

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

Generalate House
via Angelo Brunetti, 27
00186 Rome (Italy)

Telephone
00 39 06 320 70 96
Fax
00 39 06 36 00 03 09
E-mail
nef@betharram.fr

Visit us on our website
www.betharram.org

On March 21st
2007, the
Congregation of
the Institutes of
Religious Life
granted
Gustavo Zarate
(Paraguay) the
indult to leave the
Congregation of

Michael Garicoits, God's shepherd (5)

there the 99 others and rushes after the other one to bring it back to the fold.

One of his old parishioners who was stone deaf was far from religion because he had never been able to hear the catechism lessons nor the sermons. Michel took him into the woods every day and there at the top of his voice taught him the message about Jesus which until now he had been unable to hear. Finally our friend was able to receive the sacraments.

Had there been an accident? Had a workman been injured? Then and there he would leave the children to their catechism and rush off to the scene of the accident without even taking time to remove his surplice. Was somebody dying? It's Holy Saturday and the service is not yet finished. He takes off his cope and passes to the old Parish priest. "You carry on. I'm off". And off he goes at top speed on horseback. Somebody out there is in danger.

Then there is the case of the mayor receiving doubtful newspapers from Paris capable of turning people away from religion. Michel says three Masses so that God may be with him in this difficult situation; then he sets off to confront the mayor and put him in presence of his responsibilities. He speaks clearly and to his face; with a mixture of strength and friendliness, not to crush him but as to a brother in mortal danger that he wants to rescue. To begin with the mayor reacts badly. Finally he is convinced, changes his conduct and becomes a friend to the priest.

(to be continued)

Schedule of the General Council

14th May

28th Mai - 17th June
Visit to Thailand by
Fr. Gaspar Fernandez,
Superior general, and
Fr. Jean-Luc Morin,
Secretary-Bursar



Greetings for
the feast of our
father saint
Michael!



Family News

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

 **A word from the
Superior general**

For a poverty which is genuine and for love

Love is our sole reason for making a vow of poverty. Love for the person of Jesus and for his Kingdom, which are our unique wealth. Like Jesus, it is for love of mankind, our brothers, so that all may have life and have it in abundance. To live our vow of poverty, means not to accumulate profits but to do the will of God who desires that all may be saved. God's glory and the salvation of souls, are what constitute our wealth; this is what gives meaning to our lives and is priceless in our eyes.

Without wanting to despise or underestimate those who have possessions and use them for the greater glory of God and in solidarity with the poor, we felt called to something else and we wanted something more: to follow Christ who was so poor that he didn't even have somewhere to rest his head.

To be poor, what exactly does it mean? More often than not we don't look as if we are poor. We have all known, and even today, we know some Betharramites who are really poor, who own nothing, and who, when they change community, only take what is strictly necessary in a small suitcase.

To be poor doesn't mean having no materiel goods, not being able to dispose personally of materiel goods, but to use these goods under the authority of a community or a superior when there is real necessity. To be poor means pooling all that we can earn from our work, from donations, and from any other suitable source.

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105th year
10th series, nr. 16

14th May
2007



To be poor means feeling the humiliation which the poor man feels when those around him have possessions and can dispose of them as they wish, but we can only do likewise with permission, knowing that such an outlay does not correspond to our life style, even if others can do it.

To be poor means living simply, having a simple life style in what we eat, how we travel, or go on holidays. To be poor means solidarity with the poor, being able to do without what is superfluous, and even sometimes doing without necessities. To be poor means using what belongs to the community not for ourselves but to carry out the mission of the community.

The poor man trusts Providence, in the same way as Jesus trusted his Father. *“That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life and what you are to eat, nor about your body and how you are to clothe it. For life means more than food, and the body more than clothing. Think of the ravens; they have no storehouses and no barns; yet God feeds them. And how much more are you worth than the birds! Can any of you, for all his worrying, add a single cubit to his span of life?... Think of the flowers, they never have to spin or weave; yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his glory was robed like one of these. Now if that is how God clothes the grass in the fields which is there today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, how much more will he look after you, you men of little faith!.. There is no need to be afraid, little flock, for it has pleased your Father to give you the Kingdom” (Luke 12/22-32)*

For a religious, who has made a public vow of poverty, to be attached to the goods of this world, it is not only a contradiction, but is a scandal and a lack of respect for his brothers who take their vocation to live in poverty seriously in poverty. Finally it is an insult to the poor who didn't choose to be poor but who have to live with it for the rest of their life.

