

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

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through her sayings, her prayers, her visions, her devotion to the Holy Spirit, which helps her to understand the meaning of suffering, accepted through love and which will transform death from a passage of hope into a passage of holiness crowned in glory.

The miracle of miracles consists in that the mystic we know as Sister Marie de Jesus Crucifie for whom the supernatural had become natural, was at the same time the humblest and most obedient of Carmelite lay sisters and like the genuine mystics, she has been at the origin of apostolic realisations which last even today.

(The End)

## The Extraordinary Life of Sister Marie

11

The second message from Sister Marie concerns **the transcendence of the God of Love**. Already this was the message from the Prophet Elijah from Mount Carmel faced with the dilemma: It's either God or the idol. But after Christ God is Love. It is the transmission of his infinitely merciful love which He proved in his Son. This is the God loved by Sister Marie with her body and wounded soul.

The third message concerns the **active presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church**. This is the Spirit which led her to the top of Mount Carmel; it is he who inspires her with love of contemplation helping her to discover and feel the presence of God in the whole of creation and in every event. Everything becomes a delicious reading of the *Divine Forgotten One*. And Sister Marie becomes his apostle

United in prayer on the Advent path, we wish you all a



Merry  
Christmas!

NEF



# Family News

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



**A word from the  
Superior General**

## The mission of Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

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While we were all worked up in pastoral activities, Father John Craviotti, SCJ, who was getting on in years and whose health was shaky, was spending his time translating St Michael's texts in a corner of the library in Adroque. According to a pre-arranged timetable, his loyal chauffeurs would fetch him to go and hear confessions in Buzarco, take communion to a patient, hear the confession of someone who had rejected the Church and who was now at death's door. And if by chance this individual resisted, Fr John would return to the crèche to get all the children praying that he would accept God's mercy. Here you have a model of the Betharramite missionary.

Mission is not just a question of words but of deeds too, of shared experiences and a life which is transformed by its contact with the Heart of Jesus, dead and risen again. The Aparecida document states that in our contact with Christ we want to express our happiness at being disciples of the Lord and of being sent on a mission armed with the treasure of the Gospel. To be a Christian is not so much a weight as a gift, God the Father has blessed us in his Son, Jesus Christ, Saviour of the world.

The disciple's joy is not just the selfish feeling of contentment, but rather the certainty born of faith, the peace of soul and the capacity of announcing the Good News of God's love. To know Jesus is the best gift that anyone can

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10th series, nr. 66  
14 December 2011

receive; that we have met Him in our lives is the best thing that could have happened to us, and to make him known through our words and actions constitutes our greatest happiness. (Aparecida 28, 29)

For us, these words echo others to be found in St Michael's Manifesto: the Betharram priests have felt that they were urged on through their vows, imitating Jesus, humble and obedient so as to gain the same happiness for others. It is all about the same image "disciple – missionary" (thanks to the link: Imitation – task), and about the same extraordinary happiness of the disciple-missionary in the presence of those seeing how we live, and about the same commitment to the task to be undertaken.

Its secret, its foundation, its *raison d'être*, what inspires this mission can be resumed in the dynamism of our burning love for the Heart of Jesus, the Word Incarnate, Son of God, high priest of the Eternal, Servant of his Heavenly Father, consecrated and sent on a mission, the missionary of the Father. Jesus knows that he has been sent by his Father and he it is who sends his disciples. As disciples we are invited to live in conformity and identification with Jesus in our lives and to be like him in all things; thus prolonging his mission through the gift of ourselves throughout History and throughout the whole world. Our mission is therefore the continuation of that surge of the Incarnate Word saying "Here I am" to his Father, for the salvation of mankind. As we follow the Incarnate Word "consecrated and sent into the world by his Father" (John 10, 36) we too are consecrated and sent into the world through our life as religious to be signs and heralds of Jesus Christ (RL 13).

