

condition that the text wouldn't be sent to Rome.

For four years the Institute lived with this Rule. It enabled the religious to proceed in 1872 with elections which confirmed Fr Chirou as superior and elected Fr Etchecopar as vice-superior and general visitor. The miraculous intervention of Sister Mary of Jesus Crucified was recognised in deciding Mgr Lacroix to send this Rule to Rome in May 1875. It was at this time that the Bishop wrote, or at least signed the following text:

"Holy Father, I am happy to have in my diocese a congregation of religious-priests under the title of Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; they follow a common rule under the leadership of a general superior. This congregation, founded in 1832 by a priest full of the Spirit of God, in the shadow of the ancient and venerable sanctuary of Our Lady of Betharram, has grown and prospered with extraordinary speed." There then followed a lengthy appreciation of the religious, after which the Prelate concluded with the following: "I believe that this pious association deserves to be encouraged, and I unite my prayers with those of the pious priests members of this association, that Your Holiness would deign to bestow the apostolic approval on their constitutions".

With this document in hand and the trip to Rome of Fr Estrate and Canon Bordachar, Betharram was taking the decisive step in realising one of the vows dearest to the heart of Fr Garicoits.

Pierre Duvignau, scj  
Continues ►

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

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2013

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NE

NOUVELLES EN FAMILLE  
NOTICIAS EN FAMILIA  
NOTIZIE IN FAMIGLIA  
FAMILY NEWS

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

111<sup>th</sup> year  
10<sup>th</sup> series, nr 82  
14<sup>th</sup> May 2013

14<sup>TH</sup> MAY

1863



14<sup>TH</sup> MAY

2013

JUBILEE YEAR

## Prayer for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary



*Blessed are you, Father,  
Lord of heaven and earth.  
You have looked with kindness  
on Michael Garicoits our father.  
You chose him and called him,  
and entrusted him  
with the charism of the Heart of your beloved Son,  
gentle, humble and obedient.  
In this Jubilee of his ascent to heaven,  
we religious and laity of Betharram  
thank you for the holy treasure  
we have received from him.  
Grant us, Father, to follow faithfully the example of his life,  
to know, love, imitate and serve the Heart of Jesus.  
Fire us with the same passion  
to do in all things your will  
and the same compassion  
to serve all people in the heart of this world  
where you send us.  
May the beauty of our consecration illuminate our lives,  
renew our communities  
and awaken in the young  
the desire to share with us the joy and the longing  
to live the Gospel.  
Amen.*

## 5 - The 1869 and 1870 Constitutions

**1869** Things could not be left like that. When Fr Etchecopar brought the negative reply to Mgr Lacroix he succeeded in making a suggestion to him and got him to accept a new solution to end the deadlock: the Bishop would let the Congregation write the rule themselves, then submit it to His Lordship for his approval before presenting it to Rome. They hastened to take advantage of the Bishop's reaction and as quickly as possible composed Constitutions which seemed to suit the Community. Scared of a new refusal on the part of the Bishop they kept as closely as possible to the wording of the text already thrown out because of inadequacy.

In reality they had kept too closely to the text in question! For if the Bishop gave his approval to the new text without modification, even accepting to present it himself to Rome when he would go for the Council which was about to open, the Holy See turned out to be more difficult and demanded the following two conditions before giving approval: "that the Institute should have its own life under the authority of a superior appointed by the Institute and chosen from its ranks, and that its members when making their vow of poverty should keep only ownership of their goods and renounce the administration, use and usufruct of their property." This decision was made known to Betharram by the Bishop's Secretary, M. Incha-

spe. They had to get down to the work again! And get down to it they did!

**1870** The General Chapter which had been summoned met 17 August 1870 to draw up the new Code; but the task proved to be very laborious as can be seen by the acts of the assembly. The senior religious, deeply impressed by the saintly Founder, wanted rules totally in line with his way of thinking. Those who came afterwards and who had not known the beginnings were asking for more freedom and feared the demands of the vow of poverty. There were those who suggested quite simply to adopt the rules of the former Chaplains of Betharram; others wanted the rules of the Lazaristes. There were heated discussions. The Holy Spirit came to their aid in the end as is often the case in Councils and they composed a text which was a fairly good reflection of St Michael's thought, although the expressions employed only recalled vaguely his way of thinking. Above all there was an outstanding chapter dealing with the spirit of the Institute.

These Constitutions were immediately taken to Bayonne, but Mgr Lacroix was in no hurry to sign them. Was he beginning to regret agreeing the year before? Whatever the reason, he kept this Rule in his desk for a whole year, and it was only by dint of insisting that approval was obtained 18 October 1871, and then on

