

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

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14th May
1863 | 2010

Happy St Michael
Garicoits' day!



The Betharramite Adventure in China

missions and I begged for help from other missions which were better off than we were.

Our Fathers in the Teng-Yuch region were very sorely tried. They were prisoners in the hands of the Japanese for two years, and spent a month in a real prison; there was the worry of what would happen next; they were at the mercy of the invaders who could easily have sent them to a concentration camp at any moment. If they escaped that fate they put it down to the protection of St Joseph and of our Blessed Founder.

But it was the Fathers in the South who suffered most from the shortages. For two years I wasn't able to provide them with fresh supplies, and so they had nothing. Fearing for their health, I wrote to advise them to join up with Tali, where we would share out what supplies we had while waiting for better times. Here is the reply I received from Fr Trezzi who was living in that region ever since the assassination of Fr Bart: "At all costs we must stay with our Christians, and so prevent our Lahous renouncing their faith. I am under no illusion, it is going to be hard; I would dearly love to know which is the lucky country where today the population doesn't know all about the difficulties of life. It is perhaps harder to impose a similar situation on others. And yet there is no choice."

5

(to be continued)



Family News

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



**A word from the
Superior General**

Michael Garicoits, the priest

I imagine that every Betharramite felt honoured at seeing Michael Garicoits on the list of priests given as an example on the web site of the Congregation for the Clergy, for this Year of the Priesthood appointed by Benedict XVI.

St Michael Garicoits felt he was totally a priest. It was the very essence of his being. He used to sign his letters: *Garicoits, priest*. This is how he used to express his priestly identity: *to be a man, to be a Christian, to be a priest, a priest of Betharram, and superior of this community. To be all that, to be really all that, you understand that for me it's everything! Anything else is vanity, misfortune* (Correspondence II, letter 194, N 3). He carried out his ministry and he died a priest of the diocese of Bayonne, for our Congregation was only recognised by the Holy See twelve years after his death.

His vocation matured little by little in the silence and solitude of his occupations as a shepherd at Oneix. Countless priests are mentioned in his memories, among others the persecuted, hidden in the barn and whom his father used to help smuggle into Spain at night by secret mountain passes. He used to hear his mother telling how she had to get married in Spain so that her marriage would not be celebrated by a priest unfaithful to the Pope. Such family souvenirs, the pain of not being admitted to make his First Communion before the age of 14, the consolations at Oneix where he came to understand God's love for him, will give strength to his vocation. So much so that he will be able to overcome all the obstacles until the day of his ordination in the Cathedral of Bayonne, on the 20th December 1823.

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**108th year
10th series, # 49
14th May 2010**



His first appointment was assistant priest in Cambo. His Parish priest, Fr Hardoy, was a very sick man. Consequently Garicoits had to shoulder the pastoral burden of the parish. He dedicated himself totally to preaching, hearing confessions, visiting the sick and excluded, and launched the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

In 1825 his Bishop, Mgr d'Astros, appointed him lecturer in Philosophy and Bursar of the Betharram Seminary. Thanks to the witness of his life and his care of his students, he changed the community spirit of the Seminary of which he became Superior in 1831. That same year the Bishop began directing the philosophy students towards Bayonne, with the result that in 1833 the last theology students still in Betharram were ordained. *Superior of an empty shell* as he would call himself, he was all alone with Fr Guimon (Correspondence I, letter 10).

He spent the rest of his life in Betharram, as rector of the sanctuary Notre Dame and chaplain to the Daughters of the Cross in Igon. Once more the long periods of silence and solitude would favour a life of intense prayer, in the course of which he would receive the grace of founding the Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart. From then onwards the bulk of his life was taken up with confessions, spiritual direction, and formation as much for his own religious as for the Daughters of the Cross.

