

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

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Schedule of the Superior general



21st-22nd October

In Triuggio,
provincial assembly
concluding the
canonical visitation
in Italy

26th-27th November

In Rome, assembly
of the Union of the
Major Superiors

The approval of the Society of the Sacred Heart

General: absolutely no difference between what Rome wanted and what he himself understood. "It's by genuine poverty of community life according to the original spirit. What a grace for the jubilee of the Sacred Heart!"

As soon as he was totally reassured, he rejoiced. "Long live religious poverty! How fortunate to be thus involved! May it become our choicest treasure!" (Letter of 20th October 1875) He couldn't but share his happiness with his friends at Our Lady of the refuge: Fathers Etchegaray, Casau and Dartigues. "God be blest", he said, "he wants us really poor and stripped of everything. No more pocket money, no more Mass stipends etc! Fortunately the Superior himself is duty bound and so cannot allow anything that would be contrary to the spirit" (Letter of December 1876).

The commandments of the community

No one is better than any one else,
Everyone is on the way.

No one is master of anyone else,
Everyone is here to learn

No one is lord of anyone else,
Everyone is here to give
To serve and love freely!

The best way of progressing
Is to take each other's hand.

The best way of learning
Is to know how to listen

The best way of loving
Is to freely be of service!

+ Fr. Geraldo L. Bastos



9

(to be continued)



Family News

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



**A word from the
Superior General**

Fascinated by Jesus Christ and impassioned by the mission

At one time or another in our life time, each of us, Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and a few Betharramite laity, have had a strong experience of the knowledge, of the love, a fascination and attraction for the person of Jesus. For many of us it's an experience which we felt during our novitiate, for others it was at the beginning of their vocation, for yet others it was at some time during their formation, or even during the course of their ministry or mission.

As it is said in the document from Aparecida: *to know Christ is the best thing that can happen to anyone during a life time*. As Benedict XVI says it is not just a reflexion or a moral choice, but an experience. *Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life to a new horizon and a decisive direction.* (*Deus Caritas Est*, No 1).

This fascinating experience of meeting Jesus is an experience of life, purification and transformation of one's whole existence, and a way towards communion. (Letter to the Chinese Catholics N° 16; cf also his catechism on Wednesday September 3rd 2008) Such an experience has changed our lives and has been the beginning of our vocation; the experience of meeting with the Risen Christ has made known to us the love which God has for us, and had helped us to believe in Him. Consequently, our entire life has been marked by this fascinating encounter.

In this issue

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**106th year
10th series, n°31
14th October 2008**

*For us, to be
a disciple of
Jesus means
living as our
Master lived*

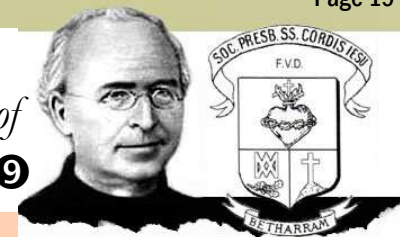
After such an experience, a question straight away comes to mind: now, what must I do with my life? And the answer in the Gospel was clear: *Repent, believe in the Good News and be baptised!* We knew that having been baptised as infants, the grace and love deposited in us then had grown; we began to take our Baptism seriously. We even wondered: *How am I going to respond to that love which God has shown me.* So we decided to consecrate to Him the life which he had given us. We chose to follow Jesus, and be like Him. Like Him, we wanted to be humble, and attach importance to what is humble; we wanted to be poor, chaste and obedient. Love calls for love. For us, to be a disciple of Jesus means living as our Master lived.

Then we discovered something else of importance: others had had the same call, the same fascination, the same experience of meeting with the Risen Christ. As well as being called, we felt invited to live in community, to help each other to persevere in fidelity to the gift received from the Lord. To share such an experience, our possessions and the mission. To be able to speak amongst ourselves and without reservation, of Jesus, of God's love and of His action in the men and women whom we met. Discovering that our meeting with Jesus made us brothers was, for us, a new experience: the experience of the brotherhood. It was an experience of communion which involved us in being responsible for each other, and to have human relations other wise than by competition, judgement, use, and the endless desire to have ever more possessions so as to have greater power over our neighbour. This was an experience which was a source of satisfaction, even if at times it was difficult from the moment that we lost sight of our meeting with the Risen Lord which had filled us with joy and peace.

