

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

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Betharram in Ivory Coast (8)

In 1987, restructuring is decided upon in France: each community will include one religious in his forties, to be responsible for the young. Fr Jacky Moura is chosen for St-Andre de Cubzac; his stand-in (Fr Minaberry) having to withdraw for health reasons, the Ivory Coast community was reduced to two again. Questions were being asked: can we stay on in Ivory Coast? When the new Provincial Superior, Firmin Bourguinat, paid his first visit in January 1988, he provoked a reflection around the question: *Do you think that the time has come to propose Betharramite Religious Life to young men from Ivory Coast?* The answer was yes. And before he left, Fr Firmin even had a meeting with three candidates. Although enthusiastic, our brothers remembered the words of Mgr d'Astros to Fr Garicoits, after his withdrawal from Toulouse: "Begin your work and without wanting to go faster than Providence, follow it with generosity and perseverance." Mgr Keletigui will give the same advice to our Provincial.

The *constant fermentation* by the Holy Spirit seems to have set the djimini sector alight; a few months later good news reached us. The Congregation of Providence of Peltre decided to open a community in Dabakala and the Daughters of the Cross at Boniere, with the intention of opening a novitiate there. It will become a reality in September 1989.

8

(Continues)



Agenda of the Superior General

from 3rd to 29th
september
Visitation of Ivory
Coast communities
as part of the 50th
anniversary celebra-
tions of the presence
of the Betharramites
in Ivory Coast.



14.IX.2009
Salve Crux
Sancta!



Family News

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



A word from the Superior General

I feel like shouting

In this issue

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In a letter St Francois Xavier wrote this: "I often feel like visiting the Universities of Europe, especially the University of Paris, and shouting like a man who has lost his head, to shake up those who have more learning than charity and to say to them: *Hey, thanks to your carelessness, how many souls are shut out from heaven and are rushing into hell!*"(Office of Readings 3rd December).

In Tamil Nadu, first of all, I was present at the ordination of Enakius and Stervin, and then in Chiang-Mai, that of Kriansgak. Since they were all celebrated in the local language, in Tamil Nadu especially, I couldn't help but think of the massive work done by St Francois Xavier for the evangelisation of these people. Centuries later we can see the vitality of these communities, all down the south-east coast of India. And from my heart rose cries similar to those of St Francis Xavier.

The Lord has been good to us and we are full of joy, because this year in the congregation we have twenty novices, thirteen Betharramites are making their final profession and there are eight priests ordained.

We have recognised God's love for us and we have believed in it. The best thing that has ever happened to us in our life is to have known Jesus and to have decided to live as he has shown us in the Gospel. However important may be the missionary activity, the fact of cultivating our interior life through prayer and the lectio divina, helps to strengthen our union with Christ and which has changed our life.

*Times are hard...*but they are our lot in life; for us they are times of grace, Kairos. Let us love the times and place

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where we are, for the God of all goodness loves all who live now, the same ones that we must reveal Him to by announcing Jesus Christ to them.

Give an account of the hope which is in you....with love and respect. Europe is lacking in vocations. Christianity no longer enjoys the social prestige it once did; the media portray Christianity like an historic event without any future. What we know for a fact is that the future of the Church and our Congregation depends on our joyful fidelity to our vocation and our mission. Furthermore the present situation obliges us to purify the reasons for our vocation so as to live only for the love of him who loved us first.

You who have remained faithful in trials with me... The majority of the Betharram religious are faithful to their vocation and mission. They are genuine religious and genuine missionaries. They know that consecration is not fashionable and that contradiction is part and parcel of the following of the Master who was neither known, nor understood, nor accepted. And since they are not greater than He, they should know the same fate.

Don't modal yourselves on the world, on the contrary... There are not many of them, but a few Betharramites seem to have forgotten the profession they made in public one day, to live according to the Gospel; they have become middle-class, adopting the materialist, hedonist, relativist and individualist criteria of today's consumer society.

Caritas in veritate et veritas in caritate... We stand for truth, for life, for the family, and the sacred dignity of every person created in the image and likeness of God, for love. We stand also for all the other qualities proposed by Jesus in the Gospel: forgiveness, unity, communion and brotherhood, a sense of responsibility and respect for our differences.

It's true – we are all sinners. But such a great truth shouldn't be an excuse for justifying behaviour contrary to the style of life of our vocation and make us give up being serious about our conversion. It is equally true that Jesus died for our sins so that, exceeding our limits, we should lead a new life.

