

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

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19 March

*“We celebrate in a
special way saint Jo-
seph, protector of
the Church and
of the Institute”
(Rule of Life, art. 92)*

The Extraordinary Life of Sister Marie

this decision the Superior issued a declaration on the 12th December 1868 saying: “Our Ecclesiastical superiors did not think that we could possibly keep her with us, saying that the cloister had the privilege of caring for such souls. The Sisters obeyed. This privileged soul is yours. May God be blessed!”

On the 15th June 1867 Mariam had arrived at the Carmelite monastery in Pau with Sr Veronica Leeves (1823 – 1906). This latter was an extraordinary individual. She was the daughter of an Anglican clergyman, had converted to Catholicism in Malta and had entered with the Sisters of St Joseph in 1851. Having worked for a few years in Calicut in India, it was decided that she should found a Carmelite Third Order for women, and for this purpose was sent to Rome. In 1866 the foundation failed and she returned to Marseille. There for a time she was Novice Mistress after which she left with Mariam for the Carmelite monastery in Pau. Having resumed the foundation of the Carmelite Third Order, it eventually became a Congregation of Indian Carmelite religious.

Mother Veronica painted the following portrait of her 21 year old novice: “When you saw her you wouldn’t have given her more than 12 years of age. Her small stature, her open expression, the difficulty she had in speaking our language, her total ignorance of everything - for she could neither read nor write either in Arabic or in French -, all combined to make her look like a child. Amongst ourselves, we used to refer to her as “the little Sister”. Yet it was most surprising that along with such simplicity she was gifted with great wisdom, a lot of discernment and if she was lacking in acquired gifts, her heart and her spirit are full of the gifts which constitute the great souls.”

(Continues)

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Family News

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



**A word from the
Superior General**

The humility and generosity of a great missionary

In this issue

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This missionary is St Paul; his many voyages, the founding of so many Churches, his fidelity, despite the difficulties, to the mission entrusted to him by the Risen Christ in person, his courage and his devotion show him to be a great missionary. He did everything for the mission, hence his generosity.

At the same time, his fragility and weakness are known; he was perfectly aware of them. They helped him to remain in his place; so much so that the missionary disappears in the presence of the One he is announcing: Jesus, beloved Son of the Father, born of a woman, died and whom the Father raised from the dead to reconcile all men and to perform all things in him.

I am inviting you to do a *Lectio* with the two letters to the Corinthians, from where the phrase is chosen to set the tone of our forthcoming General Chapter in Bethlehem: *We are only the earthenware jars that hold this treasure* (2 Cor 4,7)

We can remember the ardour of the young Saul looking after the coats of those stoning Stephen (Acts 7,58), and his relentlessness in chasing the Christians. But when the Risen Christ burst in upon his life and flung him to the ground; there he met Jesus who personified himself *the one you are persecuting* (Acts 9,5). The same power which had thrown him to the ground, helped him to get up and go into the town where he would be told what he had to do, for *this man is my chosen instrument to bring my Name before the pagan nations.* (Acts 9,15)

This meeting completely changed the direction of his life. From then onwards he considered himself to be an

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“avorton” (1 Cor 15,8). Facing men or communities, he presents himself in all his weakness, fearful, hesitating, unable to convince by his eloquence (1 Cor 2, 1-4) *If I am to boast, then let me boast of my feebleness* (2 Cor 11,30) *for we rejoice each time that we are weak* (2 Cor 13,9), *when I am weak it is then that I am strongest* (2 Cor 12,10), *although I am nothing* (2 Cor 12,11).

Paul has two reasons for highlighting his weakness. First of all there is the fact that he is the disciple of Jesus Crucified: *He who was rich has become poor because of us* (2 Cor 8,9). Then the fact of being a missionary; if he appears vulnerable and powerless, those who see and hear him will not be impressed by his eloquence or his debates, but will be open to the Crucified Christ whom he is announcing and to his power to save in God. *When I came to you to announce the mysteries of God I did not want to know anything else but Jesus Christ, the Crucified Messiah* (1 Cor 2, 1-2).

