
Prot. N° 01/BI/19
Curia Generalizia

INFORMATION BULLETIN – 191

Hinojo

On January 1, 2019, **Mother María Marcenaro** completed her fourth term of six years as Abbess of **Hinojo** (diocese of Azul, Argentina). On the same day, Mother María was re-elected Abbess of the Community for a new six year term.

Snowmass

On January 12, 2019, the Community of **Snowmass** (Archdiocese of Denver, USA) elected as abbot for an indefinite term, **Father Charles Albanese**.

Dom Charles Albanese was born in 1951 in New York City (USA). He entered Snowmass in 1977, made his solemn profession in 1983 and was ordained a priest in 2005. At the time of the election, he was Superior of the Community.

Cistercian Menology

Publication of the 2019 edition of the *Cistercian Menology* (Spanish version) on the website of the *Cistercium* review.

<https://www.cistercium.es/publicacion-menologio-cisterciense/>

<https://www.ocso.org/history/history-links/>

Quilvo

On February 11, 2019, **Mother Mariela Jeres Pereira** completed her first term of six years as Abbess of **O.-L. of Quilvo** (Chile). On the same day, she was re-elected Abbess of the Community for an indefinite term.

Wrentham

Mother Maureen McCabe, Abbess of the monastery of **Mount St. Mary's Abbey - Wrentham** (archdiocese of Boston, USA) since 2008, having reached the age of retirement mentioned in ST 40.A of the Constitutions, presented her resignation to the Abbot General. The Abbot General with the consent of his Council accepted the resignation which became effective on January 26, 2019.

On February 11, 2019, the Community of **Wrentham** postulated as abbess, for a for a six year term, **Sister Sofia Millican**. The postulation was confirmed by the Abbot General and the dispensation for her short time of profession was granted by the Holy See.

Mother Sofia was born in 1982 in Beckenham, Kent (Great Britain). She entered Wrentham in 2007 and made solemn profession in 2014. At the time of her election, **Mother Sofia** was Subprioress of the Community.

Huerta

On February 17, 2019, **Dom Isidoro M^a Anguita Fontecha** completed his fourth term of six years as Abbot of **Sta. M^a de Huerta** (Spain). On the same day, he was re-elected Abbot of the Community for a new six year term.

Kasanza

On February 19, 2019, Dom Nathanaël Koninkx, Abbot of Westmalle and Father Immediate of Kasanza (diocese of Kikwit, R.D.C.), appointed **Father Léonard Zibula Mulemesa**, as Superior ad nutum of Kasanza.

Dom Léonard was born in Dem. Rep. of Congo in 1981. He entered Kasanza in 2002, made solemn profession in 2009 and was ordained a priest in 2017. At the time of his appointment, he was the Novice Master of the Community.

Viale Africa

After many years in the service as secretary of the Order, Sister Claire Boutin is preparing to leave for Spain to help the sisters of the healthcare monastery of Monte Sión. She is being replaced by **Sister Marilucia Ji** of the Monastery of Quilvo (Chile).

Sister Marilucia was born in Seoul (Korea) in 1976. She entered Quilvo in 2004 and made her solemn profession in 2010.

Victoria

On March 24, 2019, at the end of his first term of six years as Abbot, **Dom John Bosco Kamali** was re-elected Abbot of O.-L. of Victoria (Diocese of Masaka, Uganda) for a new six years term.

Tautra

On 3 April 2019, in an article of the site of the Catholic Church in Denmark mentions the end of the conference of Bishops of the Northern Countries... The increase in the number of Catholics and also the doubling of the number of Sisters of the Tautra Monastery are highlighted.

<https://www.katolsk.dk/den-katolske-kirke-i-danmark/>

Italian:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/it/chiesa/news/2019-04/paes-nordici-vescovi-guardano-futuro-speranza.html>

Portuguese:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/pt/igreja/news/2019-04/bispos-escandinavia-plenaria-esperanca-futuro.html>

Swedish:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/sv/kyrkan/news/2019-04/nordiska-biskopskonferensen-ser-hoppfullt-pa-framtiden.html>

Polish:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/pl/kosciol/news/2019-04/skandynawia-spotkanie-biskupow.html>

Bamenda

On April 11, 2019

In the very early hours of Thursday 11 April, Bamenda Abbey at Mankon, Bamenda, Cameroon was visited by a band of at least eight robbers who entered the monastery. All the monks were gathered in the cloister at the entrance of the Church and forced to lay face down for more than three hours while the visitors ransacked every room in the complex searching for money and valuables. They took all the computers – eight; the cell phones though they did leave a few. They found very little money which angered them. In their frustration they roughed-up several monks though the injuries were not serious. The robbers promised to return and expected to receive about €20,000 - or else!

