

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

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**After your experience in India in the formation house, what do you enjoy most of your Parish life, in England?** - For a long time I have been to parishes in England and Wales telling people about Betharram, and the missionary work of the Congregation. This is organized in conjunction with the Mission Secretariat who work on behalf of the Bishops. We are given 30 to 40 parishes a year in which we can make mission appeals in England and Wales... I set out to be helpful to the Congregation. In the work I have done I hope that has been fulfilled.

**Schedule of  
the General  
Council**

**16th March - 6th April**  
Visit of the Superior general  
in Holy Land



NEF

## The approval of the Society of the Sacred Heart

bishop who had greatly changed. Up till then he would say: I would prefer to have Missionaries without vows than to have nothing!" Now he was prepared to say; "Rather than nothing, I prefer Missionaries according to Father Garicoits' modal".

At the end of a month, the new edition was ready. The text doesn't owe much to Father Etchecopar, but it was thanks to him that it was taken to the Reverend Father Chirou and so to the whole community. By letter Mgr Lacroix informed them that he was leaving them entirely free to pronounce vows; but he forbade all discussion and decision on the question.

The new constitutions were rejected principally because of article 26 which maintained in the Society those who refused vows. This was kept despite the requests of Mgr Lacroix, who was held in high esteem by all the fathers.

3

(to be continued)



# Family News

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



**A word from the  
Superior General**

## 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of San Jose College

### In this issue

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150 years ago, Father Diego Barbe, Brother Magendie, a seminarian, and Brother Johannes began their task in education at San Jose College. The beginnings were humble and caused plenty of controversy. Back home in France, Father Garicoits encouraged Fr Barbe in his project for the college. Fr Larrouy didn't appreciate one bit investing in a college without planning a house for the community. A great number of religious worked in the college during the last 150 years. Many devoted their life to educating generations of youngsters, thus accompanying the birth of the national identity of Argentina soon to be celebrating its 200 years. The religious lived for education and had at their disposal the best of what existed – the best library, the best laboratories, and the best observatory. San Jose was the most important work of the Congregation.

The work of so many religious, Fathers and Brothers, was always marked by a great generosity, witness to the evangelical spirit which drove them. They employed few staff because the religious taught, supervised the dormitories, study, the movement in the corridors; they went with the pupils for recreation, to the literary academy, and other places of relaxation. They even wrote course books during their holidays at Caseros (Martin Coronado) their country house. It must not be forgotten that these religious led a very austere life: for example, when they went out on a Sunday, they only had a few pence to pay for the tram; the Fathers' rooms lacked even the most elementary sanitary requirements.

106<sup>th</sup> year  
10<sup>th</sup> series, n°25  
14<sup>th</sup> March 2008



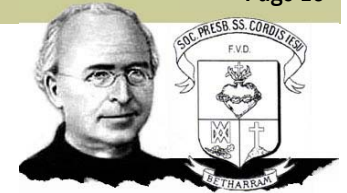
*An exciting mission: to witness to the love of God and to transmit this Betharramite identity and joy to the laity working with us*

San Jose College had its moments of glory and its moments of crises. For many of us these last few years have been a source of suffering. The College shared in the prosperity of the years of abundance. But it also experienced the change of fortune like so many others in Argentina these last years. Without being blinded by the glories of bygone days, it must remain faithful to its mission, from its humility and even from its humiliation. Faithfulness to these 150 years of Betharramite education continues today and launches out into the future, in colleges in Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Brazil. We know that education is a fertile soil for developing humanity and evangelisation; it helps us to be close to the young, according to the wishes of St Michael; as our missions in Ivory Coast, Central Africa, and Thailand understand it today.

Religious working in the field of education must be committed to witnessing to the love of God, and to manifesting it with joy, showing clearly the identity of Betharram and by transmitting this identity and joy to the laity working with us. This may appear of little consequence, but it is a noble and exciting mission.

