

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

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On the schedule of the Superior General

9th-15th December
Visit to the regional
noviciate of Bethlehem

From December 27th
Stay in Paraguay and
Argentina

January 8th-13th 2007
In Asunción, Fr. Gaspar
will be taking part in the
5th ELAB (meeting of
the Latin American
Betharramites),
concluding the 150th
anniversary of the
mission in America

January 20th
Back in Rome

Father Barbé's log (11)

than them on many questions, but most certainly not when it's a question of respect, obedience, veneration for his person, respect, love, fidelity to the congregation, our mother, never. Such declarations are trivial from being repeated. Never mind you will tell him just the same! I know him well; he will accept them for what they are, that is – the truth.

Should you see them, tell each and every one of our confreres that we love them all in the Lord, and that it is not our intention that the physical distance which separates us, should be a separation of the hearts; let them pray for us as we pray for them.

If you get a chance of talking to the novices, whisper in their ear: *Estote parati* (they understand Latin well, and many other things too.) Tell them that we are not immortal, and that one day or other our ranks will be thinned and that there will be need of replacements. Let them study science hard. It is probably necessary but let them pay particular attention to what is required by the 16th rule of the Summary.

Finally, I am making you the interpreter of my feelings, my respect, and my gratitude and affection towards all those you may come across.

Adieu, once more, my dear log; I think you had better be on your way, otherwise I shall end up by being jealous of you and thus offend our Heavenly Father. Adieu!

(the end)



Merry Christmas &
happy New Year !

NEF



Family News

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Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram



A word from the Superior General

Here I am, Father, to do your will!

In this issue

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In a few days time, on the 20th December, as part of the immediate preparation for Christmas, the *Canticle of the New Man* as our Father Saint Michael used to call the **Here I am**, will echo once again in the liturgy. It is the day on which the Beloved Son offers himself to his dear Father to bring to completion his plan for salvation: **Here I am! Send me!** (Is 6/8) It is the day on which the Word became flesh, with the collaboration of Mary in her response: *Behold the handmaid of the Lord* (Luke 1/38)

Furthermore, St Michael describes **Here I am** as an act: an ongoing act which becomes an attitude, a life style, the way of life of Jesus, Mary and of every Betharramite, from the virginal conception of Jesus.

This Betharramite way of life consists in never being a reference but referring to another. It is the way of life of the Three Persons of the Trinity; the Father exists by saying **here I am**, because he is in communication with the Son and the Holy Spirit; in a similar manner the Son and the Holy Spirit are in relation with the other two. It was in the bosom of the Trinity that the beloved Son learnt to say **Here I am**. *I tell you most solemnly, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees the Father doing; and whatever the Father does the Son does too. For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he does himself.* (John 5/19,20).

104th year, n° 11

14th December
2006

*Here I am is
the way of life
of Jesus, and
of every
Betharramite,
out of love*

Here I am is the way of life of Jesus from the moment of his conception to his death on the cross. It is self emptying, (kenose: humiliation and deprivation); it means to open up, to come out into the open, take an interest in others- the Father or the neighbour, listen, be ready to do what they want, to take risks on their behalf. It is the obedience of Jesus and of every Betharramite: **Here I am, Father, to do your will!** Obedience for love's sake rather than for any other motive – obedience willingly accepted and which is evangelical.

Here I am, is the answer of Jesus to Mary and Joseph. “*Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?*” (Luke 2/49). **Here I am**, is his answer to the Apostles when they tell him “everybody is looking for you”; “*Let us go elsewhere*” (Mark 1/37,38). **Here I am** when the crowds wanted to make him King and when *he escaped back to the hills by himself.* (John 6/15). **Here I am**, is the prayer in Gethsemane. “*Abba, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as you, not I, would have it*”. (Mark 14/36). **Here I am**; it is the wheat grain which falls to the ground and dies (John 12/24), the master washing his disciples' feet (John 13), the Son surrendering his life to his Father on the cross – His Body given up and his Blood shed for the forgiveness of sins (Mt 26/26-28).