Outside his own community St Michael Garicoits was deeply concerned by the "dechristianisation" of the people and the disobedience of the clergy. "If *you could have seen the bishops weep, as I did!* Such facts, faced by the Word of God in prayer, were to prepare him interiorly for a mystical experience: the contemplation of Jesus, eternal priest and servant of the Father, *dejected and obedient, doing nothing of his own accord, acting always by God's Spirit, to suffer and do everything he willed.* The grace of such contemplation was to lead him to modal his life on that of Jesus humble and obedient, and to be witness of

THE BETHARRAMITE ADVENTURE IN CHINA 5

+Fr. Jean-Baptiste Magenties, "L'Écho de Bétharram", January 1946

At the time of its installation the independent Mission in Tali consisted of 1,281 Catholics. Year by year this number grew slowly but surely: about 1.428, 1.574, 1.739, 2.052, 2.243, 2.400. In 1938, thanks to the conversion of the Lahous, the upward curve shot up to 5.038; in 1938 they were about 11.600 and in 1940 it wasn't far from 20.000 for a population of 5 millions. The Apostolic Prefecture had 16 Priests, 2 or 3 Chinese Priests, 3 Brothers and 7 Daughters of the Cross.

When war broke out in Europe our missions only wanted to continue to develop. Despite the fact that our resources were insufficient for our needs because we were depending on donations from France, we went forward courageously. But the catastrophe which was going to upset all that arrived and what ruins!

The war entered Yunnan with the Japanese Army. The House in Pao-Shan was destroyed in the air raids. Fr Saint Guily and the Sisters who lived there had to join up with the community in Tali. For want of funding all our missionaries suffered terrible privations; they were forced to close down the Junior Seminary, schools, dispensaries, and send home the catechists and teachers since they could no longer pay them. (*Nef*, Sept 1944)

For want of funding little by little the charitable works disappeared! With the exception of three schools, all the other schools were closed. The catechists left us since we could no longer guarantee their salary. The prep school for entry to the Seminary was closed down. The cost of living was mounting at a terrible rate; and our resources continued to fall at the same rate! A measure of rice which in 1939 cost 0fr80 now cost Frs 2.400 in the space of a month. Cotton which four years previously cost Frs 2.400 was now being sold at Frs 1.600.000. We had to feed and clothe everyone. Things were so bad that at the beginning of 1944 we had nothing left. To try making some economies I sent four missionaries to work in other



OUR
MISSIONS
DURING
THE
WAR



2010

MAY

14	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Paul Baradat, Fr Gilbert Napetien Coulibaly
	Buon compleanno	P. Antonio Riva
	15° di sacerdozio, auguri	P. Gianluca Limonta
15	10 years of profession, congratulations	Fr Kriangsak Kitsakunwong Br Hiran Klinbuakaew Fr Shaju Kalappurackal Fr Biju Anthony Panthaloorkan Fr Subesh Odiyathingal
20	Feliz cumpleaños	Hno Sixto Benitez
22	Buon compleanno	P. Gianluca Limonta
23	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Jean-Marie Ruspil
25	Joyeux anniversaire	P. André Lacaze P. Beñat Ségure
	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Gerardo Ramos
26	Buon compleanno	P. Mario Bulanti
29	Happy birthday	Br D. Athit Kasetsukchai
30	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Bertrand Salla
	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Julio Colina
31	Buon compleanno	P. Emilio Manzolini

JUNE

3	Bon anniversaire	P. Joseph Mazerolles
4	Happy birthday	Br Suphot Gabriel Liko
	55° di sacerdozio, auguri	P. Egidio Zoia
	35° di sacerdozio, auguri	P. Mario Giussani
6	Happy birthday	Fr Subesh Odiyathingal
10	Bon anniversaire	P. Barnabé Kpéhéléfopé Bakary
	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Crispin Villalba
	10° di sacerdozio, auguri	P. Massimo Motta
11	50° di sacerdozio, auguri	P. Romano Martinelli P. Albino Trameri
12	Buon compleanno	P. Angelo Bianchi
	Happy birthday	Fr Anton Madej
	50th of priesthood	Fr Terence O'Malley
	45° di sacerdozio, auguri	PP. Arialdo Urbani, Luigi Speziale, Ennio Bianchi, Alberto Pensa, Mario Zappa
15	Feliz cumpleaños	Hno. Victor Torales

his love. Such is the secret of St Michael Garicoits in the original way he had of being faithful to his Priesthood.