Thanks to our history and to our tradition, I believe that we have something to contribute through education, to that effort of the evangelisation of a culture which is ours and which, according to Benedict XVI *makes people doubt the value of the individual, the meaning of truth and goodness, and finally the very goodness of life itself.* Based on this cultural reality, to cultivate and promote the special identity of our schools and colleges, means that we take these priorities into consideration: our schools must be authentic Christian communities, and the educational community must cultivate Christian and Betharramite values and virtues; our mission in education is all the richer for being supported by the different vocations within the Church. In this way it becomes a sign of communion. Practising the theme of love, of love more than any other reason. There

## *Fr. Etchecopar and the approval of the Society of the Sacred Heart* 3



by Pierre Mieyaa, SCJ

Father Etchecopar gave his novices an instruction which was both solid and supple, and which never misrepresented the ideal of the holy Founder. His letters also bear witness to this fidelity. They depict the law of love and obedience, the two pivots of the interior life. "May the law of love and obedience which the Holy Spirit engraves in our hearts, be the rule of your feelings and the judge of your entire conduct." Letter 27th April 1867). He makes his maxims popular: "Let's make use of our poverty to know that God is everything and that we are nothing" (1<sup>st</sup> October 1868). He gladly repeats his well known sayings: "Courage! Forward march! *Da nobis recta sapere!*"

After five years of great discretion, from 1868 onwards his action becomes more effective. Without a word of warning Mgr Lacroix came to Betharram. He wants to put an end to the question of religious vows. On the 11<sup>th</sup> May 1868 he assembled all the Fathers there present in a general assembly. There was hardly the half of them; this was pointed out to His Lordship. His answer was without discussion: "These things have been dragging on for too long! It's time to come to a decision" and he added "I'm the boss!"

Immediately it was put to the vote. Of the 23 voters, 16 opted for compulsory vows; and 7 for optional vows. After this vote which for Mgr was a defeat, he called it a day, recited the *Sub Tuum*, and returned to Bayonne, amazed at the attitude of these priests.

As soon as he got back to Bishop's House, Mgr decided to write the new Constitutions. So as to be more successful, he invited as his secretary, Father Etchecopar who arrived after 19<sup>th</sup> May. Father Etchecopar found in Bayonne a



2008

M A R C H

15	Joyeux anniversaire Happy birthday	Fr. Paul Lamothe Br. Antony J. Livin Fernando
17	Buon compleanno	P. Natale Re
21	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Bruno Ierullo P. Jorge Murias P. José Gogorza
22	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Gabriel Verley
23	Buon compleanno	Fr. Butrus Alhijazin
24	Happy birthday	Br. Michael Richards
25	Happy birthday	Br. Chaowit Phraisonkhumwong
27	Feliz cumpleaños	Hno. Daniel Pavón Galeano
29	Joyeux anniversaire	Fr. Jean-Pierre Nécol
30	Happy Birthday	Fr. Pairot P. Nauchachawan
31	Buon compleanno	P. Piero Trameri
1	Joyeux anniversaire Feliz cumpleaños	P. Jean Gillet P. Daniel González
2	Buon compleanno Happy birthday	P. Angelo Riva Br. John Dawson Fr. Jiraphat Raksikhao
3	Buon compleanno	P. Franco Cesana P. Ermanno Rasero
4	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Jean Casenave
5	Buon compleanno	P. Tiziano Pozzi
9	Happy birthday	Br. Abraham S. Nadackalaya
10	Buon compleanno Happy birthday	P. Aldo Nespoli P. Mario Zappa Fr. Subancha Yindeengarm
12	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Gérard Badie P. Laurent Bacho
13	Buon compleanno Happy birthday	P. Ugo Donini Br. Shaju Kalappurackal
16	Happy birthday	P. Chanchai Temaroonrung