Caritas in veritate et veritas in caritate....We stand for truth, for life, for the family, and the sacred dignity of every person created in the image and likeness of God, for love

BETHARRAM IN IVORY COAST 1959-2009 - 8. Germination



Father Laurent
Bacho, SCJ

In Dabakala, the Muslims are referred to as “*men of prayer*”. This poses a question for our brothers; why is the adjective “praying” not applied to Christians. They decide to attach greater importance to prayer, an essential element of religious life. They invite the young especially to come and share their time of prayer, in church.

During this time the Province is questioned by the reduced presence of the Betharramites in Ivory Coast. The Provincial Superior summoned a meeting of a dozen religious likely to say “yes” to such a mission. By common accord the choice fell on Fr Jean-Marie Ruspil, in the Limoges community. On the 1st October he arrived in Dabakala; a new mission is about to open. Nyangourougbonom, 3rd parish of the region, and 40km from Dabakala, was cared for by Fr Lejeune, SMA; because of health problems he is obliged to return to his native Belgium. The Bishop asked the Betharramites to take charge of the parish; Fr Jean-Marie will visit it three days a fortnight.

In May 1986, the Provincial Visitor, Fr Laurent Bacho witnessed the involvement of the brothers in the social sector, especially in agriculture. They took part in an operation “peanuts and ignames seeds” to make up for the consequences of the drought and to encourage the introduction of new varieties. They next take up bee keeping; the income from the sale of the honey will help towards the children's school fees. By accompanying the JAC teams their aim was to keep in the villages the young who could be tempted to try out life in the South where they were often exploited in the coffee and cocoa plantations. The community was also watchful of the students' hostel, the “campus” where the young often found moral support as well support for their studies. The brothers also take care not to be too often absent from the sector; and as they were among the youngest of the priests, they were often called upon to animate diocesan activities.



2009

SEPTEMBER

16	Feliz cumpleaños Buon compleanno 25° di professione, auguri	P. Rogelio Ramírez P. Egidio Zoia P. Aldo Camesasca P. Damiano Colleoni
18	Buon compleanno 40th of profession	P. Romualdo Airaghi Fr Anton Madej
19	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Constancio Lopez Morales
20	Buon compleanno	P. Livio Borghetti
22	35 anni di professione, auguri	P. Mario Longoni, P. Enrico Frigerio, P. Pietro Felet
25	Happy birthday	Br. Anthony V. Masilamani
26	Bom aniversário 40° di professione, auguri	P. Henri Karam Amorim P. Wagner Azevedo dos Reis P. Ernesto Consonni, P. Tiziano Molteni, P. Aldo Nespoli, P. Natale Re, P. Giacomo Spini
27	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Patrick Moulié
29	60th of profession	Fr Dominic Innamorati
30	Joyeux anniversaire Feliz cumpleaños	P. Michel Vignau P. Miguel Martinez Fuertes

OCTOBER

1	55° di professione, auguri 45 años de profesión 45° di professione, auguri	PP. Giulio Forloni, Angelo Bianchi P. Giancarlo Monzani, P. Piero Trameri, P. Mario Colombo
3	Happy birthday Buon compleanno	Fr. Edward Simpson P. Tobia Sosio
4	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Enrique Gavel
5	Buon compleanno Joyeux anniversaire	P. Angelo Paino P. Gérard Zugarramurdi
6	Happy birthday Bom aniversário 50° di professione, auguri	Fr. Anthony Britto Rajan Ir. Eudes Fernandes da Silva P. Aurelio Riva
7	Buon compleanno	P. Davide Villa, Mario Colombo
8	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Enrique Miranda
9	Buon compleanno	P. Tiziano Molteni
12	Happy birthday Feliz cumpleaños	Fr. Thomas Kelly P. Wilfrido Romero
13	Happy birthday	Br. Andrew Athit Nyomtham

The free choice of obedience to superiors, *just as Jesus was obedient to his Father even unto death on the cross*, remains a fundamental Betharramite principle; far from turning us into discontented beings it frees us to be better able to fulfil our mission and allows our personal growth from the moment that we refer to Christ obedient, humble, and risen from the dead; he didn't act according to his own liking (Rom 15, 2-3; Heb 12, 2-3) but sacrificed himself in all things to be pleasing to his beloved Father.