MAY	14	Joyeux anniversaire Buon compleanno 15 años de sacerdocio 10 years of profession	P. Paul Baradat, Fr Gilbert Napetien Coulibaly P. Antonio Riva P. Gilberto Ortellado Br. Andrew Athit Nyomtham
	19	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Roberto Amarilla
	20	Feliz cumpleaños	Hno Sixto Benitez
	22	Buon compleanno	P. Gianluca Limonta
	23	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Jean-Marie Ruspil
	25	Joyeux anniversaire Feliz cumpleaños	P. André Lacaze P. Gerardo Ramos
	26	Buon compleanno	P. Mario Bulanti
	28	20 years of profession	Fr. Peter Chaiyot Charoenkun
	29	Happy birthday	Br Athit Kasetsukchai
	30	Joyeux anniversaire	P. Bertrand Salla P. Julio Colina
JUNE	31	Buon compleanno 55 anni di sacerdozio	P. Emilio Manzolini P. Carlo Antonini P. Angelo Pajno P. Ermano Rasero P. Carlo Luzzi
	3	Bon anniversaire	P. Joseph Mazerolles
	6	Happy birthday	Fr Subesh Odiyathingal
	7	5 years of priesthood	Fr. Gabriel Pornchai Sukjai
	10	Feliz cumpleaños	P. Crispin Villalba
	12	Buon compleanno Happy birthday	P. Angelo Bianchi Fr Anton Madej

## 14 May 1863

*"I WOULD LIKE TO CALL HIM A SAINT, BUT THE CHURCH DOESN'T ALLOW ME TO. IT BELONGS TO THE HOLY FATHER TO SAY THAT SOMEONE IS A SAINT. I CAN'T EVEN CALL HIM VENERABLE. YET I BELIEVE THAT HE IS A SAINT AND THIS EXPLAINS MY PREDICAMENT. I SHALL REFER TO HIM AS "THE WORTHY", THE EXCELLENT", "THE DEAR PRIEST", THE "BELOVED SUPERIOR OF BETHARRAM".*

*IT IS SATURDAY, 16 MAY 1863 AND WE ARE IN THE CHAPEL AT BETHARRAM. THE BISHOP OF BAYONNE WHO WAS NOT – THE LEAST THAT CAN BE SAID – AN ARDENT CHAMPION OF THE FOUNDER OF OUR CONGREGATION, HAS BEEN PREACHING A PREMONITORY HOMILY.*

*IN THEIR OBITUARY COLUMNS THE DAUGHTERS OF THE CROSS PROCLAIM WITH ONE VOICE THE VIRTUES OF THEIR CONFESSOR: "A PRIEST AFTER THE HEART OF GOD, A MAN OF SURE JUDGEMENT, OF SOLID EDUCATION, OF ADMIRABLE SIMPLICITY, AND OF UNBOUNDED KINDNESS. HE IS MOURNED AND BLESSED BY ALL AND LEAVES BEHIND THE REPUTATION AND ACTIONS OF A SAINT".*

*FINALLY, WHO BETTER THAN A COMPANION IN ARMS CAN TELL THE STORY OF ONE WHO ON THIS GLORIOUS DAY HAS GONE TO HEAVEN?*

Michael Garicoits, Superior of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Betharram died on Ascension Thursday at 3 a.m. The day before, he paid a visit to our Bishop who was staying not far from Betharram. He spent the recreation that evening with the priests whom he entertained in his usual cheerful manner. Then on the morning of Ascension Day at 02.00 a.m. he was gasping for breath, received the Last Sacraments and having recited the acts of Faith, Hope and Charity, he cried out "God, have pity on" and fell asleep in the Lord. He was 66 years of age.

Our Superior was really a very mortified man; he ate little, slept only five hours a night, worked almost without let

up; he rarely took recreation, showed himself to be full of goodness and charity, and was gracious whenever interrupted. He was torn between a multitude of occupations and endless problems. Business made him forget food and sleep! He rose at 3.00 am, was in the school at 4.00 where he had a philosophy class at 6.30 and theology at 11.00. Sometimes he stayed in the confessional until 4.00 pm without having anything to eat all day; after that he would return to his books then give a conference to the priests; the rest of the day was given over to study and to whatever else was the responsibility of a community superior. He seemed tireless, indifferent to everything. This total indifference he found in the



respect and love which he had for the Lord's Will. "Fiat voluntas tua" was his heartfelt cry. He always preached this love and respect for the divine Will. He waged an unending battle against scorning this Will; for him it was to be sought and carried out with military style, as he used to say. This is the end towards which we must always tend. In a word it sums up the story of his life.

Michael Garicoits began the work of the Auxiliary Priests with only one priest, Fr Guimon; the work was to develop slowly and painfully amidst trials of all kinds. Today there are 50 priests, 50 seminarians and 30 brothers. The Congregation supplies priests for the Bearn, has 3 residences in the diocese, 3 schools for the education of the young. It has sent a small band of missionaries to South America for the foundation of two residences, one at Montevideo and the other at Buenos-Ayres. In this latter city a college has taken root, Thank God. Our Superior worked hard for the foundation of the Daughters of the Cross. Full of admiration for the heroic virtues of these good sisters who suffered greatly at the beginning of their foundation, having only a type of shed for sleeping quarters during the winter months; he supported them with courage and zeal. Sometimes at 11.00 am these Sisters would still be fasting, waiting for the arrival of the priest to say Mass for them and distribute Holy Communion. As for spiritual accompaniment and discernment of vocations Michael Garicoits had received

the gift of discernment of spirits. With such a rare grace, his natural zeal and with the help of the admirable method of St Ignatius of Loyola, we are sure that he saved a great number of souls. Through all the events and contradictions he was sharp sighted enough to discern the signs of the Holy Spirit and to play down the movements of Satan. "You are a train which has derailed; there is your life. You have only to say "Here I am"; enter this way, and once your life is well focused, you can take off! Those who followed his instruction have been very happy and named him their light and tool. He had a brave and generous heart. This soul of an apostle knew no obstacles and was the kindest person who ever existed. Whenever he saw any one straying off the right path it was enough to make him lose his appetite and sleep. When talking of the love of our Lord Jesus Christ and of his mercy in the Eucharist his voice would shake and he would be reduced to tears. He was truly the Father of all seeking only to be of service to others, even at his own expense.

