

Alliance Inter-Monastères

Newsletter, July 2019



After some difficulties in maintaining the rhythm of a regular newsletter, we are repeating this initiative which, from now on, we will link to the meetings of the Council (November) and the Executive Committee (November and May). This newsletter should, therefore, be published twice a year and will make it possible to follow the projects and activities of our Benedictine family, which includes all the monasteries in the world that follow the rule of Saint Benedict. AIM accompanies and supports all kinds of collaborations and mutual assistance at the continental level covering vast regions of the world.

INTERNATIONAL OR REGIONAL MEETINGS AND FORMATION

■ Eighth Symposium of the International Commission for Benedictine Education

The International Commission of Benedictine Education is an organisation of the Benedictine and Cistercian Orders that supports schools of Benedictine tradition. Education has always been an important element in the history of the Benedictines.

The eighth symposium will be held in Sydney (Australia) with the Benedictine Sisters of the Good Samaritan Congregation from September 30 to October 4, 2019. The theme will be: «Benedictine Wisdom in the Time of the Southern Cross». Southern Cross is a Japanese science-fiction animation film.



■ Latin American Monastic Encounter (EMLA)

In 1978, Latin American monasteries were grouped into three regions: ABECCA (Benedictine and Cistercian Association of the Caribbean and the Andes); CIMBRA (Inter-Monastery Commission of Brazil) and SURCO (Conference of Monastic Communities of the Southern Cone).

The next meeting will take place at the monastery of Córdoba (Argentina) from 30 September to 6 October 2019. The theme of this meeting will be: «He loved us to the end» (Jn 13:1). Eucharist and monastic life». Father Jean-Pierre Longeat will be present at this meeting.



■ Monastic meeting of the South African Region

In 1992 the first meeting of the BECOSA association took place. Since then, meetings have taken place every year and bring together the superiors of men and women from the Benedictine communities of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. In 1998 the Order of Holy Cross, an Anglican Benedictine branch in Grahamstown, joined the association. A total of nine Benedictine monasteries and congregations are members



of the association. The last meeting took place from 18 to 24 February 2019 at the Benedictine Missionary Sisters of Tutzing, Windhoek (Namibia). It brought together superiors, formators and community delegates, and Father Mark Butlin of the AIM International Team. The theme was ongoing formation in communities with a beautiful preparatory document: «In the school of the Lord's service: Prefer nothing to Christ».

■ Madagascar : Meeting of Superiors

The Association of Monasteries of the Indian Ocean brings together the monasteries of this region living under the rule of Saint Benedict (four Benedictine communities and two Cistercian communities) but also eight Carmels and four monasteries of the Poor Clares. In view of the isolation of several communities, it is a great enrichment in the common work and sharing of experiences.

The Meeting of the Association was held in May 2019 amongst the Cistercians nuns of Ampibanjinana (Fianarantsoa) and brought together eighteen participants. The nuns took advantage of this meeting to work on the last two texts of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (*Vultum Dei Quaerere* and *Cor Orans*) addressed to the nuns. They were assisted by an Assumptionist, a doctor of canon law, Father Luis Martin Rakotoarilala, with a view to reviewing and possibly redrafting the statutes of the communities desired by the Holy See.

■ Madagascar - Studium Inter-Monasteries (SIM): Session for Formators

The contemplative monasteries of Madagascar and the Indian Ocean meet every year for training sessions mainly for Superiors, but also for the training of Formators and Cellarers. Since 2007, a training cycle in theology and philosophy has been in place for young monks and nuns.

In September 2019, the session for trainers will take place at the Maromby monastery, which will bring together twenty-seven participants and two speakers each remaining four days.



■ Central Africa: Session for Superiors

The MAC association (Monasteries of Central Africa) brings together communities living the Benedictine Rule in Central Africa (Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda).

In 2019 there will be a session for the superiors of the monasteries in this Region on the theme: «The Father Abbot and his community». The session will be held at the Benedictine monastery in Gihindamuyaga (Rwanda) and will bring together members from thirteen monasteries from different countries.



■ Kenya and Uganda - BECIAKU Association: Sessions for young people in formation

The Benedictine and Cistercian Association of Kenya and Uganda (BECIAKU) has set up two sessions for young brothers and sisters. The first took place from June 9 to 15, 2019 at the convent of Karen (Kenya) for about thirty novices in their canonical year. The second session will take place from July 22 to August 2, 2019 at the monastery of Tigoni (Kenya) for about thirty young people and their trainers.

■ Pan-African Meeting - ABE (African Benectine Encouter)

Initiated at the last Benedictine Congress, this project has now entered an active phase. A six-member preparatory Team is currently made up of English-speaking superiors. It has already met once; it will meet again with representatives of French-speaking monasteries in May 2020 at Ndanda Abbey in Tanzania.

The final meeting will take place in 2021; about 100 brothers and sisters will participate; it will be held in Nairobi or Tanzania.



■ Mexico : Benedictine and Cistercian Union of Mexico (UBCM)

The Benedictine and Cistercian Union of Mexico brings together fourteen communities. In the summer of 2019, a training session will be held with a speaker from southern Latin America. Fr. Paul Stonham, Abbot of Belmont (England), member of the AIM International Team, actively supports this Union.

■ LRB - Leadership and the Rule of St. Benedict

Developed in cooperation with the Faculty of Business and Management of the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland), the course on Leadership and the Rule of St. Benedict is led by Professor Günter Müller-Stewens (St. Gallen) and Fr. Mauritius Wilde OSB. The objective is to establish a platform for reflection and formation based on the interaction between the rule of Saint Benedict, the social doctrine of the Church and the science of government and management.