A P R I L

is no question of being satisfied with group work, but be interested in each individual. The result of such exciting work means that the young are joyful and happy. It is only by forming new men, in the image of Jesus Christ that a new world can be created. The young trained in our colleges must be involved in political and civil institutions to imbue them with Gospel values. The first Betharramites had a great admiration for St Joseph and consequently placed all their teaching under his protection. St Joseph was a man of God, a man of discernment who found out His saving presence in the events of his life: trying times like Mary's pregnancy, persecutions like the massacre of the innocents, moments of anguish like the disappearance of Jesus in Jerusalem, became for him signs of how the God of the Covenant intervenes and always keeps his promises, for he is faithful. This is why St Joseph gave up his own projects to do what God asked of him; he risked his life to protect the lives of Jesus and Mary. This is his joy and glory. With Mary, St Joseph allowed Jesus to increase in wisdom, in stature and in favour with God and men. (Luke, 2, 52) He is the teacher of the Master in all circumstances; he takes him to the synagogue where he studies the Word of God; he advises him, corrects him, and teaches him the trade of carpenter by which he will be recognised by every one. (Mark 6, 3) In the heart of Jesus St Joseph's face is identified with that of the Father from whom he had learned everything from all eternity (John 5,19; 6,38; 7,16-18; 8,28,29). He saw, heard, touched and loved Jesus, and in return was loved by him. What a joy it was to hear the message of the shepherds (Luke 2,17-18). With what care and attention did he listen to Simeon's *nunc dimittis* (Luke 2,33)! With what humility and care did he discuss the future of this Child with Mary! Because he was a man of God, through sufferings and consolations, he discovered something of the love which was later to be manifested in the mystery of the death and resurrection of "his son", the carpenter.

*The joy and the glory of St Joseph: to give up his own projects to the will of God and risk his life for Jesus and Mary...*



We shall continue entrusting to St Joseph the Betharramite mission as educators in the whole world, each and every priest and brother, each member of the laity who shares our spirituality and mission. We entrust our new projects to him. We entrust the children, the youth, our pupils, their families, our past pupils, vocations and formation in the Betharramite way of life. May he help us to give ourselves with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our strength to the will of God and to his loving project for mankind. To be faithful we shall often have to renounce ourselves, just like Jesus, just like St Joseph. But with their presence and under their protection we shall always *go forward!*

Gaspar Fernandez, SCJ

*Father Etcheccopar wrote...* *To the religious of Argentina,  
24 March 1884*

*My dear Fathers and Brothers, sometimes our nature oppressed by long and persistent work cries out to the Divine Master; take this chalice from me. Yet what examples of perseverance there are to help us raise up our weary bodies and say to us ; go forward always. Look at Jesus, Mary and Joseph always tied to the task of the same tiring work, even unto death. With this in mind let us be encouraged to follow them with the same generosity ; let us not suffer like slaves who stop, hold back, complain while the King advances, and march forward to the total immolation of the Cross.*

*Act like this ; older members pass on to the youngest this determination of the founder amidst all his trials, all deaths in the field of honour ; and the youngest, you go forward along the path of your leaders, following the counsels that we have not failed to give you. You will do it, you dear children, who have just joined us ;...the account of your journey about which we read in the refectory at this time, shows us that devotion which the religious spirit brings to you, in this precious work, the result of your most generous efforts.*

His ministries extended to various activities crossing boundaries' of culture and language. As well as speaking Kannada fluently he was also a native Konkani speaker, and with his calm temperament we had imagined him as a possible novice master in the future. People loved him for his approachability and his ever-smiling face in his various ministries. He rendered great service to the people who are affected by AIDS, the elderly in the Old Age Home and several different parishes. When he accompanied me to Bidar in 2006, it had been several years since he had served there himself, but everyone remembered him with great love and affection.

He received his First order of Lector in 2007, and then the order of Acolyte in 2008. Currently he was doing his 3<sup>rd</sup> year theology and was preparing himself to attend the international session in the Holy land with a view to final profession. A week before he died he came to Mangalore in order to apply for his passport and he took the opportunity to visit a few members of his family. They were not to know that this was the last time they would see him. Just a few days later God called him unexpectedly to be with him in heaven.