What motivated Paul, was that the foundations of his preaching, his pride and glory, is Jesus crucified (cf. 2 Cor 13,3-4) In Jesus, in his weakness, his vulnerability, his deprivations and obedience, God the Father shows his power to save. *We are preaching a crucified Christ, scandal for the Jews, folly for the pagans. But for those whom God calls, whether they are Jews or Greeks, a Christ who is the power and wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom and God's weakness is stronger than human strength... It was to shame the wise that God chose what is foolish by human reckoning, and to shame what is strong that he chose what is weak by human reckoning; those whom the world thinks common and contemptible are the ones that God has chosen... those who are nothing at all to show up those who are everything.* (1 Cor 1,23-31)

His weakness is evident also in the trials, the tribulations and the persecutions borne for Christ (cf. 2 Cor 4,8-18): *When we arrived in Macedonia we found no rest, but there was distress all the time: outside, conflicts, within, fears* (2 Cor 7,5). These are the characteristics which identify him to his crucified Master and make him a credible disciple. But they are also the characteristics which bind him to the men and women ridi-

The Extraordinary Life of Sister Marie

3. En route for Carmel



Still haunted by the thought of her brother, Mariam booked a place on the boat bound for Saint-Jean-d'Acre but due to the storm at sea the boat was blown off course and landed at Jaffa. There she joined other pilgrims going to Jerusalem and found a place for herself.

A mysterious young man approached her in the Holy City, sang the praises of perfect chastity, led her to the Holy Sepulchre; there he helped her to make the vow of virginity and, before leaving her, reminded her of the different stages of her existence foretold her by the religious in Alexandria. Accused of having stolen a ring from her mistress she was thrown into prison but was soon released when the real thief was discovered. Mariam again caught the boat from Jaffa bound for Acre. But the storm forced it to carry on to Beirut where she again entered service ; there were fresh trials, accusation of theft, quickly cleared; a mortal fall, extraordinary blindness which lasted 40 days; unexplained cure and visions.

Mariam was too well appreciated for her service, and so she changed masters and ended up by following a Melkite family Najjar, as far as Marseille. Here too she was very appreciated, but as a servant she was very disconcerting with her ecstasies, her illnesses, her visions and her longing to enter religious life.

The Sisters of St Joseph ended up by admitting her, despite the fact that she could neither read nor write, that she spoke poor French, she would use “tu” with everyone, in the Arab fashion; this was something she did all her life even with the Patriarch of Jerusalem. She was the perfect servant and very devoted. But her ecstasies increased and, in 1866, the stigmata appeared for the first time, on her hands and feet. She became a sign of contradiction with these extraordinary signs in an active community. While the Superior General who held her in high esteem was away, the majority of the Council did not admit her into the Novitiate. Heartbroken at

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



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15	Joyeux anniversaire Happy birthday	Fr. Paul Lamothe Br. Antony J. Livin Fernando
17	Buon compleanno 55 ans de sacerdoce	P. Natale Re P. Jean Lambert
19	65 ans de profession	P. Eugène Lhouerrou
21	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Bruno Ierullo P. Jorge Murias P. José Gogorza
22	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Gabriel Verley
23	Buon compleanno	Fr. Butrus Alhijazin Hno. Osmar Caceres Spaini
24	Happy birthday	Br. Michael Richards
27	Feliz cumpleaños	Hno. Daniel Pavón Galeano
29	Joyeux anniversaire	Fr. Jean-Pierre Nécol
30	Happy Birthday	Fr. Pairot P. Nauchachawan
31	Buon compleanno	P. Piero Trameri
1	Joyeux anniversaire Feliz cumpleaños	P. Jean Gillet P. Daniel González
2	Buon compleanno Happy birthday	P. Angelo Riva Br. John Dawson Fr. Jiraphat Raksikhao
3	Buon compleanno	P. Franco Cesana P. Ermanno Rasero
4	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Jean Casenave
5	Buon compleanno	P. Tiziano Pozzi
10	Buon compleanno Happy birthday	P. Aldo Nespoli P. Mario Zappa Fr. Subancha Yindeengarm
12	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Gérard Badie P. Laurent Bacho
13	Buon compleanno Happy birthday	P. Ugo Donini Fr. Shaju Kalappurackal
16	Happy birthday	Fr. Chanchai Temaroonrung

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culed, a thirst for the consolation and salvation brought by a loving God. *If someone is weak then I am weak also* (2 Cor 11,29). These are the situations where he experiences and learns *not to put our trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead* (2 Cor 1,9). It is also where he feels divine consolations, the only thing which really fills his life and gives strength for his mission. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who comforts us in all our sorrows so that we can offer others, in their sorrows, the consolation which we have received from God ourselves* (2 Cor 1,4). This is the way chosen by God to reveal himself: *My grace is enough for you; my power is at its best in weakness* (2 Cor 12,9).