You cannot imagine how my heart bled over the dismissal of Gilbert from the Congregation when I could see Enakius, Stervin and Kriangsak sealing with a kiss for the Bishop their *Yes, I promise*, in reply to his question: *Do you promise to obey and respect your superiors?* With all my heart, I hope they will be faithful to their *Yes, I promise to obey and respect my superiors!*

The prophetic dimension of our life is very strong, even if it is not evident; our obedience is in contradiction to all those who refer everything to their ego; our chastity says that human relations are embedded in respect for others and respect for their differences, and not personal pleasure; our poverty bears witness to the fact that material goods are only relative and are meant to be shared so as to come to the aid of those in need; our brotherhood proves that it is possible to live in unity while being different.

It is hard to have to accept not knowing how to go about it, or to be lacking in the courage necessary to talk about the person of Jesus Christ to the youth in Spain, France, England or Italy. We shall have to render an account for this failing for three reasons: because we are depriving the youth to get to know and meet Jesus Christ for only He can give meaning to life; because we are depriving the Church of worthwhile candidates to carry on its life and mission; and because we are not striving for the Society to be able to rely on men who are committed and capable of devoting themselves totally to the construction of a Civilisation of Love.

Gaspar Fernandez,SCJ





In this year of Priests, the sermon given on 3rd May, Good Shepherd Sunday, at Marcory Anoumabo (Abidjan) is spot on. Extracts

To you, disciple of the Good Shepherd

In the Gospel, Christ presents himself as the Good Shepherd. By making use of the image of shepherd who gives his life for his sheep, Christ wants us to catch a glimpse of the love whereby he loves us. There is a depth of love hidden under the comparison with the Good Shepherd. It is not we who have loved God, it is God who has loved us first and who continues to love us first.

The shepherd is always there. He never abandons his flock, neither day nor night. He is constantly there on the look out to guard his flock and to give it trust and security. This is how Christ is present in our lives: by his Church and by the pastors he has given us; he is personally present in the Eucharist, by his Holy Spirit. His is a presence both constant and active – a presence of love, a loving presence!

The shepherd knows his sheep; he knows each one in particular; he calls it by its name. So too with Christ! He knows our difficulties, our worries, our sorrows, our misery, and our sins. He knows them even better than we do. Whatever difficulties or sins are ours, he continues to look on us with compassion, and with pity: God's heart is close to our wretchedness. Knowing this we should be full of confidence, serenity and joy.

The shepherd gathers his flock together. Should a sheep stray, off he goes to look for it, until he finds it and brings it back to the fold. No man, whatsoever his condition, however wretched he may be, is left by the wayside. God loves each individual personally as if he were the only one for whom he should lay down his life. That is how the Lord, the Good Shepherd deals with us.

And you, my brother Priest, look to Jesus, the Good Shepherd who allows you to share in his priesthood. Don't forget that the Good Shepherd is always present, always working. He is not a subscriber ever absent from the job! Be a big hearted shepherd, a priest according to the Heart

personality, hence the importance of knowing them better all the time so as to work better for their human promotion and, if possible, Christian as well. There are young people, often bewildered, with complicated family problems, looking for references without even realising it, for adults on whom to rely. I would like to be one of these; in a way taking over from Our Lady of Beau Rameau.

Besides, for my Betharramite Brothers and myself, our mission today consists in returning to our origins: "be mystics of the Incarnation". This is a mission to be lived out in a certain form of availability, quickly and with discernment, to come to the help of the men and women of today in our world. In the face of an ailing humanity (physically, physiologically, morally) we should quite simply give of our time and witness to Jesus who saves all mankind, without distinction but through love. Our mission transforms us into educators of the faith, of the intellect, of the soul, but above all of how to pray. Finally, our mission encourages us to practise gentleness, patience, tenderness, and prudence in our relations, for we are at the service of mankind not at their disposal.

What conviction are you taking away with you and which you would like to share with us? - Ever since my first religious profession in Bethlehem, the desire to follow Christ in the Betharramite religious family has become clearer and clearer; joy, confidence, and happiness are my companions on this loving adventure. I have countless occasions to be at the service of others, in our communities and in the Church, to help them get the same happiness as I feel in the following of Christ. On the strength of that, there is only one conviction which is mine: giving my life to God is certainly not a waste! I ask the Sacred Heart to fill me constantly with the will to make my whole life a spiritual offering. By doing that, I would like to be one of those "who fly in the steps of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In memoriam

Let us pray for our departed friends:

Fr. Mathieu Etchéniq, died at Anglet (France) 1st September.

Br. Roberto Miner, died at Barracas (Argentina) 4th September.

