

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

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The Extraordinary Life of Sister Marie

heaven she could hear them tell her that “her book was not yet finished.” She came to her senses in a cave carried there by a mysterious lady dressed in blue and who had cured her neck, had served her a delicious soup, and told her what the future held for her: She wouldn’t see her family again, would go to France, would be the child of St Joseph, then the daughter of St Therese, would take the Carmelite habit in a monastery, would make profession in another one and would die in a third one at Bethlehem. She then led her at the end of a month, totally cured, to a Franciscan church. The scar on her throat which was all that remained of this extraordinary event, was noticed in Marseille, Pau and Bethlehem. It was 10 cms long and one wide. The blow must have touched the trachea and would explain her broken voice.

On her own in Alexandria at the age of 13, thanks to a Franciscan priest, Mariam found work as a servant with a Christian family, who happened to be distant relations of hers but she said nothing to them. She was soon appreciated for her perfect service. Feeling that she was too appreciated she moved to another poorer family; and like that devoted herself to the poor.

Continues from page 13 → parishioners by the sea in a healthier coastal climate. His last ten years saw him at relative peace but in growing physical and mental decline. A stroke suffered in March last year was the moment when he realised that neither he nor the parishioners could properly manage his condition, and the Olton community welcomed him back like the Prodigal Son. For eight months the brothers in community cared for him with great devotion at some cost to themselves. But he was admitted to hospital early in December where the doctors diagnosed multiple life-threatening conditions including serious heart disease. It was from heart failure that he died on January 9th accompanied in his final hours by Brother Andrew and Brother Liam. Now he lives in company with Peter and the disciples, all fishermen together.

Austin Hughes, SCJ



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(Continues)



Family News

*News bulletin of the Congregation of the
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**A word from the
Superior General**

Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father (Mt 11,27)

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In the Gospel for the feast of St Michael Garicoits I found this phrase which made me reflect and which is the key to understanding the person of Jesus and his message. Since everything has been entrusted to him by his Father, Jesus feels small; he is touched to see his Father's preferential love for the little ones; he is proud to be the only one knowing the Father; he knows how to comfort those who are weary of life and he invites his followers to be simple, meek and humble, instead of crushing the others so as to impose one's ideas, or to amass wealth and honours by passing beside simple things.

Jesus is the modal for the relationships to be cultivated with the Father. It constitutes an identification and constant communion with Him – “*I can do nothing by myself... my aim is not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me* (Jn 5,30). *My teaching is not from myself; it comes from the one who sent me* (Jn, 7,16). *If you knew me you would know my Father as well* (Jn 8,19). *I do nothing of myself; what my Father has taught me, is what I preach* (Jn 8,28). *I have not come of my own will, it is He who sent me* (Jn 8, 42). *To have seen me is to have seen the Father... It is the Father living in me who is doing this work* (Jn 14, 9-10).

By thus identifying with his Father, Jesus has nothing of his own. His appearance, his words, his mission, his will, his interests, his ideas, his projects, and his works are his Father's. This is the foundations of evangelical poverty. To be conscious, like Jesus, that nothing that I am, or have or are worth is due to me, but has been given to me by the Father's love.

**109th year
10th series, nr. 57
14 February 2011**



In the Bible, whoever meets the Lord has a double experience: the love of God and his own weakness. *My God, I know not how to speak, I am only a child!* (Jer 1,6) *I am a man with impure lips...* (Is 6,5) *Lord, I have had enough! Take back my life; I am no better than my fathers* (1 Kings 19,4) *my soul glorifies the Lord... he has had regard for his humble servant* (Luke 1, 46-48).

