

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

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Michael Garicoits, God's shepherd (8)

poverty, keeping nothing for self and to obey without dispute the leader who is God's representative at the centre of the team?

This is how it functions with the Daughters of the Cross whose confessor he has been since arriving in Betharram. He has seen to what extent the practise of the vows frees them for God's work. That's what he will do. In the big empty house in Betharram he could easily take in other priests who were willing with him to constitute this crack corps.

In actual fact it means founding a new religious Order. But, to take such a serious decision, the priest doesn't trust himself. He first of all seeks counsel from God during a long retreat with the Jesuits in Toulouse; then, he turns to his confessor who encourages him and finally to his Bishop who gives his consent although he is not entirely in favour of the project...

- "Have a go! We shall see!"

(to be continued)



Family News

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Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram

 **A word from the
Superior General**

Magnify the Lord with me

*O magnify the Lord with me,
and let us exalt his name together. (Ps. 33,4)*

I would like to share with the whole Congregation my prayer of praise and thanksgiving for the Lord's goodness to our little family, for the love which he showers on us, for the new vocations which he is giving us and which allow us to open new communities: the first one in the Vice Province of Thailand and the other one in the Delegation of Ivory Coast, Province of France.

When I was visiting the communities in Thailand last June, I happened to meet Mgr Francis-Xavier Kriengsak Kovitvanit, who had just been consecrated Bishop of the diocese of Nakon Sawan. Father Alberto Pensa was with me and he had already had a meeting with the Bishop. Mgr Kovitvanit showed his joy at seeing us coming to work in his diocese, where there is great need of priests and religious.

Some time earlier Father Pensa had sent us this news item: *The bishop would like us to settle in Mae Ramart where the Sisters of St Paul de Chartres have a school. The Sisters gave a piece of land to the diocese on which a hostel for children was built.*

The Bishop wants to entrust this hostel to us and this is why: at the junior seminary in Nakon Sawan there is

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105th year
10th series, n°19
14th September 2007

Agenda of the General Council

4th-28th September

Canonical visit of the Superior general, Fr Gaspar Fernandez, to the Province San José del Río de la Plata (Argentina and Uruguay)

1st October

In Adrogué, meeting of the (vice)Provincials of Latin America

Nominations

- of Fr. Tidkham Michael Jailertrit as councillor of the Delegation of India (Province of England)
- of Fr. Suthon Bernard Khiriwathanasakun as councillor of the Vice Province of Thailand



Betharramites, sons
of Our Lady of
Calvary, happy Feast
for the Triumph
of the Cross!



Let us thank God who continues to keep alive the charisma of St Michael

only one priest and he intends to move this priest in Mae Ramar to the seminary. From what we can understand, the two priests in Mae Ramart could look after two parishes, Mae Ramart and Mae Tawor, where there is another hostel looked after by the Sisters of Maepon. The two parishes are only seventy Kms apart, which is no great distance since the road is very good.

Furthermore, there are people living in the mountains in considerable poverty; this is something which is in keeping with the project of St Michael: be ready to go where others don't want to go. The Bishop told us that the priests of Nakon Sawan don't want to go up there; and you can understand why – to learn a new language is no easy task.

It will be best to wait and see when we get there. For the moment, nothing definite has been decided, and we should be able to have a clearer picture by Easter 2008.

The diocese of Nakon Sawan lies to the south of Chiang Mai and between it and the diocese of Bangkok. The missionary centres of Mae Ramart and Mae Tawor are in the west of the diocese, near the frontier with Burma. It is a hilly country inhabited by Karians. The problem of language for the other missionaries isn't one for our Thai Betharramites, the majority of whom are Karian and come from the mountains in the north west. Here, then, is a mission which will enable us to collaborate with the new diocese.

Our congregation is soon to celebrate fifty years presence in Ivory Coast. We already have six African priests and a brother with perpetual vows. In September there will be the ordination of a priest and a deacon. Two other priests will be ordained in the course of the year. The assembly of the Delegation, together with the Provincial Superior from France, discerned about a new mission. Their choice fell on Yamoussoukro, the capital



Michael Garicoits, God's shepherd (8)



From dream to reality

Just as the faithful of Cambo were taken from him, likewise the seminarians of Betharram. The new Bishop opened a seminary in Bayonne; little by little he recalled all the seminarians and Father Garicoits was left alone and sad, in the big empty house in Betharram.