— We shall remember these two in our next bulletin —

M. Nagipogu, Fr Bharath's father, student in Mangalore (India) died 3rd September.

Mr Ulrich, Fr Mauro's father, died in Rio de Janeiro, 4th September.



8mn with...
Br. François

As I had willingly accepted this retreat and followed it with faith, trust, hope and abandonment to God, it helped me to have a better understanding of God's project on my life. Especially when I tried to answer these questions from Ignatius: *What have I done for Christ? What shall I do for Him? What have I still got to do?* It strengthened my wish to follow Christ in the Religious life: to carry on with my progress and decide to know, follow and love Christ, so as to be more like Him and make an offering of myself for the greater glory of his Divine Majesty.

It was in this similar line of thought that I followed the extraordinary session in preparation for our vows; it was a happy occasion with the brothers from India and with companions of long date. Despite the problems with languages, the discussions and the tasks we shared were a great opportunity of living the international aspect of our Congregation.

The pilgrimage we made in the footsteps of St Michael Garicoits was another important time. The places visited spoke to us: Ibarre in its isolation and peace reminded us of our "humble" beginnings; Cambo reminded us of the love for the Sacred Heart by this young priest who was to become superior of a seminary and founder of a Congregation imbued with this devotion; Igon filled us with gratitude towards St Jeanne-Elisabeth who helped the superior to discover the beauty of the Religious Life; finally Loyola: the Saint, fascinated by great spiritual masters and anxious to imitate them for the greater glory of God. Then to crown things off, there was Betharram, the flowing stream where we were able to quench our thirst as long as we needed.

Has all this in any way changed your vision of the vocation and mission of Betharram? - When I go back to Africa my vocation and mission appear to me to be more real. We are living in the middle of people with their own

of Jesus, a good shepherd and not a "candy" shepherd, one of those shepherds who exploit God and who are everywhere present and more and more numerous at every street corner, in our streets, in our Churches and Chapels. These so called pastors who put words into God's mouth and who want to make God do what he doesn't want to do. They are mercenaries. They don't know the sheep and they betray the trust put in them by the Master.

My brother Priest, don't forget that you are the instrument of Christ's power. Despite your human weakness the light of Christ shines on you. The priest is a God-given gift. You are a gift for your family, not only for your family but also for your Christian community, for the Church and for the world. You will always want to help those who approach you to discover that the Priest of Jesus Christ is a real God-given gift.

It is often heard that the Priest is first and foremost a man. Let that not be for you an excuse for mediocrity and weaknesses. Don't let it be an occasion for others to make fun of your priesthood. Yes, we are men, weak, but called by the Lord himself to be strong with him. Yes, we are weak men who are to be transformed by our Lord and Master. If the priest is a man, he isn't a man like others, if the priest is a man, he isn't just like any ordinary man. He is the bearer of something which is beyond him, he is the bearer of Someone who is stronger than he is and who gives him strength.

The following of Christ is pure folly! One would have to be madly in love with God to leave everything and follow him. One would have to be madly in love with God to give up starting a family, to be at the disposition of the Bishop or of Superior who can send us where ever he wants in the very name of obedience. One would have to be madly in love with God to set out on such an adventure. Indeed, the priest's life is perhaps pure folly, but it is the only folly which is wisdom bearing Life.

What I understand about our Sacred Heart

Two Ivorian scholastics attended a session at Betharram last summer. In the following articles, they bring up again – each one in his own way – some issues they are particularly fond of.

During the brief session in preparation for final vows, the theme of the Sacred Heart was one of the most tenacious and edifying. Our Founder succeeded in entering theologically into the mystery of the Heart of Christ, not only to be filled with it for his own priestly life, but also to draw from it the special vocation of the Congregation which he had founded. Here is what he wrote:

Why is our Society known as the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus? Because it is specially united to the divine Heart saying to his Father “here I am”, so as to be his collaborators in work for the salvation of souls. Because it professes to imitate the life of Our Lord in a very special manner; because its members are trained to live in a spirit of humility and charity amongst themselves, following the example of the Lord’s disciples, and to imitate the divine Saviour principally in his obedience to his Father and in his zeal for the salvation of souls. This name reminds us of the feelings of charity, humility, gentleness, obedience, and devotion to be found in the first movement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus: “Here I Am”!

From such deep teaching, for me the Sacred Heart represents not only a whole programme for salvation but also it speaks of the identity of this God of Love incarnate in Jesus Christ. This is the Heart which so loved mankind, who emptied himself so as to be filled with charity, humility, gentleness, obedience, and dedication of which the cross is the culminating expression.