Betharram mission lies as much in the witness of the life of each religious as in that of each community, in personal prayer as in community prayer, in the sufferings as in the prayer of our sick brothers, in our duty done responsibly as in the spirituality, the mission shared with

*Our mission is therefore the continuation of that surge of the Incarnate Word saying "Here I am" to his Father, for the salvation of mankind.*

## The Extraordinary Life of Sister Marie

### 11. The message of Sr Marie de Jésus Crucifié

Every saint visited by God, always returns with a message. Sister Marie who was visited and possessed by God had her own personal message for us too. Fr Brunot used to say that he was deeply impressed by "the fascination which this young Arab mystic had over countless Catholic intellectuals who paid attention to these messages from God". Such was the case of de Barres, Leon Bloy, Francis Jammes, Julien Green, Jacques Maritain, Massignon etc. And rightly so. There he could detect signs that she had had a message to transmit which was even to the point.

In the 1922 edition of his *Pensees de Sr Marie* Father Buzy said that "*being a disciple and compatriot of the Divine Master she spoke the same language and with the same accent*". From Sr Marie's rich treasury Father Brunot retains three important aspects of the supernatural lesson of her life and message.

First of all, there is the declaration by both her life and sayings that the **supernatural world** exists. That there was the living answer shouted at Renan who in his *Future of Science* declared that "the great result of modern day science was that the supernatural didn't exist!" Jules Simon said likewise with assurance that if "God really existed it could only be like a satellite turning around the cosmos, without result!" Sr Marie, their contemporary, could see the opposite of the cosmos. With her the supernatural is what is natural to God, and that was where Sister Marie lived permanently. Fr Brunot maintained that the saints, and especially Sister Marie are the "cosmonauts of the heavenly spaces" revealing them to us. Her entire life, her visions and sayings, are revelations of the supernatural, making an impact on the history, the science, the psychology, and the psychoanalysis of an age imbued with all things scientific, less assured today of its reasoned dogmas.



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



2010

DECEMBER

14	Buon compleanno	F. Fiorenzo Trivelli
15	Happy birthday	Br. George Varghese Korandakkatte
16	Happy birthday	Br. Albert Sa-at Prathansantihong
17	Buon compleanno Joyeux anniversaire	P. Giuseppe Lietti P. Omer Koutouan Nanghy
18	Buon compleanno	P. Giulio Forloni
19	30 anni di sacerdozio	P. Carlo Sosio
22	60 ans de sacerdoce	P. Jean Tapie P. Eugène Lhouerrou
23	50 anni di sacerdozio	P. Giulio Forloni
24	Happy birthday	Br. Gerard Sutherland
25	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Francisco Daleoso
27	Buon compleanno	P. Alessandro Paniga Fr. Chan John Kunu
28	Feliz cumpleaños Happy birthday	P. José Miguel Larrosa P. Hiran Thomas Klinboakaew
29	Happy birthday	Br. Davit Phithak Bi-Thuk
31	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Théophile Dégni N'Guessan

2012

JANUARY

1	Happy birthday	Fr. Valan Peter Kanagaraj Br. Peter Nonthaphat Mayoe
3	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Sergio Gouarnalusse
	5 anos de profissão religiosa	Ir. Francisco de Assis Dos Santos Ir. Eder Chaves Gonçalves
7	Feliz cumpleaños	Ho. Jesús Cano P. Daniel Ramón Martín
8	Feliz cumpleaños	Ho. Teodoro Miguel
10	Happy birthday	Br. Yesudas Kuttappasseril
11	Buon compleanno	P. Alessandro Locatelli
13	Buon compleanno	F. Angelo Sala
14	Feliz aniversário	Ir. Glecimar da Silva

the laity as in our own apostolic activities, the pastoral projects in which we are involved. With humility and total trust in the Word of God the living Jesus, for it is this Word which changes hearts and not just our words or our pastoral projects if they are not the result of our union with Christ.

Each of us, imbued with love, helps all whom we meet to discover the name and visage of the God of love, mysteriously present and active just like an unending fermentation in the hearts of all. And so they can recognise him, love him, meet him, follow him and live in his love happy at being new creatures (RL 9 and 15). Through our witness which really states our identity, and by the message of the Word of God, Jesus himself, we must help others to experience this meeting with the living God present in the heart of each one. "I was looking for you outside, and lo, you are there in the depths of my being" (St Augustine).

Yes, we must be that flying camp of priests, ready for any task, ready to go anywhere..."ready to run where ever we are called". The mission entrusted to us is the responsibility of each member of the community which is the richer from the sharing of missionary experiences (RL 16). The mission is not the personal property of the religious, but has been given to us, entrusted by the Church to the Congregation who then entrusts it to a community of religious.