Denis suffered a heart attack due to a heart infection and he passed away in the ambulance with Brother Tijo present. There had been some anxiety a few months before that he may have been diabetic but this anxiety was never given official support. Only after his death did the hospital confirm the diagnosis.

On February 14<sup>th</sup> his classmates from KJC organised the requiem liturgy for our community at Shobhana Shaakha, presided over by Fr. Paul Puthunangady SDB (the Episcopal Vicar for religious). Then on the 15<sup>th</sup> his body was taken to his home place of Vittla near Mangalore for the burial. All the Maria Kripa community were there, and Fr. Britto thanked everyone for their presence and their prayers. Many many people spoke of his smiling face and friendly nature. This time Betharram's loss is heaven's gain, but we trust that his smile will bless us from above.

Austin Hughes, SCJ  
Superior provincial  
of England  
(Delegation of India)

## IN MEMORIAM

## India



Vijayadka  
8 April 1970



Bangalore  
13 February 2008

## Brother Denis Cutinha

After a sudden heart attack Dennis Cutinha was taken from us on February 13 2008 aged 37. He passed away in the ambulance on the way to hospital.

Bro. Denis Cutinha SCJ was born in Vijayadka near Mangalore to Mr. Joseph Cutinha and Mrs. Pauline D'Souza Cutinha on 8<sup>th</sup> of April 1970. He was the 7<sup>th</sup> child of his now deceased parents. His brothers Robert and Floei, and his sisters Mercina, Benny, Rufina, Veronica and Clara were well known to us. Rufina in particular always made her house (just 2 km from Maria Kripa) a place of welcome for all members of the Betharramite family.

Bro Denis did his initial schooling in St. Lawrence School, Vijayadka and did his higher secondary education in St. Philomena's College, Puttur. After his School Leaving Certificate he joined the Diocese of Mangalore with the intention of becoming a priest. During his 8 years with the Mangalore Diocese he did his P.U.C, degree, post-graduate and philosophy, as well as doing a pastoral year in the new Mangalore mission of Bidar.

In the year 2000 Dennis had struggled with his studies and so the Diocese advised him to look elsewhere. Mangalore's loss became Betharram's gain, and Denis Cutinha joined the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram, making his first profession in 2003.

After a few years of initial formation he began theological studies in Kristu Jyothi College, Bangalore in the year 2004. He was popular with the students and mixed well with everybody, even if at times he was a little self-conscious about his weight. Some of the students used to joke with him that he had the figure of St. Thomas Aquinas, but he took it all with good humour. In recent years he turned the joke around by playing energetic games of volleyball and losing the 'spare tyre'.

## Rio de la Plata

### San José college: the story continues

On the 19th of March 2008 the College of St Josephs is about to celebrate a new anniversary. One knows the history of its foundation: because of the spiritual needs of the Basque emigres and lack of clergy who spoke their language, Monsignor Escalada, Bishop of Buenos Aires and the Governor of the town Pastor Obligario, requested Monsignor Lacroix, Bishop of Bayonne, to send Basque priests to his diocese.

Amongst the first group were Fr Barbe and his companions. After many tribulations they disembarked at Buenos Aires and amidst cogitations, doubts, unfulfilled promises and certitudes, they finished by founding the College of St Josephs in the Balvanera quarter.

It was the starting point for this institution in the public life of Argentina over its 150 years, with its dark times and times of light, but times which definitely stamped its imprint on those who sat on its benches, an institution which has influenced the congregation from which it came and the society as a whole. One hundred and fifty years seems small when compared to Europe, but for young countries like ours it means an almost constant presence in the development of the nation's identity. Argentina will celebrate in 2010 the bi-centenary of its own liberation: the College of St Josephs has been involved in three quarters of its history.