Other than the trauma of the experience and a few bruises, the Community is well and perhaps more united because of the event. There is the information for their herbal medicine business that was on the computers that must be reconstituted when the computers can be replaced. And there is the threat of a return visit by the group of bandits.

These last several months have been very difficult for the Bamenda Community located in the English-speaking section of Cameroon. Though their specific area has not suffered from the random killings and burning of villages that are common in English-speaking Cameroon, being able to move about only on certain days has complicated their business resources and discouraged customers. It has been three years since the schools have been able to function and safe-travel possible on the roads.

The Community will be encouraged to know that they are in our prayers and concerns.

CIVCSVA

The Abbot General received a response to the request presented on March 7, 2019 to *the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Institutes of Apostolic Life*. This petition requested an exemption from the obligation for all contemplative nuns to belong to a Federation, according to the norms of the Instruction on Female Contemplative Life, *Cor Orans*.

The answer, dated April 1 was received at the Generalate on April 12, exempts the nuns of our Order from this obligation.

This request was the result of the study of the Law Commission, at its meeting last January, and the consultation of the Abbot General with all the monasteries of nuns of the Order. It emerged from the study and experience of the communities of nuns that this norm of the *Cor Orans* was not applicable to the nuns of the Order since our structures and legislation provide them with an answer to everything that *Cor Orans* seeks to provide through the Federation structure.

The Abbot General had therefore requested exemption as Vicar of the General Chapter.

The text of the Congregation's response is in Italian; an unofficial translation is given below.

CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETATIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE

Città del Vaticano, 1 April 2019

Prot. N. C. 79⁻¹ / 2019-04-13

Reverend Father,

We reply to your letter in which you ask that the monasteries of the Cistercian Nuns of the ancient Observance be exempted from the obligation established by the *Cor Orans* Instruction on Feminine Contemplative Life to unite in a Federation.

As is clear from the Constitutions of the Order, the Abbots and Abbesses form a single Chapter (c. 4 §2). The Abbesses are members of the General Assembly with an active vote in the election of the Abbot General and an active and passive vote in the election of the members of the General Council.

After having carefully examined what has been said, given the legal link of the female Cistercian Monasteries with the Order, this Dicastery exempts the female Cistercian Monasteries from the obligation to belong to a Federation.

João Braz. Card. From Aviz
Prefetto

José Rodriguez Carballo, OFM
Archivescove Segretario

Celebrating the Atlas Martyrs

The Congregation for Divine Worship has approved the French texts for celebrating all 19 of the Algerian martyrs on May 8. These texts are for use in the archdiocese of Algiers, and refer to Blessed Pierre Claverie and his companions in the title and in the prayers.

Our Order will keep the same day, May 8, as an Optional **Memorial of Blessed Christian de Chergé and his Companions, religious, martyrs**, but no official texts are available as of this writing. However, since the date has been confirmed, our monasteries may celebrate the Memorial by taking everything from the Common of Martyrs: For Several Martyrs during Easter Time. This Common also includes a Collect, which should name "Blessed Christian de Chergé and his companions".

The Mass texts are optional, but the ones suggested are:

Revelation 7:9,14b-17; Responsorial Psalm 30(31):3bc-4,6.8,16-17; and Gospel of St John 15:9-17

For a Second Nocturn reading, the Testament of Dom Christian de Chergé is available on the Order's website:

<https://www.ocso.org/history/saints-blesseds-martyrs/testament-of-christian-de-charge/>

Finally, Fr Thomas Georgeon has very kindly provided the French texts which have been approved.

Publication

The book "**Letters from Blessed M Gabriella**" by the Liturgical Press has been published.

Translated by David Lavich, OCSO, with introduction by Mariella Carpinello

<https://litpress.org/Products/MW057P/The-Letters-of-the-Blessed-Maria-Gabriella-with-the-Notebooks-of-Mother-Pia-Gullini>

Cardeña

Dom Roberto de la Iglesia completed his first term of six years as Abbot of **Cardeña** (Spain) on May 7, 2019. On the same day, Dom Roberto was re-elected Abbot of the Community for a new six year term.

Happy birthday, Father Bernard!

