

intervening requests resulted in the opening of Betharramite residences in new countries. In Italy it was the opening of a house in Traona for an apostolic school and in Rome the opening of the general Procure. In Paraguay St Joseph's College was opened in 1904 and in Argentina another college again dedicated to St Joseph was also opened. Finally the Chapter had to safeguard regular formation and studies for the young, hope for the future of the Institute. On that subject the Chapter Delegates confirmed the choice of the General Council to open a junior seminary in Spain and another one at Lesves in Belgium; the novitiate was transferred to Bethlehem where the majority of the senior seminarians were already living. The Scholasticate which already existed in Buenos Aires was given extra staff. Nor must the opening of two junior seminaries in England and Italy be forgotten; with all this the Congregation was now more international.

At a time of great difficulties, the Congregation succeeded in taking the best decisions and the best adapted in the circumstances to save and

pursue the work of St Michael and Fr Etchecopar. Besides, the expulsion of the religious from France and the decisions taken at the Chapter had positive consequences for the Congregation. Indeed, from the expulsion onwards the Congregation was able to adopt an international aspect, having new religious who could easily adapt to the Betharramite mission in Spain, Belgium, England and Paraguay; it was also to be a source of new vocations. This is how Fr Estrate summed up the expulsion:

*"Would we ever have thought of Italy or England were it not for the persecution? God drove us out so that we could be scattered in all countries. With the passage of time we shall gather vocations from these different countries. England and Italy have provided us with excellent candidates."*

by Roberto Cornara

To be continued ►

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Societas S<sup>mi</sup> Cordis Jesu  
BETHARRAM

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NOUVELLES EN FAMILLE  
NOTICIAS EN FAMILIA  
NOTIZIE IN FAMIGLIA  
FAMILY NEWS

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

A WORD FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

## Consecrated Chastity

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Congregation (4)

It seems a good idea to me that this section of our Rule of Life concerning chastity should open with a quotation from a letter from Fr Etchecopar to his brother Evariste at the time of his ordination as sub-deacon and his commitment to celibacy. He was then 23 years of age. This insertion dates back to the 1969 Rule of Life. The actual version is slightly longer. I find that it is a very good expression of the feelings by which each Betharramite lives out the offering of his life in chastity: the call, awareness of his existence, freedom, reply, devotion, chastity, happiness, and sign of contradiction.

Our choice of chastity is rooted in our experience of faith; it is our meeting with Christ which motivates our vocation and directs our new way of life. For us, chastity is something priceless, a way of realisation, of joy, of liberation for we assume it "attracted as we are by the beauty of the virginal love of Jesus" (R of L.30). Jesus lived a virgin and called some of his disciples to follow him on this

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14<sup>th</sup> April 2012

### CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS OF BETHARRAM

#### 4 - The Unfolding Of the 1903 General Chapter

path; he announced that, like a grace filled gift, his Father would be all he needed in the unconditional service of mankind (art 29). For us, what comes first is not what we give up, but rather the gift of our life to the Lord and to men for whose service we have been sent. Just as some choose to live evangelical love, and to give their life to the beloved through the sacrament of marriage, we too chose to live this same love by our choice of virginity, celibacy, and chastity. The choice of this evangelical love helps us to relativize the importance of the reproductive organs since they are a dimension of marriage. This choice marks us out as consecrated since it gives us an affective freedom so that our love is in keeping with our vocation (art 35). It is in our union with Christ that our chaste life reaches maturity; should we lose this point of reference, our affective and sex life can become a problem.

We lead this state of life without imagining that we are better or superior to others, each one of us "recognising and admitting our uselessness, our incapacity and our wickedness" as St Michael Garicoits used to say (DS 44) at the same time fully conscious that the affective and sexual dimension is important, delicate and a mystery. This is why we practise Christian asceticism which is a priceless means for getting to know and sort out our thoughts, desires and passions and in the course of the

spiritual battle to acquire self control. (Gal.5,23). We follow those impulses which are a help to us in being faithful to our vocation and reject those which make us prisoners preventing us from showing the joyful and generous dedication of our lives (art 40, 41). Conscious of our weaknesses and trusting in the grace of our vocation we are faithful to the sacrament of reconciliation which is our strength by God's loving forgiveness keeping us faithful to our commitment.