He was a saint; we never saw him seeking his own satisfaction but always seeking to do God's Will and accomplishing it. He was a saint crowned with all the Christian, priestly and apostolic virtues possible. He was a model for priests and a faithful copy of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Did not Our Lord himself prove this by summoning Michael Garicoits home on Ascension Thursday at 3.00 a.m. This was the time at which this valiant worker

poor and isolated the Love of God. Consequently we shall be more like John than Peter. "If I want him to remain until I re-

turn what business is it of yours?" Betharram is alive! It lives to love and share the happiness which fills our heart.

### A prayer

*O God of love, you called me to follow you closely in the Betharram family.*

*You gave us your Son Jesus as model so that we may approach you in all humility with a heart full of love for all the "victims lacking in love" in this world*

*Teach me to serve you like your disciples, ready for the mission and full of the Fire of the Pascal mystery of your Son, crucified and risen again.*

*Father, help us to build a world more humane and attentive of his humility so that we may become more worthy and more saintly individuals.*

*May we observe faithfully the obedience we profess like Mary, St Michael and Fr Etchecopar observed it!*

*With them may we make our lives into a joyful Magnificat which will resound throughout the whole world. Amen!*

Spiritual son of the "Bayonnais", **Fr Gustavo Eduardo Agin** is Argentinian; he discovered his vocation in the school room, for he has known and loved the Congregation from his earliest years as a pupil at Barracas where he noticed the power of the witness of some Betharramites, especially Fr Ceferino Arce.

Ever since his First Profession 24 February 1990 he is progressing noiselessly, shouldering the tasks which are entrusted to him and which are not necessarily easy: Provincial administrator for Rio de la Plata, superior of the formation community Martin Coronado, Regional Superior of Fr Auguste Etchecopar Region.

Thanks to his gift of listening and discernment, Fr Gustavo was obviously asked to accompany the novices of his Region as well as the young religious preparing for Final Profession during the International sessions. Careful! Please don't imagine him marching at the head of these young religious like a scout but rather walking side by side with them, guiding their steps in the steps of Jesus! For this first "narratio fidei" for 14 May 2013, we are grateful to him for having accepted to share with us his deepest and most intimate thoughts.



*Fr. Gustavo Agin (2<sup>nd</sup> from the left, above) with young professed and Fathers during an international session in Holy Land*

### **How can I pack this into my own life?**

We know that in our following of Jesus, we don't reach everything that we want to. I try to maintain a disciple's heart: learn from others how to handle appointments and responsibilities, failings and success, but above all learn to be a disciple. Since faced with life we don't always do what we should, and often what we can. As Regional I was often edified by the Betharramite availability of some of my brothers; sometimes when I asked for a change of community, or to accept the responsibility of superior etc. What profound availability in the reply of some of them to the "Follow me" of Christ! How small were my "yes" compared with the availability of one or other senior accepting a change of locality or that of a sick brother who insisted on working to the end of his life, or that of a healthy young brother saying with a smile "Here I am" replying to a missionary appeal from Betharram and who kept his word.

What a lot I learned! I ask the Lord to be able to recognize him through all the brothers whom he has given me. Just like the docile sheep recognizing the voice of their Shepherd and carrying out what they have promised.

I have also learned to be patient with sheep less docile and anxious who don't let themselves be led by the Holy Spirit any more than by his poor representatives. They help us to remember who is Master of the flock and of the Harvest: the Good Shepherd and King who loves them all the more for having distanced themselves from Him.

Day by day I have learned that certain members of the laity more like St John

understand the fragility of our religious are willing to accept co-responsibility for our missions in a spirit of availability and leadership.

Finally I have been attentive to the living example of certain of our senior members advancing slowly but surely towards the Betharram in Heaven: like the Good Thief they have abandoned themselves into the hands of the crucified Lord.

### **What am I being invited to study more closely?**

It's a long road! "Eat and drink" says the Lord to Elias. I have a feeling that Betharram, like a desert in this 21st century is slowly leading towards Mount Horeb. I am deeply convinced because the Heart of Jesus in whom I trust is leading us towards the living God. I am keeping my eyes on the horizon. Change has taken place in me by the Word of God which keeps my heart alive. What I would long for is that this love for Jesus, humble and obedient, which seduced me would have a similar effect on many young men so that together we could continue building the Church. When I look at those members of our religious family I tell them what the new Archbishop of Buenos Ayres Mgr Poli as I was greeting him at the end of his inauguration. "Mgr, I give you the best wishes of the Fathers of Betharram (sometimes known here as Bayonnais!) He was delighted and hugged me saying "May they prosper! Thank you! That has done me good! "

Yes, let's continue to prosper!