He shared this experience which he considered to be a charisma of the Holy Spirit with other priests who *felt driven to devote themselves, in imitation of Christ dejected and obedient, to win for others the same happiness* (DS 40 – 41). And this is how the Congregation was born in October 1835.

Michael Garicoits – Priest – clung to the essence of the Gospel and took seriously obedience copied exactly on the obedience of Jesus. He had to witness to it by his life. He died on the cross of Obedience, torn between the conviction that the God of the abandoned had chosen him to found a religious family bound by vows in community, and in opposition to the Bishop who refused to recognise his project for the Congregation. Many difficulties followed and a kind of uncertainty which resulted in the departure of some elements. St Michael died in this situation; by obeying his bishop he saw the slow breakup of his budding Congregation. Like Abraham he was ready to sacrifice his child, yet was convinced that God, who had wanted the Society of the Priests of Betharram, would see to it that it would survive.

Obedience to the Father for love's sake is a fundamental mark of Jesus, the Word incarnate. Consequently it should be the mark of every disciple of Jesus, of every priest. For a Religious of the Sacred Heart, priest or brother, *what should characterize us, is the spirit of obedience. If obedience is lacking, its raison d'être is lacking.* (DS 196-197, RL 60). Obedience is contrary neither to freedom nor to human rights when it is assumed through love, and when it consists *of doing nothing by one's self, but always through God's Spirit... To suffer and do everything he wants.* (DS 40-41)

Gaspar Fernandez,SCJ



ALLELUIA!

On June 5th in Adiapodoume, **Mgr Salomon**, coadjutor bishop of Yopougon, will **ordain as priest Brother Omer Koutouan**. Union of prayer and thanksgiving with the whole Vicariate of Ivory Coast.

With Saint Michael, my daily « Here I am »

Accompanying a group of lay Betharramites in Limoges,

Brother Alfred invited them to reflect together on the theme chosen for the year: "In our present day life to what passages of the charter and the texts of St Michael do our different commitments as Christians find substance reason which would be worthwhile for progressing despite our inner struggles? How do we put them into practice?"

So Fr. Alfred launched the reflexion...

By way of sharing, I think it is important for me to give you my own testimony: when I go through St Michael's writings, several of his counsels are still topical for me. Serving God by serving the poor and the humble. This is something which gives me great joy.

Faced with certain obstacles, for example silence which embarrasses me, or solitude which I find oppressive, the urgings of nature to give myself to a partner, my heart's desires to love everyone without exception, every morning I must repeat my offering "Here I am, Lord!"

This daily offering "Here I am!" is demanding. It invites me to find my peace and joy in Christ and in Him alone. In a fervent prayer and with the help of the examination of conscience of my feelings, it helps me to share my experiences in Community, to examine and obey. My constant prayer is "Lord, I am not able, I am not worthy, perhaps I am both incapable and unworthy; but I only need a word and I shall be both worthy and able." (Letter 46, Correspondence, Vol. 1)

To follow faithfully the designs of God without anticipation... Trusting in God... advancing fittingly according to one's vocation and mission... To be always and in all things humble, gentle and patient... To put up with the most difficult of individuals with charity, to work with utmost care to maintain unity through the links of peace... Strive after truth charitably, to exist and help others to exist also, by a charity which is as wise as serpents and simple and loving as the dove. (Letter 49, Correspondence Volume 1).

These words buck me up in my moments of doubt and uncertainty, when I am confronted by the temptation to be discouraged and to pack it in and organise my life otherwise. I get my joy from every experience to understand what Christ is calling me to: to carry on building my life with the religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus!