It is not just a question of quantity but more importantly of quality: we speak of a College which rapidly became a model through its teaching and innovation, strong in teachers, the first priests and then laypeople, several of whom have become legendry figures. It became a model College not only for its solid formation in humanities and classics but also for its sporting prowess and religious



formation. Its enthusiasm for these things attracted President Mitre who frequently visited the establishment and its headteacher Fr Barbet who inspired him to create the first public colleges, by law in 1863. The College has always been a model: its plan of secondary studies was developed by two other colleges in 1993 and has been adopted since by more than 290 establishments in the federal capital. Its contribution to education and to the National identity has earned it the title of The Historic College of St Josephs.

One can divide this century and a half into three great periods: from 1858 to 1940, St Josephs saw a number of its former pupils occupy the highest responsibilities in the Republic. The majority came from established and traditional families of Argentina of modest backgrounds. So the College has never abandoned its role in social development. This period marked a high point for St Joseph's contributing to the political development of Argentina.

In the second period from 1940 to 1960 the College is continued on this path, but little by little the more wealthy of the provinces and the richer classes chose to send their children to schools in their areas and, these developed other educational structures at the expense of St Josephs. As a consequence it became a college principally for the middle classes.

Then, in 1990 to our present time, St Josephs was not immune from the countries economic problems, taking both good or bad decisions in its survival. The College experienced the most critical moment of its history in 1998 when the congregation announced its closure, because of grave economic difficulties. This brought things to a head, and it became a national issue. Moments of sorrow and uncertainty, discernment and analysis, of the cross and then the resurrection, revealed the worst and the best, as happens in times of crisis. In the course of which priests, teachers, former pupils, pupils and parents were put to the test. Then

Sisters took a great interest in the establishment of Betharram in India. Sr Mariella took an active part in the building of Shobhana Shaakha and also asked Sr Carleta to help supervise the building. At that time Sr Carleta was the General Bursar and had a great knowledge of building and being an Indian was able to speak to the Indian workmen in a way that they would not accept from a foreigner. Also very active in helping was another Apostolic Carmelite Sister, Sr Marie Eugene. Sr Marie was just finishing her thesis in Rome when our SCJ General Chapter decided to answer the call from India. When Sr Marie heard about our decision for India she took appropriate action and helped in many ways.

When I landed in Bangalore I was met by Sr Chinema of the Servant of Mary. Sr Chinema and the Servants of Mary were very kind to me. I was able to visit their different Convents and this enabled me to witness something of their apostolate among the poor. One difficulty was how to make India financially independent and this is still something I think about without any answers.

***When did you publish Mission Awareness for the first time? And what was your purpose?*** - The first *Mission Awareness* was published in October 1986 as a leaflet. In 1962 I became part of the Droitwich Community and soon started helping Fr Frank Dutton with his work in obtaining money for the mission in Thailand. The story of publishing goes back to the early 1970's. It was decided that in the parish of Droitwich a collection would be made on the first Sunday of each month for our Thailand Mission. I produced a leaflet for that Sunday. In it was printed what had been collected, events that were taking place for raising money, and the information from Fr Pensa or other missionaries who wrote to Fr Dutton. Fr Pensa had just spent two years at Droitwich and was well known to the people of Droitwich.

***As a mission procurator, what is your particular task?*** - I see my particular task as the promoter of the Congregation's missionary work. With England especially involved in India that is my main concern.



5 MN...

\* Missionary bulletin of the English Province



Follows on page 20

body? Possibly. But the hidden reason for this type of privation is not the personal effort to control our will, but our solidarity with all those who right now are feeling the pangs of hunger. For them, we can fast. For them we can skip a lunch or a dinner. For them we can feel in our flesh, for a few minutes only, what hunger really means.

If we can fast during Lent, it's not because we are strong willed or are longing for personal perfection, nor that our God, the God of our elder brother Jesus, needs our sacrifices and privations; we can fast through solidarity with all those who are hungry throughout the world. It's the first step. The second one could be inviting them in to share our meal. "The fast pleasing to me, consists in sharing with him who is hungry" says the Lord. (Is 58,7)

Sebastian Garcia, SCJ

### 5 MINUTES WITH... Brother Michael

Missionary support implies dedication, creativity and discretion. In the Province of England, a Religious Brother is procurator of the missions. For the *Family News*, Bro. Michael Richards has accepted to tell us a few words about his own story and his action at the service of the Congregation.