If Life brings me joy, it's all I ask for at this moment: be ever more alive and joyful so as to share with all but especially the



*St Michael Garicoits' room*

began his day; it was the time when our Bishop was confirming the news in our region, something which only happens every 4 or 5 years. We firmly hope that he wished to fulfil "he who humbles himself will be exalted"; Our Lord sent his Bishop to speak the most beautiful words over the remains of the humblest of creatures. Personally I believe that they are the most beautiful to be spoken by any bishop. Everybody is talking about it and is far from forgetting what was spoken with such conviction. As soon as the body of our superior was offered to the public for veneration, people came from far and near to touch the body with all kinds of objects – books, handkerchiefs, ties, scarves, etc.

Several mothers even presented their one year old babies; most extraordinary, these babies touched the body without ever crying or showing signs of fear. It's as if these innocent babies recognised that Fr Garicoits had been the friend of children during his lifetime; and they would run after him like after a father or a mother.

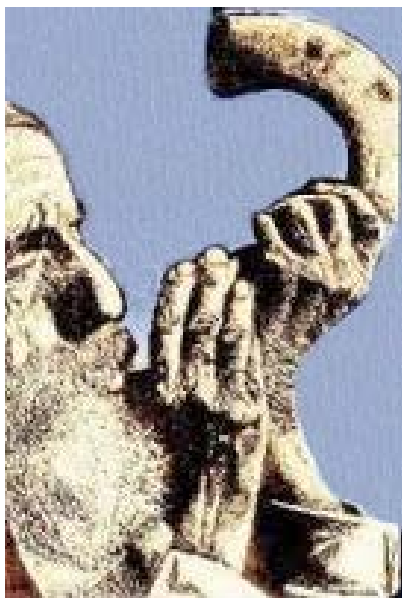
*Auguste Etchecopar, scj*



### The Jubilee Trumpets

*Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud; on the tenth day of the seventh month – on the Day of Atonement – you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land. (Lev. 25, 9).*

This morning I was woken up early by a concert of trumpet music. To begin with, the sound was far off but by 7.00 a.m. the trumpets seemed to be close by, their intense, melodious and pleasant sound joined their musicality to that of the bells of the sanctuary at Betharram ringing the morning Angelus. It was then that I noticed that their music was fading following the path of the rising sun towards the west. This is the same sun which, every morning, “comes forth like



a bridegroom from his wedding chamber, and like a strong man runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the ends of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hidden from its heat”. (Psalm 19, 6,7), reminding St Michael Garicoits of the Incarnate Word of God, who from the moment of his conception, comes forth joyful like a conquering hero ready to follow his path to the cross.

It was then that I began to realise that it was the Jubilee trumpets which had begun sounding in Thailand, towards Argentina,

Brazil and Uruguay visiting all the Betharramite communities faithful to their mission. Today, that makes just 150 years, to be precise 14 May 1863, the day on which our dear Father Garicoits finished his pilgrimage on this earth and began his life in the heavenly glory beside the Father, the Heart of Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Mary and St Joseph, together with the 144 000 souls of whom the Apocalypse speaks. That year the date happened to be Ascension Thursday.

Today, throughout the whole world, we, the sons of St Michael Garicoits, religious and laity, we are beginning our Jubilee Year and with the sound of the trumpet mingled with our voices as a witness to our lives we wish to proclaim the marvels of the Lord. “From the rising of the sun till its setting, praised be the Name of the Lord! Bless the Lord, O my soul; do not forget his goodness! Sing a new song to the Lord for he had done wonders! Bless the Lord, O my soul, bless the Lord! My soul glorifies the Lord! Magnificat!”

*Yes, sing Magnificat!* For the precious

but I’m happy all the same. Every time I had to obey an order from my superiors, for example a new mission, I must admit that it cost me something to accept as happens in our vocation: without delay and without withholding. I always needed a moment for discernment. ...Reflections, joys, lights, shadows, struggles etc. Once I had understood that there weren’t many alternatives, I accepted. That has been a great help for me. It is then possible to feel free to choose between what was good and what was better. Consequently I recognize the religious that I was and continue to be in St Peter who is full of doubts and fears. I admire John but haven’t his subtlety. When in 1998 I was leaving the San Jose College (actually about to close), I wondered to myself: What use will those three years be to me? When it was suggested that I should get ready for formation, I asked my superior: “It’s going to be a ten year mission I suppose”? Then when I became novice master for the Region, I thought “They are regionalizing me! From now onwards I shall not belong to any locality!” Then I was called upon to be Regional Superior, and they said to me “if the Region were to fall on your shoulders, what would you say?” It cost me one night’s sleep and then I accepted. So you see I am another Peter, always frightened in his boat. Jesus must have a good laugh at me and say to himself: O Man of little faith!