Consequently a threefold faithfulness is asked of the religious-disciples that we are: to the Spirit, to the Church and to all mankind (RL 14). By our communion with the Church we are expected to collaborate with all the members of the People of God. We shall be faithful to our flying camps first of all by community life but also by being totally indifferent where places and people are concerned so as to be free and available to go where ever it is judged necessary.

In order to remain faithful to our calling and to the announce of the Gospel message of the God of love in every

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situation and every where, we shall want to transform ourselves into “men who are available, capable and ready to run at the slightest signal from our superiors”; and so we shall be those tools in God’s hand, ready for his work of salvation (RL 19). We shall have to exercise discernment at every level: community, councils, vicariate meetings, regional and general chapters. We must discern so as to find out if our choices, our orientations and our methods of work in our different ministries help us to be faithful to the mission entrusted to us by the Church (RL 19) and so react with the speed required by missionary dynamism.

An example comes to my mind and which is a real call to an examination of conscience. The members of Jesus, Mary and Joseph Company who meet regularly in the Miracoli church in Rome, are mostly young people who in their everyday life wish to bear witness to their faith and speak about Jesus to the people they meet helping them to become aware of this constant fermentation taking place in each one. True, God has other means of achieving such a result in an individual, but if I lack the courage to speak to some one in particular, it is possible that he will never have the chance of finding out the treasure in his heart. But things don’t stop there: these young people help the person touched by the power of the Gospel to meet a priest so that this person may experience the mercy of a God who loves and forgives. He feels welcomed by the community and supported by prayer in his choice of a new life in his conversion. I believe that the new evangelisation consists in this!

Christ so we should be enlivened by that love which wrought our salvation. *“May they be so completely one that the world will realise that it was you who sent me and that I have loved them as much as you have loved me”* (John 17, 23).

Gaspar Fernandez, SCJ

\* Final document of the Episcopal Conference of the Latin-American Episcopate, which took place in 2007 in Aparecida (Brazil).



**Brother Emile**

because that is how I understand responding to the proposals made by my superiors who have taken the best decisions for me. I have always been happy in being able to be integrated where ever I was sent. Consequently it was youth-work which was my mission. Youth can be both rich and disturbing by times. They try to construct a life for themselves in a society which is changing all the time. Then there are the fears and doubts which affect their spiritual life. For many they are lacking in points of reference. This is something I have often witnessed myself. And yet our founder used to repeat constantly “above all else, love them as they are!” That’s what I always tried to practise in accompanying them. For them the WYD are strong moments, but the recurring question must always be, how to maintain the rhythm from one WYD to the next. Daily life returns at top speed! I much prefer the small groups like “Youth on Route” which you find at Betharram with a team of adults who accompanies them according to the desires of each one. They are sorely in need of adults who believe in them and who are ready to go the full route with them.

***As a Betharramite religious brother, what life witness would you like to pass on?*** - To be in one’s place while at the same time being discreet and always happy. The brother has his place just like the religious-priest because we have each freely chosen to live as brothers by our vows in the same family with its joys and difficulties. My greatest wish would be carry on, with determination, professing fraternity, availability and simplicity so as to show the world that religious life is a way of life which still has something to say to today’s world and that it is this which keeps us happy in our vocation. Yes, it is worthwhile to give one’s life to God and mankind! Forward march!



at Saige Formanoir in Bordeaux with Fr Jean Couret during my training. It was a fruitful year in a working class city with so many different nationalities and my experience of the world of work. It was a religious community in a working class city.

Another important time was the meetings of the young religious organised by the Congregation especially in the Holy Land – time for meeting, for reflexion, for praying and especially time to get to know each other.

As for difficulties, I suppose it was round the closure of communities in the French Vicariate as the result of the death of so many of our brothers.

***What ministries have been entrusted to you?*** - I can recall the Pastoral of the Youth as Chaplain to State Schools, the Young Christian Workers, the Eucharistic Movement, and a time with the Scouts. I also helped out with parish animation and adult catechetics.

***I believe you spent a few years in Limoges. How do you feel about the recent closure of this community?*** - I can't say that I am happy about the closure of Limoges where I spent 14 years and was very happy. It was where I took my first steps after my years of formation. Also I owe a lot to a diocese which let me live out some wonderful experiences. It was also I who told the Province four years ago that I was available. I believe that we shouldn't stay forever in the same community or the same diocese. We should always be available for our family.