St Michael had a similar experience, as expressed in *God is everything; I'm nothing!* (DS 74-75). The witness of Fr Etchecopar will help us better to understand: *Fr Garicoits was convinced that the God of the lowly and the poor had chosen him for this purpose. He was only the shepherd from the last house in the village of Ibarre, he, a disaster, a good-for-nothing and that God had said to him: "Go and found a new Congregation in my Church; it will have its place in these troubled times, where the great Orders have been scattered and where the spirit of revolutionary independence has entered from all sides even within the Sanctuary. You will walk at the head bearing the flag of the Sacred Heart, and shouting my Son's Here I am! You will be his joy and the support of his Church". He believed in that voice; he grabbed the flag. He set out on this career just like a giant and kept walking to the end of his life. My Fathers and Brothers, was his the victim of a generous illusion? Of course not, thank God. Events have proved it* (Letter of 10 January 1888).

The film *Of Gods and Men* is full of the theology of religious life. At the beginning of their discernment to see whether they should leave or stay in such extreme conditions, one of them declared: "I'm staying; nobody is expecting me" and the Father Abbott in a chat which he had with one of the religious who wanted to leave, told him "Martyrdom may seem madness just as it seemed madness to become a monk. You have already given your life to Jesus." There you have the real reasons for our consecration which show that Jesus and his Kingdom are all that we need, our only treasure.

Fully aware of how small we are and of God's love for us, we have given our life to Jesus; we know that thanks to it

The Extraordinary Life of Sister Marie

2. Tragedy at Alexandria



In 1854 her uncle moved to Alexandria with his family, and with Mariam also. She was now 7 years of age, and used to go to confession every Saturday. She was longing to receive Holy Communion and so she slipped in among the other children, and this is how she made her First Communion. Her parish priest allowed her to carry on like that but discretely.

When she was 13 years of age, and without consulting her, her uncle rigged up a marriage for her with another uncle. When her aunt informed her of the affair and the conditions of the marriage, she was shattered. Abellin's voice surfaced in her heart. Determined to belong to Jesus, she spent the night before her marriage in prayer before the home icon, then full of an unusual joy she cut her tresses and mixed them up with the jewels received. What a drama! Despite the anger and blows, she stuck to her determination to remain a virgin and was able to resist all the objections of her parish priest, and even of a bishop, a friend of the family. From then onwards her uncle treated her like a slave and her parish priest refused her absolution; everyone was like ice with her.

In this state of abandonment, she longed to see her brother again, but since she didn't know how to write, she dictated a letter for him and in secret went to see a former Muslim servant who was about to leave for Nazareth. She was well received by him and told him all about her sufferings at her uncle's. The Muslim then advised her to put an end to everything and to abandon the ruthless religion of her family and to convert to Islam. She reacted with such vehemence that the man himself became violent and in a state of rage, flung her to the ground and with his sword cut her throat. Thinking that she was dead lying in a pool of blood, he wrapped her up in a veil and dumped her in a dark street. This took place in the night of the 7th – 8th September 1858.

Later on through obedience she was obliged to tell the story of her suffering. Mariam told how dead and caught up in

by
Father Pierre
Médebielle, SCJ
1906-1995
in "Jérusalem"
Review of the
Latin Patriarchate
(1983, pages
201-239)



2011

JANUARY

14	Joyeux anniversaire Buon compleanno	F. Bertrand Belhartz F. Hyacinthe Ali Konan F. Giuseppe Pozzi
17	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Jean-Luc Morin P Serge Braga Latta
18	Happy birthday 15 años de profesión	Br. Andrew Ferris Hno Gustavo Angarola
19	Joyeux anniversaire Feliz cumpleaños	P. Henri Lamasse Hno. Raúl Villalba Maylin
20	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Mirco Trusgnach
22	Happy birthday	Fr. Charles Enakius Fr. Alberto Pensa
25	Joyeux anniversaire	F. Élisée Mambo Sika
26	Happy birthday	Fr. Chodki Damronganurak
27	Joyeux anniversaire	F. Arsène Raymond Noba
28	Joyeux anniversaire Feliz cumpleaños	P. Pierre Salla P. Francisco de Paula