Here as for the other vows appears the novelty of the community dimension of chastity. We feel deeply to what point Jesus is calling each one of us to lead a life of brotherly love according to the Gospel. This makes us more responsible for each other in our fidelity to our vocation. This fraternity helps us to grow in the maturity of our emotions. This maturity helps to support calmly the moments of solitude, to pay attention to the needs of our brothers and to overcome the conflicts inherent in community life. Dialogue, friendship and sharing our experience of God all help us to be faithful to the project of a chaste life and our willingness for the mission.

Our life of virginity and chastity enriches the church's mystery of missionary communion in the unity and diversity of vocations and ministries (art 38). The project of a chaste life is complementary to the project of marriage. It would be good

Four days before the final expulsion of the Fathers from Betharram on 10th August 1904, a decisive Chapter for the Congregation was opening in Spain. While expecting the worst, the Superior General and his Council had already made important provision for lodgings for the religious who had just been expelled from France. And so it was that at the end of spring 1903 two new residences had been opened abroad: one in Spain, at Irun, just over the frontier, a residence called "Belle Vue" where the senior religious and part of the apostolic school would be lodging.

The delegates at the Chapter had to take decisions over three very important questions. First of all safeguarding the property of the buildings in Betharram, namely the Mother House, heart of the Congregation, comprising the sanctuary, the college founded by St Michael, the monastery and the Missionaries' house. The General Chapter decided to create an Association to acquire, in the name of the Congregation, the property up for sale by the State. To be able to carry off such an expensive exploit, help from the South American missions was needed. Next and of greatest urgency, the necessary steps had to



*Fr. Victor Bourdenne*

be taken to safeguard the religious life of about a hundred religious, and even more important find work for them. The Chapter decided on a foundation in England where a group of missionaries would be at the service of the Bishops and the needs of the local Church. Furthermore the Chapter gave favourable approval to requests from different Bishops.

The consequences of the expulsion, the decisions taken at the Chapter to give a favourable response to

APRIL	14	Happy birthday	Fr. Chanchai Temaroonnung
	17	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Mario Sosa
	18	60 años de profesión	P. Joaquim Soares Moreira
	20	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Gaspar Fernández P. José Rovegno
	21	Buon compleanno	P. Pietro Villa
	23	Buon compleanno	P. Simone Panzeri
MAY	2	Happy birthday	Br. Thinakom Damrongusasin
	3	Buon compleanno 15 años de sacerdocio	P. Ernesto Colli P. Roberto Amarilla
	4	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Elie Kurzum
	5	Buon compleanno 10 years of profession	P. Antonio Canavesi Br. Joseph Livin Fernando Br. Arul Gnagna P. Maria Joseph
	7	Happy birthday	Br. Jose Kumar Johnrose
	9	20 years of profession	Fr. Yindeengarm Subancha
	10	Feliz aniversario Buon compleanno Happy birthday	P. José Mirande P. Guido Pradella Fr. Shaju Kalappurackal
	11	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Guido Eugenio García
	12	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Pierre Leborgne
	14	Joyeux anniversaire Buon compleanno Joyeux anniversaire	P. Paul Baradat P. Antonio Riva F. Gilbert Napetien Coulibaly

if we were to collaborate in discerning vocations to other life choices. In this way we would make Christ's Body grow, we would be partakers in his spiritual fruitfulness, by allowing the Church to welcome new members, by the witness of our lives and our mission. We bear witness to the eschatological dimension of the Church, towards which we are advancing full of hope.

In our culture heavily characterised by pleasure-seeking, our chaste style of life makes people stop and think. There is the witness angle; we are pointers to a contradiction, there are those who respect our style of life just as there are those who do not think that we can be faithful to our chastity. The recent widespread reporting in the media of all the sex scandals are no help to accepting our life style. And yet, there is no doubt about it that our witness to chastity is prophetic. The logic of our life style does not depend either on the approval or disapproval of the opinion of others. We don't dedicate our lives for others to judge us better nor for them to undervalue us or even to persecute us. And so acceptance, refusal or persecution should become motives for Christian fidelity.