Gaspar Fernandez,SCJ

Michael Garicoits, God's shepherd (5)



A priest whose heart was on fire

For him, a priest was a man who had given his body, his heart, his spirit and his whole life to Jesus; and through him, Jesus would gather his flock and lead them right up to heaven. Through his bishop, Jesus had appointed him curate of Cambo. In actual fact he had entrusted to him the responsibility for a huge parish whose Parish priest was old and relied solely on Michel. Will this old Parish Priest be a burden who could no longer work and yet he was the boss. This was not so for Michel who saw Christ in all his priests be they old, ill, or imperfect.

See how he guides and helps the old man to the altar, with all the care and attention of a son: in fact it is Jesus he is helping. To care for the little flock in Cambo he asks his advice and does what he says, even if it is not quite his opinion; he is obeying Jesus.

The parishioners in Cambo were far from God's Church; Together, Jesus and Michel were determined to save these souls in danger. But how to go about it? On his own Michel couldn't do it. So that the spirit of Jesus should come to him and do the task through his hands, he rids himself of all his shortcomings and of his very self. And so, Jesus has all the space. "My brethren, my friends, you are on your way to heaven, to that great joy which no one can even imagine. Come back to God while there is still time"!

Soon people were coming from all directions to listen to his sermons. His confessional was taken by storm. It wasn't unusual for people to be waiting from 3 o'clock in the morning; And often the old parish priest would send for him at 2 pm, worried as he was that Michel had not had anything to eat yet.

In any case he's a wonderful shepherd for the flock. The children, the aged, the sick and the healthy, the faithful and sinners, he's there for all of them; he goes everywhere. If ever he should find out that one of his sheep is in danger, he leaves

As a child Michel knew how to use his fists to have an apple. As a young man he charged into the fray to defend a friend. As a priest he defended his flock.

Continuation of the story by Rose Dardennes...



2007

MAY

14	Joyeux anniversaire Buon compleanno	P. Paul Baradat P. Antonio Riva
16	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Juan Antonio Morales
17	20° di sacerdozio, auguri !	P. Graziano Sala P. Antonio Riva
22	Joyeux anniversaire Buon compleanno	P. Henri Nadal P. Gianluca Limonta
23	Joyeux anniversaire 15° di sacerdozio, auguri	P. Jean-Marie Ruspil P. Tiziano Pozzi
25	Buon compleanno Joyeux anniversaire	P. Angelo Petrelli P. André Lacaze P. Beñat Ségure
26	Feliz cumpleaños Buon compleanno	P. Gerardo Ramos P. Mario Bulanti
29	Happy birthday	Br. D. Athit Kasetsukchai

JUNE

30	Joyeux anniversaire Feliz cumpleaños	P. Bertrand Salla P. Julio Colina
31	Buon compleanno	P. Emilio Manzolini
3	Bon anniversaire	P. Joseph Mazerolles
4	Happy birthday	Br. Suphot Gabriel Liko
6	Happy birthday	Br. Subesh S. Odiyathingal
10	Bon anniversaire Feliz cumpleaños	P. Guillaume Etchébarne F. Barnabé Kpéhéléfopé Bakary P. Crispin Villalba
12	Buon compleanno Happy birthday	P. Angelo Bianchi P. Anton Madej
13	20 anni di sacerdozio, auguri	P. Alessandro Locatelli
15	50° di sacerdzio, auguri	P. Davide Villa P. Livio Borghetti
16	45° di sacerdozio, auguri	P. Angelo Bianchi
17	Bon anniversaire	P. Jean Laclau

47 Saint Michael Garicoits marvelled by such humility. *"The Word became flesh, here is our God humble and devoted. From the womb of the Father to the womb of Mary; what a step! In leaving heaven he goes to the vilest place, the most disagreeable in the world, to a stable."* (DS 43)

48 By following the example of our founder, religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus should want to imitate Christ, their master, Jesus (DS 41) and adopt his sentiments of humility and embrace evangelical poverty. We commit ourselves to become "poor in heart" recognizing God our Father as our "only true treasure" (*Vita Consecrata* 21) and source of happiness. For that we have left everything for the cause of the kingdom. (Lk 18, 28 - 30).

