

national but nothing had changed in the formation which dated from the time of St Michael, and which was contained in the famous "coutumier"; on the one hand it was a guarantor of the unity of the Congregation and maintained the tradition from St Michael and Fr Etchecopar, but it also smothered the efforts for renewal which could be felt on the outskirts of the Congregation and was clearly lacking in "inculturation of the charisma" which only exasperated the divisions and nationalisms which were now apparent.

By de-centralising the government and dividing the Congregation into small regional administrative units there was now scope for better management of the Institute while respecting the different cultures and mentalities.

Finally the experience of the Congregation during World War II provided food for thought over a number of questions: difficulties of communication or even the breakdown of communication as in the case of China, which remained isolated from the Congregation for six years, obliging the Superior General, Fr Buzy, in 1939 – 1940 to appoint a general delegate

in different countries for the extraordinary management of the communities under their authority. The first Chapter after the War debated and decided on this new form of administration. This Chapter was held at Betharram from 12th – 23rd January 1947. And for the first time non French Betharramite religious were delegates. So of the 22 Capitulants we can count Fr William Lyth (English), Fr Alessandro Del Grande (Italian), and Fr Valentin Perez (Argentinian).

Furthermore, the new General Council named at the end of the Chapter contained one "foreigner" for the first time: Fr Felicien Cattaneo (Argentinian), elected General Bursar.

by Roberto Cornara

To be continued ►

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BETHARRAM

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2012

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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

Evangelical Poverty

One has only to read the title to realise that a poor life style is an Evangelical treasure. It is important that we should be convinced of this fact; humanly speaking and according to social criteria this is not very evident. By simply opening the Gospels we can contemplate the radiant person of Jesus Christ; he was born poor, lived poorly in a modest family who lived by the work of its hands when there was work to be had; he connected with the poor to announce the Gospel of God's Love to them; he had nowhere even to rest his head and died poor, stripped of his garments, of his friendships and even of his very life.

To experience poverty is to be convinced of our own limitations, of the worthlessness of our life and of our inability which obliges us to depend on others, knowing full well that without them we would not be any better. Furthermore, they make us grateful; true enough, if we are of any value at all it is because we have an inheritance graciously received from others. On the other hand we discover little by little the gift and qualities with which the Lord has endowed us, and as we share them around we are collaborating in the improvement of others. And so it is with us, created in God's image and likeness, since that's how things were

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CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS OF BETHARRAM

6 - The 1947 General Chapter

The 1947 General Chapter deserves special attention on our part, for it was there that a whole new administrative organisation of the Congregation was decided upon: the sub-division in Provinces. So far the whole Institute was governed by the Superior General and his Council. All the communities scattered to the four corners of the world depended directly on him. The General Council named the local Superiors and all problems arising among the religious were referred to the General Council.

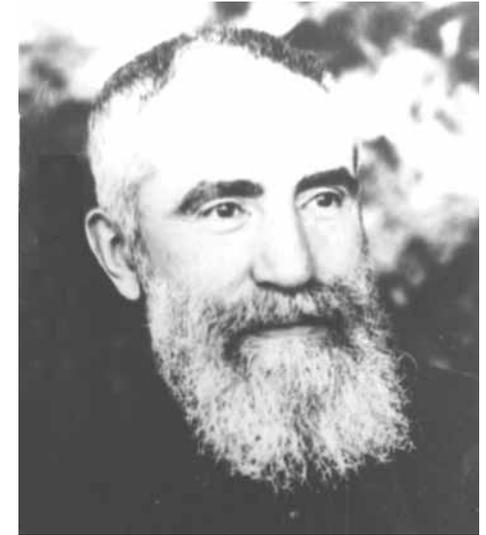
This form of government concerned the finances as well as the formation of the young members.

As we have already noted there was only one novitiate (in France) and one major Seminary (in the Holy Land) for the whole Congregation.

This organisation was already past it and for several reasons:

- Above all it was the Holy See itself which was asking for this new form of administration making way for an intermediary authority: the Provincial Superior and his Council for each country.

- Besides, the history and experience of the Congregation was a betrayal of the monolithism of the past which must of necessity evolve. With the expulsion of the Religious from France, the Institute was becoming



*Most Rev. Father Denis Buzy
1883 - 1965
7th Superior General*

more and more international. Junior Seminaries had been opened in Argentina (Barracas), in Spain (Mendelu), in Italy (Colico), in England (Droitwich), as well as the seminary at Betharram.

Whether it was in the novitiate in France or in the Major Seminaries in France and in the Holy Land, there were to be found crowds of youngsters of different cultures, different formation and different mentalities, all living together.