Here I am is neither momentary nor static. It doesn't mean: I am here, in this spot, waiting for things to happen. **Here I am** is both ongoing and dynamic. There are some who translate it as: “*Here I am. I have come to do your will*” (Ps 40/8,9). St Michael Garicoits maintains that Jesus *embarked on his mission by this act of submission, which he never abandoned.* (Manifesto). For St Michael Garicoits **Here I am** means that he never did anything of his own accord, but *acted always by God's Spirit to suffer and do all that his Father wanted.* For St Michael Garicoits, **Here I am** means that *from that moment*



Betharramerica
1856-2006



On board of the Three-Master
L'Étincelle en route for
Montevideo (11)

Monday 3rd November 1856 - Post Script: We have just returned from the Bishop's Palace. Mgr was not there; he is visiting his diocese and will only be back in January. We were informed that the harbour master had received orders to come out to meet us with small boats as soon as the French and Bayonne flags were seen. It would have been an unfortunate idea to want to get us on board an American steamer. We had neither a French nor Bayonne flag. Allow me to tell you the whole truth; far from being upset by the whole story I am heartily pleased and bless the Lord who spared us such an embarrassment. Don't know that the Tarpein Rock is not far from the Capitol. It would even be more Christian to say that *Crucifigatur* comes quickly after *Hosanna*. Therefore God be praised!

And now I would like to say a few words about Buenos Aires, but a life time would not suffice to tell you about all the magnificent sights and also (for here as elsewhere, it is a land of exile, a valley of tears) what is wretched in this country. I am neither artist nor poet; I don't possess the where with all to make a success of it. I shall simply say that when there is a project to found a town, build convents, churches, one would be well advised to take model here. I don't think that in France they know how to build anything so magnificent as what can be seen here.

I must finish! Adieu, my dear log; you want to return to France. Go ahead! I agree. My best wishes and those of my confreres go with you. When you reach your destination you must do your best to cheer up all those who have been worried on our account. They deserve our consideration. Once you have done this, you will then adopt a serious ton of voice like someone expressing his inmost feelings, and you will tell our Very Reverend Superior that the little colony in Buenos Aires gladly accepts others to be better

Slowly but
surely we are
getting to the
last pages of
Father Barbe's
Log . 150 years
on, the South
American
Betharram has
still got the wind
in its sails.
Thank God!
Forward march!



2006

DECEMBER

14	Joyeux anniversaire Buon compleanno	P. Paul Fourcade F. Fiorenzo Trivelli
15	Happy birthday	Br. George Varghese Korandakkatte
16	Happy birthday	Br. Albert Sa-at Prathansantihong
17	Buon compleanno Joyeux anniversaire	P. Giuseppe Lietti F. Omer Koutouan Nanghy
18	Buon compleanno Happy birthday	P. Giulio Forloni Br. Maria Soosai Rajendran
19	25° di sacerdozio, auguri	P. Carlo Sosio
21	50° de profesión, enhorabuena	Ho. Juan Carlos Miner
22	55 ans de prêtrise, félicitations	P. Jean Tapie P. Eugène Lhouerrou
23	Happy birthday	Br. Arul Gnana Prakash Joseph Br. J.Bosco Parinya Wonganan
24	Happy birthday	Br. Gerard Sutherland
25	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Francisco Daleoso
27	Buon compleanno	P. Alessandro Paniga Fr. Chan John Kunu
28	Feliz cumpleaños Happy birthday	P. José Miguel Larrosa Br. Hiran Thomas Klinboakaew
31	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Théophile Dégni N'Guessan