We also realised that we had not come together to spend our days talking about Jesus amongst ourselves, the more we stayed together the more our conversations became superficial, to the point of forgetting all about what had

Fr. Etchecopar and the approval of the Society of the Sacred Heart 9

by Pierre Mieyaa, SCJ



After the euphoria of recent days, began the long task of putting the new Rule into practice. They had no difficulty in passing from a monarchic form of government, which St Michael Garicoits had borrowed from the Jesuits, to the constitutional form which was preferred by the Holy See.

The only problem concerned the practice of the vow of poverty. Already Father Etchecopar had pointed this out to Father Magendie on the 4th July 1875. "It is much more demanding than our previous rules, which allowed pocket money as well as three Mass Stipends per month".

They were even wondering if the code would be retroactive, concerning the senior Fathers who had already made their religious Profession. To get a solution to these problems and other sensitive issues, his council encouraged the Superior general to go to Rome. Speed had no place in Father Etchecopar's method of government, hoping that time would help find a solution to the problems. His guess was that the Holy See wanted them to aim at what was best, little by little and with patience" (Letter of the 3rd April 1871).

By the middle of the month of October, he accepted to undertake a first trip to the Eternal City. There he was joined by Father Estrade, who arrived from the Holy Land. Together they were received by Father Bianchi who explained the Constitutions to them and solved their problems: (1) the senior professed religious were to renew their vows according to the new formula. All but one accepted the suggestion with enthusiasm, to the utter admiration of the Roman contact who exclaimed: "It's a miracle that there was only one"! (2) The rules on poverty were more stringent, but corresponded to the secret wishes of the Very Reverend Superior



2008

OCTOBER

15	50 años / 50 ans de vœux 40 años de vida religiosa felicidades, félicitations Feliz cumpleaños Happy birthday	P. Julio Colina, P. Pierre Caset P. Gaspar Fernández, P. Michel Vignau P. Osvaldo Caniza Br. Wilfred Poulose Perepadan
19	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Javier Irala Cabrera
20	Buon compleanno	P. Aurelio Riva
21	Buon compleanno	F. Severino Urbani
22	Buon compleanno	P. Romano Martinelli
23	Happy birthday Buon compleanno	F. Terence O'Malley P. Raimondo Perlini
24	60 ans de vie religieuse, félicitations	P. Mirco Trusgnach
28	Bom aniversário Feliz cumpleaños	P. Lino Illini P. Tarcisio Vera Ho. Sebastián García
29	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Nicolás Ayerza
30	Joyeux anniversaire Feliz cumpleaños	P. Pierre Monnot Mons. Claudio Silvero Acosta

NOVEMBER

2	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Carlos Escurra Cantero
3	60 ans de vie religieuse félicitations Happy birthday	P. Gabriel Verley P. Bertrand Salla F. Colin Fortune
5	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Sylvain Dansou Hounkpatin
6	Bom aniversário Happy birthday	P. Joao Batista Ribeiro Br. Anthuvan Savari Muthu
7	55 ans de vie religieuse	P. Beñat Segure
8	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Firmin Worou Ogougbe
9	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Jean-Baptiste Olçomendy
12	Feliz cumpleaños Buon compleanno	Ho. Henri Cha, P. Carlo Luzzi P. Constancio Erobaldi
15	Feliz cumpleaños	Ho. Alberto Zaracho Barrios
16	Joyeux anniversaire	F. Narcisse Zaolo
17	Feliz cumpleaños	Ho. Alfredo Alonso

transformed our lives in the first place. We were together for a mission: to preach the Gospel, to allow all men and women to have the same fascinating experience of Christ, of God's love for them, so that consequently they should organise their lives and enjoy happiness despite trials, for they will have learned to put all their trust in God, the Father of Christ, who was faithful to his promises by showing that love is stronger than death.

Our life therefore is constituted of four essential elements: our vocation, consecration, community and mission. The needs and passion for the mission must never let us forget the experience of our meeting with the Risen Christ. If this should happen we would wear ourselves out in a load of activities whose aim is not to procure for others the joy which we have tasted. Furthermore, it is possible that in our preaching, instead of transmitting to others the meaning of meeting with Jesus, we moralise, reproaching others constantly for not doing what we ourselves are not doing, or under the pretext of assuming ideas from the latest book just read to satisfy our need for recognition and self esteem.