The next session will take place from July 14 to 26, 2019 at Sant' Anselmo (Rome).

■ Monastic Formators Program



The 13th Course of the Monastic Formators Program in English was held this year from March to June. For the first time, the course was held partly in Sant' Anselmo (Rome) while the rest of the session was held in Assisi. This integration into the College of Sant' Anselmo has been a very positive development. The formators during these sessions lived their own rhythm of community and shared the life of the International College. The twenty-three participants from fifteen nationalities were able to benefit from the teaching, wisdom and experience of this inter-

national faculty with seventeen speakers, whilst the Roman phase allowed them to visit the Eternal City. Several Benedictine and Cistercian communities in Italy were visited, as well as Bose and Sant' Egidio, and the course is scheduled to take place every two years.

The next session will therefore be in 2021. This monastic program has been followed since 2002 by about 400 monks and nuns. For any information, please contact Fr. Brendan Thomas: brendan@belmontabbey.org.uk



■ Rome - Monastic Formation Course (CFM)



The three-year monastic formation course (CFM), organised by the Cistercian Order, is intended for all Cistercian monks and nuns in formation, as well as all other Cistercian or Benedictine monks or nuns, who wish to deepen their ongoing formation, and for all friends interested in Cistercian cultural and spiritual heritage. Since 2007, through an agreement between the College St Bernardo-in-Urbe and the Athénée Pontifical Saint-Anselme, the CFM has been under the patronage of this Pontifical University. The CFM is dedicated to the study of the sources and

monastic tradition, especially Cistercian, to patristic and liturgical knowledge, to knowledge of spirituality specific to the ideal and to the monastic cultural heritage, to contact with the human sciences, psychology, anthropology, and especially to a solid knowledge of Holy Scripture and monastic theology.

As every year, a number of monks and nuns will follow this training course from August 26 to September 20, 2019.

NEW FOUNDATION

Colombia : Community of El Rosál, Cundinamarca

At the end of 2018, the Trappistine Community of Humocaró (Venezuela) sent three sisters to found in El Rosál, Cundinamarca (Colombia). It is the first Trappistine foundation in Colombia. The sisters have acquired suitable land on which is located a large family house that they are currently developing.

Cundinamarca is the most populated of Colombia's thirty-two departments. It is located in the Western Andes in the geographical centre of the country. El Rosál is a city located 20 km from Bogotá and 2,685 metres above sea level. A large part of the agricultural community of El Rosál is employed by major flower producers.



All the projects mentioned in these pages are supported in one way or another by AIM.

THE FOUNDING DOCUMENT OF THE CISTERCIAN ORDER HOLDS THIS YEAR ITS 900 ANNIVERSARY

The legal document written in the 12th century, the Charter of Charity (*Carta Caritatis*) is the founding document of the Order of Cîteaux. Many events will be held to celebrate this event.

JUBILEE OF THE AMTM

There is a secular association in France that is concerned about financial aid to support AIM projects. This association «Les Amis des Monastères à Travers le Monde» (AMTM) celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. On this occasion, it is organising an evening at the «Maison des Évêques» -Bishops' House- (Paris) on Thursday, October 16, 2019, at 7 p.m., with the participation of Father Anselm Grün and several representatives of monasteries from Asia, Africa and Latin America, studying in Europe.



THE BULLETIN

The Bulletin 116 was published in May 2019 and presents a document prepared by the International Team: «A Mirror of Monastic Life». This booklet, sent with the Bulletin 116, is intended for the community review of the life of a monastery or a group of monasteries, under the actual conditions of our societies. It has already been tested in several situations and has worked well.

The Portuguese Edition of the Bulletin is well under way. Monasteries in Brazil have mobilized to make it happen.

The Italian Edition has until now been linked to the La Scala magazine. From now on it will be independent.

The Spanish Edition is under the responsibility of the Benedictine Oblates Movement of Manquehue (Chile).

The English Edition is carried out by the Abbey of Ampleforth.

The German Edition is regularly published under the responsibility of Fr. Cyrill of the Abbey of St. Ottilien.

AIM COUNCIL 2019



The next AIM Council will be held at the León Abbey in Spain on 19 and 20 November. We invite and fervently wish the presence of the superiors of Spain to share the themes discussed: the formation

proposals in the different monastic regions, the question of sexual abuse in the Church and the challenges for the future.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY AIM, IN 2017-2018

The following is an overview of the aid granted from July 2017 to June 2018. We will give the results of the year 2018-2019 in the next newsletter.

AIM has contributed towards formation 264,934 euros (Simple professed, scholarships, online formation, formation of formators, continuing formation, professional formation for the service of the community, liturgical formation, international, national and regional meetings, intervention of experts.)

AIM has contributed for the development of communities: 433,770 euros (Construction and renovation, profit-making activities, administration, agriculture, education, health, publications.)

A total of 698,704 euros.

Thanks to all those who can help us in different ways to maintain the momentum of all those communities that ask us for support.

THE WEBSITE

The website now includes a direct funding possibility to support the projects presented by AIM. Feel free to consult it: aimintl.org.

On the opening page, we no longer present videos as we have done for several years. Instead we place the brief and alternative presentation of different projects to be supported, in addition, of course, to all the other headings.

In recent days, a person sends a message to monasteries usurping my identity with an email address that is not mine, to ask for reception facilities for friends from abroad who are looking for a vocation discernment or something of the same kind. This message is not from me, ignore it.

My email address: jp.longeat@abbaye-liguge.com

In the joy of a beautiful solidarity under the guidance of the Gospel, fraternal good wishes.

Fr. Jean-Pierre Longeat

President of AIM

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