FEBRUARY

1	Joyeux anniversaire Buon compleanno	P. André Gillet P. Albino de Giobbi
2	35 años de votos	P. Carlos Escurra Cantero P. Miguel Angel Cardozo P. Constancio Lopez Morales
3	Happy birthday	Fr. Tidkham Jailertrit
5	Buon compleanno	P. Giuseppe Franchi
7	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Joseph Saint-Pé
8	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Henri Marsaa-Poey
9	15 años de sacerdocio	P. Osvaldo Caniza
10	Buon compleanno	P. Pietro Felet
12	Joyeux 101 ans	P. Joseph Canton
13	Buon compleanno	P. Natale Re
15	Joyeux anniversaire Happy birthday	F. Paul Lamothe Br. Antony J. Livin Fernando

and in our very weaknesses he can do great things so as to spread his Kingdom among all mankind, as we recognise God for our Father and behave like brothers. It is only by being aware of our smallness, of our trust in God's love and our self offering that we can become indifferent to wanting something and wanting it only if God so wills.

It is only then that we are ready to lose our life if God so wills, and to remain faithful in trials as we entrust ourselves to Divine Providence. And so, we can give ourselves for the mission, not for self but for the others; not as a personal project but an ecclesial one; not for gaining in prestige but in order to do good. Only then will we be poor, chaste and obedient because Jesus is our unique wealth, the object of our pride and the guarantor of our freedom. Only then will we be able to live in communion, because we shall be ready to accept from our brothers to become better and to give the best of ourselves so that the brother may grow. Then only will we act with the conviction that the important is not that everything should go according to my wishes, that I should be recognised but that God's will be done, even if that should upset me! The result of all this is not bitterness but the joy of tasting the essential: the tender love of God, the fulfilment of his Will and the spread of the Kingdom.

Fr. Gaspar Fernandez SCJ

Father Etcheccopar wrote... to Fr. Jean Magendie, 3rd February 1882

For the past two months I have been feeling rather weak and the business is taking whatever strength I have left. I shall content myself simply by saying to you with Father Garicoits: 1. Keep ever before you God and his adorable will; 2. To go to God and as an expression of his will, there are our rule and Constitutions. 3. This is the aim and this is the means, according to the grace which is yours and the duties of your station. Then by respecting the one and the other with utmost sensitivity, meditate on each word and may Our Lady bless you!



Second appointment for a spiritual preparation for the General Chapter 14-31 May in Bethlehem.

From the recollection given to the Fraternity Nè Mè (Adiapodoumé, 18th December 2010).

The incarnation: God in human weakness

2. The Kenose (Phil 2,6-11) : the humility of God

The humiliation of the Son of God, his obedience at the moment of his Incarnation, is made known to us in the famous hymn to the Philippians which is the foundation of any meditation on the behaviour willed by God at the moment of his Son's entrance into our world: "*he did not cling to his equality with God*" or "*he did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited*" "*but he emptied himself taking the form of a slave.*"

The Son was the equal of his Father, of the same divine condition; it was his right to claim the privileges as God's ambassador; just as an ambassador has a right to all the honours which are due to him who sent him in the first place; instead of that, he was obedient to the conditions of his human birth, wanting to be treated as God's servant who becomes the slave of his brothers adopting their condition so as to transmit his to them. From the first instant Jesus is in the chosen state of obedience and humility, of total renouncement to his own will and totally available to the will of his Father. He accepted everything as coming from his Father, including his death on a cross.

Bethlehem intends reconciling us with that weakness and fragility which we find in ourselves and which could easily lead us to rebel against a Creator who had been rather ungenerous with us. The Incarnation teaches us that the greatness of man has nothing to do with his strength and his power but in his capacity to give of himself: "*As we contemplate Jesus at Bethlehem*" says Jean Vanier, "*we discover a God **who is coming down** to our level. We ought therefore to understand that the divine character in each of us, is not so much our capacity to exceed which drives us to rise above the others, but the ease which we have of **lowering** ourselves, of serving for love's sake, of being **poor with the poor.***" Fr Varillon also offers us a

teaching the younger pupils at Droitwich, and although he always felt that teaching was never his *forte*, he appreciated in retrospect how much the experience gave him.