***Nef - Where does your vocation to religious life come from?*** - To me my vocation to the religious life of Betharram is both a gift and a mystery. In the early 1930's Fr Thomas Rose a Priest of Betharram was appointed Parish Priest of Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Old Hill. This area is part of the Black Country and was the centre for chain making. The first wedding Fr Tom conducted in that parish was that of my parents and he baptised three of the children from that union, myself included. Does this story say something of God's mystery and plan?

***At the age of 59 you were sent to India for the construction of the first scj formation house, in Bangalore. What were the difficulties and the joys of that time?*** - Yes I was 59 when I arrived in India and took courage from the fact that one of our great missionaries of Betharram, Fr Guimon, was over 60 years when he went to Argentina in South America.

With the building I was very lucky because Sr Mariella, who was the Superior General of the Apostolic Carmelite

came the announcement that the College was going to continue, and the new challenges would be confronted.

And there lies the end of a long journey which we have travelled up to this anniversary. Everyone, religious and lay, began to search for new ways of administration and participation in structures, formerly purely clerical, in quest of a new ministry for the congregation in face of the spiritual, educational and social challenges of our time.

Without forgetting our roots, we mustn't lose sight of the reason for the colleges existence which is 700 children that our parents have confided to us to form in the faith and knowledge. It is to provide a Catholic education in a world more and more impregnated with unbelief and religious indifference. It is to introduce new immigrants to an education of quality. It is to put life into the region that the urban evolution once a nerve centre has marginalised. It is to introduce the young to the Lord in the hopes that with grace and the holy spirit some will choose a religious life when we are in need of vocations. It is to continue to accompany the faith of hundreds of young people and to convince them of a sense of service to God and their country. It is to teach and to live together in solidarity not in an idealistic utopia but as an experience in doing something for our dear country. It is without doubt to illustrate the Fiat Voluntas Dei F.V.D. which shines out proudly on the College badge of pupils and old boys.

So even if this seems unusual, the reason for the College is to exist for those who do not belong to it so that they may have the opportunity of being formed in this dear establishment.

That is how I see things, I who came to the college at the age of six and who over 48 years continue to dedicate myself to it and work for it.

Hector M. Vigil  
Headmaster of the College of St Josephs



**Rio de la Plata****A Province under construction**

**Who are we?** The Province of Rio de la Plata comprises 3 brothers and 19 priests, of whom one is on secondment (General Superior) and two loaned (Father E. Lasuen and Father Gilbert Koffi Kouman); 6 are aged between 40 and 50, the rest stretch up to 90 years of age. There are several in very poor health, finally there are two religious finishing their formation, one in India and the other in Thailand.

**What do we do?** For the past 152 years we have been engaged in the pastoral of education (8 colleges with between 200 and 2 000 pupils); we are in 4 parishes and 5 chapels – not to mention the 70 chapels scattered across the diocese of Santiago del Estero. We have 700 employees with whom we have work contracts.

**How do we cope?** As best we can! We share our different works thus multiplying both tasks and travelling. When we get up in the morning it's difficult to know where we will sleep the next night (I mean in which of our houses). Retirement is not an option; while our strength lasts we shall carry on working.

In such conditions which have worsened these last few years because of unexpected deaths, we have tried several times to reorganise the Province since 2005. (In Uruguay, the two parishes of Sauce and Atlantida have been handed back to the diocese).

Last September, during the visit of our General Superior and his two Councillors, Fathers Bruno Ierullo and Enrico Frigerio, all members of the Province were invited to a plenary assembly. Some were prevented from assisting because of illness and an expected departure but without advance notice.