Alfred Christian Nandjui, SCJ

vited by our General Chapters, by the new Rule of Life and by the orientations given by the Superior General, let's stop deluding ourselves. Let's fill our daily life with the intuitions of the charisma and spirituality of our Father Saint Michael. Don't let's tire of updating them. For we love what we know, what we love keeps us alive, we identify with what we are experiencing, and we only announce what we identify with.

According to you what are the strong points of Betharramite Spirituality? - Under the guidance of St Michael we learn from Jesus, the Incarnate Word dejected and obedient, how to renounce our own will so as to be full of the plentitude of the God of Love. *The interior law of love:* Again, under the guidance of St Michael we are called to become a "kerygma", that is living witnesses to the God of Love, through means of the Gospel of freedom, and the saving power of God which has been offered to all mankind.

How can that spirituality have anything in common with and nourish the faith of the laity in today's Church? - I shall start off with the Basic document on the Family for the Betharramite laity (1997). What is charismatic and which constitutes a driving force in the Church is the relationship with Jesus Christ, the eternal Word made man, in the mystery of the God of Love, One and Triune; the relationship with the Church, mystery of communion, and her mission; the relationship with the world, the temporal and daily realities, like the yeast in the dough. All this and a soupcon of Betharramite charisma; St Michael's intuition is precisely to have discovered the essential of the Revelation of the God of Love in the person of Jesus Christ, in his life style (the Gospel) and in his mission which brings liberation. The Jesus of the Gospel, who was dejected and obedient, adorer of the Father: *here I am to realise your plan for salvation - servant of mankind - here I am to realise your plans of mercy and liberation - in a relationship which is vital for the community - the Church - with a burning missionary desire: to obtain the same happiness for others.* (The Manifesto).



Meeting with Fr Daniel Ramon Martin, of the Adrogue Community, editor of a leaflet of spirituality, intended for the Betharramite laity in Argentina.

5 MINUTES WITH... Father Daniel Martín

Nef: How did you get to know the Congregation? - The Fathers of Betharram, Angel and Luis Carraro, were friends of my grandfather. They used to often call at our house and that's how Luis became my sponsor for Confirmation. Fr Luis who always had a welcoming smile knew in what direction to throw the invitation.

How did your vocation materialise? - Your question which is usual today with the youth and formators makes people of my generation smile, for things were different then. The call came to life on seeing my grandfather getting up every morning at 5.00 a.m. for his meditation, on seeing him working hard at the different parish activities (this was in 1947). Then there was the close contact with the altar service all the time I was an altar server. At the age of 10 whenever I went into the "apostolicat" in Barracas, my heart was already on fire with one wish: to be a priest.

In your ministry what experience made the greatest impression on you? - In my many and varied ministries my constant preoccupation was to accompany the young, boys and girls; help them to experience meeting with Jesus, both personally and as part of the Church, through the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

How did you get the idea of a spirituality leaflet on the Web? - The leaflet called "Betharramite Spirituality" is now a teenager! It is 14 years of age. It wasn't born on the Web. For years there had been the periodical distribution of about 500 duplicate leaflets in all our movements and activities; for example there was *Betharramite Youth* and FALABE among those responsible for the educational pastoral in the parish. Today, each community receives it by e-mail and makes photocopies. The contents don't change: a page of present day spirituality, corresponding to St Michael's thought an invitation to prayer on life. And forward march!

What would you propose as a means of living the spirit of the Congregation in greater depth? - As we are in-

St Michael's charisma: personal reflexions

To be what we are, what we really are, is important, that's all, anything else is vanity. To be a man, to be a Christian, all that; to be well and truly that (Letter No 3). Remain in peace in the place where God has put you.

These quotations from St Michael are linked for me with the **HERE I AM**. If every day, with God's help, I try to live out fully my life as a woman (at work, at home, and in my many activities) and my life as a "loving servant of God", if I occupy my place and only my place, perhaps I will succeed little by little in doing the Will of Him who loves me. It's not all that easy to occupy one's place, without fear, without pride, but with courage. Time is necessary for prayer, reflection with others (brotherly love) and to celebrate the Lord.