The Congregation had become inter-

before us: the Father begets from all eternity, transmits life to the Son knowing full well that without him nothing will take place. The Son receives everything from his Father, living to give Him pleasure in all things and the Spirit who is their mutual gift. Poverty is therefore characteristic of the Three Persons of the Trinity and is therefore fundamental in the identity of the Incarnate Word.

This then is what constitutes spiritual poverty and which is so important for loving and being loved. It is to be seen in material poverty: poverty of goods, as much for those upon whom it is imposed by the injustice of mankind as for those who could possess material goods and willingly choose to abandon everything. There is one point to be made here – to be poor means having nothing or owning no goods. To make a vow of poverty is the fruit of a decision freely made on the part of a religious wishing to imitate Jesus in his poverty and to live like the poor. Nobody is obliged to make a vow of poverty.

Number 49 of our Rule of Life tells us clearly what constitutes our vow of poverty. Fundamentally it is the experience of our faith in the love of God; it is from Him that we receive all that we are, all that we are worth and own. We learn this love from Jesus and this is why we have decided to be poor like Him, recognising that every gift comes from the Father, trusting in Providence and sharing with the brethren.

It is a huge commitment demanding on our part renunciation, austerity and openness. Poor is the one who cannot dispose of goods belonging to him, and

not the one who, even if he has made the vow, manages to get everything without dipping into the common cashbox. Poor is not the one who is leading a comfortable or middle class life style, nor the one who is longing to be able to buy the latest gadget on the market. Poor is the one who has not a personal bank account into which money from the ministry may be paid and which one day the family will inherit rather than the Congregation.

To be poor by vow means sharing. Whatever a religious can acquire by his work or his skills, everything he receives as gifts belongs to the Congregation. It is equally true for pensions, retreats, grants, insurances (Rule of Life 50). To share is to entrust everything to the community keeping nothing for self. To share is to make use of goods simply through necessity. To share means not making greater use of the community's goods than the one who brings nothing to the common cashbox.

To share also means accepting to receive from the community the things that I need, or what is necessary for the mission, whether I have a well paid job, or whether my pastoral activity or my availability for the needs of the community or my state of health doesn't allow me to receive the financial rewards in keeping with my activities. He who has a salary relies on the community for the necessities of life and for the mission as much as the one who has no salary at all.

To share is keeping an eye on the expenses and the financial balance in the community: working together at the congregation projects, in the light of the

JUNE	15	Feliz cumpleaños	Hno. Victor Torales
	17	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Jean Laclau
	24	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Dominique Etchepare
	25	Bom aniversário	Ir. Marcelo Rodrigues da Silva
	26	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Jean Couret F. Marius Angui
	27	Bom aniversário	Ir. Robson Antonio Leite
	28	Bom aniversário Feliz cumpleaños	Ir. Pedro Waldomiro Merlo P. Milciades Ortigoza Acosta
	30	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Jean Lambert F. Jean-Paul Kissi Ayo
JULY	2	Buon compleanno	P. Massimo Motta
	3	Happy birthday	P. Eugene Lhouerrou
	4	Buon compleanno	P. Carlo Ruti
		Feliz cumpleaños Joyeux anniversaire	P. Enrico Frigerio P. Fulgencio Ferreira P. Hervé Kouamé Kouakou
	5	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Jacky Moura
	6	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Gilberto Ortellado
	7	Feliz cumpleaños	P. José María Ruiz
	8	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Pierre Caset
	11	Buon compleanno Joyeux anniversaire	P. Arialdo Urbani P. Joseph Ruspil
75 ans de sacerdoce, félicitations ! 20 ans de sacerdoce, félicitations !		P. André Gillet P. Jean-Luc Morin	

Gospel discerning together what we have chosen to live, so as to be capable of self correction and so help each other to remain faithful to our vow of poverty. It also means cutting out waste both at personal and at community level, particularly when the resources on which we were relying are running out and when we are trying to be stick by the poor. Sharing also means rendering an account to the community of the goods which the community has put at our disposal, each one feeling responsible for the common good.

The community itself should be poor and live close to poor families, avoiding an accumulation of wealth or the scandal caused by the use of methods worthy of the well off: luxury cars, top of the range clothing etc. The community cannot stock pile; the community is called upon to share, not just what is surplus, so as to be of help to others and to help realise as far as possible the mission of the other brothers of the Congregation who may be less well endowed and to share with the poor.

The spirit of poverty and of sharing is a great leveller and helps us to construct communion which is the great treasure of a religious community as it is of the Church in today's world as John Paul II reminds us when he says: "house and school of communion".