2007

JANUARY

1	Happy birthday	Br. Valan Peter Kanagaraj Br. Peter Nonthaphat Mayoe
3	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Sergio Gouarnalusse
5	Happy birthday	Br. John Peter Sundar Raj
6	Joyeux anniversaire Buon compleanno	P. Sauveur Londaitzebéhere P. Roberto Cornara
7	Feliz cumpleaños	Ho. Jesús Cano P. Daniel Ramón Martín
8	Buon compleanno Feliz cumpleaños	P. Angelo Pessina Ho. Teodoro Miguel
10	Happy birthday	Br. Yesudas Kuttappasseril Br. Praveen A. Kumar Anandraj
11	Buon compleanno	P. Alessandro Locatelli
13	Buon compleanno	F. Angelo Sala
14	Happy birthday	Br. Lucas Soosai S. Manickam
16	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Pierre Lagouardat

forward he was the victim in the presence of God. The first condition is called obedience, and the second one humility. What therefore, enables communion to exist in the Trinity, the Church, a family, a religious community and society at large is humility and a loving obedience.

At Christmas we shall listen to the author of *Here I am* and of *Behold the handmaid of the Lord*. The entire life of Jesus, his sacred humanity, the mystery of the Incarnation resounds throughout history. *Here I am*. We shall contemplate God in the Child in Bethlehem, wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in the manger. The contemplation of his kenose (his humiliation and deprivation) cannot but touch us deeply. Where ever we go our lives will be an echo of the Canticle of the New Man: *Here I am!* On condition of being humble and obedient for the love of God and our brothers, more for love than for any other motive, as disciples of Jesus, humble and obedient. Thus we shall be artisans of unity where ever we may be.

Gaspar Fernandez Perez,SCJ

Father Etehecopar is writing... to his sister Julie, on the 23rd December 1884

In Rome, the wishes for a happy New Year are offered at Christmas, and for Catholics at heart it is a good idea. Where can there be renewal, if not in the presence of Him who renews everything; happiness, if not in the presence of the Angels' Joy; safety, if not in the presence of the King of Ages! My dear Sister, let's go into the presence of the God of Love, and there accept my good wishes and gifts in the heart of his Immaculate Mother. My presents are none other but Jesus and Mary. They are giving themselves to us, they are all ours. Let's help each other to offer ourselves to Them. During Mass, God willing, I shall give you these magnificent gifts – I shall give you the Child Jesus in the arms of his Mother, and with the shepherds and the Magi we shall offer our poor hearts.

*Humility
and
obedience is
what enables
communion
to exist*

Full General Council 2006

Account amongst brothers



From the 8th to the 16th November Father Gaspar Fernandez assembled his councillors in Rome for their annual work session. Several outside contributors were also invited; they helped to enrich the discussion and to define the action to be taken on certain points e.g. economy, relations with the laity, the situation in India, the cause of beatification of Father Etchecopar.

In a peaceful and relaxing atmosphere, the full General Council began by taking stock of the situation (vice Province by (vice) Province. The detailed review took three days, and revealed the strength and weaknesses of each entity. With realism and respect for individuals, the Council tried to examine each individual case. The result is the image of a Congregation very much alive, as can be felt from the visits of the General Superior, from relaxed meetings and from articles in *Family News*!

On 11th November, the group invited the Italian Provincial Committee responsible for the coordination and animation of the laity. The putting into practice of a decision of the last General Chapter concerning the appointment of a lay correspondent for the Council and of an international reference document, was brought to our attention. The Italian Province has made its logistics available to gather all available materiel. Then, Father Enrico Frigerio, general councillor responsible for the laity, will draw up a sample text. After consultation with the different national fraternities the final text should be presented to the General Chapter of 2011. One of the aims is to “make everyone aware of what makes us members of the same body, religious and laity Betharramite, while at the same time protecting what is particular to each group.”

On the 13th November there was a welcome break – the Council spent the day at Assisi. The next day, strengthened by the spirit of the evangelical dialogue, they tackled the second part of the session:

Those who knew him remember him as honest conscientious and hardworking, and it was in that mode that he served for many years as a bursar, and as a schoolteacher. Past pupils remember him as a great source of strength and stability for them, and the community remembers his kindness. Other people recall his artistic side and his love of classical music, his accomplishments at piano and organ and his love of art. He often played at our retreats and community gatherings. He was never given to boasting of his achievements but he was very proud of the stained glass window he commissioned for the West window of Our Lady Star of Sea church at Delancey. A photo of this beautiful stained glass with its image of Mary protecting the ships at sea was always kept in his room.