What was he to do? Complain? Protest? Demand? Through the voice of his Bishop, this is God's Will. Without further ado, he obeys.

By removing him from Cambo, God taught him how to obey, even if it was very hard and beyond his understanding. By leaving him at Betharram almost without any work, God teaches him to accept to be nothing and gives him time for reflexion and prayer. Michael needed all this so as to become in God's hands good supple clay out of which he would mould what he wanted.

At last, God's time arrived and things became clearer.

In days gone by, the young shepherd of Oneix had great difficulty keeping his flock in order; above all as it expanded. Luckily he had excellent dogs. If a sheep was hanging back, or another one was making for the river; or if an eagle or a wolf was hanging about; or if a thief had an eye on one of his lambs, he'd all out "Go for it, Capi!" the dog would bound, and order was restored.

The Bishop too had problems. What a help it would be for him, if only he had a few generous priests ever ready to dash into dangerous situations, and ready to undertake the most difficult of tasks! And what a blessing it would be for the diocese! Father Garicoits understood.

He would like to give this crack corps to the Bishop. But for such troops a more solid formation and a tougher style of life was essential. In a word, such priests should be more saintly than the rest. Now to become a saint, is there any surer route than promising God by vow to live in

The seminary of Betharram is empty. The heart of an apostle is filled with dreams and projects.... the path of St Michael Garicoits continues.

With her talent as a storyteller, Rose Dardennes invites us there once more.



2007

SEPTEMBER

14	25° di professione, auguri	P. Aurelio Riva P. Elie Kurzum
16	Buon compleanno	P. Egidio Zoia
18	Buon compleanno	P. Romualdo Airaghi
19	80 ans de profession, félicitations Joyeux anniversaire Feliz cumpleaños	P. Joseph Canton P. Raymond Descomps P. Constancio Lopez Morales
20	Buon compleanno	P. Livio Borghetti
25	Joyeux anniversaire Happy birthday	P. Jean Tipy Br. Anthony V. Masilamani
26	Feliz cumpleaños Bom aniversário	P. Rogelio Ramirez P. Henri Karam Amorim P. Wagner Azevedo dos Reis
27	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Patrick Moulié
30	Joyeux anniversaire Feliz cumpleaños	P. Michel Vignau P. Miguel Martinez Fuertes

OCTOBER

1	50° di professione, auguri	PP. Arialdo Urbani, Luigi Speziale, Ennio Bianchi, Alberto Pensa, Mario Zappa
3	Happy birthday Buon compleanno	Fr. Edward Simpson P. Tobia Sosio
4	60 ans de profession, félicitations Feliz cumpleaños	Fr. Jean-Pierre Nécol P. Enrique Gavel
5	Buon compleanno Joyeux anniversaire	P. Angelo Paino F. Gérard Zugarramurdi
6	Happy birthday	Fr. Anthony Britto Rajan
7	Buon compleanno	P. Piero Donini P. Davide Villa, P. Mario Colombo
8	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Enrique Miranda
9	Buon compleanno	P. Tiziano Molteni
11	40 ans de profession, félicitations	P. Beñat Oyhénart
12	Happy birthday Feliz cumpleaños Happy birthday	Fr. Thomas Kelly P. Wilfrido Romero Br. John Paul Kitti Loakham
13	Happy birthday	Br. Andrew Athit Nyomtham
14	50 ans de profession, félicitations	P. Firmin Bourguinat
15	Feliz cumpleaños Happy birthday	P. Osvaldo Caniza Br. Wilfred Poulouse Perepadan

of the country which is half-way between Dabakala and Adiapodoume, where our communities are actually. The Bishop whom I met in July, is delighted to entrust us with an area rich in schools and a university. He wants us to take charge of the chaplaincy for the students. The parish church has to be built as well as a house for the community; but above we must build the Church, the Christian community.

All the more reason why we should thank the God of all goodness who continues to keep alive the charism of St Michael Garicoits and the Congregation. If it is true that in certain places we are withdrawing, in others we continue to expand. I hope soon to be able to tell you about another new community. Even if Betharram is not as we were used to seeing it, it still maintains the life and dynamism which the Spirit has always given it. In any case it is still as courageous as ever and never misses a chance of serving the mission of the Church.