In order that this witness should be credible, we must show signs that the happiness in our life is fundamental. This is precisely what was evident in the whole of this Chapter on the Rule: *We find our happiness in the*



Fr. Gaspar

*unconditional gift of our lives (30), consequently our hearts are full of a holy joy and ready to serve God (DS 56, 33). In order to be happy and to dedicate ourselves totally in procuring this same happiness for others (37), remembering the true dispositions of each one helps offering the joyful gift of love in its totality (39). Without a real spiritual life it is impossible to persevere joyfully (39). How happy I am! How happy I am! (Fr Etchecopar, o.c.)*

Gaspar Fernández Pérez, scj



**DURING THE MONTH OF MARCH THE COMMUNITY OF VILLA DEL PINO (MONTE PORZIO CATONE VICARIATE OF ITALY) CELEBRATED THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE HIV PATIENTS. TO MARK THE OCCASION, THE BISHOP OF TERNI, MGR VINCENZO PAGLIA, AN OLD FRIEND OF THE FATHERS OF THE COMMUNITY AND VERY CLOSE TO THIS WORK, ACCEPTED TO SHARE HIS THOUGHTS DURING A CELEBRATION; HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES:**

### To Give Life

If I were to make a synthesis I would say how our friendship started (the community of San Egidio and the Fathers of Betharram). It was born on the road which goes from Jerusalem to Jericho.

There are three people on this road: two of them – could have been a Bishop and a priest or some laity, it's of little importance –, seeing the wounded man, carried on their way. We don't know why; they probably had other things to do. So contrary to the Gospel story the opposite happened here. In Jesus' parable only one stops; 20 years ago we were at least two. We were face to face with a few patients whom

nobody wanted to care for; everyone was afraid of them and besides there was no cure.

So we met on that road and we can say that the Gospel was right. The Gospel even if we read it alone can work miracles. Today we are celebrating one of those miracles; the miracle of a friendship, that's what is important because it has saved all those lives. What is important in life? Money? Power? No! To be loved is what counts! It's all there. On that day this friendship came into being, not because we were already friendly, but because together we looked in the same direction and didn't look at ourselves. That's friendship



*St Michael Garicoits wrote...*

**How the Rule is to be considered.**

The rule is to be read with care and consideration, then without the aid of the book, the meaning must be grasped, and all the perfection contained therein is to be engraved in our memory, so as to recall it quickly and have it as the rule within arm's reach.

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## OF THE CONGREGATION

Church, any proposal in order to build a better future.

On 15-16 March the religious held a Vicariate Assembly in Adiapodoumé. The program of this meeting: prayer, narratio fidei, Mass, fraternal exchange, sharing, table fellowship.

During their visit, the Superior Regional and the Regional Bursar had a real family gathering with the lay associates also in Dabakala and Adiapodoumé.

### Vicariate of Argentina-Uruguay



**Barracas** ► On Maundy Thursday, 100 young people gathered at the Sacred Heart College of Barracas from 10.30 pm until 6.00 am of the Holy Friday, to celebrate the Youth Easter.

The celebration began with a dinner among dances and songs. At midnight the Maundy Thursday Eucharist started – it was in various parts.

The celebration had two meaningful moments: the washing of the feet and the communion with the Body and the Blood of Jesus.

The atmosphere was one of sharing, dancing, singing, celebrating life and faith. At dawn, all went back home to live and meditate the Passion of Jesus.

### Vicariate of England

#### Appointment of superiors ►

The Superior General received with joy the positive answer of the Congregation of the religious for the appointment of the Brothers Andrew Ferris and Gerard Sutherland as superiors, respectively, of the community of Olton and the community of Great Barr. Thanks to both for taking on this service!



### Vicariate of India

**Hojai** ► From March 15th to 26th, Fr. Biju Allapat, the vicar of India and Fr. Enakius, the Indian Vicariate Bursar had their official visit to North East of India. It is a 6 days of travel (up and down) by train. Their purpose of going to North East was to meet the members and to see the progress of the new community at Hojai and to see the ministry of the Novices Edwin, Justin and Vino. They also took this occasion to visit the Bishops of Guwahati and Bongaigaon. Fr. Biju and Fr. Enakius say that they had a fruitful visit and at the end they met the families of our three north east brothers who are in Mangalore.