***You have often been involved in accompanying groups of young people. Is this a ministry which attracts you particularly? If it is so, why? Does the witness of the youth in Madrid (Cf. Nef November 2011) find an echo with you?*** - I was always involved where ever I was sent

*Father Etcheccopar wrote...*

To the pupils of Notre-Dame School of Bétharram  
Bethlehem, 19 December 1892

*Dear Children,*

*As we approach the New Year, my heart, although always in unison with yours, feels a surge of love and good wishes for you and for your parents; I have already placed these good wishes at the Crib; I shall place them again at the feet of the Child Jesus, especially during the Christmas season. The Blessed Virgin never tires of training you in love. For you I shall ask that you grow in love, like her love for us. Oh! How he loves us in his dark and obscure Crib! How he shows us his tenderness, by suffering, by shivering, by moaning, by weeping over us! In gratitude let us offer him all our little heart aches, our work, our obedience, our prayers and our good example; and so he will come into your hearts like in the Crib, like in Mary's arms, like for Joseph, the Shepherds and the Magi; how happy we are with Jesus! Good bye dear children! Happy and holy New Year for you and your dear parents!*

## Jesus' birthplace yesterday and today

It is not possible to spend more than a year in the Holy Land and not consider otherwise the huge step which the Word of God took when he became incarnate on this Earth.

I was lucky with some friends to go to Taybeh, a mainly little Christian village to the north of Jerusalem, near Ramallah. Beside the Sisters of the Cross of Jerusalem there is a very old house, typically Palestinian, known as the "House of Parables". There one can see the living quarters and lots of everyday household utensils dating from the time of Jesus. The Sister who showed us around drew our attention to the fact that contrary to the opinion about the



welcome reserved for Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem, Luke's words "*for there was no room for them in the inn*" must not be taken to mean that they were not welcome. For, she told us, the traditional hospitality in Palestine is such that it would be unthinkable to turn anyone from the house, especially a woman about to give birth. The "House of Parables" consists of a single room, higher than the entrance, and providing a common room with a stable to one side. The common room was therefore not very big and couldn't provide a minimum of conditions necessary for a birth. By way of hospitality Mary and Joseph were directed to an adjoining room which was either the stable or a kind of cave behind the house. It was therefore in such conditions that the Word of God entered our world, *His state was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave and become as men are*" (Philippians 2).

Given this, I was all the more impressed by a quotation from a theologian at Centre Sevres giving fresh depth to the incarnation of Jesus.

*The Word of God didn't just adopt our human nature but by his birth he was attached to a definite time and space, at the heart of a definite people, Israel; he was born into the traditions of this nation, without ever placing himself on the fringes of his people, but being always and ever a Jew.*" (Michel Fedou).

And so, in the actual situation of the inhabitants of that country – Occupied Territory – how can one forget from all that we hear and see about how the Jews and Arabs behave today and then try to imagine to what extent Jesus had wanted to be incarnate?

May the Word made Flesh return to our midst so as to reconcile these people, these three religions and the whole of mankind!

Henri Lamasse, SCJ

simple life style in community while lending a helping hand. The house is big so there is plenty to do. Each with his talents and I have offered to help where ever I could. I am doing some painting and I am happy to help where ever I can for the good of the community and the brothers.

***Since your arrival what has struck you most in that community?*** - What has struck me most is the extent to which this mission demands total availability from the residents in the accompaniment of the patients in their daily life. It is a simple and happy life thanks to the rule of life which demands respect, kindness and each one finds his place. Tender loving care and a sympathetic ear is essential. The community of Fathers is resident also in the house with its times for prayer and sharing a meal together once a week.

***Twenty years ago on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1991 you were making your first vows in Betharram. What was the beginning of your vocation as a religious at Betharram? Twenty years later, what has changed, evolved?*** - My vocation dates from the age of eleven when a priest who visited our parish spoke to me about his mission in Africa. He was asking if one of us was ready to give his life for God. This struck a chord in my heart and I thought "why not me?" Little by little this thought progressed and I decided that I didn't want to be living on my own in a presbytery! So I looked for a Congregation, a religious family, and the answer was Betharram. I knew it already thanks to my uncle and godfather – Fr Emile Garat; this is how I found a family full of the joie de vivre and simplicity.