When we have problems with chastity, poverty or obedience is it not possible that we have lost sight of Jesus who was chaste, poor and obedient, who fascinated us and whom we wanted to imitate? It is possible that we have conformed with the ideas of this world which gives as "values" the idols of eroticism, independence and greed. When this mentality takes possession of us, little by little, we are ashamed to talk about God to our brothers, because we have other priorities, and our brotherly life in community become a burden. We must make ours the four components. We cannot reduce our life simply to the mission, for the whole point would be missing. Neither can we hide ourselves in private piety, because others need to feel the experience of God's love in their lives, and to believe in Him.

Gaspar Fernandez,SCJ

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Our vocation,
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Father Etcheopar wrote... to the Religious, 16 October 1876

I had a private audience on Friday, 29th September, feast of St Michael. It was as if Our Lord, by this double coincidence, wanted to make our devotion to his Calvary even more important for us, and pay homage to the virtues of our saintly Founder.

With the kindest of smiles, the Holy Father, Pius IX questioned us about our Congregation. "Holy Father, all its members hold you in such high esteem that they are ready for any sacrifices." "This doesn't surprise me" replied the Holy Father. "It's the opposite that would have surprised me. Are you not disciples of the Sacred Heart? And the Sacred Heart is the source of dedication and love."

Province of the Río de la Plata

Well Adjusted!

Source

Father Garicoits, man of God and his shepherd, used to warn his followers of the need to be well adjusted on their way. How? By being mindful of God's Will. This was the necessary food of his Son Jesus from the first instant of his life right up to his death on Calvary.

Our Betharramite march at the service of the mission and in the light of the Rule of Life 2008, as we shoulder our heritage – glorious but heavy – and the challenges of the new evangelisation as defined at Aparecida requires that we constantly reactivate our "Here I am".

We should take our direction from the wealth of our origins and according to the calls of the Holy Spirit ever present in the history of mankind. We are consecrated and sons of St Michael. We are the Province of San Jose del Río de la Plata (a community of communities) and, at the beginning of this third millennium, together with the whole congregation we are reviving our project. The Spirit is guiding us through the General Chapter of 2005, through Councils of Congregation, of Aparecida and of the Church progressing in Latin America.

appearance; or else he would say about some one who, in his view talked too much, that "he knew all and more"; or he would correct anyone who suggested that he was old by declaring outright "Old, no! only stored up youth!"

But the "Lion of France" had the heart of a child. This was his originality and his chief attraction. He needed to love and to be loved, to give and to receive, to console and to be consoled, to listen and to be listened to, no matter who the person opposite was. It could have been one of his pupils, to whom he sometimes gave a thorough good spanking, or whom he had once saved from being delayed for his examinations. It could even have been people in high places, where he mingled with the utmost ease: prefects, governors, consuls, inspectors, ministers, whether in Rosario, in Santa Fe or Buenos Aires. – not to mention Church dignitaries: prelates, bishops and even Paul VI and John-Paul II whose photos with him were to be seen in his bedroom.

His simplicity, humanity, and child like spirit, flowed into his spiritual life. As well as the devotion to the Sacred Heart and St Michael which he absorbed during his novitiate, he was attracted to the "Little Way" of St Teresa of Lisieux for whom he had a great devotion. For the same reasons he felt close to Blessed Marie de Jesus Crucifie, better known as "the little one" the little Arab girl from Jesus' country. Is it a coincidence that Bro. Jean entered his eternal reward on the very day that the Church celebrates the liturgical feast of this little saint?

But at the head of this list of saints so humble and yet so great, is to be found the Mother of Heaven; she would remind him of his own mother so quickly taken from his affection. Mary was the Lord's servant, she in whom the Lord did great things; she was the model of the soul consecrated to God and to men. Every day he recited the 15 mysteries of the Rosary; and often led pilgrims to St Nicolas Sanctuary, praying the Rosary in the bus taking the pilgrims to meet Mary. During one of these visits, he said that he had seen the sun whirling in the sky. One thing for sure is that the Virgin Mary filled his head and heart.

Such was Bro. Jean, friend and servant who believed that even in him, God could do great things. He was no saint. But he was a good man who believed that with God all things are possible.

IN MEMORIAM

Argentina



Arette
6th August 1917



Rosario
25th August 2008

Brother Jean Casaubon

Jean Casaubon was born 91 years ago in Arette, a village on the French side of the Pyrenees with a ski run which, according to Bro. Jean was the most important of France or Navarre, assertion which was usually accompanied by a smile full of malice! Bro. Jean didn't know his father, who had been killed in battle just before the end of World War I. When his mother died the youngster was reared by an aunt who spoke to him early on about Betharram.