When Bishop Derek Worlock offered us a pastoral opening in the Portsmouth Diocese in 1969, Tony was sent to answer the call, and along with Fr. Philip Ilsley scj was soon established by the sea at St. Columba's Bridgemaury. The following decade was probably the most creative in his life as he ministered to a wide variety of parishioners, young sailors, and teenage school children. Some of his friends from that period remained life long companions and one of them who owned a boat used to take him on regular sea fishing trips.

The image of Jesus calling his disciples by the Sea of Galilee meant a great deal to him, and in 1981 when he joined a Holy land pilgrimage, it was the experience of sitting by this same Sea at Capernaum that moved him to tears. For a while Tony became a great enthusiast for the Ministry to Priests movement (a mutual support group for clergy) but his brethren noticed a certain restlessness within him. He would be enthusiastic for a place, a project or a parish for few years but then would become restless and want to move on. Subsequent postings to Fegg Hayes (Stoke-on-Trent) Droitwich parish, and Holy Name, Great Barr began to reveal this more and more.

Several families took him to heart and cared for him. The Leigh family in particular looked after him when he was in the parish, and the Dwyer family cared for him in his declining years. Although he had found studies difficult and did not relish teaching he was a surprisingly good teacher at parish catechetical level. Parishioners from Bridgemaury and Fegg Hayes remember with gratitude his simple way of teaching the gospel message and making difficult concepts accessible. The post-Vatican II catechetical movement had really taken off in the Portsmouth Diocese and Tony was much inspired by its then leaders at L.S.U. College of Education.

The New Millennium saw his health in rapid decline, and with some misgivings his superiors accepted his request to retire from active ministry at 69 and live with former

IN MEMORIAM

England



Oldbury

10th December 1932

Olton Solihull

7th January 2011

Father Anthony Box

An early recollection of Tony Box goes back to 1969, shortly after he was appointed to a Parish on the Hampshire Coast. He had taken up sea-fishing and was practising casting with his new beach-casting rod, on the football pitch at Sambourne. With some casts he reached over 80 metres. I remember thinking that he must have been very enthusiastic to practise with a rod over 200 km from the sea.

Tony Box was born in Oldbury in the Black Country, that part of England where the industrial revolution began, with its tradition of coal mining, metal smelting and manufacturing. His family of modest means were faithful traditional Catholics and after WWII were quite happy to see their only son go to the little Sacred Heart Apostolic School at Tenbury Wells under Fr. Alec Biggert scj. Tony's uncle Cyril Hazelwood scj had been ordained in Bethlehem a short while before, and his cousin Cyril Barlow began training at the Birmingham Diocesan Seminary.

Tony passed through three short-lived SCJ seminaries, Tenbury Wells, Fritham and Caerleon before priestly ordination in 1957 at Birmingham Oratory along with Fr. Ted Simpson scj. He never found studies easy, so Fr. Jack Waddoups scj coaxed and nursed him through philosophy and theology and encouraged him all the way. While at Caerleon he picked up many practical skills that helped the cash-starved seminary survive, like plumbing, joinery and motor maintenance. His father, a hairdresser, and one of the few parents of scholastics to possess a motor car used to visit from time to time bringing gifts for the community that lifted their spirits in the cold and wet Welsh climate. Students knew that their house (Caerleon Hall) was where Charles Darwin wrote part of 'The Origin of the Species' and they used to remark with grim humour that they could see why.

After ordination he stayed at Caerleon for a year picking up some G.C.E.s and then passed a year in Bétharram helping look after the young schoolchildren. The 1960's were spent

way of poverty so as to become like the God who appeared in Bethlehem. *"We shall only enter into God when we are stripped of everything. The material poverty of Bethlehem and Nazareth is but the sign of a poverty which is much deeper. The immense poverty of God, infinite, absolute, without which we couldn't say that God is love. The God in whom we believe is infinitely humble, in other words, he has been stripped of all signs of prestige. Prestige is always a non-essential. In us there is a certain need of prestige, of rubbish, of counterfeit, which does not exist in God. God is humility personified."*

Bethlehem teaches us that the true face of God is manifested in weakness and humility. In his humility God doesn't impose himself on us; he accepts the individual but without taking possession of him, always leaving him his freedom. Our Founder, St Michael Garicoits, has well developed the power of God's love which acts with humility. In his Manifesto, which is a foundation document, this power is presented to us as *"something which attracts us to divine love, a modal showing us the rules for love and the means of reaching the divine love"*.

