



Secrétariat Central à la Formation - ocso -

Abbaye Notre-Dame du Val d'Igny, February 28, 2018.

Newsletter 16

To the Superiors, the Regional Secretaries,
the Brothers and Sisters interested by ocso-formation.

Dutch-speaking Region:

[Report from three sessions for initial formation \(VONK-sessions\), May 2017 - January 2018:](#)

Since March 2017, the Dutch-speaking Region experienced three sessions of formation, of which two were held in French abbeys. The group is so big that hospitality of these sessions ask an Abbey with a large guesthouse.

8 May-12, 2017, in the Monastery St. Lioba, the session was given by Sister Emmanuelle and Father Marc Loriaux from Lioba. *Authority and autonomy in the NT*, was the starting point. Two moderators and 25 participants participated in the session: 12 novices and 13 temporary professed. As novices: 3 Cistercian nuns, 4 Cistercian monks, 5 Benedictine monks. The temporary professed were: 2 Cistercian nuns, 1 Benedictine nun; 6 Cistercian monks and 4 Benedictine monks.



23 October-27, 2017, at the Mont-des-Cats, introductions by Dom Manu from St. Sixtus and Sister Katharina from Brecht to *Lectio as form of obedience*. The conferences of the two speakers on *The narrative identity* were much appreciated. Each participant had to write a recent personal story to share in a small group. Then, those who wanted it, shared it in the large group. It was moving and very positive. There were 25 participants: 15 novices including 4 Cistercian nuns and one Benedictine; 4 Cistercian monks and 6 Benedictine; 10 temporary professed, all monks: 6 (ocso) and 4 (osb).

7 January-12, 2018: first session of a *Conversatio morum suorum* cycle. The session took place in Orval, because the renewal of Westmalle's guesthouse was not finished. The session was introduced by Sister Benedict from Arnhem/Koningsoord. The starting point was the *conversio/conversatio morum suorum*: definition and views from the Desert Fathers and the ancient monastic sources, related to a modern anthropological model. Thanks to the interactive work, we did the bridge with the experience of participants. It was well appreciated. 25 participants, with, exceptionally, a novice mistress from another Region. The group consisted of 12 novices: 3 nuns (ocso), 1 (osb); 3 monks (ocso), 4 (osb). 12 temporary professed: 1 nun (osb); 11 monks: 6 (ocso) and 5 (osb). Two temporary professed had been unable to come because of their studies also reviews.



International Symposium on William of St-Thierry : history, theology, spirituality:

For this symposium, to be held at Reims (France) from 4 to 7 June 2018 and which has already been announced in the *Newsletter* 15, the final program is now available.

See it in **Annex 1**.

A proposal of formation in illumination:

Last summer, the Benedictine Abbey of Kergonan (France) had organized an exhibition on the art of calligraphy and illumination. After the closing of the exhibition, both assisted by a teacher, formation courses were offered. The formation in illumination was animated by Caecilia Bernier.

Currently, Caecilia, young mother, working illuminator for 15 years, would be ready to work with communities, or even to ride a larger project with one of our Regions. Her experience of formation in England and her mastery of the English language, open wide possibilities. First she was formed by a grandmother also illuminator, then she continued her studies at the school of illumination of Angers. She teaches geometry, the medieval design, the use of colours, calligraphy. What she expected of who would want to follow such formation is: "rigor in the work, listening, opening the mind, autonomy, punctuality, respect of self and others".

See **Annex 2**: various proposals for formation of her workshop *Le Lutrindor*. Website of the workshop worth the visit: www.atelierlelutrindor.fr .

To directly contact Caecilia Bernier: lelutrindor@hotmail.fr .

French-speaking Regions:

Session Inter-noviciats at Cîteaux:

From 15 to 18 January 2018, 45 participants (25 brothers and sisters in formation, 18 formators) gathered for a session on the *Rule of Saint Benedict*. The session was given by Mother Hannah Van Quakebeke osb, prioress of the monastery O.L. of Bethany (Belgium). She is considered to be the successor of Sister Aquinata Böckmann. Comprehensive study of RB 72 and also the sources of the RB. The formators worked with novices and between them alternately with Janine Noël. There is a good diversity in participants (ocso, osb, deaconesses of Reuilly).

Session on the Rule of Saint Benedict at Maredsous:

For more than forty-five years, sessions on the RB are organised at the Benedictine Abbey of Maredsous (Belgium), at a nearly two-year rate. These sessions offer a thorough study of the text of the Rule to remove all the impulses for the monastic life and the search for God today. They include monks and nuns from different monastic traditions.

The next session will be held from 12 to 18 July, 2018. It will address Chapter 7 on Humility: *From fear to love: humility, a style of life*. Driven by Mother Hannah Van Quakebeke, the session is open to all, young and old, monks and nuns. Registration will be closed June 1.

For more information: cf.: S. Benedict from the monastery of Hurtebise, e-mail: hurtebise@skynet.be

Session of the STIM:

The final session of this year, for the students of the common cycle of the STIM, will be held in the Abbey of Bellefontaine, from 13 to 20 April 2018. Thirty-four hours of classes are scheduled: 11 hours of *Fundamental Theology*; 8 hours of *Theology of religions* and 15 hours of *Theological Anthropology*.

Annex 3 (10 pages, in French): the *Presentation* of the three courses of this session is shared to us by Father Bruno of Tamié Abbey, Director of the common cycle of the STIM, with the agreement of the three teachers concerned: Father Benedict Andreu, Mr Dennis Gira and Mrs Frédérique Poulet. In addition to a detailed presentation of the course, a current *bibliography* in these matters is thus made available. Mr Dennis Gira is ready to send supplements for its material if needed.

Sessions which have taken place or which are programmed in our communities:

- * Chimay: from 14 to 16 March, the *Book of Exodus*, by Didier Luciani, Professor of the Catholic University of Louvain;
- * Cîteaux: from January 29 to February 2, *Pauline Christology, a Biblical approach*, by Father Eric Morin of the College of Bernardins in Paris;
- * Cabanoule: January 9, then one day per quarter, *Saint Honorat and monasticism of Lérins*, by Mireille Labrousse.
- * on 20 February, 22 May and a day at year end, work of a *Biblical text and discussion questions*, with the Pastor Elian Cuvillier, Professor of the NT at the Faculty of Protestant theology of Montpellier;
- * March 13, *Burning social issues*, by Pierre Morel, Deputy of the Lozère department;
- * from April 30 to May 5, *The Story of our community's history since the founding*, with Sister Lydie Rivière;
- * Orval: from 10th to 13th January, Session of *Monastic Spirituality*, by Pastor Pierre - Yves Brandt;
- * Sénanque: Once a month, *Spiritual Interview* with Bishop Paul - Marie Guillaume;
- * La Coudre: from 19 to 23 March, *Cistercian History*, by Madeleine Blondel;
- * Val d'Igny: from 23 to 25 April, *Anthropology*, with Madame Frédérique Poulet.

Meeting of formators from Italy:

From 9 to 14 April the Italian language formators meet at Subiaco. The meeting will be around the contributions of a few participants on the theme: *The purpose of the Rule of Saint Benedict and the new generations*. The main speaker will be Dom Guillaume Jedrzejczak.

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Newsletter 17:

May 31, 2018.