This equality in the lacking of material goods is fundamental if our fraternity is to mean anything. Consequently those who own property must renounce it when they enter community. It is totally unacceptable to see in the same community some religious owning property while others have none, as was the case



Ibarre: the humble origins of St Michael

in the Monastery of the Incarnation when St Theresa entered. Before First Vows (the novices) must hand over the administration, use and usufruct of their possessions to one or several persons of their choice. (Rule of Life 54).

The choice to lead a life of poverty requires of us a simple way of life, austere, close to the poor and bearing in mind what the situation is like in each country. It is pure hypocrisy to want to dispose of goods after making a vow of poverty; it is a shock for Christians who know who we want to be and who see us doing the contrary; it is a humiliation for our brothers in community and in the Congregation who are being faithful to their dependence in the use of this world's goods. This is serious for we are no longer faithful to our commitments, breaking with the equality which poverty gives and turning community life into a farce!

Gaspar Fernández Pérez, scj

Young Betharramites at WYD in Rio de Janeiro

POPE BENEDICT XVI HAS INVITED THE WORLD'S YOUTH TO BE PRESENT AT THE 28TH ASSEMBLY OF THE WYD WHICH IS DUE TO BE HELD IN RIO DE JANEIRO WITH THE THEME: "GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS" (MT 28,19). IN THAT SAME YEAR FROM 14TH MAY 2013 TO 14TH MAY 2014 OUR RELIGIOUS FAMILY WILL BE CELEBRATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF OUR FOUNDER, ST MICHAEL GARICOITS.

Providentially linked by a common theme (Benedict XVI has given Faith as the theme) both these occasions have become a unique and non renewable opportunity to trace a path which can

almost be called "special". With this in mind Fr Gaspar, the Superior General, wants all the young Betharramites from everywhere and from every culture to come together so as



St Michael Garicoits wrote...

The family isn't to be considered as a recruiting ground for some parish ministry, nor as an assembly of priests from which, under certain conditions or at the request of some person of influence, somebody could be found in answer to some need or other outside the sphere of the order. Why not? Because...

- 1) It would be offering access to ambition and there is nothing better than to kill it.
- 2) It would be changing the status of the family and so to speak making of Betharram a place of provisional stage and preparation.
- 3) It would distract the members from the real aim of the mission.
- 4) It would be wounding the heart of the community either because the community couldn't rely on seeing its most devoted children die in its arms, or because the family would be overburdened with foreign members who would have projects other than that of living and dying under its protection and who would be ready to abandon it as soon as they were able to satisfy the secret plans which they kept hidden in the deepest recesses of their souls.

What fundamentally of the original society would still be in existence with such a way of thinking; and once this principle is admitted, is the society not heading for ruin at every moment? (M 348)

OF THE CONGREGATION



Without the presence of the Betharramite religious - the Bishop said - the parish would have been closed down. The Parish Council took the opportunity to organize a collection to raise funds that will be used to complete the building of the house of spirituality and pilgrim hospitality.

Vicariate of Argentina-Uruguay

Blessed be the technology! ► From May 29 to June 5 was held at the residence of the Regional Novitiate the annual retreat of the Vicariate. The retreat began with two days of absolute silence following the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. The following meditations, focused on the person of Jesus, the Church, the World and Betharram, were presented by two teleconferences given by Fr Gaspar Fernandez Perez, Superior General, and Fr Gustavo Agin, Regional Superior, and by two lay people: Gustavo Barreiro and Leo Caviglia. One example to be followed!

Vicariate of India

A new priest for Betharram ► On May 19th Br Arul Gnana Prakash was ordained as a priest at Our lady of Carmel Church at Korattampet by Most Rev. Dr. Soundararaj SDB, Bishop of Vellore. The motto chosen by Fr. Arul was "Messenger of the Gospel". Best wishes to Fr. Arul and to the whole Vicariate!

Vicariate of Thailand

A new mission place ► Late May, the vicariate accepted the invitation of the Bishop of Ratchaburi, to take care of Fatima Parish, in the south west of Thailand, 2 hours' journey from Sampran. Most of the Parishioners are Karen, who emigrated from Myanmar and are coming from the refugee camps. Among them there are 250 Christians. For the time being, Fr Jiraphat is in charge of this Parish. He is helped by Br Panuphan, the new philosophy student. Let us pray for this new project!

First professions

► On May 14th, the Vicariate celebrated the Holy Founder with the First Profession of Manop and Banjerd, at Ban Betharram (Chiang Mai). The celebration was presided over by Mons Francis X. Vira Arpondratana, Bishop of Chiang Mai. The parents of the young professed came to share the joy of the feast with the Betharram Community. On the day after, the formators of Betharram seminary organized a meeting for the parents of our young brothers in formation. The aim was to involve the parents in the formation process by giving them some information about the structure of our Congregation and about the most meaningful aspects of our Spirituality and the life of our Founder.