At Delancey (Guernsey), he volunteered for the job of Parish Priest at the age of 75, and spent 9 fruitful years of ministry there. To the amazement and delight of his brothers he blossomed and learnt new skills. He visited his flock regularly in spite of being unable to drive a car, became a compelling preacher, encouraged the young, and organised good catechesis for all ages. Much to the amazement of the Portsmouth Diocese he built a new parish school, and it was all paid for before the first pupils crossed its threshold. He was always very modest and attributed any successes to the work of the good people around him. He was much loved in Guernsey and parishioners always kept in touch. He thought of this as the most fruitful period of his life.

When he came to Olton in 1998 he knew that his days were numbered and it was his earnest wish that he die at home and not among strangers. Several people in our community and several generous helpers in Olton parish made that possible for him in spite of his increasing frailty and need of nursing care.

But to return to the Sea of Galilee: Jesus spoke to Peter about the belt and then said ‘follow me’. Peter followed him and so did Cyril. For 93 years he followed him and now he has found the company of the Lord who first called him, not for a picnic by sea but for a banquet in the heavenly Jerusalem where all saints sing the praises of the Lord.



Austin Hughes, SCJ

IN MEMORIAM

England

*Someone else
will put a belt
around you and
take you where
you would
rather not go...*

P. Cyril Hazlewood (1913-2006)

Fr. Cyril belonged to the last generation of SCJ priests and brothers to be trained in Holy Land. After his time we were trained in our own individual countries, so he was the last one among us to know the *ancien regime*. He was also the last one who knew people who knew St. Michael personally. He was the end of an era.

Although his life was long and active, it is no secret that the last 8 years were very hard for him after the illness that caused him to lose his right leg. Jesus' words to Peter came painfully true for Cyril: *'when you were young you... walked where you liked, but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will put a belt around you and take you where you would rather not go'*. He found the dependence of his last 8 years a heavy cross to carry.

Faithfulness to religious vows was the belt around him, and it took him half way round the world and back again. Born in 1913, it took him to Bétharram as a young boy and then to Palestine at the age of 20. He made his first vows in 1934 in Bethlehem and was ordained priest in Jerusalem in 1940. He spent a couple of years teaching at the Diocesan Seminary at Beit-Jala, and then made his way back to England. But this was in the middle of World War II and all travel was dangerous and circuitous. His route back home took him via South Africa, but his ship was torpedoed in the Indian Ocean, and he drifted on the waves for a couple of days in a life raft. Eventually rescued by the Royal Navy, he landed in Durban where he worked in a parish for a few weeks, before embarking on a boat for Glasgow. He had lost all his clothes in the shipwreck, and had been given clothes by the Navy, so his family were surprised when eventually their newly ordained priest turned up Birmingham dressed in a sailor suit!

For the next 60 years the belt took him to Droitwich where he taught French for many years, to Sambourne prep school where he also taught, to Holy Name Parish Great Barr where he ministered for 10 years.

- With Fr Austin Hughes, English Provincial Superior, there was a discussion about what was done and had to be done to assure the satisfactory running of the Indian Betharram, very affected by the death of Fr Xavier Ponthokkan; the satisfactory regional solidarity with Thailand ought to assure the continuation of formation, which is important for the Delegation. In the mean time, other interesting proposals are surfacing, e.g. reinforcements in religious from other countries or the foundation of a third community.
- With the postulator for the cause of beatification of Fr Etchecopar, and the archivist of the Congregation, there is general satisfaction at the amount of materiel collected (Complete Works) and the steps taken in the departments concerned. In the words of the Promoter, Mgr Corradini, the cause is much further advanced than was thought. Father Jacky Moura and Roberto Cornora then left the meeting with precise research to be undertaken and an equally precise time limit.
- A whole day was spent pouring over economic matters, with the help of Mr Luigi Pirovano and of Mrs Maria Grazia Cavazzini, from the General Bursar's Office. Besides the balance sheets, it is necessary to return to the General Administration, along with the annual accounts, the provisional budget for the following year. It is not simply a question of good stewardship it is also a sign of foresight, of openness and of sharing, which are not alien to the vow of poverty.