49 Poverty according to the Gospel makes us men attached to Jesus, poor, relying on Providence and detached from all kinds of possessions; so with greater interior freedom, we will make ourselves available "to announce the good news to the poor." (Lk 4, 18) We will welcome all, especial the poorest, "with the heart of Christ." (*Perfectae Caritatis* 13)

Evangelical poverty
from the revised Rule of Life
(extracts)



Father Etcheepar writes... to his brother Evariste, 29th August 1857

Our superior is Father Garicoits, a close friend and contemporary of our late uncle Evariste. Did you know that he was a great saint? Our reverend Superior has told me as much. He has told me that, as a child, uncle Evariste used to receive extraordinary lights from heaven and such wonderful knowledge that even Father Garicoits was dumbfounded.

Father Garicoits is a man of God, a man created by God for his own glory and the salvation of souls. For years he guarded the sheep on the mountains in the Basque country. Under the care of Evariste he started learning Latin, then Providence drew him to Betharram. He stayed there for a long time on his own, confronted by the many obstacles opposing his good works according as he thought about them and tried to put them into action. But with God's help he overcame all these difficulties and now he is the father of a multitude of children who are like the fruits of his work, his struggles, and of his trust in God and who try to be his crown, his consolation and his joy.

Saint Michael, a powerful and relevant figure for today

For this issue of the 14th of May, 144th anniversary of the birth to Heaven of the founder of Betharram, an evocation of him has been sent from

I am profoundly convinced that Michael Garicoits is a Saint for the present times. A Saint who is not out of date, and cannot be relegated to the distant past; for the vitality of his spiritual doctrine is extremely enlightening in guiding the faithful in imitation of Christ through the Gospels.

His spiritual teaching rests firmly on rock: which is on the multiple facets of love, love as the foundation of a holy life which rests on the pillars of obedience, availability, humility and the gift of oneself.

Love captured the heart of Michael and filled the very depths of his being, not a superficial, sentimental or romantically philanthropic love. But a very powerful love based on the Gospel. As a result he knew out how to trace a path exemplified by a life dedicated to the end, finding full communion with God and his brothers. Such is the rich and valuable patrimony left for his Society.

St Michael knew how to mature and strengthen within himself a love of God and neighbour through the light of the cross. He experienced the bitterness of loneliness, misunderstanding, slander and calumny. He had to live in a society steeped in tensions, conflicts and considerable violence. Under the pressure of sorrow, he didn't give in to discouragement, he understood the great temptation of giving everything up and retiring to Ibarre into the peace of his family home. However, he knew how to confront life and didn't let things fall to pieces around him nor be overcome by adversity. In darker moments, he placed himself in the arms of God who allows his chosen sons to suffer, but like a shadow from his hand they are caressed and comforted.

St Michael remains a model for the young of today. Within the complexity of F. V. D. (may the will of God be done), he issues a challenge to all those young of heart,

In *Vita consacrata* John Paul II explained that the “three states of life” namely the laity, religious life and the ordained ministry were all components of the Church. “To Live and to Love” helped me to understand better that each of these states of life was complementary of the other two; and that each one contributed to the necessary enriching of the other two. As priest and Betharramite I feel perfectly at ease in this mission to the laity. Close to them yet different, I try to show them the source of all Love and they in turn bear witness to the Love alliance to which we are all invited.

Counselling the laity, self knowledge and the experience of sharing – how is all this reflected in your personal commitment and your community life? - Not a doubt! “*To live and to Love*” has helped me to be more present to my brothers in community, to be more aware of their existence, to have a better understanding of the human importance of all relationships, and in my prayer to include all this in my relationship with the Holy Trinity. Ever since the first week of my involvement in the Movement, I am more at ease with myself, if I may say so, as a man, as a religious and as a priest. And my love for Betharram is all the stronger.

As a son of St Michael, what do you find of particular interest in this mouvement? - The Movement has its evangelical roots in the commandment of Jesus: “Love one another as I have loved you”. How can we not seek in the Heart of Jesus, like St Michael, everything that can enrich and develop the love which we have for each other, whether in marriage, in religious life or as a priest? St Michael’s project is more theological. The project of “To Live and to Love” is of necessity more down to earth and at grass root level. But they are both an invitation.