Vicariates of Holy Land & France

Along with the Blessed Mary ► From May 3rd to 8th our guest house in Nazareth hosted a symposium gathering the Carmelites of the Holy Land and dedicated to the Blessed Mary of Jesus Crucified. Three of our confreres – Frs. Hourcade, Lamasse and Hialé – gave their own contribution during this week of study: a living proof of the bonds existing between Betharram and the Carmel.

... and a few weeks later in Pau ► The Maison St-Michel organised a feast for the transverberation of the Blessed Mary of Jesus Crucified. On this occasion, Fr. Beñat Oyhénart gave a lecture about the links between Betharram and the former Carmel. On the programme also: the blessing of the statues of Michael Garicoits and Mariam Baouardy now adorning the chapel choir; the Eucharistic procession enriched by the rhythms and rituals of the churches of Asia (thanks to Fr. Stervin and to two Thai brothers). Thanks to the some 200 people who were present!

Vicariate of Italy

Our Pilgrim Lady ► The start of the solemn pilgrimage of the statue of Our Lady of the Beautiful Branch was launched in Albiate where, on May 23-24, the community of Betharram fathers with friends, priests and lay pe-



ople, prayed the Holy Rosary, led by the Vicar, Fr. Aldo Nespoli; then the celebration of the Holy Eucharist was presided over by the parish priest of the Pastoral Community of the Holy Spirit, to which the community of Albiate belongs. It was a joyful and simple celebration marked by the fervent participation of all the people: the family of God gathered around Mother Mary. In the following days Our Lady visited the Betharram Community in Parma. From there she will continue her "journey" across Italy. The end of the journey will be on July 26-30 when a great pilgrimage will accompany her to Betharram for the celebrations of the Centenary of her crowning.

Book suggestion ► On June 12th, a booklet, "Guidelines for spirituality of the Betharramite Fathers", was presented in the premises of the Parish of the Sacred Heart at Lissone. In this booklet, Saint Michael and the Betharram spirituality are scrutinized through the eyes and the heart of a lay person. Our congratulations to Mr Grugnola and... many thanks too for his precious help in the translation of the NEF into Italian. Thank you, Mario!

Vicariate of Ivory Coast

Parish Jubilee ► On Sunday, May 6 the Parish "Our Lady of the Poor" at Dabakala celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its foundation. During the celebration, the Bishop administered the sacrament of confirmation to 32 baptized. He thanked the Fathers of Betharram to whom the Parish was entrusted in 1982. Wi-

to deepen Betharramite spirituality so that it may become a dynamism in the life of each one to help them live out their Christian vocation; and by being present at the WYD in Rio they should have an intense experience of the Church, apart from which a charism cannot be lived.

What does this double participation consist of? How can these two experiences be linked? I think I can suggest a few points:

- It is a great educational opportunity: thanks to it we want to have a strong experience with the young following the appeal launched by Benedict XVI with the theme of the WYD "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Math 29,19). It is an appeal containing two elements:
 - First of all, to be able to announce, one must be a disciple.
 - Then, one cannot be a disciple without accepting the challenge to set out.

Go! Is an appeal which demands giving witness of all we have seen and heard, what we have experienced and touched.

These WYD will be a strong vocational experience for us religious who will be living them out with the young. We are invited to make a fresh discovery of our quality of disciple and renew our adhesion to Him who called us, either recently or many years ago, but who continues to call us and is asking us to renew today and every day our



missionary surge.

It is a great vocational experience for the young whom we are accompanying to live out this event. May the Spirit of the Risen Christ grant us the grace of a new Pentecost!

- For us Religious of the Sacred Heart is it not a great opportunity to recall the memory of the 150th anniversary of the death (*dies natalis*) of our Father, St Michael Garicoits? As I have said up above he continues to live through us in so far as we are faithful to the witness which he gave.

From the message "Go, make disciples" we can retain two solid affirmations which are ours:

1. First of all: "Here I am! I have come to do your Will!" Do you not think that this appeal by Jesus "GO" was something he lived himself together with the fundamental attitude of personal availability in performing the Will of his Father? Of this commitment of Jesus Saint Michael retained the heart and core for it to become his experi-

Father Robert Daquo

Layrisse, 14 August 1932 - Betharram, 24 May 2012



Father Robert Daquo has just died. Today we his friends have come here to accompany him in this funeral Mass. I would like to present briefly Fr Daquo's life; beside it would be an insult to him to spend too much time talking about all that he did, such was the extent of his humility and discretion. However Fr Daquo would deserve some measure of recognition on his qualities, both human and spiritual; without seeming to try, he could make contacts by a simple smile, an action, teasing, (remember him in the middle of the young college students who really appreciated him!). As for the teachers one of them said "As long as the Daquo brothers are around, the college will function". Yet Fr Daquo felt deeply the sadness of others; he would enquire for news about one or another that he knew to be in difficulties! For us he has been an example of a true son of St Michael Garicoits, able to keep to his own place without being an embarrassment, or a "patraque" as St Michael used to say.