How does the spirituality of St Michael Garicoits permeate my everyday life? "Forward march" this is what I say every morning at 5h45 as I get up. I hold this message from St Michael and the surge which he always wanted to give to every action of his life.

First of all "Forward march" is a kind of resolution; it's a way of getting down to a good day's work (or a day of rest) as the case may be. The charter of the Fraternity "Here I am" invites us to welcome the events of every day with an act of faith. To be able to do that, we must put the best foot forward and not be overwhelmed by the worries, cares, surprises or sufferings which can come in all shapes and sizes. Family life is not one long peaceful stream no more than a doctor's life nor life in society in general. When I say "Forward march" I mean that I want to be like St Michael Garicoits, like the reliable prophet he is.

But I want my "Forward March" to be more than simply a resolution: it is the wish to be part of the creative act of God. By his death and resurrection Christ has made us coheirs of his Father's creative action. This does not mean

Mado Bleyne

that creation is incomplete and that our little human activities could complete it, but through divine grace whereby God wants us to love this World we know all too well that a real love can change a life. I think that in St Michael's life there was something like that. The best expression of such a desire is the foundation of a religious Congregation. His desire wasn't simply a form of ambition for his own glory, but it was born of the discernment with a Jesuit showing him the route to follow. From then onwards what determination! What perseverance! And what self sacrifice! And the whole wrapped in gentleness and humility.

How is one expected to attain such behaviour? There is only one solution, be filled with charity or love in all the acts of our life. Whatever I can do doesn't make sense if it is not done through love. And that's not always easy! When I launch "Forward march" every morning, I have only got to reply "For love's sake".

Philippe Bleynie

Father Etcheccpar wrote... to Fr. Jean Magendie, 5th March 1896

Brother Athanasius is recovering from his attack of catarrh, not from the sickness of ageing, nor from his customary gaiety. The other day I went to visit him; we chatted about days gone by, he was getting more and more excited. "Father Garicoits! Wasn't he good! He was always ready to be of service, and to give himself for the others! How he loved the brothers! He used to say to the Bursar: "You are in charge of them, you are my friend, so be full of goodness for these dear brothers, they are doing as best they can. For us and for the brothers Fr Garicoits would have crossed the Gave hundreds of times. One day I was going to empty the rubbish bin and he came to help me. So I said to him: "Stand back; you are going to dirty your cassock". He answered me: "Let me be; there's no shortage of cassocks; in any case I shall take care; we have to fertilize this poor quality soil in St Mary's". Ah! What delightful simplicity, wouldn't you agree? What charity for the brothers! And what an example of humility! Don't you think that it's the image of our loving Jesus who was wont to say: "I haven't come to be served but to be of service and to give my life for others?"

On Wednesday, 7th of April, Fr. Austin guided the group to Betharram. Fr. Austin explained to the group the story of our founder St. Michael Garicoits and the humble beginnings of our Congregation. We had anointing of the sick and Mass in St. Michael's Chapel. After a picnic lunch we visited Our Lady's Shrine and meditated on the Stations of the Cross in Betharram. All members of our group expressed and appreciated the spiritual experience that they had during the visit to Betharram.

It was an excellent experience for me to be involved with this group. It was one of best weeks in my life. It was filled with laughter, fun, meeting amazing people and wonderful children, not forgetting the rich experience of spirituality involved in the Lourdes experience. It was honour to be a part of this group for a short time. I was able to give something to others who are not as fortunate as I am. As a helper, I found a deep bond between the members of the group and I have made some marvellous friends.

During the pilgrimage I understand that it is in giving that we receive love and friendship from children and other volunteers in the group. I can proudly say that the HCPT pilgrimage to Lourdes has enriched my life. Remembering the motto of this year 'Called to Serve' brings to my memory, the spirituality of our founder St. Michael Garicoits, when he declared 'To bring the same happiness to others'. I can positively affirm that I tried my best to bring this happiness to others in our group and those whom I met during the pilgrimage days in Lourdes.