The Apostle doesn't make use of his weakness as an excuse to avoid commitment or to limit his dedication. On the contrary, by trusting not to himself but to God's grace, he throws himself into the race and fears no obstacle to carry out the mission received from the Lord. Here is where is rooted the generosity which his weakness does not invalidate.

As we journey towards the General Chapter and as we contemplate the life of Paul, disciple and genuine missionary, each one of us, Fathers and Brothers of Betharram, must make his examen on what really motivates his life as a consecrated religious and his mission, and ask for the grace of conversion. Of course the future of our family depends on a well organised pastoral of vocations; but it depends above all on the fidelity of each one to the evangelical life style for which God is the sole indispensable, and for that reason leads to accepting to lead a life in the logic of the grain of wheat and the washing of the feet as taught by Jesus. St Ignatius of Loyola clearly understood this in the three fold offering in the Spiritual Exercises (nr. 98): *Eternal Lord of the Universe, in the presence of your infinite goodness, of your glorious Mother and of all the saints of Heaven's court, by your Grace and help, I make this offering: I intend and desire, and it is my deliberate resolve, granted it be for the more perfect service and greater praise of your Majesty, to imitate you in putting up with all injustice, all abuse, all poverty in reality no less than in the spirit, should your most Sacred Majesty be willing to choose and admit me to this state of life.*



40 Days We have been in Lent for the past few days. How come that in our conversations, it has been reduced to a painful time of miserable and useless efforts, a time of privations which we pretend to be self imposed like hypocrites, like a plan in which we don't even believe?

Behold the time of grace, a favourable time, a time which is a gift from God to help us measure what is best in us. It would seem that there is only God to believe in our possible sanctity, in our growth, in our blossoming, in our fulfilment.

To enter into Lent means to be submerged in accepting God's desire. In his great wisdom he has given us the capacity to love like he does. He knows how this can nourish our existence to bring it to full happiness. He helps us to realise that life can block up the system.

With his Son Jesus, he offers us the possibility of entering on a path where we are going to let ourselves be tempted by what is best in us. You will have to admit that this is something which requires some change of attitudes: give over chasing after time, being distracted, thinking one's self indispensable, check the flood of self created needs which make us slaves.

FASTING, not only the question of food, but our ears, our engagement diary, the ipod, the radio and internet, the mobile phone and SMS, consummation and speed...

PRAY: invent zones of silence where it is wonderful to be exposed to the kindly sunshine of God's presence and start listening to his breath of life so as not to be in suspended animation.

SHARE: This could be offering someone the alms of being my neighbour. Solidarity/charity? It is on purpose that these two words are associated like the aspects of sharing: charity is the love which has been put in our hearts by God and which drives us to love our neighbour. Solidarity is that love set in motion by concrete actions where we

it's thanks to the others: "To appreciate what one is worth as a unique and invaluable individual doesn't mean that we have to be believing that we are perfect and better than the others. It doesn't drive us to comparison with others, to be in competition with them or to belittle them. Love of self begins with a genuine compassion for self. Far from self condemnation because of errors, or in sufferings and in self humiliation before our failings, the person who loves himself, listens to himself, consoles himself encourages himself and trusts himself. The individual who trusts himself is not overcome by the thought that he might make mistakes. And even if he does, he knows how to make good the failing. For him they are ways of finding out what not to do. This trust is built up by these convictions: I feel guilty; I have no need to compare with others. I rather compare what I have realised with what I have done previously; I accept my present level of skills, while at the same time I strive after self improvement." (Maubourquette 33-35)

Laurent Bacho, S.C.J

Father Etcheccopar wrote... to Fr. Jean Magendie, 4 March 1894

The ordinations have had to be put off... The seminarians are making good use of these delays imposed by the Church: because the sentiments which are theirs seem very good to us, and because they are good religious, they will make good priests, priests after the example of Father Garicoits himself. It is hard to keep up teaching, theology and one's own sanctity as well as that of others. It's a case of self immolation! But how are we to recognise the children of the family? Is it not by recognising in them the characteristics of their father? Look! Throughout a whole lifetime piling up all the hardest jobs; servant and pupil at the Major Seminary; always both master and slave; the first and the last, head and beast of burden of the Community !!! Oh, whatever we do! Nature will shout, baulk, be furious in vain. Noblesse oblige! Our flag will drag us along; our motto will carry us off; and whether you like it or not, you are running under the auspices of your Founder while saying to yourself: rather die than run away!