In the Retirement Home he was often to be found in the chapel where he would spend long moments alone with the Lord. He spent 19 years in the Retirement Home from 1993 - 2012; in the college as secretary-bursar he spent 30 years from 1963 - 1993; at Bel Sito he spent six years from 1958 - 1963. He also spent a short period of time at the Apostolicat after his studies in Rome.

ence of human and spiritual life. There you have Michael's reply, a reply which is immediate, passionate and enthusiastic.

2. St Michael's "HERE I AM" is an expression of joy and not sadness. To believe in Jesus Christ and to live by Him, fills him with a boundless joy which is impossible to keep for one's self. To the invitation of Jesus "Make disciples" comes St Michael's response which he wrote in the Constitutions of 1838: "At the sight of such an extraordinary spectacle, the Fathers of Betharram felt driven to be totally dedicated to finding the same happiness for others". These simple words are the result of the experience of God made by St Michael and which he wants us to live today with the young.

par insisted on the vocational nature of this experience, because it can become an occasion for a new commitment in the animation of vocations: This is how he expressed it: "I am asking everyone to support this initiative as from now, because it can be an opportunity for encouraging vocations in our Regions and Vicariates".

The appeal has been launched! Forward march!
We entrust it to the intercession of our Father Saint Michael.

Graziano Sala, scj

Let us set out on this journey (not only in spirit, but also in reality) through the witnesses of today. This event will be led by the Superior General himself together with other religious and lay persons who share the same dream as St Michael and who want to live it out with the young so that they may be fascinated by it and that they too may say their HERE I AM by their courageous and joyful choice as disciples and witnesses of the announcement.

In a recent letter addressed to all the Regional Superiors and Vicariates for the launch of this appeal Father Gas-

The two terms - brilliant and luminous - are often contrasted. Robert was brilliant for he had passed all his diplomas in Canon Law, archivist and Librarian, but he was also luminous by the presence of interior grace. Of course we shall pray for him, but our prayer will also be a prayer of thanksgiving and gratitude.

BIDDING PRAYER

Fr Robert Daquo has shown us the way of self-sacrifice, of humility and of service. Let us ask the Lord, for our families and our religious communities, to live out these same evangelical virtues in peace and with trust.

The Daughters of the Cross and the Betharram religious have been and still are very close in the missions. Let us pray for our two congregations called to the service of mankind today, that we may continue to express our love for God and for the world.

In Retirement Homes or hospitals and clinics, self sacrifice is not an empty expression; it is a lifetime vocation. Let us pray that this fire may not be extinguished but be communicated to others, for it is the fire of the Holy Spirit.

Fr Daquo has met up with his family, and especially the brother from whom he could hardly be separated. Let us pray for his family who accompanied him during his last illness; let us pray for his friends, especially those who have not been able to be here for this funeral Mass, I want to mention especially Fr Gaston Hiale who sent us a message and who is closely united with us tonight.

his way to Colomiers to visit the

Daughters of the Cross (there was a community of these Sisters in Pibrac) he would stop off to pray to the little saint. The Rector of the Basilica is one of the community; here in Pibrac there is also a De La Salle School, and away back in history there was an important novitiate. I tell you we are surrounded by holiness.

Pibrac is a place of pilgrimage; tell me how are the pilgrims received? What impact does this fact have on the life of the community?

Welcoming the pilgrims is a service which the community assures with joy and cordiality. For the community it's an opportunity to show the meaning of Me Voici, by accepting to be disturbed. The laity are also partakers in this service. Not to mention the fact that the airport Toulouse-Blagnac is near at hand so we have plenty of visits from our confreres.

From your point of view what is the strong point of your community? Are there any weak points on which you would like to work further?

I think I can say that the strong point of our community life is unity in the diversity of occupations and persons. This is why we attach importance to our times of prayer and the quality of this prayer, and why we hold on to the frequency of our fra-

ternal meetings and discussions.

It is going to be the feast of St Germaine soon. As part of the festivities on 15th June a Mass for the young has been programmed. How present are the young in the life of the parish? Has youth pastoral been included in the community project?