***Could you tell us something about important moments in your life – happy or difficult – something which made an impression on that time of your life?*** - I shall always remember two important moments: the experience I had





A new face has come to enrich the great "mosaic" of the community of Monteporzio (Italy).

In fact Br. Emile Garat has left the shores of the Gave to live a few months of a sabbatical year which, as defined in the Acts of the General Chapter 2011, is "a grace of human and spiritual renewal."

## 5 minutes with... Brother Emile

***Nef: A few months ago you asked for the possibility of a Sabbatical Year. Why this wish? And how are you going to organise this coming year?*** - First of all I never asked for a Sabbatical year. It was the French Vicar with his council who suggested it to me. It's 20 years since I made my vows and since then I have never taken time for myself. When the suggestion was made to me I didn't feel like taking this time but I said "Yes" because the suggestion came from my confreres. The suggestion from my Vicar was to spend three months in Italy, a 30 day Ignatian retreat in January and the rest of the year in the Central African Republic. It was I who asked for suggestions. They may have thought that I needed a change, a top up after the fatigue, but it was they who felt that need for me, not me.

***Have you any wishes, projects or definite plans? What are you expecting from this year?*** - As I have already said, organisation is composed of wishes, projects and plans. Nothing very precise, simply to live in depth what I am being asked to live during this coming year. Take time to read, to discover what my brothers are doing on the mission. I shall try to live it as simply as possible while, at the same time, keep to myself.

***You are going to spend three months with the community of Monteporzio which for years has been committed to the important service of HIV positive patients one of the greatest sources of human poverty today. What will you be doing in that community?*** - I have already been in the community for the past two months. I was well received by the community, the staff and the voluntary helpers. It is just like being in a family – living a very

## A community is being closed...

In the next pages two recent experiences are told : the first one is the closing of the Betharramite presence in South Italy. The second is the opening of a new community and mission in Hojai in the Northeast of India.

The immediate reactions can be contrasting: perplexity, sense of abandonment on one side; joy and enthusiasm on the other. But how is it really?

According to our Betharramite style, is it not necessary to try to be useful where the need is clearer and evident? And the discernment of the works is perhaps not precisely the ability that we need to foster most? Therefore the discernment is our forced option.

In the logic of the time that passes by, openings and closings of the works are very similar to the pulsation of a heart that loves and continually tries to generate life again and again.



After the closure of the community at Bitonto, Betharramite presence in the south of Italy came to an end after 23 years. I was asked to write an article on our experience as part of the Church of Pouilles and say how we came to closing the community. It seemed easy at first and so I accepted; now that I have started writing, I find it's at all easy. Memories have to be refreshed and those 23 years have to be revisited! It's a trip down memory lane

which is gladly shared with our confreres, Frs Re and Sala.

We arrived in Pouilles in September 1988 at the invitation of the Bishop of Bari, Mgr Mariano Magrassi who was

On last October 30, at the presence of Mgr Cacucci, archbishop of the archdiocese of Bari-Bitonto, of many diocesan priests and parishioners, the Betharramite presence came to an end in South Italy.

Fr. Aldo Nespoli, former member of the community of Mariotto-Bitonto, as well as the present regional Vicar for Italy, is reviewing this experience which started in 1988.



looking for a community which would bear witness to religious life in his diocese. For us from Milan there was the difficulty of facing another culture and other religious traditions. To begin with our pastoral ministry was situated in Mariotto parish: religious instruction as well as the parish work and then the appointment of Fr Sala for Youth Pastoral, and Fr Natale became parish treasurer.

It is obvious that the beginnings of this mission represented a U turn for us, a complete upheaval of our life which would have to be strengthened.