5 MINUTES WITH... Fr. Henri Lamasse

Like many Betharramites, Father Henri Lamasse of the Limoges community, has more than one string to his bow. Besides being a hospital chaplain, being in charge of a parish and of the fraternity **Me Voici**, for several years now he has been involved in the Pastoral care of the Family. On his return from one of the sessions which he conducts all over France, we put some questions to him.

Nef - *“To live and to love” is a fine programme. It is also the name of a movement which is very dear to you. What is it all about exactly?* - Nothing more and nothing less than a deepening and developing of our **relationship with others**, which is at the origin of all existence. “It is not good for man to be alone”. Of course it is a question of relationships in marriage, but also about relationships in religious community life; relationships which a priest has with his parish, for example, with his lay colleagues. And for the Christian the relationships he has with ANOTHER.

What was the intuition at the origin of the movement?

What educational programme? - The founders were two Jesuits, who between 1960 and 1965 were persuaded that when there is a good relationship, for example in marriage, relationships with others is all the better: family life, friendships, professional life, and even for us Christians, our relationship with God. However this is only possible if we are at ease with ourselves, if we have good contacts with our fellow members, and have the ability to listen and exchange which is part and parcel of the movement, and on condition also to be faithful to the dialogue which is required. Teenagers discover their parents in a new light, married couples see that the results are good, and in the work place relationships are improved. I can bear witness to this.

Apart from the planning and counselling, how can a religious find his way in suggestions meant for married couples in the first place? - He can succeed all the better, since a religious professes fraternal relationships in his daily life. Several married couples told me “that they discover that religious are very close to their way of life”

Too often they only see the priest in his role; on the other hand they feel that they are understood in their relationships by the way the religious lives his relationship with his community...

who are valiant and courageous to make the world more human and more united.

In a crowded society which lacks space, the church of Christ, must engage the young with the outreach of Saint Michael Garicoits: in regard to corruption and injustice, and fear: it needs honest and upright young people. In a world drugged with power, money and pleasure, it needs young people anxious to maintain the high values of the Gospels. In the present illness founded on the fragile principles of selfishness, it needs to redress this disturbing tendency in society, opposing its dangers and threats. The world has need of young people committed to Christ in the same way as Saint Michael was.

Once more another Rule of life!

Yes! We always return to it, the rule of life! Which: the old edition or another? The last one was dated “January 2007 Rome; Bethlehem, Easter 2007”.

In 2006 everyone was invited to amend the current text. Last January, our commission reviewed the different propositions received. It had to produce a summarised edition; the Superior General appointed me to do it and during my holidays in Bethlehem I completed a copy for Easter.

Before the end of September 2007 each Providence or Vice Providence, Council or an ad hoc commission was appointed to read the actual document and give their comments. The Council of the Congregation in November 2007 will receive a summary of the different contributions; and will work on them.

The definitive text? In the General Chapter of 2011! Why all this? What changes will there be?

“The General Chapter requires that the General Council creates a Commission of Study to revise the Rule of Life

Rogelio Ramirez, SCJ



taking into account recent documents of the Church and of Canon Law from 1983. The additions introduced into the Rule of Life will be examined and approved by the next General Chapter. They will follow 12 points to examine the government, which is a question of harmonising the *Ratio Studiorum* and the Chapter on Formation.

“Appetite comes from eating,” they say. Far from limiting itself to Government and Formation, the Commission inspired by the Superior General has widened the field: in effect it has rewritten the text! They have already taken account of Canon Law from 1983; the Commission has finished this work. We have introduced quotations from recent documents of the Church; and also passages from Fr Etchecopar, our second founder.

In 2005 the work was completed. They now are ready to go forward.

The titles of the chapters have changed, not from any whim but to adapt the content to what we want to actually live. “Betharramite formation” comes after “our ministry in the Church”, when “the formation” precedes “apostolic activities”.

Everywhere we use the present tense in place of the future: why put in the future what we are called to live in the present?

Should we have a short rule; easy to read? Some wanted it to be a source of prayer, of meditation: hence several quotations. It has never been easy to reconcile the desires everybody.

Will the choice of colours and format make a clear presentation?