Wilfred
Pereppadan, SCJ

in memoriam

Fr Henri Nadal, 89 years old died in the retirement home of Betharram (France) on May 12th.

We entrust him to the Lord, and will pay a tribute to him in the next issue.

England- France**A memorable Easter Pilgrimage**

During Easter week April 2010, I was privileged to be a part of HCPT (Handicapped Children Pilgrimage Trust) pilgrimage to Lourdes. HCPT was founded by a doctor called Michael Strode in 1956. He took four children with disabilities as pilgrims to Lourdes (France). His main objective was to give those children a good pilgrimage experience. He accommodated them in hotels rather than in hospitals. He treated them just like other pilgrims in Lourdes. Now Every year at Easter, HCPT takes around 2000 children with disabilities to Lourdes. The children come from different ethnic backgrounds and may belong to different religious backgrounds. At Easter week, the children accompanied by their helpers are formed into small groups and they travel to Lourdes from all over the United Kingdom, Ireland, and also from Croatia, Romania, Slovakia, United States and West Indies. The HCPT group is one of the biggest children's pilgrimages from the United Kingdom.

I was fortunate to be a part of West Midlands HCPT group no. 204. Our Chaplain is Fr. Austin Hughes SCJ. He has been involved with this group since 2002. There are nineteen people in our group. Out of the nineteen people, six were disabled children and one adult who was physically challenged.

My previous summer ministry experience with children who had severe learning difficulty at St. Elizabeth's Centre, Muchhadam in 2008 helped me to quietly join in and actively participate in different group activities. The motto for this year's pilgrimage was 'Called to Serve'. Our group prepared various activities based on this theme. We enjoyed outings, narrating the story of Bernadette and Lourdes, a visit to the Pyrenees, games on the Prairie, relaxing and singing in the cafes, occasional visits to the grotto for prayers, a visit to the baths, the torchlight procession and the HCPT trust special Mass.

*Oh, Holy Spirit, unremitting ferment,
Master of the interior life, come and visit us!*

*Gather us in one body and turn us towards
Him who is our Head and our Heart.*

*He is the Word who invites us to realise his dedication and
gentleness in today's world and in today's Church.*

*He chose us to show, despite our limits,
the depth of his tenderness and the beauty of truth.*

*You have assembled us here in Bethlehem, where he was born,
to take a look at what we are and what we are doing. You wish
to inject new life into our identity and our apostolic fire.*

*Give our entire family the desire for what is right; give us
the wisdom to discover it and the strength to carry it out.*

*Make us docile to your grace, which is always the same and
always new. Help us to be good instruments in the hands of
our Creator; help us to be the joyful witnesses, merciful,
humble, and constant of our Saviour Jesus.*

*Teach us to live under the twofold law which you imprint in
our hearts: love to be united with the Lord in the service of
our brothers in humanity; and obedience so as to be one with
Him and do His Will gladly and willingly.*

*May our Rule be our 8th commandment; may it be the sign
and means of enjoying your happiness and of procuring
happiness for others.*

*May our communities become more and more a place of
giving and forgiving; may they be sources of communion, a
springboard for the mission in the vicariate, the region and
the Congregation.*

*May our shortcomings make us humbler, more generous, and
stronger in Jesus Christ and through Jesus Christ.*

*May we have, every day of our lives, a reaction and a prayer
for this Chapter:*

*to place ourselves under your guidance, to be carried along by
your momentum and to say constantly "Here I am" at the
school of Our Lady of Betharram, of St Michael Garicoits,
of Blessed Miriam and of Fr Auguste Etchecopar.
Amen. Fiat! Fiat!*

**Variations
on a Prayer****Towards the
General Chapter**

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C.G.
2011

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF **Together at last !** ■ The preparatory meeting to the final profession was scheduled on April 21st.