Gaspar Fernandez Perez, SCJ

Father Etchecopar wrote... to his sister Julie, 31st July 1865

For a Christian, there is no sorrow which is not followed by a consolation, just as the body is inseparable from its shadow. Why does sorrow cause so much joy in a truly Christian heart? It is because it is part and parcel of the Cross of Jesus and consequently the foundation of a hope of Heaven.

What greater motive, what better source of consolation can our Heavenly Father give us than to send us the Cross of Jesus and with it, if I may say so, a Ticket for Heaven at the same time saying: "Come my child, come and accompany my Son on Calvary; come and help him to carry his Cross, and join that tiny band of souls who have chosen as their portion the tears of this world and the joys of Eternity."

Immersion into India

An immense country where to incarnate

Fr. Philippe Hourcade, from the community of Pibrac, spent the month of July in our communities of India. His witness.

“To show unbounded love within the limits of one’s responsibilities.” The word ‘boundless’ resonated very strongly in me each step I took in India: the immensity of the country, the cultural and religious differences, and the very conditions of life... the limits of my responsibility at Bangalore and Mangalore have given me a taste of this limitlessness which St Michael considered so important: that of the daily life lived by the brothers, shared in simplicity, and enjoyed in the presence of the Lord. Another kind of limitless immensity comes to life here. So many faces, so many kinds of life to discover. So much vitality and kinds of work, both intellectual and manual, looking after the garden and the animals, in our two communities who live with the difficulty of transport, not to mention material needs, crowded buses, heat, and noise. Their simple style of life touched me. In a country where misery cries out, as a part of daily life, more or less living in a fatalistic way, being present is simply a veritable challenge! Indeed I never felt that I was a tourist but a pilgrim.

Each of our two communities are situated on the edge of the town. Bangalore, is a growing metropolis of 7 to 10 million inhabitants, I do not know the exact number. A veritable anthill: crowds everywhere, all the time, with the constant noise of horns and traffic. Mangalore is a coastal town, very humid, surrounded by numerous hills, and nestling under a veritable covering of rich vegetation, a pleasant place to live. It is at the heart of an impressive religious complex: religious houses are very numerous. You find many of these are houses of formation.

A month wasn’t sufficient to discover such a land. As far as possible, the fathers of the communities (Tidkam and

3. Our community life has an evangelical dimension if we really share; *share* the Word of God, share our Faith rich in daily events, sharing our materiel goods both human and spiritual. This is something which requires hospitality and an attentive ear; but it also up to each one to share his joys, sorrows, doubts and difficulties. All our actions are in reference to the community. The *Eucharistic* celebration is the foundation and summit of this sharing.

4. If we are each responsible for our own faithful response to the Lord’s call, we are also concerned for the progress of our brothers. *Honesty* with our brothers is exercised through brotherly dialogue, encouragement, our personal life style compared with our community project.

5. In community living there are frustrations, indifferences, and refusals to be borne with. This is something which the formation community cannot avoid; the formators encourage those in formation to make the best possible of life as it is. They also help them to develop a sense of forgiveness.

6. It was our choice to meet as a community so as to be happy and joyful. We try to practise a simpler way of life, to be more cordial, more human, in our dealings with each other, expressed through affectionate respect. Hobbies, relaxation and festivities are all part of family life which is typical of the community.

Group of Formators
Session at Adiapodoume, July 17th 2007

On the eighth of August 2007 brother Arnaud Richard of the French Province, temporary professed, has been released from his vows to the congregation. May our prayers accompany him in his new life.

I pray that he will give me the Spirit of strength and wisdom so as to announce his kingdom.

I finish with the Our Father.

NOTE

Every phase of this short exercise begins by mentioning a divine action. These are realities which are part of the essentials of my Christian faith.

This exercise is meant to help me to be more fully aware of the reality which is the source of my apostolic vocation.

Ary Crollius, SJ
facilitator



Assurances from the assembly

Brotherly life in community

The source and modal of our fraternal life in community is the **Trinity**. Fraternal life in community is one aspect of formation for Religious Life as Betharramites which must always be developed.

1. We are invited through **faith** to recognise the Trinity as the source of community; our religious community wants to be an image of the Trinity in the Church; our brothers are a “sacrament” from Christ whom we see in Faith. Our community is the primary place of our apostolate where we put into practice the “spirituality of communion”.
2. To be a sign and reflection of the life of the Trinity, we have all to undergo a conversion and practise self denial: Put first of all what we do for the community rather than wanting the community to act for us. Community life involves our **responsibility**.