#### What do these passages say to me?

I reflected on Peter’s curiosity concerning John’s future. I have a feeling that the majority of today’s Betharramites are like Peter. John whom I consider the perfect

believer is a bit like the “Betharram family” exactly as St Michael imagined it. I realize to what extent Peter’s attitude – normal – is so human and part of our lives. We are more concerned with what we were, who we are and who we will be. We are agonized and are wondering all the time. We are constantly making comparisons and seeing our reflection in our brothers. It’s a type of conduct which adheres to us more and more as the years pass. Fortunately there are other saintly brothers in our religious family who are not stopped with such problems. They are the miniature St John’s resting their head on the breast of the Lord and giving by example. Jesus’ answer strikes me: “If I want him to stay behind until I return, what business is it of yours? As for you, follow me” I say to myself that he could have continued saying “Follow me! Because at the right moment I shall be part of history. I came to save mankind and will continue to do so. Fear not just live your life and abandon your life to me”.

It reminded me of the lines from Psalm 128.3 “They ploughed my back like ploughshares, drawing long furrows. But the Lord who is just has destroyed the yoke of the wicked.” But the Lord who sets people free says to me: “I shall plough the land and give the laborer the seed; and you will sow the seeds and will have life in abundance. “You are my chosen one, my instrument. Trust the Mercy of Jesus, the image of his humanity and divine love.

As I change I believe in the incarnate God, walking along side his People on their way to history..... and if we walk with him, who can be against us?

## NARRATIO FIDEI

**5 MINUTES WITH ...? DURING THIS JUBILEE YEAR THIS SERIES OF INTERVIEWS OF COMMUNITIES IS SUSPENDED TO BE REPLACED BY DIFFERENT TYPE OF WITNESS TO CELEBRATE THE 150 YEARS SINCE THE DEATH OF OUR SAINTLY FOUNDER. HE WILL INVITE US MORE THAN EVER TO MEDITATE ON HIS LIFE'S JOURNEY, ON THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF HIS EXISTENCE, ON HIS DEEP CONVICTIONS, ON THE ACT OF FAITH WHICH HE SHARED THROUGH HIS WRITINGS AND HIS MINISTRY IN THE SERVICE OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF HIS TIME.**

**TO HELP US IN THIS MEDITATION WE HAVE ASKED A FEW OF OUR BROTHERS TO TELL US OF THEIR OWN EXPERIENCE OF FAITH ON THEMES DEAR TO ST MICHAEL; ISN'T THIS ANOTHER MEANS OF CULTIVATING FRATERNAL COMMUNION, "TO RAISE OURSELVES AND TO BRING OTHERS TO PERFECTION" (RoL 96 AND DS 331)?**

**ON THIS THE 14 MAY, ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEPARTURE FOR HEAVEN OF MICHAEL GARICOITS, PRIEST, FR GUSTAVE AGIN SCJ, TOOK A TIME OF SILENCE, REFLEXION AND PRAYER AND HAS SPOKEN TO US THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD (JOHN 21,22) AND THROUGH AN EXTRACT FROM THE DOCTRINE SPIRITUAL. IT IS NOW OUR TURN TO LISTEN TO HIM!**

### Scripture reading

"If I want him to stay behind till I come, what does it matter to you? You are to follow me!" (Jn 21,22)

### Text by St Michael

"Love, that is what motivates mankind; that's the secret to be discovered in the postulants and novices; there's the divine seed to be developed in hearts. If it is lacking, there is nothing to be done. Love must always be humble and discreet. Peter's is exaggerated; the apostle is meddling in what doesn't concern him. The cross should belong to all the Saviour's friends; but nature and the type of the trial is a secret to be kept under wraps. Out with inquisitiveness! "If I want him to stay behind till I return, what business is it of yours? You are to follow me". St John is admirable! He says nothing, asks no questions; no inquisitiveness, no curiosity. He is ready for anything, he wants to know nothing and is peacefully and lovingly in a state of abandonment to the will of his dear Master! Oh, if only we were like St John! I only we were always ready to progress, without showing the slightest opposition; never asking "I am off, but who is going to replace me?" without no other worry except to respond fully to Our Lord's call. Follow me, that is enough; what does the rest mean to you? What a beautiful sight we would offer to God and mankind and what control such examples would have on hearts!

### SILENCE

**NARRATIO...** First of all I want to say how happy I am for my vocation; as happy as

Peter was after meeting with Jesus on the shores of Lake Tiberias, I don't know why

gift of Saint Michael Garicoits, our Father, who begot us into religious life where we can experience joy!

**Magnificat!...** Because Father Garicoits "was convinced that the God of the humble and the poor had chosen him for this very purpose, him the humble shepherd from the last house in the hamlet of Ibarre, he who was a "misfit" a "nothing".

**Magnificat!...** Because from his tender childhood Michael hungered and thirsted for God, even climbing the surrounding mountains to touch the heavens where his mother had told him that it was here that God lived.

**Magnificat!...** Because at Oneix, while he was longing to meet Jesus in his First Communion, Jesus revealed to him his love, consoling him and filling him with the joy of finding the treasure, the chosen pearl.

**Magnificat!...** Because he lived his preparation for the priesthood at the same time as the need to work.

**Magnificat!...** Because Jesus, the Eternal High Priest and servant of the Father associated him with his own priesthood on 20 December 1823 in the Cathedral of Bayonne.