Ultimately is it not in the depth of our hearts that we become always more devoted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus according to the charism inherited from St Michael Garicoits?

Beñat Oyhénart, SCJ



Br. Arnaud Ampo (1914-2007)

IN MEMORIAM

France



What religious family? The Fathers of Betharram. What priests were gathered around Sainte Michael Garicoits? Well not quite! Under the inspiration of the Daughters of the Cross... and St Elizabeth in 1839, St Michael welcomed the first brother who was called Arnaud, Arnaud Gaye from Saint Pe. This was the beginning of the Society in 1839, nearly 170 years ago.

Brothers are full members of the society; fully part of the family and fully brothers with the same commitments by vows, sharing the same common life of prayer and mission.

Like Arnaud Ampo they were formed by Betharram and Saint Michael. It was about 1930 or 1931 about the age of 14 or 15 he left his mother and his home. And brother Arnaud became a remarkable religious! Always ready to go out of his way against his own wishes to answer all kinds of demands. Can do plumbing? It was he who began the work. Can he do carpentry? With some application he did it perfectly. Be a beekeeper? Clever and ingenious that was he.

Brother Arnaud did his work to the sound of classical music which he dearly loved. But the radio also kept him in touch with the world: a world of conflicts and reconciliation or a world of sport!

Brother Arnaud breathed prayer: his daily Mass, his ways of the cross. Sitting or kneeling below the pulpit he assisted at the celebrations in the sanctuary, discreetly, humbly but faithfully.

This marvellous equanimity in the midst of the difficulties of life in community, was shaken brutally and ultimately at the time of his fall. From then on he became dependent on others, living long days of inaction, and nights of nightmares and loneliness.

Holy communion brought him an extraordinary sense of peace. What eyes! And what gratitude at that moment as he tremulously he said Amen and Thank you.

Here was a brother according to the heart of Saint Michael. There is a heart forevermore offered to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Gabriel Verley, scj
introduction of the funeral mass
Betharram, 10th April 2007

*Province of France***Storm on the Ouzoum**

In the land of streams and waterfalls in the Pyrenees when a storm rages, rivers become very dangerous. What is the Ouzoum? It is a small tributary of the Gave of Pau which can suddenly become very angry and ferocious! The population of Asson and the neighbouring villages know all about this.

During the last two weeks our Province has been pained and greatly upset.

Some people from the parish of Notre Dame du Piedmont where Betharram is situated are very angry since we have taken away their parish priest, Fr Leon Laclau, our confrere; they have found it a harsh decision. And yet.....

For a long time, we had at first a brotherly and discreet discussion to persuade Fr Leon Laclau to end "purify" his relationship with a woman. Far from listening to this advice, he has allowed her more and more to enter into his life and his house. She came to live with him in the presbytery. Advice and threats have been to no avail. The Bishop of Bayonne and the Provincial Superior have had to say: "We can't allow this! It is not possible!" Fr Leon has now no longer any pastoral faculties in the diocese; we had appointed him to another community. But he refuses to leave his friend.

The media have published the affair; with the complicity of our confrere and those who support him. The torrent is in full spate: the Ouzoum is carrying before it plenty of mud and of all kinds of debris... And yet Fr Leon remains our brother...

We ask for your prayers and support. "May this trial draw us closer together and purify our faith and love of God" as Saint Michael concluded in a letter to a priest in Bayonne. May our members draw this conclusion.

Beñat Oyhénart, SCJ
Provincial Superior

*In the mountains of North Thailand***Youth Pastoral in action**

Invited by the parish priest to conduct the catechist camp for all Karen Children in this parish, we started our journey to Meatom with two Sisters and two Teachers from Marina. At the end of 140 km of the road through the mountains and the forest, there were 55 children from different faiths, ranging from 9 and 14. We taught them the catholic faith, the prayers, the sacraments, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The children were happy with the camp even they do not have for study...

After the evening, we organize games. The villagers came to watch the children play every night and were happy with the camp. The house wives prepared food for the children and us. Happy to see different peoples, people confided to me how difficult it is for them to live their faith and also to survive. The people have not much chance to go out from the village and know only the village nearby.