Shaju at Bangalore, Biju Anthony at Mangalore), and the simple professed were very keen to help me discover the Indian way of life, and their country. I keep happy memories of the day I spent at Moodbigri at the Jain temple and other sites, and the day passed in Bangalore with Brother Wilfred when we took a record number of buses on that day.

At the heart of this polytheistic universe, the Catholic world is recognized in the States of Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, thanks to the great part played by their social institutions, their highly respected schools, clinics and hospitals. The impressive number of priests and religious brings a particular feature to the local church: its ancient tradition which goes back to St Thomas, the Apostle, it is suffering through being considered the religion of foreigners, maybe as a caste apart? In some discussions that I had with our young brothers, I noticed that they took part in ministries over lengthy periods working with the marginalized; the old and infirm, those who lived in the slums, children at school. When they do this work over a school year this is called ‘regency’. Certain are very open to making an effort to understand the Hindu world; what we would call inculturalisation. At the end of my stay, Fr Britto told the communities what life was like in the North of Karnataka: prompting certain discussions on the poverty found there compared with their own areas. This seems to be a useful apprenticeship for the Betharramites in India after their initial formation, when they will begin doing pastoral work; a sister of Saint Joseph of Tarbes told me how there was a need of men to work in the slums.

I ought to say that the boundlessness of fraternal life appeared in a new light. I didn't have a great deal to do, except being in their midst as an elderly religious; John Britto, one



of the brothers, to whom I confided my sense of powerlessness, assured me with these words: “you are Mary, we are Martha.” But in spite of all the obstacles of language, it was the brotherhood that counted, I felt it during those 36 hours when the four brothers took their final vows; Subesh, Valen, Stirven and Enakius. They had already heard me speak from the abundance of my heart about the letters of St Michael and his mission statement, which was the inner source of his spirituality throughout his life. Our young brothers felt strongly the need to be encouraged, sustained and rooted in the tradition of our religious family, the witness and life shared with Fr Joseph Mirande and Brother Gerald Sutherland, after the tragic death of Father Xavier which has traumatised and disoriented this small but growing community.

As I look back over this brief experience and the challenge it presented, the international reality of our family appeared to me in a much clearer light: to live always as brothers for the benefit of all, in the way of the Word Incarnate. Concerning the question that the future professed put to me about what I thought of the future in their region, I surprised myself by saying something that I would never imagined without them. Very often good things are given to us to develop by divine providence in spite of our weakness, uncertainties, occasional errors. In such circumstances one needs an anchor, little by little implanted in the heart of each religious, this universal vision of the marvelous spectacle that inspired Christ in his mission for “you and for the multitude”.

As Christ, a man among millions of others, special yet limited by time and culture, our charism is a little thing among others, arising from simplicity, humility, joy according to the measure of our abilities... a question of boundless things within the smallness of our lives.

Philippe Hourcade, SCJ

It is not easy to explain the meaning of “to adore”. The surest way is to begin by the position of the body. A position of adoration will show us the corresponding interior attitude to adopt. “Man is never so great as when he prostrates himself in adoration”.

HE ENLIGHTENS ME – I THANK HIM

The eye of God is a light on my life, since nothing is hidden from Him. With the power of this light I take a look at that part of my life just passed. Within me and around me I can see signs of his presence, of his goodness, of his love.

I thank you for the wonder of my being, for the wonders of all your creation (Ps 139,14)

HE SHOWERS HIS GIFTS ON ME - I SHOW HIM MY LIFE

In the presence of so much goodness, what has been my answer? Often I failed to recognise his generosity. I sought to satisfy my desires elsewhere. Can I really say that my will was to love and serve his divine majesty in all things?

HE LOVES ME – I CALL FOR HIS MERCY

Jesus came, not to call the just, but to seek out sinners. It is precisely as a sinner that I answer his call.

Here I could recite Psalm 130 as an expression of my pleading, my desire, my hope and my trust.

HE SENDS ME FORTH ON A MISSION – I OBEY

Every meeting with the Living God is a meeting with Him who sent his own Son as a sign and messenger of his love for the world. With him and in him he sends me out on the same mission.