Third part of a spiritual preparation for the General Chapter, 14-31 May in Bethlehem.

From the Recollection given to the Ne Me Fraternity, (Adiapodoume), 18th December 2010.

The incarnation: God in human weakness

3. Humility – the road to truth and freedom

The Incarnation of the Son is meant to convince us to what extent we are loved by God the Father since he has sent his Son to live among mankind in an extraordinary proximity. This is how the Father shows us the extent of his esteem for us and how he appreciates us: *“It is the burning desire of Our Lord that we should be loved with all his heart.”* (DS 51). Since God takes such care of me, it is pointless spending time wondering what I am worth. We have been called not to a life withdrawn within ourselves but to openness and caring for others. (Gal 5, 22-23). True, each one of us needs the love of the others, but when this need to be loved and appreciated is overwhelming we are losing our liberty; we are wasting our energy in wanting to be recognised instead of seeking the happiness which we can spread around us. *“Supposing that a similar measure of glory should reflect on God from the esteem and appreciation which mankind bestows on us, we should have a preferential love for contradictions and humiliations so as to be totally conformed to the sentiments of Our Lord”* (DS 49).

Whenever we are less bothered about ourselves, deceptions and failures are relative and are judged to be the result of our human condition without our being put off and destroyed. *“Our Lord came down from Heaven to teach us how to please his Father, to carry out his will, to love humiliations and sufferings in the same measure as the world loves honours, to seek out the cross with greater diligence than the men of this world seek the glory of here below. Oh God, come to our aid! Lord, help us to appreciate these things! Grant that we may find our consolation in the humility of your Divine Son”!* (DS 109).

Sometimes such humility has led to exaggerations. It is not a question of low self esteem by comparing one's self constantly with the others, thinking that if we are weak

pay tribute to the links which unite us to all mankind. The reference on this theme is Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical “Love in Truth”.

So, are we ready for this season of Lent? What a joy this time can be? For pity's sake don't let's adopt a sad expression for entering into it! On the contrary, the Gospel invites us to perfume ourselves and to be smart so that the beauty of the heart is evident, so that Easter will crown this favourable time with a final bouquet. Have a good LENT everybody!

Jacky Moura,SCJ

Alas! The Rule of Life!

This is what the poet had to say about it:

*What is clearly imagined is clearly proclaimed.
And the words to express it are clearly expressed.*

And this too:

*“Hasten slowly and don't be discouraged!
If you must begin the work twenty times over.
Polish it up and make it shine.
Add some things and for others strike them out!”*

We thought it was going to last forever!

It had to be rechecked. There were texts which appeared; then there were others.

1st November 2008: a text *“ad experimentum”* nearly the final text; while we waited patiently for the General Chapter.

January 2010: We had an excuse for remembering the experience, the mother of all sciences! By then it was almost certain, the 2010 text would go up to the General Chapter of 2011.

We'd forgotten the poet! In their wisdom, the Commis-

* Nicolas Boileau,
l'Art Poétique
(1674), Chant I

sion set about the task again. Nearly twenty times over for the final text which was both *polished and shining*.

Two years of experience and three regional chapters later where religious, communities, vicariates and regions had their word. Thank you each and every one!

Some phrases have been lightened: “*add some things, strike out others*” so we did! Phrases were made more readily understood.

The place and role of Vicariates and regional vicars have been clarified, and up graded; we now have “the vicariate bursar.”

Eight articles in the Constitutions and a statute concerning the “bursar’s offices”? OK! One statute.

In the light of the Code of Canon Law, the chapter entitled “Leaving the Congregation” has been changed to “On separation with a member”.

There are still two points:

- The general chapter, to vote a text (which others will come along and change!);
- The daily life to put into practice what will have been voted!

Let’s hasten slowly! Let’s not be discouraged! We’ll get there! Our Father Saint Michael Garicoits tells us:

“The Catholic Church, superiors, rules show us the way; they are like sign posts on the roads.”