For me, the Sacred Heart is the source and origin of “Here I Am”. Through this first action, the Sacred Heart helps us to enter into the boundless love of God and to be living witnesses to it in our turn. To speak of the Sacred Heart is to describe the spirituality which shows us the loving face of God for the joy of mankind; it is understanding the spirituality which introduces us into the dialectic of love and happiness: to be happy so as to love, and love so as to be happy.

Continues from page 7 → As part of my responsibilities at the Accueil Notre Dame, I came in contact with lots of people, some of humble origins, others posh; some asking to spend the night, others looking for a quiet corner to rest, or wanting to polish up their spiritual life. The important is to be able to listen, to be there present to be of help. Thanks to all these meetings I have come to realise that there are those suffering from loneliness or who are going through painful situations. Showing them understanding and compassion is the best that can be done for them. And this is something which strengthens us as well. For we don’t necessarily have to give them something but receive from them.

For the past 9 months you have been living close to St Michael Garicoits, what did it do for you? - Those months spent close to St Michael Garicoits helped me to get to know him better and to want with all my heart to make his “Me Voici” a reality taking hold of all my life. Above all with the reasons which were his: *without delay, without reserve, for love rather than for any other reason.* How I would dearly love to be “That Heart which loves in truth, believes and tastes the things of God, which races, flies on the tracks of Our Lord Jesus”, to enter totally into God’s project of love and salvation of which our Founder was an outstanding example. In other words, like him I want to be that young branch which grows and spreads its branches so as to uplift and save “Man, the whole Man.”

In June you did the Thirty Days Retreat; then in July you did the session in preparation for your Vows. What did you get from this double experience? - The first experience- the Ignatian Retreat- was like a rerun of my Novitiate: same formator, same companions, more or less, the monastery nearby, not the Bethlehem Carmel, but the Monastery of the Sisters of Bethlehem, 5KM from Betharram.



8mn with...
Br. François

IVORY COAST**A project for ... (3) Adiapodoumé**

Kouassi Aya Melanie is the only daughter of a single mother, Pale Therese. They both live in a run down quarter next door to the parish looked after by the Betharramite Fathers where they are very actively involved, Melanie as altar server and Therese with the Legion of Mary.

Every day Melanie walks along the streets of her quarter on her way to school in an over crowded classroom. In spite of their very difficult living conditions, Melanie is a good worker; at 9 years of age she is in CE2 (second year elementary class). But as they have no electricity at home it is impossible to study in the evening, for night falls quickly in those latitudes! With the result that last year she didn't move up to the next class.

This year a young out of work is helping her with her revision for a fee. Melanie goes to her evening classes several kilometres away from her home, twice a week. On her way Melanie day dreams: when she grows up she will be a doctor to look after people and improve their quality of life. Meanwhile, Melanie doesn't look well. She isn't ill but her body speaks volumes; it tells the trouble her mother has to make ends meets and to take care of her.

Melanie is one of many children in that situation. For want of electricity they are handicapped in their schooling. Yet, they only want one thing – something quite simple but very necessary: be able to study in the best conditions so as to succeed and build their future.

For them, Saint Bernard Parish has the project of building a reading centre complete with library and study hall so that they can work in the evening and not sink more and more into poverty. The cost of this project is estimated at €8.300 (£7,300). Can we have a try? Can we give this opportunity to Melanie and her friends?

Hyacinthe Ali, SCJ


For your donations

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The Sacred Heart is the crucible of “Here I Am”, and so cannot leave us indifferent and stationary. It challenges us not only to a dynamic union with the Saviour and to a more solid interior life, but also to act more usefully in our world and in the life of every man. Consequently, the Sacred Heart comprises a spirituality of involvement inviting each Christian to a happy spiritual life, to a life radiant with the gift of self for the benefit of others.

From this heart flows the virtue of availability for God and availability for others so as to be faithful to “Here I Am” and the desire to be like Christ in his dejection. And so, for me what sums up the Sacred Heart are Love, happiness, and involvement.

Olivier Ohoueu Adiko,SCJ

8 MINUTES WITH... Brother François

Nef: What was the point of this special year? - It was meant to help me take a look at what I had been doing so far, to meet new realities and above all to immerse myself in the place where St Michael had spent the major part of his life and which he had marked deeply with his extraordinary holiness. In Betharram we cannot avoid meeting the face of the saint, with his theology and spirituality of “Me Voici”. For me, everything feels and breathes St Michael Garicoits.