At the age of 20 he made his First Vows in the Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Two months later he was on his way to join the Community of Barracas in Buenos Aires. Luckily for him the journey was neither conclusive nor long: for during the year he joined the Sacred Heart College at Rosario. This was in February 1938; and there he remained until his death 70 years later.

He would smile every time that he was told that he was a pillar of the Sacred Heart College, but it was a knowing smile, for he would never have put this statement in doubt. No more than he would have rejected the nickname "Lion of France" which the past pupils gave him when he wrapped a great black cape around his soutane, giving him a stately bearing. He was perfectly at ease as supervisor, teacher, photographer, secretary, administrator, legal representent, functions which he held at one time or another in the College. "Not bad" either, when, at the lectern in the chapel and wearing his alb he would direct the celebration of Mass, with introductions long enough to equal the homily, rolling his "r"s in a strong voice and a good French accent.

Such was Bro. Jean. His strong outward appearance was lit up by a smile which was both gentle and mischievous, his look serene and penetrating. He had the heart of a child. He knew that he had a charming smile, which could be accompanied by a commentary that was either serious, or funny or even malicious. His witty remarks were pleasing; even when he didn't seem to notice anything in particular, he would make surprising remarks; for example he would invite ladies he knew to do up their hair so as to tidy up their

Our priority, if we are not going to be working in vain, is to be going in the right direction. Forward march, always! We are what we are: few, old, hampered by serious health problems, some are isolated in huge buildings and overwhelmed by big undertakings. Forward march, here we are, Lord!

From the initial inspiration of Father Garicoits up to the present day, God has wanted us to be missionaries living in community... and yet we are so few! Forward march!

This same Spirit, who guided Father Garicoits with Mary's fair branch, has directed us to the 2007 Assembly. He has pointed out a sure way, with its stages and means. He has shown us what we must aim for: the renewal of the quality of our life as consecrated Betharramites in Latin America; then get down to what has to be done, namely the success of our pastoral work in response to the order of the Master: *Go and preach the Gospel!* Then begin to organise ourselves in three communities for initial and on-going formation, for the pastoral care of education and for our mission to the poor.

We have set out. Slowly. How can we not believe in the Spirit who has spoken to us? The difficulties inherent with all changes abounded. Temptations for our splendid past continue to be an attraction, like the onions of Egypt; temptations of discouragement in the face of an uncertain future, and the fact of our diminishing numbers, brothers who abandon us, brothers who don't believe in the mission, brothers who remain on the fringes of history... Forward march! Yes, forward march all the time, sure that this is the route wanted by God, and fully aware that, as we progress, religious and laity, if we use the same words not all understand them in the same way; consequently there are misunderstandings, illusions... which provide suitable occasions for refining our discernment and of rekindling in the heart of the Betharramite missionary a vibrant *Here I am!* Forward march.

We are itinerant Betharramites. To be itinerant involves walking. Walking together, united, accepting the different

Taking the
right
direction

On the way

Walking

charismas of the brothers, respecting them, encouraging them, and checking their charismas.

Walking with precise aims, in a spirit which is typically Betharramite: free, joyful, discreet, unfailing, and readily available. Walking with the self-confidence of a flying camp, capable of attacking what others refuse, abandon or know nothing about.

Marching in community

Walking in brotherly communities for the Mission: communities willing to learn to live as brothers, to walk at the same pace; communities trying to share simply their life, their prayer life and projects, the joys and difficulties of the route; communities which accept that they will not be together every day of the week but who are convinced that their community living is their most precious possession. Community life is the source of an authentic Religious Life, on the same wave length as the plan of Jesus who is present whenever we meet in his name (consequently the importance of weekly meetings, of prayer, of friendship, and of relaxation). Community life is the source of the uneasy apprenticeship of making Jesus the centre of everything: hence the importance of planning prolonged times of prayer, private or in community, times of solitude with the Lord but also time for sharing experiences. The community is source of apostolic zeal: it is there that together we reflect on the mission, and plan ordinary and extraordinary pastoral projects. It is in community that the authenticity of personal charismas is verified as well as projects which are under way: hence the importance of meetings to assess the progress being made and the reality of what is being done and lived.