In closed session, the General Council returned to three major questions fixed by the General Chapter of 2005:

1. **Regionalisation:** the different (vice) provinces are actually reflecting on communities and vicariates. The Congregation Council of November 2007 will be an important occasion for thinking about regions (according to the calendar drawn up by the Capitulates of 2005, the processus must be finished in time for the Congregation Council of 2009). Mean time, other initiatives, on the model of ELAB (the meeting of Latin-American Betharramites, due to take place in Paraguay in January 2007) are under consideration, in agreement with the Major Superiors.



God alone is great; to Him be honour and glory! He will maintain and govern this Society which he formed. Yet, let us bear in mind that this is not a work where the perfection of Heaven is to be found, but a work where the imperfections of this world will always be found.

(St Michael, DS 76)

2. **Formation:** In conformity with No 80 of the General Chapter, an international session for “formators” has been programmed from the 3rd–17th July 2007, in our house in Adiapodoume (Ivory Coast). The main theme will be accompaniment in the following of Christ. Along with this main theme the question of education for the materiel and financial life, for the affective life and life in community will be tackled. At the same time, there will be a meeting of the newly reconstituted Betharramite Service of Formation, to reflect principally on the 2008 Session for the future Final professions.

3. **The Mission:** In the face of calls from local Churches, of projects in hand, and of the resulting financial needs, it is urgent to form a general missionary study with Fr Bruno Ierullo, general councillor in charge of the question. He will be responsible for noting what is already being done in the (vice) provinces with the energy of the entire Congregation.

Latest news: At the end of January 2007 in Rome, the Commission “Rule of Life” will announce their final project, after careful analysis of the feed back from the base. In view of the time limit, all remarks and suggestions from the religious must reach us before the end of 2006. There are only a few days left for reactions to the revised “Rule of Life”. At the end of ten busy days, and in view of the size of the challenges, there is one thing sure and certain: the collaboration and trust of every one is a power in the power of the Spirit.

Jean-Luc Morin, SCJ

The Advent in the Djimini Country

Arise! The Lord is coming!

This is the cry which echoes in our ears as we enter a new Advent. Already the fifth Advent that Ivory Coast knows no peace. The country is cut in two. Adiapodoume in the south, Dabakala in the north; our little delegation lies on both sides but is not divided. Like all the inhabitants of the country who have difficulty in supporting a separation imposed by this war, the Ivory Coast branch of Betharram is living in the hopes of peace.

along the year in self purification and the contemplation of the Pascal Mystery.

On the identity and mission of our Congregation? - For me identity and mission are one and the same thing. To say in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament “*Yes, Father, here I am to do your will*” is to say one’s availability for whatever is to come, it invites me to give myself totally in response to the Father’s love. Our mission, willingly accepted, is a real challenge. It begins in the community with the brothers and then spreads to those who have no knowledge of Jesus Christ. Love received is love given. It is here that my mission begins. During my novitiate, I am taking care of the sick, household duties, catechetics in the local chapel, and next year, God willing, I shall have my missionary experience in the service of the poorest.

Christmas, so dear to St Michael, is fast approaching. What aspects of this mystery mean most to you? - Several aspects appeal to me. The circumstances surrounding the birth of the Child: he was born of the Virgin Mary and placed in a crib. This reminds me of those mothers who have no rights to a Maternity Hospital, of those who rely on the solidarity of their neighbours, or who give birth any where. This innocent baby is laid in a manger; as soon as he opens his eyes he gives joy to many wounded hearts.