Or else:

“Our rules are great instruments cooperating with grace; they are the straight roads leading to God and placing us under the light of the Holy Spirit; for us they are like an eighth sacrament. Furthermore in them we find a sure guide and monitors who remind us of our duties, even our obligations under the natural law.”

Beñat Oyhénart, SCJ

Commission for the revision of the Rule of Life



5 MN with...

and Fr Petrelli, to whom I must add Frs Luigi Gusmeroli and Alessandro Del Grande, convinced me of the reality of what our Founder used to say: “Far from being a hindrance to God’s work, by their sufferings and prayers draw down blessings from heaven”. Despite the suffering of not living in community, our sick brothers never felt alone or useless. They understood that their life was in God’s hands and that they were called to live it in faith. They prayed so much for vocations, for their confreres, for our religious family. That can only draw down God’s blessings on us.

Does the spirit of St Michael help you in your ministry with the aged, their families and the staff? - I have always lived the spirit of Betharram as a “family spirit” what draws people closer with the gentleness, the simplicity and availability which St Michael wanted for himself and for his spiritual sons. Here, I try to be present and attentive for the people and to do as best I can for them. As far as the families and staff are concerned, I try to give a good witness of a Christian life at the service of the aged.

As delegate to the forthcoming General Chapter have you a message for the world wide religious you are going to meet? - The message I would like to give the Betharramites scattered throughout the world is to love one another better and to treat each confrere they meet like a brother to be welcomed and served. When one of them is in trouble, let us remember the words of our Founder: *Nothing is to be spared in the care of the sick. Let us avoid every word, and every action which would make them think that they are a burden* (DS 172). It’s not just a question of physical sickness but moral suffering which can be a trial for many of us. The strong message from the General Chapter would be that every religious should feel proud of being Betharramite and that he should increase the spirit of communion and generosity which our Founder wanted for us, his spiritual sons.

clear on our attitude towards them and first of all within our communities: *Nothing is to be spared in the care of the sick* (DS 172) and Saint John of God tells his religious to welcome the sick as brothers and neighbours, saying: *Always have charity, for where ever charity is lacking, God is not present either, even though he is everywhere.* Let's remember what St Michael used to say: *Sickness is a gift, a grace in God's plans.* (DS 127) *All that we do for the sick it is for God that we are doing it.* And our Rule of Life says: *"To follow Christ means to be at the service of mankind"* (art 10) and *we wish to share the hopes and joys, the sadness and anguish of all mankind"* (art 10) such is the ministry which I try to have in the Care Home.

For several years you lived in community with two sick brothers who were guests in that Home. How did you live through it? - When I arrived here as chaplain, Fr Angelo Pessina had already preceded me by 15 years. A traffic accident had left him disabled, but Fr Angelo had always lived this trial with faith, courage and generosity. Although he was some distance from a community he considered himself closely linked to our religious family. He was delighted to have visits from his confreres. He often spoke of St Michael and of our spirituality. His attitude was always admirable and a comfort. Then when Fr Angelo Petrelli was admitted in 2005 we tried to spend some time together, to pray together and to live here the spirit of Betharram. We formed a little Betharramite community. As for me, the words and witness of these true sons of St Michael upheld and encouraged me. Fr Angelo Pessina left us on 27th January 2008 and Fr Angelo Petrelli on 12th April 2009. I miss them both very much.

St Michael used to say: "The sick are a blessing for the communities." Has your experience helped you in any way to understand better our Founder's declaration? - The experience which I had with those two confreres, Fr Pessina

Father Carlos Rodriguez Saiz

On Monday morning, 21st February, it was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Fr Rodriguez in the hospital of Chiang Mai, Thailand. It is true that his health had been declining for some years. In 2009 I had invited him to come home with me to be looked after in Europe. But he preferred to rest among his faithful in the Chiang Mai cemetery.

Ordained priest in Bordeaux in 1960, he celebrated the golden jubilee of his ordination last year. During the long years spent in Thailand (50 this year) he consecrated 47 of them to the Karian mountain tribes: 27 years at Methoklo and nearly 20 years at Mepon. These two figures tell us the type of man he was: to all appearances he was as solid as a rock, motionless, steadfast!

In 1970 Mgr Lacoste sent me to join Fr Rodriguez to be introduced to the language and pastoral for the Karians. During those two years I got to know him and held him in high esteem particularly during the evenings spent together, especially during the rainy season.