The theme of our meeting: only one, exclusive: *As we are and with what we have, what are we going to do?* The

**Lent 2008****Fasting, a privilege?**

Christians are all in Lent now. It is a good time to examine one's conscience, to increase one's time of prayer, to go to confession and to be reconciled to the Father.

The Church teaches us that one of the best ways of living out Lent in depth is by fasting.

I think that in our world today fasting is a privilege. Not a privilege reserved for those strong enough to do without one meal a day; that's not the question. But rather, only he who is not hungry can fast. The others, those who are hungry cannot fast. Only he who has his daily bread on the table can fast.

Here in India I have seen the many aspects of hunger. I saw them in Argentina also. It's like what you see in Brazil, in Paraguay, or in Ivory Coast. In fact hunger looks the same the world over. We quickly realise it, for we are not hungry, neither you reading this nor I writing it.

In our world, there are countless people who know what it is to be hungry. More than we can imagine. These people, who go hungry every day, cannot fast, for they have no choice. Their hunger is their "daily bread"; they fast every day.

We can fast because we are not hungry. This can be the underlying meaning of our privations during Lent: forego certain foods, and offer the sacrifice for these poor people. We can fast, not they. So we can fast in their place.

How can we do that? How can some people fast in this world when others are hungry? Wouldn't someone fasting be an insult to them? Surely, the God of Christians doesn't need our sacrifices. Our fasting isn't going to add anything to his eternal glory. Fasting more isn't going to draw our soul nearer to God. For us, fasting is a sort of apprenticeship. Doesn't fasting help to discipline our

Thoughts of an Argentine scholastic who is making a stage in Mangalore.



their gratitude for our work among them. They have enriched us by their poverty. During the mission, we understood that we were the poor ones. They gave us far more than we gave them: their joy in poverty, their desire for life, their simplicity in accepting their lot.



Blessed Miriam  
Region

### Province of England Delegation of India

**A friend has left us** ■ On February 20<sup>th</sup> we received from Bangalore the news of the death of Mother Mariella, former Superior General of the Sisters of the Apostolic Carmel (1984-1996). This Congregation is particularly linked to us because their Foundress, Mother Veronica of the Passion, was the Novice Mistress of Blessed Mariam of Jesus Crucified. Mother Mariella went out of her way to help us to get established in India (1995). May the good Lord reward her! Let all of us pray for her and for all the sisters of the Apostolic Carmel, who are always ready to give their valuable help to our communities in Bangalore and Mangalore.

### SAMPTRAN PROJECT 2008 (3) A life on the increase

One cannot but be amazed at the reality of Betharram in Thailand. Where as in other parts of the Congregation, enthusiasm is fading and hope is dying, here, although Christians are the little minority, the momentum is great. At Phayao, there are 30 candidates, at St Joseph's Junior Seminary in Bangkok there are 30 others, and at Sampran there are 25 postulants and scholastics in formation in the most elementary of conditions.

The Spirit is at work. Every day, more young candidates knock at the doors of Betharram. We cannot continue leaving 30 junior seminarians outside one of our houses, without the accompaniment special to Betharram. Hence the need of a suitable place where they will be introduced to our way of life, as soon as their elders will have moved into the Seminary actually under construction.

Thanks to the efforts of the Congregation, thanks to the help of those who know and love Betharram, to all those who want Betharram to be more than ever before ferment for the Gospel in Thailand, the site in Sampran is advancing. May it soon be finished!

Today, nobody is self-sufficient; we all need each other. There is no such thing as first or second class Christians. We have each our mission field; while some are leading communities, others are accompanying the young in formation, others again are making suggestions for the Christian way of life. There are those who share a little of their wealth for they know that to build a Seminary is to build the Church, for the good of the world. It is there that those men will be trained who tomorrow will accompany men on the path of life opened by Christ.

Bruno Ierullo, SCJ

question was obvious, but not the answer. First of all we listened to what each one had to say. It was an important moment of sharing, without interruption or questions. It was a matter of expressing one's feelings and this doesn't invite discussion. Next came the time for explanations and group work, after which the *ripe fruits* began to fall: we couldn't continue with 8 communities, we had to re-group and why?