Finally, tell us something about your Ignatian Retreat. Before beginning the Spiritual Exercises, I had no idea that I would get so much from them. As soon as I understood the Aim and Fundamental Principle of my life, for me everything was completely changed. The 1st week was a time of purification and reconciliation with my past history. The 2nd week had me looking forward, the princpal fruit of which was *the making of a decision*. Consequently, if I must worry about the future, the mission, as I have already said, begins right here and now in my community, and then spreads to those who have no knowledge of Jesus Christ. I would ask each and every one of my Betharramite brothers for the universal cure – to pray for me. May God and Our Lady always go with us!



5 MINUTES WITH... Brother Osmar

Young Osmar Carceres Spain left the postulatus in Puente Remanso in January 2005 to enter the regional novitiate in the suburbs of Buenos Aires. As a place of formation, hidden life and growth, the Adrogué House is a bit the Bethlehem and Nazareth of his religious vocation. In this time of preparation for Christmas, the time was ideal to have a meeting with the youngest candidate of the Vice-Province of Paraguay.

Nef: Can you tell us where you come from and how you came to want to be part of the Betharramite family? - I was born in Paraguay, in the department of San Pedro in North Yataity. I wanted to be part of the Betharramite family from the moment that I discovered the Saint of “*Me Voici*”. I was gripped by what he had done with his life, and I wanted to be like him. In the year 2000 Providence willed that I should meet a cousin who was already in the Congregation. He began talking to me about Saint Michael and gave me the little life written by Father Brunot. Without realizing I was hooked and that’s how the fish was caught!

You are from Paraguay and the only first year Novice in Adrogué. How are you coping with this experience far from your own country? - Besides being the only Novice, this experience outside my own country is an important mile stone in my process of discernment. It has allowed me to find out exactly in whose footsteps I am following – if it is for Jesus or for some other motive. I have to say “Yes” every day and face up to all the obstacles on my way. It is not easy, but with God’s help, I am constantly victorious. I surprise many people, in my family, amongst my friends in the village, but once you have put your hand to the plough there is no looking back. So. Forward march!

Since the beginning of your novitiate what important discoveries have you made about the journey of your vocation? - What has been most important for me, a novelty and most beneficial is the spiritual accompaniment of my Master of Novices. With him I make the link between my daily experiences in prayer, study and manual work with God and my brothers in community. Thence, I become aware of the value of prayer – personal and community, and the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There is also dialogue and fraternal correction which help to grow in holiness – personally and in community; and there is also the daily witness of life. For me the brothers are like an open book. Finally, the Spiritual Exercises are a help all

Arise! We are invited to stand up when the temptation would be to remain seated or even lie down. Stand up when we are weary watching, helpless, the impoverishment of the population, the deterioration of life in society, the pillage of a whole country.

Arise! We want to remain standing so as to help others to get to their feet; and who are fed up. On your feet, youth! And set the Catholic Young Students in motion once again, and the Young Catholic Workers. On your feet, children! “*Coeurs Vaillants and Ames Vaillantes*”, you have something to say in order to win peace. On your feet, women of Safolo! You want to learn to read and write. On your feet!

Arise! The Lord is coming! Even if peace is slow in coming. Even if we run the risk of being discouraged. Even if weariness is visible on every face... the Lord is coming! He is coming and he is already here. He who encourages the men and women convinced of his presence at their side, in these times of adversity. He who enlightens by his Word the life of our little Bible group. The witness of faith described by the books of the Bible invites us today to bear witness to our faith.

Arise! The Lord is coming! The same cry echoes throughout the world. We think of our brothers in the Congregation, scattered throughout the world, facing so many difficult situations, like, for example, our Indian brothers affected by the death of Father Xavier. The call of Advent rings out in the depths of our trials and our despondency. Once we’ve heard it, may we too be able to relay it around us, and so in our own small way, we shall have helped a few to get up, to stand up... and the Lord will have come indeed.