## Congregation - Rome

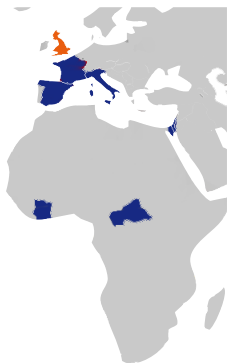
**Journey within the Family** ► From March 6th to 16th, Fr. Graziano Sala, General Secretary and Bursar, made a visit to Thailand in order to know this realty which has grown a lot since his last stay overthere in 2004.

**19 young religious in the cradle** ► ... in the cradle of Bétharram, of course! where started on Thursday, April 12th the session of preparation for perpetual vows; the young religious are accompanied by two veterans, Frs. Laurent Bacho and Enrico Frigerio, and by Frs. Guido García and Stervin Selvadass, who have for sure fresh memories of this experience.

**Announcement** ► On March 24th, the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life confirmed the decree of dismissal for Fr. Barnabé Bakary Kpéhéléfopé (Ivory Coast). We wish all the best to Fr. Barnabé.

## Region St Michael

On February 27<sup>th</sup>, the Superior Regional, after the approval of the Superior General and his Council, appointed Fr. Jacky Moura, as master of novices of the Region. His mandate will start on September 1<sup>st</sup>. On the same day,



Fr. Jean-Marie Ruspil will be joining the community of Pibrac.

## Vicariate of France

From March 24th to 25th, the Betharramite laity of France met for their annual retreat. The theme of this retreat, led by Father Gerard Zugarramurdi scj was "Living for Christ in the footsteps of St. Michael." First the facilitator talked about the Eucharist and the virtues of the Sacred Heart in St Michael's life. Then he tackled the topic of the Incarnation as a sign of God's presence in us and among us. The time for personal prayer, sharing life experiences and exchanges over the meals fostered a good atmosphere within the group. At the end of this day in the desert with the Lord, the laity felt that saying "yes" to the Lord is a source of joy.

## Vicariate of Ivory Coast

**Meaningful times of the visit of the Superior Regional** ► Sunday, March 11th, a pilgrimage of the city parishes was held in Yamoussoukro. During the same days Fr. Jean-Luc Morin, Regional Superior, Fr Joseph Saint-Pé, Regional Bursar, and Fr. Hervé Kouamé, Regional Vicar for Ivory Coast were making the canonical visit. The first part of the pilgrimage consisted of a silent and prayerful march and the pilgrims were asked to answer a few questions regarding their role in their country's situation; their duty vis-à-vis the society, the family, the



*Mgr Vincenzo Paglia*

according to the Gospel; it is born when two people together see the same suffering and decide that they want to ease it. Indeed, what did we do? We found an inn which could be either table rue Dandolo (in Rome) or the Villa del Pino at Monte Porzio. Next we met the inn keepers, that is the Superior General and the city Mayors. The inn keepers promised that these people would find a house... which came to be known as the "Family Home". The real miracle is not the work of some hero but that of brothers and sisters who knew how to stop on their way before someone needing their help and friendship. They went to see the Mayor and the Superior General; they found volunteers among their friends and together they helped. Finally they understood that Jesus wasn't just present in the tabernacle with a light burning; Jesus is also present in the sick and the burning light is us, for we must love these patients and enlighten their existence; we must help them to grow in all senses of the word and help them to live as best as possible.

An action isn't enough; the Samaritan said: "take care of him and whatever expenses you have I'll repay on my return" (Luke 10,35). That's how a realisation comes into being proving the friendship which makes the Gospel miracle evident.

Dear Fathers, to give life or to give a few more days to the HIV patients, that's called martyrdom, for the martyr is the one who gives his life.