Brotherly communities in communion: with the Universal church and the local church (projects, and pastoral orientations); with the Congregation (projects, documents, instructions); with the projects of the other communities (working as a team); with lay helpers on pastoral projects, at the service of education and missionary activity.

depend on an excellent team of catechists, who collaborate with us in the task of evangelisation for years, is really a sublime blessing... Three years ago a Charismatic Renewal group was formed. Every day, for half an hour before Mass there is possibility of receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation. Every Thursday, after Mass, there is Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament followed by Benediction. During the course of the year pastoral groups visit the families Assembled around the visiting statue the groups help the families to pray, reflect and get to know and love the virtues of Our Lady of Betharram

You make use of the "leaflet pastoral". What is it all about? - It's leaflets, tracts, cards, notice boards etc, all kinds of useful methods of launching a systematic evangelisation. The language used is simple and easy to understand at any age; there are drawings, nice pictures which are eloquent. I notice all the time that this is the type of materiel which people are looking for to help them pursue their faith life.

Looking at you one realises that you take care of what you eat to have a better life quality. Would you have any tips to pass on to our readers?

- 1) Have a regular check up; see a nutritionist.
- 2) Avoid foods containing fats and sugar, like fast food outlets, no nibbling!
- 3) Replace them with healthy foods; the choice of dishes is all the more varied and tasty.
- 4) Keep an eye on the quantity of healthy foods eaten.
- 5) Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables.
- 6) Drink plenty outside meals.
- 7) Take plenty of exercise, go for a walk every day, on doctor's advice.

On what aspects of Betharramite spirituality did you draw the attention of your brothers? - On “Here I am”, on personal and community availability, and on the model which we have in the Sacred Heart of Jesus; how can we reproduce the virtues of Our Lady of Betharram in our religious life; how to discover again our consecration and mission after St Michael’s Manifesto.

Your spirituality is solidly founded. What has helped you most in your relation with Christ during your ministry in Argentina and Paraguay? - All the priests who accompanied me during my years of formation and my first steps in the priestly ministry, in the different communities where I was appointed, transmitted their enthusiasm and their deep conviction concerning St Michael’s message. I also learnt a lot from the groups of laity with whom I worked in the pastoral field, especially the Legion of Mary, the Cursillos and the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

Tell us something about the Chapel of Our Lady of Betharram and its activities.



- The sector where the Chapel is situated is one of the reception areas for immigrants from rural areas, coming to Asunción in search of a better life. There is a huge commercial activity, especially the wholesale market just beside the Chapel. These new city dwellers as blessed with a deep popular religion.

For the pastoral care of these people we concentrate on the catechism of the children (200 are enrolled at every level), and for the youngsters preparing for Confirmation (about 200 too). To be able to

Communities freed from all burdens: Freed from mutual prejudices: communities where each one has his own vital space which is essential for the human and spiritual balance of the religious, a bed where he can rest, a table where he can live in harmony with his brethren, replenish his strength, both physically and affectively, a brotherly heart waiting for you at any hour of the day or the night, with open arms. Freed from the administration of possessions and of educational works; we own property, there’s no doubt about that, but we learn how to trust, how to hand over the management to competent lay persons who look after it better than we could ever do.

Vocation Communities: Who live out their vocation as a gift from God and bear witness to it by their joy, their spirit of prayer, their pastoral zeal, their sense of team work, and respect for community projects. Who transmit their enthusiasm for the Kingdom, the Church, and the charisma of St Michael. Who throw light on the vocation of laity of their close collaborators (catechists, directors, teachers, staff, old pupils) supporting them as best as possible. Who attract by their way of living: See how they love one another, and willingly receive students, novices or quite simply the young in research.

Missionary Communities: Who today launch an education challenge by proposing, with all humility and clarity, kindness and confidence, “the civilisation of love” as opposed to the culture of death which today imbues the young, families and society. Which are embodied in the midst of the poor by being involved in their hunger for God, by sharing their life and their demand that their dignity be respected and for the justice they long for.

Is this a new kind of flying camp? I don’t know but what I do know is that each religious has his community to which he is attached; that each community draws up their own community apostolic project according to the Rule of Life 2008; that the Province, community of communities,

Itinerant communities

draws up a provincial pastoral project setting out clearly the aims of the Province, the animation of the religious life of the communities; the pastoral projects for charitable works and organises team work.

According to their originality and specific tasks, all the Betharramite Religious are open to everything (Province, Region, Congregation, Church) and to everyone (other communities, lay collaborators, projects in the Region, Congregation, local and universal Church). We have all been sent to the same mission. Forward march always!