On May 8, 2019, **Father Bernard de Give** of **Scourmont** became 106 years. He is the Venerable Senior of our Order!

Father Bernard was born in Liege, Belgium, on May 8, 1913. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1931, and became a Cistercian at the abbey of Scourmont in 1972.

We thank Father Bernard for his witness and his fidelity!

Glencairn

On May 31, 2019, **Mother Marie Fahy** completed her third term of six years as Abbess of **St. Mary's Abbey (Glencairn – Ireland)**. On the same day, she was re-elected Abbess of the Community for a new six year term.

Newsletter n°21

The Newsletter n°21 of the Central Secretary for Formation can be obtained from the Internet under the heading "Formation/Newsletter":

<Formation/Newsletter>

Publication

The DVD "Les 19 bienheureux martyrs d'Algérie" has been published. Movies are in 9 languages. Audio languages: German, English, Arabic, Spanish, French, Italian, Polish, Portuguese.

Subtitles: German, English, Arabic, Spanish, French, Dutch.

Here is the link to get the information:

<https://www.laboutique-chemin-neuf.com/fr/accueil/films-net-for-god/5cd16a993965884b3f44898b/les-19-bienheureux-martyrs-d-algerie>

Letter to the Cistercian Family

Abbey of Notre-Dame de Cîteaux
F-21700 Saint-Nicolas-lès-Cîteaux

May 15, 2019

*To the members of the "Cîteaux Mater Nostra" Association
To the superiors of the communities of the Cistercian Family
To the leaders of Cistercian lay communities*

Dear Reverend Father, Dear Reverend Mother,
Dear brothers and sisters, religious and lay, living in the Cistercian grace,

On March 21, 1998, the celebration of the ninth centenary of the foundation of Cîteaux brought together at the place that is the wellspring of the Cistercian Family about 800 monks and nuns belonging to all our Orders and Congregations. It was truly a day of grace and thanksgiving that deeply strengthened the communion already at work in our great Family.

As we prepare to celebrate the ninth centenary of the Charter of Charity, I address myself once again to all the Cistercian communities around the world to keep them informed of the ongoing reflection that has been under way in Cîteaux for three years, focusing on the idea of developing the site from which the great Cistercian movement began. I would not venture to address you without the support of the chief leaders of our Orders and Congregations who are co-signing this letter. It is therefore with their support and encouragement that I am turning to you, believing that the project that is being set up here at the fountainhead of the Cistercian Family can become a strong sign of the Charity that underlay the birth of Cîteaux and its development.

Here follows the history of this project:

On May 2 and 3, 2017, about thirty brothers and sisters of the Cistercian Family responded to my invitation to meet in Cîteaux to reflect together on the future of the site, the birthplace of our whole Family. Among them were the Abbots General and Prioresses General of our Orders and Congregations, as well as a representative of the Cistercian Lay Fraternities and certain professional advisers who are friends of Cîteaux.

Dom Eamon Fitzgerald, the OCSO Abbot General, gave a report on this meeting in No. 113 of the AIM Bulletin.

On May 7 and 8, 2018, the same group, expanded by a few new members, met again at Cîteaux. In the presence of the Abbey's notary, the group officially constituted itself into an Association called "*Cîteaux Mater Nostra*", whose main purpose is to make of Cîteaux more of a place where the Cistercian Family can remember its origin, come on pilgrimage, and bear witness to its charismatic sense of the place. Among these projects, two are particularly emblematic: the restoration of the Definitory—a historical witness of the unity of the Cistercian Family—and the creation of an oratory in the very place where our founders dedicated themselves to prayer.

On 11 and 12 April, 2019, the *Cîteaux Mater Nostra Association* held its first ordinary general assembly at Cîteaux, in the presence of the Generals of our Orders and Congregations, as in previous years. Martin Bacot, Chief Architect of the Historical Monuments Commission of the Burgundy Region, presented us with a possible programme for the redevelopment of the Definitory. Jean-Marie Duthilleul, an architect specializing in train stations and churches who enjoys a great reputation in France and beyond, helped us to reflect on the various possible traffic patterns on the site, and on what a small oratory could look like on the site of the first church of Cîteaux.