You were sent to a reception community; what did this do for you? - I was very happy to be accepted in such a varied community where everyone has different responsibilities, but where “welcome” is important. I also appreciated how close we were to the Care Home. There is a community of religious, some of whom are heading joyfully for their 100th birthday! They know how to be interested in what a young religious in training is doing, and each of them with his personal history bears witness to the faith which I was able to make use of.



Brother Francois Tohonon Cokou, from the Benin, has been spending a year in preparation for his final vows in Betharram. We wanted to know more about this experiment in the cradle of the Congregation.





Saint Michael
Region

Vicariate of Ivory Coast

Celebration of the 50th anniversary ■ On 13th September, Mgr Vincent Landel, SCJ, Archbishop of Rabat ordained priest Br Emmanuel Congo and Deacons Br Arsene Noba and Br Omer Koutouan. On the 14th feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, Br Francois Cokou will make his final vows in the Congregation. That is a liturgical summit to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Betharram in Ivory Coast!

Vicariate of France-Spain

Year 1 of "Beau Rameau" ■ The new school year 2009–10 opened with a new school grouping, "Le Beau Rameau" regrouping schools under the trusteeship of the Daughters of the Cross and the Fathers of Betharram. More than 500 pupils are concerned, involving 2 Primary Schools (Igon and Montaut), a secondary school and a lycee (Betharram), and a technical lycee (Igon). On 31st August at Igon, the Trustees represented by Sr Marie-Xavier and Fr Gaspar Fernandez set out the Orientations. Mass for the staff and teachers was presided over by Mgr Aillet, Bishop of Bayonne, after which everyone met up at Betharram for a festive meal. St Jeanne Elisabeth and St Michael Garicoits must surely have appreciated this new initiative.

Vicariate of Brazil

Mission accomplished ■ From 26th July to 2nd August the 2009 Betharramite missionary week took place at Bru-madhino. More than 60 missionaries (religious in training, sisters, priests and laity) visited every one of the 35 communities in the parish. The morning was given over to home-visits, the afternoon to activities with the children and the evening to celebrations and meetings with the youth. The results were good for personal involvement, for the quality of the sharing and the discovery of the Betharram spirituality.

The Regional Novitiate: It's off! ■ On 3rd August in Bangalore the novices from B^d Miriam Region began officially their canonical year. Let us pray for the 6 young Thais and 3 Indians; under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and of Fr Chan, their novice master, may they grow in all aspects of their life and vocation.



Fr Etchecopar
Region



B^d Miriam Region

Vicariate of England

India comes to Olton ■ Over 300 people came to the solemn profession of Vincent Masilamani, Pascal Ravi and Wilfred Pereppadan on September 8th at Olton Friary, among them several local Indian families. Fr. Enrico Frigerio received their vows, and all three parish choirs took part in the liturgy. Our young Brothers are a great blessing on the community these last two years. Some seeds of vocational awareness have been sown... Alleluia!

Vicariate of Thailand

My soul give praise to the Lord ■ On 15th August in Saengtham College, in the suburbs of Bangkok, the feast of the Assumption was celebrated as usual by ordinations and institutions. 4 Betharramites were involved: Br Thina-kom and Br Nonthaphat as "reader", Br Athit as "Acolyte", and Br Thomas Hiran as "Deacon". More than 1000 Catholics and 300 priests assisted at the Mass presided by Mgr Banjong Chalyara. In the afternoon there was a festive reception at our seminary. One more blessing for Betharram in Thailand!

Father Etchecopar wrote... to his sister Julia, 10th September 1876

What is man, that a God should love him? I have been reading in the Book of Job: "Man's life is nothing but a struggle: when night came I would call for day, and when day came I was longing for night".

That is how people before us struggled... So, forward march, through sorrows and joys. Forward march towards the Heart and in the Heart of Jesus; it is always open and will never close.

Forward march always! He knows our wretchedness... He is Father, He is Mother! He is host! He is victim! He is gentleness and humility!

O God of all Goodness! It is only at the hour of our death that we shall know and proclaim all his goodness, while hoping against hope, like men of deep faith, and we shall receive his Eucharist on our failing lips together with the forgiveness for an unworthy life, full of mystery. Then we shall cry out with the Prophet: "Even if he were to strike me dead I shall continue to hope in him, and I shall not be confounded." Amen!