The last day we had a party... I read the Word of the Lord about the light and salt then I explained the meaning of the parable through Karen tradition. Then the leader of the village gave his message to the Children and the villagers. He said: "Keep the good things in your hearts which the Father, the sisters and brothers taught you. Encourage your children in study and faith and hold your good tradition in your daily life. We must keep two things in our life: religion and rice [which means livelihood]. In front of outside influences we must be careful and be one. Help each other when one of you is in need. May the unity we experienced this week remind us that we can do if we help each other."

In this mountain village between rice fields and streams, people live a simple life according to the environment, they want to know God and need our help. That's why we promised ourselves to come back to proclaim the Word of the Lord through our life.

"Semper parati" ■ On the 9th in to 13th April the General House experienced the joyful invasion of the Scouts of Europe from Pau and Dax. The welcome of the community, the organisation, service and celebrations have allowed 44 young people between 13 to 19 to experience an unforgettable pilgrimage to Rome. Mounting the Scala Santa on their knees to the final Mass presided over by our Superior General, making their promises in St Peter's, have been intense moments that they will never forget. Between the "always ready" and the "here I am" of Betharram is only a step... the first impulse of the Incarnate Word... a very happy combination.

Province of France Delegation of the Ivory Coast

From Bel Sito to Bel Rameau ■ On the 12th and 13th of May, the Superior General assembled with 13 religious and 29 laypeople at Betharram. What was the objective? Bel Sito, a community near Bordeaux which from 1948 to the beginning of the 70s had formed the young French and Spanish scholastics. The house is now closed but the memories live on and the exchanges of experiences show that the grain of wheat that fell into the ground has germinated...

Regaining hope ■ On 16th April the General assembly of the delegation of the Ivory Coast took place. "A time to share what has been happening around and in our communities, reflection on the future of the delegation, finances and the search for their own resources." On the same day began the dismantling of the military outposts which had split the country into two for five years. Everyone hopes that "this will be " the resurrection of the Ivory Coast in this time of Easter" as Fr Jean Marie Ruspil hopes.

Province of Italy

Spring tour... ■ On the 14th of April at Albavilla the Lay Association reflected on the theme of mission. The reports were presented by Fr Piero Trameri who is responsible for missionary animation in the Province, and for volunteers who wish to work with our Fathers in Central Africa, in Thailand and in India. On the 18th of April at Montemurlo there was a meeting of lay associates where there was a serious discussion on the spirituality of St Michael for the present times.



*Saint Michael
region*

Priest of the Sacred Heart ■ On the 9th of June at the cathedral of Como, Simone Panzeri of the community of Maroitto was ordained priest by Monsignor Diego Colletti. He celebrates his first mass at Albiate the following day in thanksgiving together with our members.

Regional meeting of Formators ■ The provincials and Formators of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay met from the 26 to the 29th of March at Adroque and reaffirmed their resolutions: each religious is called to participate in the formation of the young by his advice and, especially, by the witness of his life. The Betharramite formation is founded on the word of God, the teaching of the church, the *Ratio formationis*, the directions of the superiors and the actual social and cultural situation in which they live. Pastoral work with the young and contact with the laity is important for gaining vocations. Aspirants and postulants must live these stages of their formation in their own country; the novitiate will be regional. The region will prepare itself for the creation of common Scholasticate in 2009.

Province of the Rio de la Plata

Youth of Betharram ■ More than 50 young people took part in the annual gathering at Villa Betharram, Adroque, at the beginning of May. In a convivial atmosphere they succeeded in having a time of reflection and review. Taking up the theme of the year of the province which insisted on the need of "building bridges" in all their places of life; the family, studies, friends.

Vice province of Thailand

Posterity of Saint Michael ■ On the 26th of May will be blessed the new church of Chiang Dao, which Fr Elie Sablayrolles (1919-1981) dedicated to our founder. Including Chomtung (where Fathers Lhouerrou and Lanusse had worked), there are at least three parishes dedicated to Saint Michael Garicoits in the Chiang Mai Diocese. Three days later, the 29th of May Fr Gaspar Fernandez, Superior General will receive the final vows of brother Phonchai Gabriel Sukjai in the missionary house chapel. Certainly the Shepherd of Ibarre from the mountains of the Pyrenees will continue to call his companions to the mountains of Thailand and inspire shepherds to lead their sheep.



*Fr Etchecopar
region*



*Blessed Miriam
Region*