The participation of the young in the life of the parish is necessary. A lot of them assemble in the different groups – Scouts de France, Scouts d'Europe etc, and their parents are also there. The Chaplaincy for Public Schools has about 50 of them; they are also there as altar servers, musicians for the liturgy; there are also two Samuel groups where they discover how God calls.



Feast of Saint Germaine in Pibrac, in 2011

The International Session (Betharram, 11th April-18th May 2012)

THE PREVIOUS SESSIONS (2001, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2009, AND 2010) USUALLY ASSEMBLED 8 – 13 PROFESSED IN PREPARATION FOR FINAL VOWS. THIS YEAR THEY WERE 19 (11 FROM THE BLESSED MARY REGION, 5 FROM THE AUGUSTE ETCHECOPAR REGION, AND 3 FROM THE ST MICHAEL REGION). THEY WERE ACCOMPANIED BY FATHERS ENRICO, GUIDO, LAURENT AND STERVIN; THE SUPERIOR GENERAL SPENT NEARLY 3 WEEKS WITH US.

This session had the same aims and objectives as the previous ones. However, great importance was attached to daily interiorisation so that each one should better remember what had happened during the day with the different challenges received. We spent two whole days gathering the testimony of our senior brothers. Their witness made a deep impression on the young brothers and encouraged them



Group of the international session 2012

to greater fidelity despite the problems they might meet. Meetings with the non resident religious (Pietro Felet, Austin Hughes, Jean-Luc Morin, Elie Kurzum and Gerard Sutherland) opened up new horizons. This was equally true in their meeting with the association "Au Coeur du monde". There were also plenty of opportunities for broadening their horizons in meeting with women religious (Igon, Anglet, and the monastery of Bethlehem Sisters), the Bishop of Bayonne, with some members of the laity, friends of Betharram and especially in

Pau for the feast of the Ascension.

But the daily contact with the Senior brothers at La Maison Neuve was really important as was the Notre Dame Community who rendered many services and saw to it that they had a pleasant stay. Several religious intervened for instructions: the communities from Pibrac, Pau and Anglet. In Betharram we invited our brothers for the presentation of the different Vicariates; we also took part in the different offices and Eucharistic celebrations. The feast of St Michael was a great occasion offered by the French/

Spanish Vicariate to get to know each other. We were happy to have the different possibilities of sharing as it strengthened our sense of belonging to the Congregation and it was good to know how the other brothers live.

In the instructions during the session, where our Founder lived was important: Ibarre and Betharram to begin with, but there was also Hosta, Oneix, Garris, and Cambo, Bayonne (Cathedral and harbour)... Other places of interest (Loyola, Xavier and Lourdes) helped each sessionist to deepen his inner life. The silent walk helped towards a better personal integration. Our wish was to grow more closely to our Founder, not forgetting the affective side which contributes to the necessary human attachment. Several of his letters both meditated upon and shared helped to strengthen the link with St Michael after which we better understood the treasure of his spirituality which was transforming us.

Another aim of this session was to give us a better knowledge of the "International Betharram" by the mingling of the different cultures through our daily life; this demanded much attention and respect for the diversity of languages makes communication difficult. Fathers Enrico and Guido rendered a great service for the translations; the times of community prayer were a help in accepting our differences which are enriching. We must admit that exchanges are difficult through a poor knowledge of the language; the young who are in formation are invited to make greater efforts here! Each one of us recognised with

humility that it is absolutely necessary in our Congregation to meet someone from another culture.

As usual, the essential resides in the deep personal experience of Jesus, humble and obedient, the gentle and humble heart of Jesus to choose to spend one's whole life faithful to the charism of our Founder. Personal prayer, contemplation, the silent walk, personal accompaniment, the Eucharistic celebration were all considered to be important in the face of Perpetual Profession. The demands have not been minimised; on the contrary they have been underscored so as to make the personal choice more serious. The joy of personal consecration to God has been considered as important in maintaining faithfulness of the heart to our Betharramite religious vocation.

In their summing up, the team recognised that this has been a gift from God to the young religious but a gift also to the team. Time given freely to others is very precious personally. Finally we would like to add that the Superior General's presence went a long way in assuring the quality of the session. We hope that this session will bear abundant fruits for the Betharramite mission to which these young religious will be called and sent in the different Vicariates.

Laurent Bacho, scj

which motivates us.

From the beginning the community was founded as a Formation house. How is this mission honoured today and has the life of the community had to make any special choices so as to put it into action?