The Council Vatican II asked all Christians today to be martyrs, that is to give life. Some are asked to shed their blood but all are asked to give life. Is she not a martyr the mother who conceives and gives birth to a son, who feeds him and takes care of him? Isn't that giving life? Isn't that martyrdom? And are each one of us not martyrs if we give life to those around us, and better still giving life to those from whom it is being taken, simply because he hasn't enough to eat or because he is excluded and abandoned? Today, I believe that actions like these are works like those of martyrdom which makes the Church beautiful and holy. My friends, there you have the Church!

For all that, I want to say thank you to the Congregation, thank you to the Fathers, but the best thanks comes to you from Heaven from the guests who spent time in this Home. We here assembled say thanks as we remember those 20 years of love, of passion for these 20 years have been a gift of life here at Monte Porzio.

Mgr Vincenzo Paglia  
(Bishop of Terni)

## LAY SPIRITUALITY

IN THE PAST 20 YEARS MORE THAN 82 HIV PATIENTS, HOMELESS AND LACKING NOT ONLY FAMILY SUPPORT BUT EVERY OTHER KIND OF SUPPORT, HAVE BEEN WELCOMED AT MONTE PORZIO (ITALY) BY A COMMUNITY COMPOSED NOT ONLY OF RELIGIOUS BUT ALSO BY HELPERS, NURSES AND LAITY. BY SHARING THE DIFFICULTIES AND EMOTIONS OF THIS WORK, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BUILT UP "A PHILOSOPHY OF CARE". LET'S FOLLOW THEIR ADVENTURE THROUGH THIS WITNESS OF A COUPLE OF VOLUNTEERS WHO WERE THERE AT THE START.

### To be a volunteer in a Family Home

It is not easy to say why a person will volunteer to work in a Family Home to welcome HIV patients. To be present beside such patients doesn't seem to correspond, in the popular imagination, to those situations which only suppose what is positive; for example caring for children, for the lonely, life's victims, the elderly, who in a certain way are suffering these situations unlinked to their will. How often can we hear the remarks like "they looked for it", or "it's all their own fault" and so forth. According to common consent it doesn't seem possible to find positive reasons to take an interest, not only in the problem but in the care of individuals affected by the HIV virus.

For us it all started in March 1992, when the Betharram Fathers, promoting the cause of the Family Home, came to the Council Chamber of our little town, Monte Porzio Catone, and presented the initiative which they were setting up to come to the aid of HIV victims. We were present at the debate, interested to know all the details but trying to understand the reality of what was

involved. Thanks to competent and passionate people who felt the size of the problem, we came to understand the need to make progress in carrying off a victory which would be a sign of the time for a long time.

Everybody knows that the enthusiasm of the young is contagious and that very evening we were answering favourable an invitation to go and visit the structure which was accepting the Family Home. And so it was that we met Giancarlo, one of the first guests, one of those "young people" as we have always called them. He came to us greeting us joyfully, and when the moment came to leave he asked us when we would be returning. It was then that we realised that we were not just face to face with a problem, however abstract but with a real person, in flesh and blood, with his history, his life, his desires and his needs; like him lots of others have challenged us and asked us to intervene and to reply. It was during this first visit that we began to be interested in the Family Home, to get to know it so as to adhere to the spirit and adopt it for ourselves. In the

teachers who voluntarily accompany the young for camps, outings or meetings. Without the presence of so many laity it would be difficult to assume the changes and continuity in the service of education as well as accompanying the youth.

*An important part of your history is the presence of the Betharramites in the schools. With 12 religious for three residences, shouldn't your community aim at the essential?* - Yes, it is a huge challenge to maintain the quality of the teaching, of the formation both human and Christian for the laity who work with us. The importance isn't that there should be religious living on the spot, but rather that we should assure the launching of the formation programme. At that level things are clear; we religious are the guarantors of the charism and the spirituality; it is our obligation to form the others for this commitment; as for them, they will be the people who will transmit the message.

*Judging from the experience of a community like yours, it is obvious that religious life as well as the mission is to be lived in a permanent reflection and evaluation. What tools do you have for this?* - To tell the truth we stress the need for the religious to be formed all the time and since the religious have to react with the laity, thank God the different teams work sufficiently well as teams. It often happens to us to act together. This is proof of the healthy relations and community spirit which exists among us. We also have moments of ongoing formation organised by the Vicariate.