When an elder priest would ask me how things were going, I could scarcely say that all was fine in spite of a few difficulties. But the wise and experienced priest answered that in order to understand the people and the parishes it was necessary to become part of their history, love and share their traditions and their religiosity. We understood that we had to sacrifice our customs from Brianza and adopt the local customs and be immersed in their culture without abandoning our own culture. I don't think I am lying when I say that I think this is what happened and that these past 22 years are proof. Of course we had to face difficulties, but above all give up the idea of "our own culture". The first years were enthusiastic; we were supported by frequent visits from our Superiors and the Bishops, often accompanied by the diocesan clergy. Our insertion was gradual and exciting. Pastoral activities were enriched by community activities: morning prayer with the Sisters, adoration and con-celebration on Fridays at our suggestion, for the parish community. The diocesan clergy respected and shared our choice, even if for certain important feasts during the liturgical year required our participation. Then Fr Romuald Airaghi and a newly ordained priest, Fr Simon Panzeri arrived to replace Fr Sala in Youth Pastoral.

the 'tribal belt' of North India where many local people have a greater ethnic affinity with the peoples of Myanmar, China and Thailand than the Dravidian and Aryan peoples of the Indian sub-continent. It is these tribal peoples who form the ever-growing Christian community in Assam.

Since October we have established a new community at Hojai led by Fr.Subesh.

Fr.Wilfred is temporarily supporting him, but in the long run the community will be joined by Fr.Pascal, Fr.Vincent and Bro.Jose Kumar. At present our three novices (Justin, Edwin & Vino) are at Hojai for their Novitiate pastoral insertion, and the community will also occasionally host students on their summer vacation pastoral placements.

A 1,000 strong secondary school sits on the large campus, as do two convents, a girl's technical school and boarding houses for both boys and girls. The day pupils are mainly Muslims from the local town, while the boarders are mainly from tribal villages. All are very happy to come to our school which has a good reputation for standards, discipline and behaviour.

When our new community arrived there were some difficulties in managing the Boys' House, but thanks to the wonderful work of Wilfred, Subesh and the three novices who acted as Good Shepherds some real progress has been made here.

Because of the obstacles to building up a Christian community in Hojai itself the Diocesan priests did not particularly want this mission, but true to our charism we have accepted this mission as a call from God, who will bless us as long as we are faithful in our witness to the love of the Heart of Jesus.

Austin Hughes, SCJ

Continues from p. 9 ▶ have been marked by it and are the richer for the experience. We are grateful to the priests and clergy who accepted us and who loved us. Finally we are grateful to Providence which guided and accompanied us in the marvellous undertaking in Pouilles.

Aldo Nespoli, SCJ

*From the review of the Vicariate of Italy  
"Presenza Betharramita" nr.4 - December 2011*

### ...Another one is being opened



Our invitation to Hojai came from Thomas Menampambil, the outgoing Archbishop of Guwahati the Assamese capital, who like many bishops in the North Indian missions comes from Kerala in the South.

Hojai is a dry dusty town in Assam with a mainly Muslim population of around 36,000. Small light industries including a perfume factory, and agriculture support its self-reliant though poor population.

Although one of the oldest missions of the Guwahati Diocese the Christian community in town is tiny due

to the dominance of Islam. What it provides is a base for ministering to the tribal villages round about who have embraced the gospel.

Fr.Shaju was our pioneer here two years ago, and he went to the surrounding villages of *Bodos* and *Garos* led by the Sacred Heart Sisters who showed the way. This is deep in

During the year the Bishop entrusted other duties to us, particularly the Blessed Sacrament parish near Bitonto; this was an important choice for us from the point of view of the pastoral and in reply to the needs of the local church. Unfortunately the splitting of the community because of the distance between Mariotto and Bitonto upset our community life, not through ill will on the part of the members but because it had not been possible to maintain our rhythm. What we really missed was the celebration on Fridays and sharing in the important feasts.

As the situation evolved the idea of a new adjustment began to grow; so in 2009 the Mariotto parish was without a priest after the appointment of the parish priest dean for the South of Italy. There then followed the closure of a community which was barely accepted by the parishioners. Without wanting to be pessimist but with the intuition worthy of the people, there was a growing feeling that these departures signalled future choices to be made.

Then in 2011 a similar fate befell Bitonto parish. The priests who had built it and who had been called to other charges it was impossible to replace them for the simple reason that there was a fall in vocations and the good works could no longer be maintained.

Despite the insistence and the sorrow of the Archbishop, Mgr Francesco Cacucci who was asking us to reconsider an adjustment – despite the friendship and esteem of the diocesan priests, it became evident that we couldn't choose otherwise. It's heartbreaking; it looks like retreating before the enemy; the Betharramites are abandoning the South of Italy whereas 20 years ago it was presented as a real choice for the Congregation with its roots only in the North.