Betharramite formation wants to accompany the individual who feels called by God to become a disciple of Christ like St Michael Garicoits. Here in Pibrac, importance is attached to personal and community prayer, to a reading of the Spiritual Doctrine, the regularity of community meetings and days of recollection every two months. Efforts are also made so that meal times are times of deep brotherly exchanges.

What can the presence of young religious bring to the community?

It's an extraordinary presence of youth, of liveliness and joy. Children and the young appreciate their friendliness; they love to be able to share their preoccupations and their interests with those closest to them.

Many of the laity in Pibrac are members of the Me Voici Fraternity; how do you get on with them? What are their expectations?

Generally speaking the members of the Me Voici Fraternity get on very well with the religious, a relationship which is almost family-like and there is great solidarity in the pastoral work. All are interested in the life of the com-

munity. All are dying to know more about the Congregation. The members of the Fraternity want to

find out with us how the charism of Fr Garicoits helps us to live out our vocation and they want to bear the weight of the Congregation with us. There are three groups which have meetings to reflect on the spirituality of the Founder. This is where the Tschanfeto Association operates to support the project of the Teaching Farm at Adiapodoume (Ivory Coast). They are also in close contact with the Higher School of Agriculture in Purpan, a Jesuit establishment in Toulouse which keeps a close eye on the development of our work, sends trainees to follow the progress of the work of formation and exploitation.

You are also in charge of the Saint Germaine Basilica, dedicated to the young shepherdess who used to guard her sheep and amazed the village by her patience, her gentleness and her piety. As faithful disciples of St Michael Garicoits how are you coping with the veneration of this young saint and are you not being a trifle unfaithful to our founder?

St Germaine and St Michael have common evangelical characteristics – humility, patience, seeking God's will in little things. Probably St Michael knew all about the pilgrimage to St Germaine and it is possible that on



... the community of Pibrac

IN 1982 THE BETHARRAMITE COMMUNITY MOVED FROM TOULOUSE TO THE RURAL VILLAGE OF PIBRAC WHICH HAS GROWN INTO A SUBURBAN AREA OF TOULOUSE. THE REASON WHY THEY MOVED WAS TO TAKE OVER FROM THE FRERES MISSIONNAIRES DES CAMPAGNES. ALONG THESE 40 YEARS, THE COMMUNITY HAS REMAINED FAITHFUL TO ITS STATUS OF HOUSE OF FORMATION. AT PRESENT IT IS COMPOSED OF THREE MEMBERS: FR. EMMANUEL CONGO, FR. JEAN-DO DELGUE AND FR. JACKY MOURA (ABOUT TO LEAVE FOR HOLY LAND) WHO WELCOMED THREE YOUNG RELIGIOUS FROM THE IVORY COAST: BR. HYACINTHE ALI KONAN, BR. MARIUS ANGUI (FOR THE YEAR IN PREPARATION OF THE FINAL VOWS) AND THE POSTULANT HIPPOLYTE YOMAFU.



Members of the community of Pibrac

Nef: Thanks to the previous presence of the Missionary Brothers, the parishioners were already familiar with religious life. Are the links which unite you with them an image of this long history and is there anything special here which resembles other parishes?

When a Congregation is present in a parish there is the richness of its charism. The Missionary Brothers had brought to the parish community their fraternal partnership with the laity and the liveliness of their presence in everything which made up the life

of the parishioners. They ploughed deep furrows in the parish mission field. The religious of the Sacred Heart can now carry on the spirit of such collaboration. Community life adds strength to the family spirit where all are brothers. Simple relations, friendly greetings help us to be attentive to the needs of the people and obtain for them the joy of knowing that they matter for what they are. Many religious have passed this way, but people have come to realise that despite the differences it is the same spirit

The spirituality of St Michael in the life of a married couple

EVERYTHING IS A GIFT YET NOTHING IS PLANNED BECAUSE EVERYTHING IS CONSTRUCTED LITTLE BY LITTLE. IT COULD BE WHEN MOVING HOUSE, OR IN THE COURSE OF SOME CHANCE MEETINGS. ANNE-MARIE IS MEMBER OF THE ME VOICI FRATERNITY AND SINCE THE LAST GENERAL CHAPTER OF 2005 HAS BEEN "INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT". DANIEL MARCHAND, HER HUSBAND, HAD DISTANCED HIMSELF FROM THE CHURCH, THEN FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS HE HAS RETURNED TO A MORE PERSONAL AND PRACTICAL FAITH, FOLLOWING HIS OWN PATHWAY. A PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND TO CELEBRATE THEIR EMERALD WEDDING BECAME THE OPPORTUNITY FOR TAKING A FRESH LOOK AT THEIR COMMON STORY WITH BETHARRAM. HERE IS THEIR COMBINED WITNESS.