*The mission in favour of education was an important topic at the last General Chapter. Proof article 118 in*

*the new Rule of Life. How do you remember this in your community?*

Essentially thanks to the great availability of each religious; as a "flying camp" we go from college to college "showing the intense charity within the limits of our work." What we can give, we give. In view of the fact that we are not as many as previously, our preoccupation and attention to the mission of education is as evident as previously.

*You live your mission close to the youth. Do you pay any special attention to the pastoral of vocations?* - Yes, it is the result of everything we do. It is very close to our hearts, joyfully, and it is easy to see. Today we notice that the youth pay great attention to a more committed Christian vocation. For us this is a great source of hope. This year the majority of our colleges, for a whole week, experienced solidarity with the poorest. The young have seen how we live and that's how they continue accompanying us as animators or missionaries. Another important thing to note these last few years is the excellent work carried out by Fr Sebastian in the colleges in personal accompaniment; the fruits are there; the young are much more committed in their faith.





### How is community

**life organised?** - We know what it means to be an itinerant community but we are also aware of our religious life and its demands. Only a community project can make the fraternal life and mission possible. At the moment we are evaluating ours. What have we done so far? Today, after three years experiment we are reconstructing it. For that we met for two days in February; it was a moment of great prayer, and in such a favourable climate each one of us could express how he felt and how he was living the experience.

The experience was certainly positive but fatiguing. During these past years we attached more importance to our weekly morning meetings: a time for prayer, sharing, celebration and a meal. We saw that we needed to reinforce these events; this is why we now meet on two Mondays a month for the whole day so that our meeting would have more depth.

We know that each residence has to organise its community times, and feel in communion with others; this is why we attach great importance to the role of the Assistant who is elected by all the religious, so that there is always someone to call the meeting. Our big meetings are so many "cenacles" during which we take food so as to be sent and return.

**Practically speaking, the engine of the education mission is the collaboration between the Betharramite religious and the laity. How does this work out?** - Down the years collaboration has developed normally. Sharing the mission with the

laity functions at two levels: first of all there are those engaged at a professional level – the salaried staff (legal reps, teacher's assistants, pastoral coordinators, catechists, and teachers) and the laity who collaborate as volunteers with total generosity and gratuity.

In order to facilitate the organisation and keep our focus on the values of the charism, we have training sessions, for example during the month of February there are two days of meetings with those responsible for management, and those charged with educational activities, pastoral, catechetical and religious activities. A total of 80 delegates are present. Then, every month we get together during a morning with the legal reps and the directors. Twice a year with the teaching directors, the pastoral coordinators and catechists; and once a month it's the turn of the pastoral educational team.

As for the teachers there are meetings for special occasions and meetings at times specially arranged for them; whenever we meet we take time for reflection and formation.

**You mentioned the presence of lay volunteers working with you?** - Yes, there are a lot of them; they are responsible especially for the pastoral of the youth. Missionary activities or the formation of Leaders, solidarity etc. With all this, a lot of young people have found means of formation and are able to accompany the younger members. There are also groups of parents who dedicate themselves to solidarity activities based on the charism. We mustn't forget the large number of



introduction to the project we read: "The Holy Spirit gave to the Church a Religious family whose special mission is to reproduce and bear witness to the surge of the Incarnate Word. Let's pay attention to the men of today, and with humility let's be present in their lives. We want to share the joys and hopes, the sadness and anguish of today's men and women. [...] But be careful! Before such a problem as the AIDS phenomena in Italy, it is easy to talk of welcome, hope and salvation in so far as that, besides these declarations, there are choices, community choices which must be made and for which one has to struggle, otherwise we shall be less true, less Christian and less faithful to our vocation. To achieve this community experience is capital and cannot be replaced and so we must offer the priceless heritage which is our community life which is a sign of great worth and to which we shall bear witness with our fraternal

love. Besides anyone who imagines that he is not personally concerned in shaping a better future is living under an illusion.

At the beginning of our commitment as volunteers at the Family Home, so as to face death and the great sufferings attached to the final end, an end which is rapid and dramatic in the case of this illness,

we felt the need to adopt a "guide book" which would be a foundation document recalling the reason for the commitment and would set down the type of relationships and especially with someone HIV positive.