**Magnificat!...** Because the Father of mercies granted him the grace of conversion through the witness of consecrated poverty of the Daughters of the Cross at Igon and of their Foundress Sister Jeanne Elizabeth Bichier des Ages; "priestly dignity" had gone to Michael's head and made him forget his humble origins.

**Magnificat!...** Because within "the solitude of four high walls" of Betharram Father Garicoits received the treasure of the charism; he saw Bishops cry and felt like Jesus humble and obedient. He came to realise

that imitation of Christ was the real way of fighting against the evils of the epoch.

**Magnificat!...** For the comrades who joined him in October 1835 to live out in community the charism of the Heart of Jesus humble and obedient, Fathers Guimon, Perguilhem, Chirou, Larrouy, Fondeville and for all those who would join in the future.

**Magnificat!...** Because Saint Michael was full of the love of God which he felt to be like a flame in his heart which he admitted later on.

**Magnificat!...** Because he must have had the same spiritual experience as Jesus, humble and obedient like Abraham; he obeyed his Bishop even when he was convinced that by following a particular path, the Congregation which God Himself had asked him to found, was heading for disaster.

**Magnificat!...** Because God ever faithful to his promises and in whom St Michael had total confidence, confirmed his undertaking: 20 years after his death, Pope Pius IX gave his approval to the Congregation!

**Magnificat!...** for the joy which St Michael obtained for so many people through the gift of discernment, helping them to discover their real vocation and through the sacrament of Reconciliation to experience fully the love of God in sacramental forgiveness.

**Magnificat!...** for Michael's missionary spirit, starting with popular missions right through to education as found in Betharram, Asson, Mauleon, Oloron and Orthez in spite of the opposite opinion of many of his companions.

**Magnificat!...** For the obedience and daring of the first missionaries sent to Argentina: Fathers Barben, Larrouy, Guimon, Harbustan, Sardoy and the Brothers Magen-

die, Fabian and Johannes for the popular missions and education which they undertook with great generosity to such a point that the tradition still exists today!

*Magnificat!...* For the countless men and women, religious and laity, children, teenagers and adults who today in 15 countries are enthusiastic in wanting to follow the life and choices made by St Michael Garicoits so as to bring the love of the Heart of Jesus into the heart of this world where so many men and women are sorely in need of it!

*Magnificat!...* For the lives of all those, scattered throughout the world and who continue to be witness to the gentleness, humility and obedience of the Heart of Jesus, as St Michael Garicoits teaches us!

*Magnificat!...* Because in 1863 those who loved him were heartbroken at seeing him leave; whereas in 2013 we are rejoicing because after his beatification in 1923 and his

canonisation in 1947, we feel that we must thank God for the graces bestowed on him for the benefit of the Church and for all the fruits which have already been produced!

*Magnificat!...* Because the Congregation which the Lord wanted him to found is now scattered throughout the whole world and continues her mission to bring to others the same happiness the result of being faithful to the love of God manifested in Jesus Christ humble and obedient!

Let the trumpets continue to sound! Don't let them stop! Through them may our gratitude spread through all the earth as we proclaim the wonders which God performed in Michael Garicoits, his humble Basque servant from Ibarre, and which he continues to perform in his disciples, religious and laity, from one end of the earth to the other!

Gaspar Fernández Pérez, scj



*Saint Michael Garicoits wrote...*

Divine Providence takes care of everything in the world. To carry out its plans it uses all the means which seem most inappropriate to us. The unbelievers themselves who deny Providence serve it unwittingly. We often complain about what it does for our good, and often grumble about what is of greatest use to us. Above our heads God embroiders a magnificent tapestry. If you look up you will only see the reverse side of the work, where all seems to be muddled up and in a state of confusion. But when you are able to contemplate the work on the right side, you will see it as it really is. You will be really surprised and full of admiration at the sight of what today, in your ignorance, you dare to criticise. (Father, here I am, p. 81)

ed, helping the local Churches, acting in the formation of young people, in the works of assistance to answer the call of Christ with a total and confident "Here I am!".

This is your commitment which I accompany with a special prayer that you may always bear witness to your motto: always forward!

I wish you well, and implore the blessing of the Lord on you all.

Cardinal Angelo Scola, Archbishop of Milan"

## Vicariate of Ivory Coast

**Ordinations** ► Sunday, May 12, Bros Marius and Elise were ordained priests and Br Hyacinthe received the Diaconate. The celebration was presided over by Mons Vincent Landel scj, Bishop of Rabat (Morocco).

The celebration is ushering in the Jubilee Year in honor of Father Michael Garicoits, our Founder. This is what Mons Landel wrote in his message: "Saint Michael helps us to become more aware that we are part of a "flying camp", eager to spread the joy of being disciples of the "Here I am" of Jesus (...) Thank you for giving me the opportunity to ordain Bros Elysee and Marius as priests and Br Hyacinthe as deacon, in Adiapodoume."