I look around me and try to identify the invitations given me by God; all the good works which he has prepared for me to get involved with.

person, I am not referring only to the young in formation... the formator needs to be a fully balanced person within themselves before claiming to help others.

If you had to pick out a conviction and a priority from this session what would it be? - A conviction: never to stop improving the method of a personal, systematic and frequent support in the course of formation. A priority: to deepen my knowledge of the spirituality of the Ignation Exercises so as to use them in formation in the least threatening fashion.

The meeting of formator's took place in Africa for the first time for the congregation: what aspects in the life of the church and of Betharramite religious life did that open up to you? - More and more the life of the congregation moves towards areas like Africa, Asia and South American. It's part of the new reality of the young who are maturing and growing there. On the other hand they have not been touched by globalisation with masses of poor, and marginalised; one sees clear cases of violence where people are being driven from their lands, trafficking in drugs and lack of schools, hospitals, or elementary hygiene...

This is what I saw. But at the same time I return full of hope to the 9 postulants at Puente Remanso very much aware of the difficulties, but trusting in the grace of God which is the source of all hope...



Prayer space

Daily examination of conscience

HE SEES ME – I ADORE HIM

Every moment of prayer begins with God. He knows me even before I begin to think about him. He has seen me from before my birth.

And so, today, at this point in time, He can see me and He knows me. How am I going to react? The mother of Jesus gives us an example: "He has looked on me – I praise him".

IN MEMORIAM

Argentina



Fr. Juan Morales (1915-2007)

Fifty years ago I knew dear Father Morales. I was a young girl of 19 years of age. I was beginning to teach in San Jose College. I remained there for 40 years, near Father, even when we were separated. My first years I was constantly with him; I got to know his penetrating look, his smile which accompanied his actions, the simplicity of his daily life.

He had a good memory, was always attentive and ever anxious to improve our professional qualities as well as our quality of personal life. Father made a lasting impression on our College; it was a great stroke of luck to have spent all that time with him. He made his remarks gently, with the result that they made a lasting impression on us. When he was called elsewhere, our friendship lasted (in case of necessity we could always phone him).

We often met up. I can remember a visit where we used to spend our holidays: on his instructions, we had dinner in a Basque restaurant and chatted for hours – he always had something to talk about; it was a pleasure to listen to him.

With him there was a solution to everything. I can still remember him suggesting during one of his visits, that I take the headship of the College. He spoke to me in terms that were so exact, he knew me so well that I could not deceive him. Father Morales taught me the meaning of belonging. It is now 10 years since I gave up teaching, yet my heart is still in the College.

Father Morales made a deep impression on my life. I was born on the 10th July 1938, the very day of his ordination priest in the Holy Land. We often chatted about this coincidence. I believe that God put him on my path to guide me. Together with my husband and children, I wish that he rests in peace.

Mabel Elsa Esposito de Sanchez

Juan Morales was born on the 16th May 1915. He was a past pupil of St Michael Garicoits School and of San Jose College (Buenos Aires). He did his novitiate in Balarin and made his Final Vows in Bethlehem where he was ordained priest on the 10th July 1938. After studying at the National University of Buenos Aires, he taught history, geography, Spanish, literature and psychology in our different colleges in Argentina. He held positions of responsibility, not only in our schools but also in the Province. Having retired to the Provincial house in 1985, he died in Buenos Aires on the 5th July.

IN MEMORIAM

Italy

Fr. Celestino Gusmeroli (1925-2007)



Tartano
16 August 1925



Seveso
31 July 2007

I met Father Celestino for the first time on 1st September 1940 at Talamona station. He was a fine young man of 15 years of age, fair, medium build. Wearing glasses made him look serious. I was amazed to see a 50 lira note sticking out of his trouser pocket; this was the monthly fee which was to be given to the seminary.

The following year I joined him at Colico, on his way to the novitiate. We spent the war years together, six years at school, but living in the house where the big boys were not in contact with the younger boys. In 1948, at the age of 23, Father Celestino was ordained, the youngest of four other new priests. His superiors, judging his intelligence to be sure, sent him to Rome to prepare a theology degree. As soon as he had obtained his degree, he was called back to our seminary at Albiate where he taught Italian to the grammar school boys and moral theology to the students. In 1954, at the age of 28 he was appointed Master of the Students and in 1959 superior of the Scolasticate, the most important in the young Italian Province.