On the other hand we are very grateful to everyone for this experience in the Church of Bario-Bitonto. Our lives



Follows on  
page 12



St Michael  
Region

## Congregation

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has appointed:

- Fr. Wilfred Perepadan, **Regional Vicar of England**;
- Fr. Hervé Kouamé Kouakou, Fr. Javier Irala and Fr. Biju Paul Alappat, **First Regional Vicars** for, respectively, the Region St Michael, the Region Fr. Etchecopar and the Region Blessed Miriam;
- Fr. Joseph Saint-Pé, Fr. Sergio Gournalusse and Bro. Gerard Sutherland **Regional Bursars**.

## Region St Michael Garicoits

After the **Regional Council**, gathered at Betharram, and after the approval of the General Superior, have been appointed **Superiors of Community**: Tiziano Pozzi (Bouar); Sylvain Dansou (Adiapodoumé); François Tohonon (Dabakala); Gabriel Verley (Anglet-St-Palais); Pierre Grech (Betharram-Notre-Dame); José Gogorza (Mendelu); Jacky Moura (Pibrac); Piero Trameri (Albavilla); Aldo Nespoli (Albate-Lissone); Celeste Perlini (Colico-Bormio); Carlo Antonini (Milano-Castellazzo); Maurizio Vismara (Montemurlo); Mario Longoni (Monteporzio); Giacomo Spini (Parma); Tiziano Molteni (Ponte a Elsa); Elie Kurzum (Zarka); Henri Lamasse (Bethlehem-Nazareth).

## Vicariate of France-Spain

**Towards... 2013** ■ The Assembly of the Vicariate gathered on December 5 at Betharram, with about thirty religious present. The Regional Superior notified the participants of a few guidelines emerged from the Council. All communities gave their suggestions about the preparation of the centenary of the coronation of Our Lady of Betharram and of the 150th anniversary of St. Michael's death.

## Vicariate of Italy

**Starting afresh at grassroots level!** ■ About forty religious from Italy took part in the assembly on November 29th in Albiate. The Superior Regional showed the path he and his council will follow in the Vicariate and in the Region.

## Region Fr. Auguste Etchecopar

**Brazile & Paraguay in the foreground** ■ On December, 8th, the novices Iran Lima da Silva, Maicon Faria Barbosa, Paulo Goncalves and Jeferson Roberto de Souza (all from Brazil) made the first vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in Passa Quatro (Brazil). The novice Cristian Romero (from Paraguay) took his first vows on December 10th in the parish of San Joaquin, Paraguay. We wish them all the best and rejoice with the Region which accompanied them all along!

**Preparing the coming year** ■ The Regional Council gathered in Passa Quatro (Brazil), from November 29th to December 1st. Patiently and with renewed hope, the members tackled the pending issues of 2011 and planned the steps to be taken in 2012, when they will receive the visit of the Superior General from February 13th to April 23rd. We wish them all the best in their task!

## Vicariate of Thailand

**A fruit of the Here I am** ■ On November 26, Bro. Athit Niyomtham made his final vows in the hands of Fr Austin Hughes in Ban Betharram (Chiang Mai). 150 people turned out to join in the celebration with Bro Athit and the whole community. We thank the Lord for the gift he gave to the Congregation and we wish all the best to Bro Athit!

**Since money does not fall from trees...** ■ Fr Jiraphat, Superior of Ban Garicoits in Sampran, is taking concrete steps towards the economic self-sufficiency. He is developing a few projects in order to generate some income for the community: fish, rabbit and duck farming along with mushroom, fruit and vegetable cultivation.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Brazil:** On December 7th, after a long illness, the mother of Fr Jair Pereira, of the community of Passa Quatro (Brazil), returned to Father's House. We feel close to Fr Jair and his family members in this sorrowful moment and we entrust their dear mother to God's Mercy and Goodness.

**England:** Mr. James Kelly, brother of Fr Tom Kelly, SCJ, Parish Priest of the Sacred Heart Parish in Droitwich, died in Ireland on December 1, 2011, at 87 years of age. We pray for his eternal rest and we feel close to his family.



Fr Etchecopar  
Region



B'd Miriam  
Region