**Because we haven't formed teams to carry on the task, but communities to be witness to our following of Christ, by living in community.**

Obviously there were questions and personal interests: *that no, because... Me there, no, because...* We exposed our attachment to the walls, *to our monuments*. There are personal stories of course – where I studied, the church where I was parish priest for so long, and above all the blood and toil of our predecessors to construct all that. Without a doubt, it's more difficult to uproot a tree with so many roots!

We also discovered how easy it is to be blind in the face of the evidence, when the heart only is consulted. Is this why the heart has its reasons which reason doesn't understand?

In any case, and this was the crux of the matter, nobody had thought about where he would be best off, where the climate was best, it was only a matter of emotions, of attachment to the faithful, the pupils, an area... a bit also the fear of change, of novelty.

The time had come to recite Father Jean Mateo's prayer to the *Lord of Uprooting*: it is a daily invitation to dismantle our tent, to pursue other horizons, with words which are far from innocent: e.g. renouncement, self sacrifice, detachment...

In view of our pastoral reality, we chose several criteria:

- Improve the quality of our religious life by forming meaningful communities;

- Accompany the educational communities; don't close any college, but give the laity in charge a greater autonomy; our presence to be purely pastoral;
- Greater efforts for a missionary presence with the poor, with the condition of movement – short term contracts will be signed with the bishops;
- Respect the charism of each one, which doesn't mean saying *what I like, otherwise nothing*;
- Remember that we are all missionaries, whether in a hovel in Santiago or in the Reception Salon at San Jose, and nobody has a badge of honour when necessity dictates the law.

Finally after almost unanimity we accept to form 4 communities: a community for formation, seat of the regional novitiate; another for accompanying the educational communities, being present in our colleges from time to time while continuing to live in the same house, an itinerant missionary community and finally a community for our religious who are sick and terminally ill.

We also see the risks involved: Put face to face two groups, one well housed in the colleges and the other working with the poor in a mission; those who bring in the money so that the missionaries can spend it on their travels; and those who have to beg to be able to survive (Budgets and financial reports will be a great help here.); Another risk: the itinerant mission could cease to be so, in order to respond to the needs of the people, and we would settle down once more and the community would lose its dynamism.

Finally, we must say that the solution adopted is anything but easy: a bishop nearly had a heart attack when we told him we were leaving a parish; one community asked for,

and obtained a delay. There are problems also about dividing property, even threats of law suits.

It is evident that all this will require a period of transition which may not necessarily depend on us; what is paramount is that the route will be made as we advance. May we all quickly find out that having less of this world's goods makes us freer, and being freer we are the richer. May Our Lady of Good Hope bless our good will to be daily better religious and better Betharramites.

Enrique Miranda,SCJ  
*Superior Provincial*

## BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CONGREGATION

### Congregation

**Brainstorming exercise for the congregation** ■ For its next visit at the beginning of August, at the request of father Gaspar Fernandez the Betharramite formation ministry will work on among other things, the theme Betharramite mystic. This is an important theme as it shows used to practical application of our charism. According to the circular, which is just about to be addressed to all the religious and to lay associates of our society. In order to nourish and develop our reflection on this theme, those associated with our society are welcome to take part in it. This summer, contribution on this theme can be sent to the councillor in charge of formation. ie laurentbacho@yahoo.fr

### Regional Novitiate

**Back to the Mission** ■ The novices of this region from the 11th to the 19th of January, went to the north of the country to give a mission at Nueva Esperanza. Lacking their usual comfort hand with an open heart and generous spirit. We visited families, shared the word of God, our faith in Jesus Christ, Mary and the Saints, and especially spoke about the importance of the sacraments. We learnt a lot from these people are less implicitly, showing us the value of little thing like sitting in the shade, drinking a glass of water. These people have scarcely anything yet, they have overwhelmed us with their kindness, humour,



*Fr Etchecopar*

*Region*