**Arise! The Lord is coming!
Fresh hope is flowing into our lives
Its mystery will make fruitful a faith filled silence
Let’s cleanse ourselves!**

Jean-Marie Ruspil,SCJ





*Saint
Michael Region*

Province of France Delegation of the Ivory Coast

Transpyreneen Meetings ■ On the 19th November the Old Boys from the scolasticate of Bel Sito, including some former religious from France and Spain, travelled to the sanctuary of Aranzazu. "The ideal experienced at Bel Sito has influenced their lives and continues to influence them. This is something worth sharing today" commented a religious to Fr Firmin Bourguinat. To do so, it is hoped to have a meeting next year in Betharram.

The Pyrenees Association ■ Following the death of their President, the Executive Committee responsible for the materiel goods of the Province held a meeting in Pau on the 22nd November. Mr Langles, Tax Inspector, succeeds a faithful friend of Betharram, M. Castagne. 100 years after the law of separation of Church and State, the collaboration between laity and religious has some heady days in perspective.

Regional Printers ■ Fr Raymond Laulom has just published, in the Monhelios editions, a well documented book on the History of the Valley d'Aspe. From the arrival of the Romans to the reintroduction of the bears, our retired brother – who is not at a loose end just the same – brings his contribution to local history. Friends of Sarrance, and other places dear to Betharramites, will appreciate his book.

Servant and witness ■ On the 7th January 2007, Br Gerard Zugarramundi will be ordained deacon by Mgr Ignace Bessi, Bishop of Katiola. The Basque country and the Djimini country will thus be united in the same struggle for the Mission and for the Word of Life.

Province of Italy

Regional Novitiate ■ On the 5th November, Fr. Hervé Kouamé and the 4 Ivorian and Centre-African novices put down their luggage in Bethlehem. After many bureaucratic hurdles, they can now have time to deepen their vocation at the very source of faith. From December 9th to 15th, Fr Gaspar Fernandez will be on the spot to accompany their first steps in Holy Land.

Miracles of Childhood ■ On Thursday 23rd November there were crowds in the church of Miracles: Cardinal Marchisano and the mayor of Rome, amongst others, were opening the exhibition of *100 Cribs* from the whole wide

world. On this occasion a group of children portrayed the Nativity, for the invited guests. A feeling of Christmas to be discovered until the 7th January in the *Sale del Bramante*.

Province of the Rio de La Plata Argentina

Mission for Advent ■ With Christmas approaching and in the dynamics of the 150 years of presence in America, the community of Villa Betharram (Adroque) has launched an interesting initiative. For two days, (9th-10th of December), religious and laity went from door to door in their vicinity helping people to rediscover the true meaning of Christmas. The object of the exercise was obvious: enjoy the festivity, OK, but why? Not only was there the Christmas meal to be prepared, but hearts were to be made ready to greet the Christ Child who was to come.

Province of England Delegation of India

Brotherly presence ■ After the big shock caused by the death of Fr. Xavier Ponthokkan, the communities in India are on the way to their normal life activities. Fr. Tidkham from Thailand vice Province and Br. Gerard from the English Province are giving their best to rebuild and strengthen our Indian brethren in many ways.

Vice-Province of Thailand

A week in November ■ The religious of the vice-province made their annual retreat in Chiang Mai guided by a diocesan priest from the diocese of Bangkok. Fr Vijit helped our brothers to experience the movement of the Charismatic Renewal. This new method for retreats appealed to all. We can be sure that it will help each and everyone in their spiritual and missionary life.

60 Years a Priest ■ At the end of the vice-provincial retreat, 70 members of parishes where Fr Jean Lanusse had ministered joined the Betharramite family to celebrate his diamond jubilee (ordained on 29th September 1946). After the Mass which he had presided, the missionary Father received lots of messages and tributes, including a word of praise from Father Pairot, and presents offered by Father Pensa. The festivities continued in the Diocesan Centre of Chiang Mai with an excellent meal organised by Fr Jirapat. Here was a wonderful example of fidelity and devotion to duty for the young Betharramites present.



*Fr. Etxbecopar
Region*



*Blessed
Miriam Region*