"Behold him in the crib and hidden under the Eucharistic species. It is a manifestation for the benefit of all, a school open for all those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. What a school! What a master! What power and what gentleness in the lessons at the crib! What methods used to win over the greatest sinners!" "Such is the conduct of Our Lord in his Incarnation. In this sublime mystery he is an attraction, a modal and a support for souls; he attracts us, he enlightens us; he tries to place our hearts under the law of his love; but, finally, he requests but obliges nobody; what he needs are willing souls" (Saint Michael Garicoits, *Spiritual Doctrine*).

Laurent Bacho, SCJ continues...



The First Chapter of the St Michael Region

From the 13th to 18th January 2011, some thirty religious from France, Spain, Italy, Ivory Coast, The Holy Land, and the Central Africa Republic assembled at Betharram for their Regional Chapter. This was a time for listening and for dialogue, a time for meeting the brothers bringing with them the experiences, the calls, the worries and expectations of the different communities; it was an extraordinary time for discovering that the Word of God and his Will are expressed through the words and expectations of the others, even when it is not always evident.

The reports given by the Vicariate Superiors were important as was the Regional Superior's. Finally, the meditation proposed by Sister Martha, Superior General of the Daughters of the Cross, was important too. Starting with the Gospel of the Annunciation (Luke 1,26 – 38) she brought us back to the source in Jesus, God became incarnate to help us understand that the grace which has been given us is not to be squandered. *God has the initiative of coming to us. It is He who comes. We should therefore take the time to listen, to accept, and to love God, to let him do his will... He will always surprise us!*

Right from the first day all the delegates felt that they were co-responsible for the work of rereading and renewing community life. Its importance was all the more enhanced by the fact that this Chapter was the first of its kind since the reorganisation of the Congregation. Provinces have been replaced by Regions sub-divided into Vicariates. Hence the internationality of this assembly which broadened the horizons of the local communities opening them up to bigger and more complicated realities. Also the success of a Chapter depends on the willingness of each one and the commitment of the whole group to the good of the whole.

The following subjects were tackled: vocation animation and initial formation; community life, on-going formation and openness to the laity; internationality and missionary

of one hand at the two daily Masses, with a congregation of 25 to 40 adults. On Sundays at each of the two Masses there are about 200 people. On the other hand, because it is ideally situated our church sees a lot of passage.

In 2010 the parish celebrated its 140th birthday; in 2011 there will be the commemoration of 150 years of the presence of the "Basque Priests" in Uruguay. What does that mean for you? - Correction: We celebrated the 140th anniversary of the opening of the Church (in 1870) for the parish was erected more recently in 1931. As a matter of fact it was an opportunity, with the help of a pamphlet, to remind the parishioners in general and the diocese in particular of the early activities of Betharram in Uruguay. At the same time, it leaves us with a bitter taste when you think that we nearly dropped the parish during the provincial assembly in 2007; that the number of religious is very small; as well as myself (70 years of age), there is Fr Ruiz (80) and Brother Enrique (90), both very sick men, as well as that, there is no hope of any reinforcements possible. All this makes you wonder what sort of festivities we are going to have in 2011.

For years now, Betharram has no more vocations in Uruguay. Is it possible to imagine a pastoral for vocations? - In view of the composition of the parish community, any pastoral for vocations would have to be based on the college, where there are not that many young people (150 boys). One thing sure and certain: a young priest would have to come here to give the necessary impulse.

Would you have a message for your brothers in the Congregation? - More than a message it's a wish I would like to express. Would that St Michael would give us a clear sign that this mission in Uruguay should continue!

