Romana"!...

## Province of France Spain

**Fraternal presence** ■ Fr. Leonardo Gallejones, parish priest of Benlloch (Castellon), is being supported in his fight against cancer: moral and medical support from Br. Theodore Miguel, on secondment from Betharram since a few weeks; pastoral help from Fr. Gaspar Fernandez who has planned to spend the Holy Week in Fr. Leonardo's parish. Through the loving support of his family, the marks of friendship and the prayer of the whole family of Betharram, Fr. Leonardo can find new energy to go through this trial.



*Saint Michael  
Region*

## Province of Italy

**In the name of the victims of violence** ■ For a month, Italy was shaken by the kidnapping and the death of a 17-month-old epileptic child, Tommaso Onofri. Tommy's body was found on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, one year after his baptism by Fr. Giacomo Spini (the family of the child belong to the Sant'Andrea in Antognano parish entrusted to the Betharram community of Parma). In the aftermaths of the kidnapping, our Brother addressed a touching appeal to the kidnappers, echoing the words of the Pope. He constantly sustained the parents along this trial, and tried to guide the prayer of the parishioners. Between the psychological pressure and the media pressure, Fr. Giacomo managed to maintain a human and balanced attitude in such an inhuman case.

## Meeting of the laity of the Region Fr. Etchecopar

The Betharramite laity from Latin America will gather in Passa Quatro (Brazil) from April 28<sup>th</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> May, for the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the sort. About 20 persons from Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay will join the Betharramite lay people in Brazil. In the framework of the celebration of the 150 years of Betharram in America, this event has got a particular meaning. It will allow the laity to be always more part of our charism, not only to value the contribution of the Congregation to each country, but above all to face together the challenges of the future.



*Fr. Etchecopar  
Region*

## Province of the Rio de La Plata

**New school year** ■ The Betharramite religious who disembarked in Argentina in 1856 could probably not imagine their future posterity. The handful of students of the beginning have multiplied: 150 years later, our colleges have more than 5000 students divided in 7 schools, fortified by the commitment of 700 co-operators and the trust of 4000 families. Today like yesterday, Betharram is well settled in the education system of the country.

## Vice-Province of Brazil

**After the resignation, the mission goes on** ■ Fr. João Batista Ribeiro, superior of the vice-province since the