Under the guidance of the Betharram Fathers and following their example we understood and made ours the importance of accompanying these people, not only as patients, but as persons in all their aspects, with their need of care, but also needing human and spiritual support, and looking for a new quality of life, however short.

There we were committed to be in contact with these young people, accompanying them, but above all listening to their personal history so as to get to know them and help them in so far as they were able or willing to live these extraordinary moments of sharing. There was never a Christmas, Easter or birthday of the Family Home,

never a World Day of fight against AIDS when there wasn't a celebration together, a prayer and festivity to assemble friends known and unknown, organisations and institutions, in a word the whole region!

However the real sharing and proximity was our on a daily basis, as we prepared for the guests for the Family Home, or prepared the Sunday lunch, or the evening meetings, the evening gatherings and celebrations to build up projects and activities and give out pieces of information. Whenever we succeeded in getting to know the young people of the Home, one of the pathologies would make them leave us for ever. We think that this experience of daily life, of the relations built up little by little, was one of the reasons for our service as volunteers at the Family Home. It was even the reason why there were problems with some of the early volunteers and why

they left us.

We understood that without strength of character and deep motivation, volunteering at the Family Home was a one off and temporary event. From the first moment of contact with the guests, commitment requires great motivation, progressive participation, not forgetting the emotions, and the support of a human and spiritual development of the young; this is the reason for the commitment. We cannot deny that the real reason for our commitment was absorbed by us from the choices made by the Betharram Fathers, which they put into practice day after day, in real acts of work and solidarity.

For the past 20 years, the Fathers of the Family Home Villa del Pino and the volunteers of the Association "Il Mosaico" have been walking together.

Antonio and Caterina Vicari

Extract from  
*Le Cure Amorevoli per persone con Aids*  
a book published for the anniversary of the work



Caterina and Antonio Vicari

## ... the flying community for Pastoral Care of the Vicariate of Argentina and Uruguay

FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS, THE VICARIATE ARGENTINA-URUGUAY IS REDEPLOYING THEIR PRESENCE BY ASSEMBLING THE COMMUNITIES ACCORDING TO THE MISSION WHICH IS THEIRS. THIS IS HOW THREE COMMUNITIES HAVE COME INTO BEING: ONE IS CALLED "THE FLYING COMMUNITY FOR PASTORAL CARE", ANOTHER "THE COMMUNITY FOR FORMATION AND REGIONAL NOVITIATE", THE THIRD ONE "THE ITINERANT MISSION COMMUNITY". IN THIS EDITION WE ARE GOING TO PRESENT THE LIFE AND MISSION OF THE "FLYING COMMUNITY FOR PASTORAL CARE." IT IS COMPOSED OF THREE RESIDENCES: BARRACAS, ST JOHN BAPTIST AND MONTEVIDEO.

### *Nef: How did this community come into being?*

- For several years in Argentina and Uruguay we were already in a "state of discernment about people and works". It has not been an easy task for several reasons, but principally because of the fall in the number of religious faced with the many and important works for which they were responsible, particularly in the world of education. There are more than 6000 pupils and nearly 800 staff in all. During the Provincial Chapter in 2007 we made this choice; the communities saw themselves reduced to three including the "religious community for the pastoral care of education". That's how it came into being.

*What is your particular ministry?* - For the past few years, anything connected with management (whether administration, education or pastoral) has been entrusted to the laity. Now there are no communities in any college. The religious have reserved the care of sacramental pastoral, accompaniment - opposite directors, teachers, pupils and parents; there is a special sort of presence for the pastoral coordinators, catechists but also during



meetings, camps organised for the pupils, or during other events organised for the educative community. As religious we want to maintain the pastoral dimension in the colleges, in keeping with the Betharramite charism and spirituality. For this mission itinerancy is important (to be flying camps); this is why we agreed amongst ourselves about the place of our different missions, and where possible we go there in twos. For each college there is a religious who is a "reference" for the educational community; he is member of the direction team, is present at the directors' meetings and serves as link between the religious institutions and the diocesan ones.