Would there be a Betharramite ready to relay this wish?

In memoriam

Fr Patrick Moulié (Vicariate of France-Spain, Anglet community) lost his mother, Mary, buried in Pau on November 9th, 2010. Let us pray for her.

Br. Aristide Keita N'Guébata, (Vicariate of the Central African Republic), received on January 18th the news of the death of his brother Narcisse, who was in Cameroon. Let us pray for him and for them.



5 MINUTES WITH... Father Enrique Gavel

The first Betharramite missionaries to South America called at Montevideo on 5th November 1856 and landed the next day at Buenos Aires. Four years later Fr Jean Baptiste Harbustan crossed the Rio de la Plata in the other direction to take charge of the Chapel belonging to the Basque (Vascos). In 1868 the Immaculate Conception School was opened. And the century-old story continues. Witness a Betharramite from Uruguay, Fr Enrique Gavel.

Nef: Can you tell us the story of your vocation? - It all began with a youngster whose grandmother brought by the hand to be an altar server in the so called Basque church, the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Montevideo. He was scarcely eight years of age. Fr Louis Marcel put this question to him: *Do you want to be a priest?* And he answered with an enthusiastic *Yes*. Two years later, after a year at the Basque College, a vocation matures gradually in Argentina, at the apostolicat in Barracas, next at the scholasticat of Androgue. Final vows confirmed this vocation, 50 years ago on the 1st March; in conclusion I was ordained priest in this same Church of the Basques at the end of 1963.

You spent many years director of the college in Montevideo; today you are Parish Priest. How would you describe your life as a priest? - From my ordination in 1963 up till 2008, my ministry was in colleges (Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Rosario). I was responsible for the teaching, discipline and management; and from the point of view of the pastoral, I was helped by the priests from the parish. As a result of an activity involving the college and the parish, I am on my own looking after the parish. For a priest it is a very good experience to carry out his ministry in the parish. It's a great pity that there is no one with whom to share such an enriching task.

What is your pastoral milieu like, socioeconomically speaking? - St Michael Garicoits' parish (together with the church of the Immaculate Conception) covers over 53 streets at the heart of Montevideo. This represents 6 500 inhabitants, mostly middle class people. Situated as it is in the centre of the town, our church is used mainly by relatively old adults. The young can be counted on the fingers

animation; organisation of the government and economy of the Congregation; communication and mutual relations. Instead of wasting time in formal exchanges about the management and the efficacy of structures, the debate was directed on the individual religious and his daily life. This resulted in the propositions and suggestions which will be submitted to the next General Chapter. Sure enough, we were tempted to change nothing, to imagine nothing new and different for the near future; there was the risk of wasting time on short term works which would be less and less evident, in view of the lack of vocations and a certain weariness in Europe. But men of God are not going to let themselves be conditioned by fear and a lack of trust in the future. The future is built by thinking, like Brother Emile that "the charism of the Founder is not the property of the Fathers and Brothers, but that it belongs to all; and each one of us must be faithful to it so that others may discover it and be won over by it."

The Regional Superior's report was well received and eventually taken up in the groups, particularly the invitation addressed "to the religious and communities to raise their eyes and look beyond the particular and enjoy the vision of the whole". The Delegates felt that they were at a cross roads of their history and which was not easy to negotiate. In the face of the lack of visibility of consecrated life in a society culturally pagan, full of prejudices on the morality and the consistency of the life of religious and priests today, the Betharramites know, according to Fr Graziano, that "*greater power must be given to local realities, and that the religious and the communities must feel that they are all engaged together on the same route, by being willing to be part of common projects.*"

Hence the conviction that the period we are going through can be a providential occasion for rediscovering and proposing our priestly and religious ministry within the Church, on the strength of our experience. Naturally all this brings us to examining our present situation and to suggesting concrete answers to these questions: how is one to offer

the brothers in community an apostolic commitment which they can undertake? How are we to promote where ever we are, information on Betharram, the work it does for the promotion and education of mankind, with a view to vocations? How can we envisage the new forms of poverty and emergency situations? How can we help the brothers to acquire professional skills in a particular ministry? How can we encourage communities with similar ministries to collaborate, and how can we accompany them in this? How are we to restructure communities showing signs of fatigue and apostolic routine? How describe individual responsibility within a shared community project? What organisation from the point of view of finances can be envisaged at every level? How are greater participation and co-responsibility to be encouraged for the laity by entrusting them with posts of management and directorship in the works and activities where the religious are no longer present?