## Vicariate of India

**St Thomas** ► On April 20th, the Novices of the Region along with the guest of the Community went for a pilgrimage, as an event of the Year of Faith, to the Tomb of St. Thomas, the Apostle of India. This Historical place is situated in Chennai, the capital city of Tamil Nadu, South India. St. Thomas, who was called by Jesus to become one of his twelve Apostles and had a great love for his Master, is known for the proclamation of

his faith: Let us also go; that we may die with him! and he uttered that timeless act of faith: My Lord and my God! According to the tradition, as a missionary he came to India, and proclaimed Christ around the west coast of India. It is believed that at Mylapore (now San Thome), he had met death by the spear, as he was praying in front of the Miraculous Cross. He was buried in the Church at Mylapore and a beautiful Church was erected over the Tomb.

**Ordinations** ► On May 8, Br George Mathew was ordained as a priest by the laying on of hands of Most Rev Dr George Valiamatam, Bishop of Telicherry, at St George's Church, Mavumchal. On May 22, the Rev Yvon Ambrose, Bishop of Tuticorin, will confer the priestly ordination to Br Livin Fernando at Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, Vallioor. We join the Indian Vicariate in thanking the Lord for the gift of these new priests who will serve the Church inspired by our Founder.

**Professions** ► Today, 14 May, the Vicariate is inaugurating the celebrations of the 150th Anniversary with the First Profession of Br Shamon Devasia Valiyaveetil and Br Reegan Vincent Raj in the Chapel of Shobhana Shakha, Bangalore. The Eucharist is presided over by the Most Rev Dr Ignatius Paul Pinto, the Emeritus Archbishop of Bangalore. The blessing of Xavier Care Home is following.





### Vicariate of France

**"Yes" to Thalia** ► In France the Jubilee celebrations for Saint Michael Garicoïts were inaugurated on Friday, April 5. In the Church St-Pierre in Pau, about 800 people attended a show entitled "Life of St. Michael Garicoïts. Founder of the fathers of Betharram". A great animated show, set to music and performed by a group of 200 children, together with a few Betharramite religious who said "here I am", not this time to their bishop but to a Greek old lady and bravely went on the stage to play St Michael himself and his contemporaries. Well done!

### Preparing oneself for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary

► On May 10th, in Pau, the Betharram friends and the disciples of St. Michael Garicoïts joined the religious community and the St Michael Garicoïts choir for a prayer vigil around his relics. Saint Michael Garicoïts helps us through the words that he left us and through hymns inspired by its spirituality, to contemplate God and follow the Incarnate Word in obedience to the Father.

### Vicariate of Italy

**"BetharrAmici"** ► On April 5-7, the community of Our Lady of the Miracles in Rome organized a second meeting for the Lay Association of young Betharramites, "BetharrAmici." The purpose of this meeting was to prepare the World Youth Day in Rio and the 150th anniversary



of the death of St. Michael Garicoïts. The motto of the WYD, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations!", was also the catch phrase expressing the message that was announced in evangelizing the people on the Piazza del Popolo. On Saturday afternoon (April 6), after a prayer session, the young betharramites, while offering "free hugs" invited people to come to the church where the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was going on, led by the group "Friends of Jesus, Mary and Joseph". The initiative was a success. The young "BetharrAmici" were very pleased to meet so many people and gently lead them into the church. Several were admittedly entering a church for the first time after many many years and rediscovering the value of prayer and of the personal encounter with the Lord. Another key moment was the speech given by Pope Francis during the "Regina Coeli" in Saint Peter's Square on Sunday, April 7.

**A letter from Milan** ► Cardinal Angelo Scola, Archbishop of Milan, sent to the Betharramites present in the Milan diocese, a congratulatory message on the occasion of the Jubilee Year in honor of St. Michael Garicoïts which will open on May 14. Here is the text...

"Dear Betharram Fathers and Brothers, I am pleased to join you on the occasion of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Saint Michael's death.

It is a time of celebration and thanksgiving for the teachings and the example of your Founder who, with his vision he felt the need to pursue a work of evangelization with missionary spirit in rapidly changing contexts.

With the same enthusiasm, the Congregation continues his work today by being present where it is need-

## The virtues of the Sacred Heart: Obedience

*IF IT IS DIFFICULT OR EVEN UNTIMELY TO RANK THE VIRTUES OF THE SACRED HEART, IT COULD STILL BE SAID THAT THE MOST DIFFICULT TO PRACTISE WITH SERENITY AND CONSTANCY IS SURELY "TO OBEY". "I? TO OBEY? YES, YES, DEFINITELY... BUT..."*

*"TO STRIP ONE'S SELF OF EVERYTHING, ABOVE ALL OF SELF TO BE ABANDONED TO THE LAW OF LOVE" IS A REAL CHALLENGE FOR HUMAN NATURE. YET ST MICHAEL GARICOITS, AMAZED AT THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF THE SON, OBEDIENT EVEN TO DEATH AND DEATH ON A CROSS, MADE OBEDIENCE A PILLAR OF THE CONGREGATION. HE EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO SAY THAT WITHOUT OBEDIENCE THE CONGREGATION WOULDN'T EXIST.*