At the end of this plenary meeting, a vote was taken which shows that the Association is very clearly in favour of continuing the project. You will readily imagine that it will be necessary to find financial support for it. It is not easy for me as Abbot of Cîteaux to broach such a subject, but I have been asked to do it nonetheless. This is what I can say at this time:

Since the Definitory is an officially registered Historical Monument, we will be able to obtain substantial subsidies from the French State. In addition, the Heritage Foundation and other bodies, particularly regional ones, have already informed us that they will also stand by to aid in the restoration of the Definitory. That said, it became clear during our discussions that, in order to move forward in this direction, it is also indispensable that the communities of the

Cistercian family, too, commit themselves to supporting this project, which amounts to at least 10 million euros.

On a personal note, I would like to add the following. When we invited the Generals of the Cistercian Family and some other monks, nuns and lay people, to meet in Cîteaux in May 2017 to reflect together on the future of the site, my community brothers and I were far from imagining that the exchanges would take the direction outlined above. We were all surprised to see these perspectives emerging in a discernment in which dialogue flowed freely. We can say that these were days of grace and joy when we perceived the breath of the Spirit passing among us.

The project taking shape is intended as a new sign of the communion that unites our great Family. Those who co-sign this letter with me hope that you will welcome it. We entrust it to your prayer and that of your communities.

*Dom Olivier Quenardel
Abbot of Cîteaux*

Dom Mauro-Giuseppe Lepori
Abbot General, OCist

Dom Eamon Fitzgerald
Abbot General, OCSO

M. Angelines de Frutos Benito, Abbess President
Congregation of St Bernard, Spain

M. Noëlla Ghijs, Prioress General
Bernardines of Oudenaarde

M. Mary Helen Jackson, Prioress General
Bernardines of Esquermes

To make concrete our common desire to realize the project fully, we suggest you commit yourself to each of these 3 points, specifying your choices below:

Gift of prayer: It is God that unites us. If we come together before God in this Life project, we would be implementing the Prologue of the Rule: "First of all, present your need to Him by a very brief prayer so that he may bring to a successful conclusion everything you undertake." We could, for example, offer a day of prayer with the intention that our place of origin become a focus of communion and a place of pilgrimage and shared memory.

Gift of Communication: We are surrounded by a wealth of networks of communication. Informing your family and friends about our common project would be a great help. For example, when we send community news, we could inform our loved ones about this project so that our birthplace might become a place of communion, pilgrimage and shared memory.

Financial gift: We would of course appreciate donations of large sums; but gifts of any size by a large number of communities of our Cistercian Family seem to us essential. We can send directly to *Cîteaux Mater Nostra* our own donations and/or those made to us by people close to us who would like to help the Association collect the necessary sums. Alternately, this could possibly be done through each Generalate.

* * *

Our community: _____

Contributes to the *Cîteaux Mater Nostra* project as follows:

The gift of prayer of: _____

The gift of communication of: _____

The financial gift of: _____

News from Cîteaux

Cîteaux Meeting, 12 April 2019

RATIONALE: on the Birth of a Pilgrimage
by Jean-Marie Duthilleul, architect

1- At Cîteaux the present intent is to carry on a history—the history of the Cistercians and of the Abbeys that house the whole Cistercian family. We wish to continue in our century what began here 900 years ago in the first small chapel consecrated on 16 November 1106, the Chapel of Saint Edme, where Stephen Harding and his brothers were at prayer when Saint Bernard and his companions joined them around the year 1112.

2- The desire is to continue Cistercian history for our century, for the Cistercian communities that are living today, but also for all our brothers and sisters in the world, both those who seek God and those who have forgotten him as they wander about in search of meaning in contemporary materialistic societies.

3- Can we leave these human brothers and sisters of ours without light and without points of orientation? Can we deprive our Nineveh of its Jonah? Can we seek God in calm and solitude without wanting to point the way of this quest to any person lost in the disoriented cities and country-sides of our century?

4- If each Cistercian abbey in the world is a place of welcome for every person searching for meaning in his life, if each Cistercian abbey in the world is a place of learning about the search for God, there is a particular Abbey, a precise place on this earth, where the Cistercian spirit was incarnated for the first time and then nourished according to the Charter of Charity. I speak, of course, of the Abbey of Cîteaux.

5- There is no question that Cîteaux is the mother. It is this place, this small acre of Burgundy, that definitively remains the wellspring, the place of the first incarnation, the place that will give birth to all the Cistercian communities of the world. This place is also the mother source because it is the place of the physical coming together of the General Chapter of the Cistercian family, a gathering that is both the manifestation of the Love in which this family abides and one of the means to achieve it.

6- On the very grounds of the Abbey, the place of that first incarnation is also the place where Saint Stephen Harding and his brothers prayed in the chapel where Saint Bernard and his companions joined them around 1112.