Have been appointed to the General Chapter and for the vicariates of:

Central Africa: Fr. Tiziano Pozzi

Ivory Coast: Fr. Sylvain Dansou Houkpatin

France-Spain: Fr. Jean-Dominique Delgue, Br. Émile Garat, Fr. Jacky Moura, Fr. Beñat Oyhenart.

Northern Italy: Fr. Gianluca Limonta, Fr. Alessandro Paniga, Fr. Piero Trameri

South-Centre Italy: Fr. Aldo Nespoli, Fr. Simone Panzeri

Holy Land: Fr. Pietro Felet

It would not be easy to answer all these questions and the General Chapter in Bethlehem next May will probably not be enough. But nothing is to be neglected. History teaches us, through Mary's answer to the message of the Angel: *Fiat voluntas Dei*. St Michael Garicoits, our Founder, gives echo to this with his *Here I am*, to which he added: *no delay, no reserve, no looking back*. In Mary's answer to the Angel and the availability of St Michael every Betharramite can find the words to say that he is aware of his limitations, as much as in the strength which God gives to all who believe and trust in Him. We shall let ourselves be guided by events, people and Jesus given to us by God. We shall let ourselves be convinced like the shepherds on Christmas night, to go out and make the announcement; like the Magi who took another route home because they saw and they believed. We shall let ourselves be convinced that in order to be fully faithful to our vocation we have no alternative than to be at God's service by sharing with all the Love of which the Betharramites know they are capable.

Angelo Riva, SCJ

Congregation

Brainstorming in Rome ■ From January 24th to February 4th, there was a studying atmosphere in the generalate in Rome. With St. Michael in glory as a backdrop (the restored tapestry of his beatification) 11 Fathers worked hard for the next General Chapter. The Preparatory Committee (the members of the Council of the Congregation) planned the themes of the Chapter and the practical details. At the same time, the commission concerned was giving the final touches to the text of the Rule of Life to be submitted to the Chapter. At the end of the meetings, as St Michael said in the letter which inspired their concluding "narratio fidei", the participants felt that "God blessed [their] work, and this led to this peaceful and restful expression of praise: blessed be God" (letter 392).

Vicariate of Ivory Coast

Anti-crisis friendship ■ The Betharramite lay association "Ne Me" lived its traditional New Year's meeting with the community of Adiapodoumé on January 15th. The joy of being together in discussing, celebrating Mass and sharing meal, strengthened their friendship, and encouraged all of them to face the anguish caused by the political uncertainty.

Vicariate of Paraguay

Priest according to the Heart of Jesus ■ On Saturday, March 5th, Brother Alberto Barrios Zaracho will be ordained as a priest in his hometown of San Joaquin (Diocese of Coronel Oviedo). Lets us join him in thanking the Lord and let us pray for his ministry, with all Betharramite Religious in the Guarani Country.

Vicariate of England

S.C. Jubilee ■ On 14th January, the Olton Parishioners celebrated 30 years of the arrival of Betharram Fathers and Brothers. Taking over from the Capuchins, the Scj Fathers made the Friary their formation house in England. Fr. Edward Simpson, Parish Priest since 1981, presided the thanksgiving Mass. During the refreshment, Br. Andrew Ferris, Superior of the Community, expressed heartfelt thanks to the parishioners for support and love. Mr. Loughran, speaking on behalf of them, appreciated hearty the presence and mission of the Sacred Heart Fathers and Brothers.



St Michael Region



Fr. Etchecopar Region



Brd Miriam Region