His deep and exemplary piety won for him the respect and esteem of the students, despite his demands of fidelity to the rule. In 1969, at the age of 44, he took part in the Chapter for post conciliar renewal at Betharram. When he returned from this, he had been named Provincial Superior. The next 8 years were years full of problems, of departures of religious, which sorely tried his unshakable faith in the priesthood. During his stewardship, the Italian Province reached its maximum in numbers, while, at the same time, suffering from serious financial difficulties. Far from being frightened, Father Celestino trusted in Providence, even thanking the Lord for maintaining the Betharramites in a state of poverty, which for him was a great way of walking in the steps of St Michael. At the same time, he had to undertake the responsibility of Master of Novices as well as Parish Priest of Lissone, following the brutal death of the founder of the Parish of the Sacred Heart, Father Joseph Airoidi.

young religious in formation; there was also a presentation by Fr Gustavo Agin, master of novices in the Father Etchecopar Region, on the help needed by the young in the use of material goods, and another by Fr Laurent Bacho, General Counsellor for formation, on the importance of forming the young for brotherly life in community, and then an intervention by Fr Biju Paul, Superior of the Indian delegation, making the point of the importance of psychology in understanding the emotional life of those in formation. Without taking into account several other exchanges which took place between us.

Has the International dimension and geographical diversity of the meeting been a stimulus or a break? - It was a grace as well as a challenge. We are an international congregation living in different historical situations. It is important to have such meetings. The subject matter and the debates help to clarify convictions not always as holy as we would wish, by directing them towards the one and only true master. Some challenges, because of our human diversity, must be taken on personally, using the gifts that God has given us and the limitations that we have imposed upon ourselves through our sins...

What have you discovered or rediscovered about your mission as formator? - The first and most important point is the necessity of regular and reciprocal dialogue between formators, as a privileged tool to help the young in formation. Religious life begins by God's call, the call is imprinted by grace and comes from his infinite mercy, but the response must be given by a human being, with all his limitations. This brings about the second important point, in my opinion, which has two aspects: on the one hand the discovery of the spirituality of the spiritual exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola as a confirmed method to discern the will of God, and on the other hand the importance of taking into account certain human sciences, notably psychology in the process of formation. It is necessary to note that when I speak of Ignation discernment or psychological processes within the

Adiapo 2007
de formationis



5 MINUTES WITH... Brother Mauro

Brother Mauro Ulrich de Oliviera is responsible for the postulants in Paraguay. In this capacity he participated in the gathering which brought together the three regions in July at Adiapodoume, Ivory Coast. He gave us his impressions.

Nef - What were we doing at Adiapodoume for two weeks? Basically we spoke about formation in religious life, more precisely the need for a personal accompaniment as an indispensable tool for growth. Formation in the religious life is not without its contradictions. There is something fascinating and something frightening when we human approach human reality, which also touches on the divine; when we attempt to understand and help individuals to understand as well as possible God's call. It is fascinating because we know that the young are going to find their true happiness by directing their life in this way; it is frightening because however prepared we are, we know that the ways of God and not the ways of men, and it often happens that we base ourselves on human criteria, far too human. Meeting with people of other cultures and different temperaments being engaged to the best of ones abilities in the mission of formator, with commitment and devotion, makes us feel that we are taking on something quite beyond us, a transcendent responsibility...

What particular issues did we consider and how did we deal with them? - As I've said, the principal subject was personal accompaniment. This means that formation in the religious life must take into account the person, it must be personalised. The fundamental question is: *how can I help such a person, enable that person to respond in the best way possible to the call that God has given him?* During this session there was a certain amount of confusion between spiritual accompaniment, human accompaniment and the formator's accompaniment. The problem, reading between the lines in the conversations and exchanges, was the concern to draw together these three aspects while keeping the proper dynamic of each. Dealing with this we have had the presentations of Fr Gaspar, Superior General, who stimulated our reflections, the teachings of Fr Ary Crolliu sj on the challenges, the dangers, and importance of creating relationships to assist

When his mandate as Provincial ended, Father Gusmeroli resumed as chaplain at Bormio, Morbegno and finally Solbiate, with the old and the sick. When at last he could take some rest at Albiate, he was struck down with Parkinson disease, obliging him to be hospitalised for three years at Seveso.