Province of Italy

New use for St Joseph's House, Albavilla



During their meeting of 13th June 2008 in the presence of the Superior General, the Provincial Council approved the project for the reconversion of St Joseph's House, Albavilla. Consequently, the future project and closure of St Joseph's Community were given the go ahead. On the following 2nd July, the Superior General gave his approval and the General Council ratified the decision.

This decision however painful, after much thought, had been under reflexion for a long time. All the Religious in the Province had taken the time to let it come to maturity. As soon as it was realized that St Joseph's House was no longer a going concern and unable to carry out its mission adequately, the Provincial Council opened a de-

5 MINUTES WITH... Fr. Constancio Lopez

Nef : Father, what did it mean for you to preach the retreat for your Brothers? - Quite a challenge! It was also a good opportunity for sharing, reflecting in depth, both personally and in community, on what are the foundations of our vocation and our mission, in the Congregation and the Church, today.

What points did you touch on? - I thought that it would be best to take as the main theme of the retreat, St Michael's calls to action. *Forward march, never stopping. Humble, obedient, persevering and happy, forward march! Unobtrusive but devoted, serving God and man willingly and with determination! Forward march, forward march!* To begin with we discussed the value of silence (interior and exterior). St Michael tells us: *At the beginning of this year, may we with God's grace, impose total silence in and around us and the Almighty Word of God will come down on us and remain with us. There is no more powerful weapon against a torrent of abuse than silence. There are times when silence is enough to arrange a situation.*

We also reflected on vocation in general, and on our vocation in particular. Each religious was asked to tell us how his vocation emerged, and how it became a reality in his choice of the religious life. We talked about the importance of the human being - the person, his roots his value and his dignity - we spoke about the religious community, based on dialogue, of the essential values and non-values in the present day situation. We read and discussed what is said in the Church documents about religious communities, likewise what is to be found in St Michael's writings and in our Rule of Life. We insisted on the personal project for life, from the fundamental elements which make it up, then we discussed the project of community life, followed by a debate in the whole group.



This year, Fr. Constancio Lopez preached the retreat to the Betharramite Religious in Paraguay.

We wanted to get to know better a preacher, who is member of the community of Asunción, Colegio Apostolico, and in charge of Our Lady of Betharram Chapel.

the first elements of our Congregation. At present, they are five between 15 and 17 years, accompanied by Fr. Paulo Vital, priest-in-charge of the house, and Fr. Henri Karam Amorim, parish priest. The success of the evening of September 20th is in line with the style of Betharram in Paulinia: dynamic, simple, joyful.

Vice Province of Paraguay

Children and students, forward march! ■ On September 14th, the Juventud Betharramita (Betharramite Youth) organized a day of meeting and recreation at Capiatá, in the outskirts of Asunción. Coming from our different colleges and parishes, 70 school children and students gathered around Father Gaspar Fernandez, Superior general, and Brother Daniel Pavón, in charge of Youth Pastoral of the Vice-Province. On that occasion, was presented a new – and interesting – magazine, compiling events and happenings of the “Jube” over the last two years: camps, gatherings, missions, various training courses... Initiatives and signs of hope are galore.

Province of England Delegation of India

Violence against Christian people ■ On September 14th by evening, scenes of vandalism were perpetrated against some twenty churches of Mangalore. Our formation house of Maria Kripa was attacked as well: stones were thrown, that spoilt the roof. Nobody was wounded. Father Biju appealed to police: everything is now under controle, but fear remains... The convents of Apostolic Carmel Sisters at Mary Hill as well were assailed; besides, an icon of Infant Jesus, at the gate of their orphanage (Balagraha) was destroyed. Let us support our Indian Brothers and Sisters with our prayers.

Vice Province of Thailand

Worldwide Formation ■ September 22nd was the last day of the spirituality session facilitated by Mrs Isabelle Pommel. The French teacher in theology really got through to her audience. Thanks to the work carried out over the month the Thai scholastics have discovered the writings of St Michael Garicoits and they are now longing for more! An initiative to be repeated at Ban Betharram or elsewhere.



*Blessed Miriam
Region*

bate in the Province and launched a serious study to re-convert the work.

Actually, St Joseph's had already undergone huge changes and a previous change of Mission. It had been opened in 1955 as a Junior Seminary and had functioned thus into the 1980's, while at the same time carrying on as a centre for vocations. When the hostel and school were closed in 1998, the Province invested heavily in the reconstruction of St Joseph's to make it a Retreat Centre. Today, we must admit that at the time we didn't perhaps appreciate the local situation; in fact there were already several retreat centres run by Religious in the area.