7- On this same site, we can see the very damaged but still standing building called the "Definitory" because it is there that the Cistercian spirit was defined and refined through fraternal discussion.

8- The area surrounding the Abbey of Cîteaux has been severely battered over the centuries, to such an extent that this area today no longer exhibits the form of an abbey. On a steep south-facing slope, scattered buildings remain. Only their shared east-west direction relates them to one another.

9- And yet visitors who travel through Burgundy flock to Cîteaux sometimes for a spiritual quest, but sometimes also simply because they are curious to discover the place where the Cistercian movement was born, with a momentum that would spread throughout Europe and then the rest of the world. How can we respond to this quest on the part of genuine seekers while also transforming into a search the simple curiosity of the tourists? Beyond that, how can we open for them the door to the search for God? How can Cîteaux become a place of pilgrimage, that is, a place that awakens in everyone a taste for the search for God?

10- In chapter 53 of the Rule, concerning the reception of guests, the fourth paragraph reads: "Guests thus received shall be led to prayer: after which the superior, or another brother designated by him, shall sit in their company. The Sacred Scripture will be read in the presence of the guest for his edification. Then he shall be treated with every kindness." Thus, what we are to offer each of those who visit the abbey is first of all prayer, then listening to the Word of God, and finally a fraternal relationship.

11- Since the chapel where Stephen, Bernard and their companions prayed is the first place where visitors seek the source of the Cistercian movement, it is to this place of origin that we should take

them, in order to pray there with them. That is why the construction of a new, small, memorial oratory on that very spot is planned, after determining with exactitude the location of the original chapel. In the silence and the soft light of the place, whoever enters there will hopefully be able to put his heart in listening mode.

12- This new oratory will be very close to the historic library building. This library is conducive to the visitor's discovery of the "divine Scriptures", not only as human writing, carefully preserved and reproduced by the monks, but also as an instrument for seeking God through the intelligence. The aim here is to "open one's heart to the understanding of the Scriptures".

13- Then the visitor will be able to begin understanding what the Definitory represents for the whole Cistercian family. It is the place where the concrete implementation of the relationship of fraternal love among all communities is conceived, the place where all concern themselves with one another. The Definitory is, in a way, the place where the Charter of Charity takes on full life through the vicissitudes of history.

14- These three buildings—the Oratory still to be built, the existing Library, and the Definitory still to be restored—are located to the east of the present monastery, far enough away so that their being accessible to visitors is compatible with the monastic life of the present Cistercian community.

15- With a view to the creation of this set of places, where the heart and intelligence of visitors can be opened to the One who awaits them, the community of Cîteaux has begun a reflection on the organization of the entire Abbey site. Indeed, whoever arrives in Cîteaux for the first time nowadays is often quite confused at not finding any of the usual architectural signs of a Cistercian Abbey: here there is no 12th-century church, not even in ruins, no cloister, no enclosure, only buildings from this and that century, from the 15th to the 20th, built on a large hillside in no apparent order.

16- To demonstrate the coherence of this ensemble of buildings, and to allow us to understand it more fully, it is necessary to organize the modalities of its discovery with great spatial precision. This we aim to do by establishing a succession of perspectives by tracing paths and planting trees, by creating contemplative spaces, by working with the light that changes all day long, and in a sense by re-creating the space given us by the Creator so that it can speak to us like a book, in keeping with Saint Bernard's observation that "trees and rocks will teach you what you cannot learn from any master".

17- All around these paths of discovery—discovery of the site and discovery of the One who holds it in His hand—the community plans to set up orchards and vegetable gardens as a testimony of a frugal life, a life in communion with God the Creator through his creation, in the spirit of the encyclical *Laudato si'*. Thus, the local community intends to set up a framework for showcasing the three prophetic places of the Cistercian family: the Oratory, the Library and the Definitory.

18- There are specific moments in history when the Lord expects certain people to do a specific work to build up His Church. We have arrived at such a moment. Our contemporary cities, like all societies founded on the instantaneous, often resemble a Nineveh whose inhabitants "cannot yet tell their right hand from their left". They are a senseless people awaiting the arrival of a Jonah. "Jonah was a sign for the inhabitants of Nineveh, and it will be the same with the Son of Man for this generation," Jesus tells us in Saint Luke's Gospel. By creating in Cîteaux an environment that initiates into the quest for God, the Cistercian family will help our contemporaries perceive the Presence of the Son of Man in their lives.