Anne-Marie: On our arrival at Saint-Andre-de-Cubzac, not far from Bordeaux, I wanted to become involved in the parish. Fr Charles Jerusalem suggested that I could help him with catechism. Seeing that we were somewhat isolated, he took care to introduce us to other couples, which I found very touching. Our children became friendly with Joseph Ruspil in ACE. Finally Xavier Destizon became everyone's friend. He helped to prepare the funeral service for Daniel's parents, with enough discretion towards Daniel and those of his brothers and sisters who had taken their distances from the Church.

Daniel: Now and again I used to accompany Anne-Marie to Sunday Mass. What attracted me were the smiling faces of those priests, the care for all, the depth of the homilies, the respect and hope which shone out of them. I can still remember the christening of our last born son with Joseph Ruspil, a friendly meal with Joseph Pecoste, Xa-



Anne Marie & Daniel Marchand

vier Destizon and Jacky Moura; it was full of joy and good humour.

During a confession Xavier Destizon said to me "You are well on the way!" Such a simple reflection continues to

echo in me. I can measure the progress I have made since.

With the Parish we celebrated the Community feast day for the 60 years of the three religious, Xavier, Joseph and Henri. It made a deep impression on everybody.

Anne-Marie: Alas another bitter festival in 1995 announced their departure from Saint-Andre. I had never wondered where these priests had come from in the first place! They had spoken about an eventual group of laity who would be studying the spirituality of the Founder, and then nothing more. This is what drove me after a few months to go and see Henri Lamasse in Pessac; since I was taking an interest in the bicentenary, he told me about a group of laity which had recently been founded in Bordeaux. It is there that I discovered the story of St Michael Garicoits and his spirituality, and then Betharram in the summer 1997. Down the years thanks to the help given to my faith I have been able to get through several trials in our two families. In 2002 and 2003 I had the great grace of being present in Betharram and then at Adiapodoume for a session destined for the laity wishing to love the spirituality of St Michael Garicoits; the crowning moment was a week spent in Rome in 2005 for the General Chapter. I am really grateful to the religious for sharing the treasure of the spirituality which drives them and I am an enthusiastic member of the Betharram family.

Daniel: I had the opportunity of being with Anne-Marie in Betharram and then in Rome. We visited several communities, and where ever we went we found the same values in evidence.

Henri Lamasse was accompanying the Fraternity of which Anne-Marie is a member. So every time he came I took the opportunity of discussing with him. Consequently I pursued with Henri the path opened with Xavier Destizon, following his advice for reading materials which I often shared with him. He even convinced me to do the week-end *Vivre et Aimer* (a worldwide association on Marriage) which encouraged dialogue; Henri's tact, skill and respect went a long way towards helping me on my return to God. Little by little, Anne-Marie and I share our faith and our prayer as a married couple. I am now discovering Jean-Dominique Delgue. "Ahead", I don't dislike it; in fact it even corresponds to my temperament!

Anne-Marie: Ten years on and I am still amazed at the link between what *Vivre et Aimer* (Ignatian spirituality) and the Me Voici Fraternity can do for me. Availability to God's Will – "Me Voici" – and the decision of greater love for the conjoint in *Vivre et Aimer* are a daily support for each other. Besides Daniel knows how to remind me of "Me Voici"!

We haven't a community near us and the other members of the group say how sorry they are not to be able to move. The Gironde group is grateful

to Henri who travelled backwards and forwards for twelve years and to Jean-Do who has been accompanying us every two months. This is something which maintains a link with the Congregation; Daniel and I are lucky that we can be welcomed in Pau, Limoges, Betharram, Pibrac or even further afield according as we move for work with *Vivre et Aimer*. For me it is important to be able to share in the life of the Community, prayer, Mass, meals – these are things which strengthen the fraternity.

Daniel: When Anne-Marie wanted to go and visit Fr Henri in Palestine, I didn't hesitate for a moment. Our trip to Palestine was based on the presence of Betharram in Nazareth and Bethlehem. We let ourselves be guided by Philippe Hourcade and Henri. We soon

realized the importance of geography, ancient history and contemporary history. I loved being able to appreciate the Gospel in its home territory; I feel closer to the Jew, Jesus, and the early Church. As I come to understand the struggles of the period I have no difficulty in accepting the problems of today's Church. I feel part of it; this pilgrimage and the texts of Vatican II (suggested by Jean-Jo Delgue) keep me from being blocked when there is something I don't agree with in the practise. The simplicity and the respect shown by the Fathers of Betharram help me to continue on my way.

Anne-Marie: All these gifts have helped us to grow in our faith as a couple and together we can say a huge Thank You and "forward march always!"