The man was not talkative, but after a little glass of saké he would open his heart and I was happy to receive his many counsels; two unforgettable years spent in that mountain village. Far away from everything, without roads, electricity or dispensary, for the countless patients. Carlos was master of many skills: mechanic, watch-repairer, and above all doctor for these people the poorest of the poor.

Every month we used to go to a meeting with the Fathers at Chiang; after a long walk of several hours in the mountain tracks, we would reach a road suitable for vehicles and there we would wait for the possible passage of a lorry.

In his bag Fr Rodriguez always had a collection of watches given to him by the youngsters in the villages to be repaired in town. But the days preceding our departure Fr Rodriguez couldn't help but open them to take a look at

IN MEMORIAM

Thailand



Pampoliega

27 January 1933



Chiang Mai

21 February 2011

the mechanism. But putting them together again was another story; they often ended up in pieces at the watchmaker's. A similar fate befell the generator.

Fr Carlos was also a doctor and we would make use of our trips to town to stock up with medication: antibiotics, vitamins, antiparasites. In the village there was a constant queue of patients: Oh Father's injections! They were the best to be had! They cured immediately and wrought miracles!

Good Fr Rodriguez, what memories! You were a good missionary and had the patience of Karians amongst the Karians!

Don't forget us now that you are near to the Sacred Heart and Our Lady. We cannot forget you.

Pierre Caset, SCJ



St Michael
Region

Vicariate of Center Africa

Ordination to diaconate ■ On February 27th, in the church of Niem, Br Martial Mengué was ordained as deacon by Mgr Gianni, bishop of Bouar. Our prayers and wishes for fruitful Ministry accompany our brother.



Fr. Etchecopar
Region

Vicariate of Paraguay

A celebration with harp and guitars ■ On Saturday, March 5th, in San Joaquin the Bishop of Coronel Oviedo ordained as a priest Br Alberto Zaracho Barrios, born in San Joaquin. The newly ordained priest Fr Alberto, 30 years old will minister in the College of Saint Michael in Asuncion, as chaplain. We wish him a fruitful ministry in his pastoral work as betharramite missionary.



Br^d Miriam
Region

Vicariate of England

Prayer and sharing ■ On February 21st - 22nd, the Fathers and Brothers held their usual Recollection Day in Nympsfield. A special reflection was dedicated to our recent deceased, Fr. Colin Fortune, Fr. Anthony Box and Fr. Carlos Rodriguez. "So, let us pray for each other and remember specially these three Fathers", concludes Fr Mongkhon who participated for

the first time to this meeting, as he has recently come from Thailand to support our pastoral works in England.

Vicariate of India

In assembly ■ On February 15th and 16th, Indian Vicariate held its annual assembly in Bangalore, under the guidance of Fr. Austin. Fr. Biju Alappat gave the welcome speech, Fr. Valan read the last year's report. Explanation were given about the new construction plan of Maria Kripa and the legal procedure of land registration. Fr. Austin blessed the foundation stone. Our companions of Betharram were invited to have a fellowship meal with us.

5 MINUTES WITH... Father Alessandro Paniga

Nef: How is your role as chaplain in a Nursing Home the continuation of your previous ministry as a Betharramite priest-religious? - During my life time I have tried several ministries: responsible for the apostolic, superior of the scholasticate, teacher, promoter of vocations, provincial superior, parish priest, but the service of the mentally ill and the aged has always had a special place for me. Already as a young priest I was chaplain to the St Benoit Clinic not far from our house in Albavilla. So much so that even today, from Solbiate, two or three times a week I pay a visit to the mentally sick in that home. Consequently my present ministry which I am carrying out at Solbiat caring for the old and the sick and at Albese for the mentally handicapped, is in direct line with my constant desire to give myself to the care of such people.

What is there in common between our spirituality and that of the Brothers of St John of God? - The Brothers of St John of God make a fourth vow of consecrating themselves to the service of the sick. That is the centre of their charism as wished by their founder. Care of the sick and the aged is not specific to Betharram, yet we are called to be attentive and available for them. Our founder was quite



For the past seven and a half years Fr Alessandro Paniga has been chaplain to a Care Home run by the Hospitalier Brothers of St John of God at Solbiate, not far from Come (northern Italy). We put some questions to him.