In view of a fresh change for St Joseph's House, the Provincial Council opened a new course of action, in the light of all the discussions in the Chapter and Assemblies. In 2006 an appeal was made to the specialists of the Talenti Foundation.

The Talenti Foundation – jointly sponsored by the Italian Conference of Major Superiors, the Union of Major Superiors of Italy, several banks and social organisations – is a network of some 1200 firms which for years have been active in non profit making social actions. Their aim is to promote the cultural and social use of property, according to the social teaching of the Church, to worldwide principles and for the common good.

The Foundation shares its means of analysis and offices with Congregations and Religious Orders, with Church entities, social undertakings and associations of voluntary helpers. In accordance with its mission, the Foundation favours all kinds of meetings, cooperation and collaboration in studying the needs and in the formulation of answers, the search for public and private partners, in order to build up viable projects, their financial structure etc.

Therefore, the Provincial Council asked the Talenti Foundation to make a detailed study of the social needs of the geographical area where St Joseph's House is situated, noting particularly requests for help from the local Church.

The Talenti Foundation submitted the results of its research to the Provincial Assembly in 2006; hence the second round of consultations to find a possible answer to local needs and to promote a better use of St Joseph's House.

Wanting to maintain the image of the House and make use of the existing patrimony, after long debate the future of St Joseph's House was defined and a workable project based on local realities was envisaged.

The idea is to offer hospitality to professionals – students and the not so well off – similar to hostels for young workers, as well as suggestions on the meaning of sharing and solidarity; as a continuation of the vocation of St Joseph's House it would provide the residents with a place for reflexion and personal growth. The activities proposed are suitable for the House: temporary accommodation would be offered upstairs, whereas daily hospitality would be proposed in the meeting rooms; the park will be organised so as to provide places for social events, as well as for different initiatives of solidarity.

This second part of the study and the project which has grown out of it, were presented to the Provincial Assembly of 2007 and received its approval. With the help of the Talenti Foundation, the Provincial Council started straight away looking for organisations likely to put the project into action and run it.

It was thought that the new St Joseph's House could be entrusted to a group of families belonging to some organisation already existing in Italy for some years; finally it was decided to sign a contract with the co-operative Sol. Co Como. According to the Talenti Foundation this was the best option.

After approval by the Provincial Council, the Community will leave the house; the new St Joseph's House will be soon operational with all the activities for a students' hostel, defined by agreement between Sol. Co and the three universities existing locally.

Mario Longoni, SCJ

Congregation Communication

Saint Michael in a video ■ In Barcelona, the Claret Studios have just produced a DVD entitled "Garicoits"; the saint of Betharram is narrated to children, in 14mn and in 6 languages - French, Spanish, English, Italian, Portuguese and Thai. The drawings of the illustrator Pierdec, reworked 40 years after their publication, provided the basis for the animation. This DVD targets schools and parish catechisms... but also all young people from 7 to 77 years old!

Team work ■ From 22nd to 24th September, the Superior General and (Vice) Provincials gathered with religious and lay representative from each country. The meeting aimed at forming a regional team of pastoral education. The meeting took place in the community of Martin Coronado, near Buenos Aires. The work was fruitful, marking another step forward in the forthcoming setting up of the South American Region. It is interesting to note that all the lay people present were women. Is not that a sign that something new is coming up?

Province of the Rio de la Plata

Youth commitment ■ Last Sunday, on September 21st, the final profession of Br. Guido Garcia was the climax for the spring and students' festival. Under CAMJUMITA (Betharramite youth camp), 150 young people from all over the Province of St. Joseph of Rio de la Plata shared the joy of the fully profession of one of their own, without delay, without reservation, without return, out of love.

Vice Province of Brazil

Bingo tables for vocations ■ On Saturday evening, the hall Nossa Senhora do Belo Ramo was filled with bingo tables. 400 persons had accepted the invitation of the group for vocation promotion - laypeople from 6 communities in the parish - to play, eat and show their solidarity: profits will contribute to give financial support to the "Seminario betharramita". Since 2003, this *aspirants' home* at 100 km from Sao Paulo has been accommodating young men attracted by religious life; there they attend the courses of the secondary school, they get some training in community life and they are gradually introduced to



Fr. Etchecopar
Region