Father Celestino was a man of prayer. During his many trips to Rome by car, even before talking about his problems, he would begin by reciting the Rosary. He was devoted to the Stations of the Cross and Visits to the Blessed Sacrament. He scrupulously observed all the exercises of the Rule. Despite his failing eyesight due to old age, he faithfully recited the Divine Office. Man of faith, he was convinced to have been called to the priesthood by God, and he was determined to live out his life for God's love. As a preacher, he was greatly appreciated, and was called upon by the priests for all sorts of missions. His experience as spiritual director of countless seminaristes, gave him self confidence for accompanying souls, especially religious. As a master of conferences, he was remarkable as a great speaker, a man of wide culture and widely read.

From his youth Father Celestino was a lover of nature; he loved to climb mountains without any special equipment and, when in the presence of the beauty of creation, he would sing at the top of his voice. He knew a huge collection of popular songs by heart, and would gladly join choirs, spreading joy and his ability to enjoy the simple things which life puts before us.

Towards the end, his deteriorating state of health rendered him silent. He had lost the art of conversation which was his. He would cut short all visits so as to go to Chapel and remain in the presence of Him who was the centre of his life. Certainly, the face to face with God, must now be his eternal joy.

Celeste Perlini, SCJ

Let us also pray for **the father of Fr. Giancarlo Monzani** whose funeral took place on the 17th of August in Colnago (North Italy).

Inter congregational events

Bi centenary at La Puye 4th/5th August ■ This year the Daughters of the Cross celebrated 200 years of the first profession of Sister Jeanne Elizabeth Bichier des Ages with her four companions on the 2nd February 1807 at Molante; 10 km from La Puye, a village where the parish priest was Andre Hubert Fournet.

The sisters had come from different countries with lay associates of their congregation to celebrate this event on the theme: *With Christ the light of the world another world is possible*. There was a dramatic presentation of the founder's life, a very festive Mass, messages inviting each to return to the source of living water which is Christ, a simple and happy meal in the cloister, everything centred around the theme of building another world.

Betharram was well represented: Fathers Gogorza (Spain) Henri Amarin (Brazil) Romualdo Airaghi (Italy) Benat Oyhenart, Provincial Superior (France) and Laurent Bacho (Ivory Coast). Their presence was in recognition of their founder and our founder who said: "it is that good sister who has done everything." It was an enriching experience for our two congregations to come together from diverse places. A gathering recalling a page from our history!

Province of France Delegation of the Ivory Coast

Returned to our source ■ From the 5th to the 11th of August at the provincial retreat at Betharram, Father Joseph Mirande invited us to reflect on the love of God proposed by the Pope in his first encyclical linked with "God founded in love" of which our founder calls us to bear witness to. He insisted with various texts of holy Scripture, indicated or suggested from the encyclical to return to the word of God.

The silence and the five times of community prayer have



*Saint Michael
region*

been a precious help to us, as well as the prayerful example of our elder brothers. The preacher encouraged us to consider positively our weaknesses and our wretchedness as a way of growing in humility, of weakening our pride, of detaching us from ourselves to leave more room for the Lord and our brothers. Our hearts at Betharram, wounded by recent events, were soothed by peace and hope in the love of God, and moulded by the wisdom of India and the heat of Brazil, as Gabriel Verley remarked in his speech of thanks. We have gone out with the desire to let ourselves be converted more by love and to share God's love in our communities as a light in the world. (Laurent Bacho)

A series of celebrations ■ On the 15th September at Bonieredougou, our brothers Bakary Barnabe Kpehelefope and Segla Raoul Thibaut will be ordained respectively priest and deacon by Monsignor Ignace Bessi, the Bishop of Katiola. Five days later at Urrugne, brother Gerard Zugarramundi, at present at Dabakala, will be ordained priest (the first French priest to be ordained for 15 years). The province and the delegation will be there; let us unite in thanksgiving for these ordinations and in prayer for vocations.

Province of Italy

"Regrouping of parishes" ■ The house of San Giuseppe in Albavilla will welcome on the 6th/7th October the first national congress of Betharramite parishes. The different people in pastoral responsibilities both religious and lay will meet on the theme: *Parishes, what are you? Where are you going?* There will be discussions, audiovisual presentations and a general exchanges of ideas. This is an important initiative for a Providence very much engaged in pastoral work.