The love which the Son had for his Father is proved by the virtue of obedience. The external expression is proof of the internal expression of this love! Sometimes we would be inclined to place internal in opposition to external; it's a fact that the exterior does not always render the interior exactly. Hence the hypocrisy of which Jesus often accused his fellow countrymen. The ideal is to be found in life's consistency such that our behaviour is the genuine manifestation of our interior dispositions. When it comes to dealing with the virtues of the Heart of Jesus, we are on sure ground both for our interior and exterior dispositions: Jesus Christ is our mirror and our example which we must never lose sight of: his life, his actions, his behaviour both internal and external .... compare constantly with him: "Is your heart in any way like his? In the present situation, what would he do?" DS 341. Saint Michael suffered at the sight of the ravages wrought by the disobedience and rebelliousness in the Church in the aftermath of the French Revolution. It was his wish that the Society of the Sa-

cred Heart of Jesus of Betharram should face the challenge by stressing the importance of obedience. "Obedience structures our Society and makes it into the Congregation of Betharram. Obedience should be our characteristic. If obedience is lacking, our raison d'être is lacking also. "The obedience of which we are talking is the obedience of Jesus. The founding text stresses at great length the humility and obedience of Jesus. In the case of Jesus obedience and love go hand in hand from the moment of his conception in Nazareth to his death on the cross; his entire life was motivated by his Father's will to be carried out voluntarily and freely; his obedience is a son's obedience. The Son of God is pleased to respond to this mission which has been entrusted to him. He does it through love and to show mankind the meaning of love. The obedience proposed by the Gospel is a filial obedience and not a servile one, performed in the real freedom of the children of God; St Michael talks of a "loving obedience".

Today, if for religious vowed obedience

demands the sacrifice of one's will for the service of the Congregation, what does it mean for the laity? Even if the lay person is not bound by law, he is still required to fulfil God's will; he can't be satisfied with intentions and declarations: "It is not enough to say: Lord, Lord, to enter the Kingdom of Heaven; you must do the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Mt 7, 21). Whosoever does the will of my Father who is in Heaven, he



«At the sunset of life, you will be judged by your love»  
drawing and caption by St John of the Cross

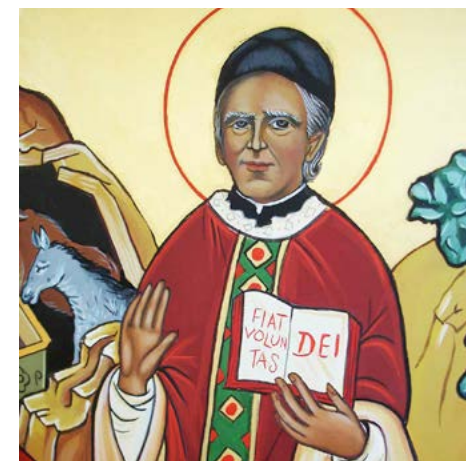
is my brother, my sister and my mother". (Mt 12, 50).

For the laity, they can practice obedience in their professional life as well as in their family life. Thus work is not regarded simply as a means to earning a salary (although this is important to provide for a family), but also as a way of participating in the work of creation and so of collaborating as equal partners with God the Creator. As we celebrate

the 50th anniversary of the opening of Vatican II, it is good that we should contemplate the meaning which the Christian gives to work: "Far from thinking of a sensible individual as a kind of rival to the Creator, on the contrary Christians are convinced that the victories won by human beings are signs of greatness of God and a consequence of his ineffable plans. The Christian message doesn't deflect man from the work of the construction of the world nor does it encourage them to lose interest in the fate of their fellow men. On the contrary it is their most pressing duty". (GS No 34) Professional work is therefore the area where the Will of God may be done.

Doing God's will can be a special place in the lives of married couples and family life; the Church wants the couple and family to be not only a place of cohabitation but also real community life. "The family is a school of human enrichment. But so that the fa-

mily should reach its potential and its mission, it demands a communion of souls and attentive cooperation on the part of the parents in the education of their children". To be part of this mission and committed to it is the obedience to which you have been called. We are therefore leaving behind the narrow-minded interpretation of obedience that could be ours reducing it to obeying a few orders. It's all about carrying out the mission to which one day we gave an enthusiastic YES and which requires daily generosity on our part.



## QUESTIONS

- 1) "Doing God's Will" is a motto which the Betharramites use as a heading (FVD). What does this mean for us, religious and laity?
- 2) What are the interior qualities, the dispositions of the heart needed so as to be faithful to our different callings (community or family, work or mission) and to be more faithful to the spirituality of our Founder?

- 3) "It is not through power that we receive what God sends, but through respect and love", such was the lesson given by St Michael to the brother-cook a few hours before his death; how can we live up today to this abandonment to the will of God?

Laurent Bacho, scu

## Note from the General Council

On May 6, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, presented to Priesthood the Brothers **Éder Chaves Gonçalves** and **Marcelo Rodrigues Da Silva** of the Vicariate of Brazil (Region Fr. Augusto Etchecopar).

## IN MEMORIAM

On April 27, at the age of 80 years, **Mr. Angel Colina**, brother of our confrere Fr Julio Colina (community of Mendelu, Vicariate of France-Spain) died in Miranda de Ebro (Burgos). As members of the Betharram family we are close to Fr Julio and his family and we pray for the eternal rest of their dear one.