Session for final profession 2010

A cloud of volcanic ashes has decided otherwise. With 5 days of delay for latecomers, here they are all gathered in Betharram. Until May 28th eight young religious and their guides are gathered for a time of renewal and sharing: a Thai (Br Athit), an Ivorian (Br Elisée), 2 Brazilians (Br Luiz Henrique and Br Robson) and 4 Indians (Br Arul, Br George, Br Jose and Br Livin), with Fr Enrico Frigerio (Rome), Fr Gustavo Agin (Buenos Aires) and Fr Jiraphat Rakhsikao (Bangkok). Let us pray for them, for the Notre Dame community which hosts them, and for religious and priestly vocations... here and everywhere.

Vicariate of Ivory Coast



Saint Michael Region

Tour of Ivory Coast ■ Between the 10th and 25th April, the Vicariate had a lively time thanks to the visit of the Superior of Saint Michael Region and the regional Vicar. Fr Graziano Sala and Fr Jean-Dominique Delgue could monitor the local communities on the spot and encourage the religious. After Dabakala and Yamoussoukro, several meetings took place in Adiapodoumé: with the community, with the young brothers in formation, and with lay members. Other significant moments: the gathering of the Regional Council, the ordination as acolytes of Br Hyacinthe Ali, Br Marius Angui, Br Aristide Keita and Br Antoine Adamou... and a convivial time with the Fraternity Nè Mè.

Vicariate of India



Blessed Miriam Region

A bunch of ordinations to priesthood ■ In this Year of Priesthood and in the month of Mary, Betharram in India is living a wonderful time: on May 8th, Br. Subesh Odiyathingal was ordained as priest in Kariapalli (Kerala) by Mgr Mar George Valiamattam, archbishop of Telicherry. On May 14th, feast of St Michael, it is Br. Valan Kanagaraj who receives the sacred orders in Vellalanvilai (Tamil Nadu) from Mgr Yvon Ambroise, bishop of Tuticorin. Still in Tamil Nadu, in Srivilliputtur, on May 16th, Br. John Britto Irudayham will be ordained as priest by Mgr Peter Fernando, archbishop of Madurai. "*Magnificat anima mea Dominum!*"

THE CONGREGATION

Solidarity Project **IVORY COAST**



The situation for the campus at Dabakala

We want to thank all the donors and benefactors of the Congregation. A special word of thanks to all who supported the project for the campus of Dabakala. Thanks to them, what still needed to be done to improve the students' living conditions has greatly advanced.

The donations which we have received so far (to a total of Frs. CFA 4.259.300, €6.500) have financed the installation of 4 showers and 4 toilettes, the construction of a new *appatam* (shelter for rest and study) and the refurbishment of another one, the purchase of 10 bunk beds and the refurbishment of the cloister.

The youngsters are delighted with all we do for them. They are thanking us all the time. There are 36 of them from the whole department for their schooling in Dabakala. Three of them are in final year, 12 are in Year 3, and the rest in intermediary classes.

This year we have been trying to progress further in accompanying the young students. Twice a week, two teachers in Philosophy and French give them private lessons. This is paid for with the fees for the youngsters which amount to Frs. CFA 2.000 a month (about €3,2). As well as that, two pharmacists from the hospital in Dabakala, voluntary teachers at the Lycee, come and give a helping hand to the examination class (year 3 and Final year) for Maths and Physics. As Catholics from our parish they give freely of their time for this service. With the result that in the first and second terms, the marks of the youngsters are considerably up on last year's. Four or five of them have been 1st in their class and the majority of our students have good averages.

From the point of view of equipment, we still have to find Frs. CFA 1.200.000 - €1850 to allow us to install the cooking facilities on the campus. The youngsters prepare their own meals themselves.

Once more, a huge thank you to all our supporters and who will continue to support us!

Last year, as part of the Solidarity Project 2009, the Congregation was invited to share with our communities in Ivory Coast in general and in the Dabalaka community in particular. Father Luc-Martial Kouadio, superior of our community in the Djimini country, explains the situation of the project.