
Prot. N° 02/BI/22
Curia Generalizia

INFORMATION BULLETIN – N° 198

Newsletter Formation

The Newsletter n°31 of the Central Secretary for Formation can be obtained from the Internet under the heading "Formation/Newsletter":

[Formation/Newsletter](#)

Information

The Information Bulletin n°197 that records the News which appeared between the month of January and the month of June 2022, can be downloaded under the heading: "News / Bulletins."

http: [Bulletins](#)

The Necrology notice for n° 2022-1 can be found under the heading: "News / Necrology Page".

http: [Necrology Notices](#)

Assomption

Mother Alfreda Gaudet, Abbess of N.D. de l'Assomption (Archdiocese of Moncton, Canada) since 2004, having reached the age of retirement mentioned in ST 40.A of the Constitutions, presented her resignation to the Abbot General. With the consent of his Council, the Abbot General accepted the resignation. It became effective on the 29th June 2022.

At the same date, **Mother Genevieve-Marie Fontaine**, former abbess of N. D. d'Echourgnac (France) was appointed Monastic Commissary for the community of N. D. de l'Assomption.

LET IT BE KNOWN

Mother Maria Francesca Righi, abbess of Valserena, as Pontifical Commissary of the **community of Soke (Huambo)** in the archdiocese of Huambo (Angola), decreed the temporary closure of the community of Soke on 27 June 2022. During this period of temporary closure, the sisters of the community will go to Valserena for a time of renewal of their monastic formation. During this period, a monastic presence will be guaranteed on the Soke property. We ask for your prayers for the community of Soke.

Les Gardes

Mother Béatrice Blanloeil, Abbess of N.-D. des Gardes (Diocese of Angers, France) since 2008, having reached the age of retirement mentioned in ST 40.A of the Constitutions, presented her resignation to the Abbot General. With the consent of his Council, the Abbot General accepted the resignation.

On July 11, 2022, the Solemnity of Saint Benedict, the Community of Les Gardes elected as abbess **Mother Annie Jadeau** for an indefinite term.

Mother Annie was born in 1966 in Cholet (France). She was a member of the *Congregation of Filles de la Sagesse* before joining Les Gardes and began the process of *transitus* in 2011. She made her solemn profession in 2014. At the time of her election, she was Novice Mistress.

Myrendal

On 27 July 2022, the Abbot General, with the consent of his Council, at the request of the Father Immediate, has suspended the exercise of the autonomy of the community of **Myrendal** (Diocese of Copenhagen, Denmark), in accordance with the Statute for the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities (nrs. 10+16).

On the same day **Dom Guido Van Belle**, Abbot of Zundert and Father Immediate of Myrendal, was appointed *Monastic Commissary* of the community of Myrendal.

Snowmass

Dom Charles Albanese, abbot of Saint Benedict's Abbey, Snowmass (Archdiocese of Denver, USA) since 2019, has presented, for personal reasons, his resignation to the Abbot General. With the consent of his Council, the Abbot General accepted the resignation. It became effective on the 29th July 2022.

At the request of Dom Vincent Rogers, abbot of Spencer and Father Immediate of Snowmass, the Abbot General, with the consent of his council, has suspended the exercise of the autonomy of the community of Snowmass, according to the Statute of the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities (10+16).

Dom Vincent Rogers, abbot of Spencer and Father Immediate of Snowmass, has appointed on 29th July 2022, **Dom Damian Carr**, former abbot of Spencer, as Monastic Commissary of the Abbey of Snowmass.

Las Escalonias

Dom Abdón de la Cruz Rodríguez Hervas, Prior of Santa Maria de Las Escalonias (Diocese of Córdoba, Spain), gave his resignation from the office of Titular Prior to the Abbot General (Cst 40). The Abbot General with the consent of his Council accepted the resignation. It became effective on 1 August 2022.

Maria Frieden

Having fulfilled the requirements according to the Statute on Foundations, nr 20-21, the community of the Abbey of Maria Frieden, in the diocese of Aachen (Germany) was transferred on 23.06.2022. The new address is:

Abtei Maria Frieden
Hermann-Josef-Strasse 6
53925 Kall – Steinfeld

Mother Gratia, the abbess is writing: *"A decision process of 3 years is behind us and we are happy to have found a suitable monastery 20 km from Dahlem, where a Benedictine convent moved out 3 years ago. We are now living on rent and have a new house chaplain, Fr. Christian Keller OCSO from Sint Sixtus. A wonderful providence."*

Mount Melleray, Roscrea, Mellifont

Given the difficult situations of the communities of Mount Melleray, Roscrea, and Mellifont, during a meeting of superiors of the Region of the Isles in Brownhill (Bernardines, England) in June, the Abbot General proposed a plan, including the naming of one Father Immediate for all three communities and the appointment of one Monastic Commissary for all three communities. Each community would continue to live where it is, but there would be one formation house for all three communities, and other structures of mutual help.

This proposal was studied in the communities and, after reflection, all three communities, by a vote of their conventual chapter, agreed in principle to accept it. Suggestions from the communities were incorporated into the plan.

The juridical status of the communities has been as follows

Mount Melleray: Since the resignation of Dom Richard Purcell as abbot of Mount Melleray in November 2021, the abbatial office has been vacant. The Father Immediate of Mount Melleray since October 2020 has been Dom Michael Ryan, abbot of Bolton.

Roscrea: Dom Malachy Thompson has been superior ad nutum of Roscrea since 2018. Since the abbatial office at Mt Melleray (Father Immediate of Roscrea) is vacant, Dom Michael Ryan of Bolton has functioned as Father Immediate of Roscrea since November 2021.

Mellifont: Since the resignation of Dom Brendan Freeman as superior ad nutum of Mellifont in November 2021, the abbatial office has been vacant. Since the abbatial office at Mt Melleray (Father Immediate of Mellifont) is vacant, Dom Michael Ryan of Bolton has functioned as Father Immediate of Mellifont since November 2021.

After consultation with the communities, who expressed their consent by a vote of their respective conventual chapters,

(1) On July 16th, 2022, Dom Michael Ryan of Bolton delegated his responsibility as Father Immediate of Mount Melleray to Dom Brendan Freeman of New Melleray Abbey.

(2) On July 16th 2022, the Abbot General, with the consent of his Council, in the name of the General Chapter appointed Dom Brendan Freeman of New Melleray Abbey as Father Immediate of Roscrea and of Mellifont.

(3) On August 2nd 2022 Dom Malachy Thompson offered his resignation as superior ad nutum of Roscrea to the Father Immediate, Dom Brendan Freeman, who accepted it.

(4) On August 3rd 2022 the Abbot General, with the consent of his Council, in the name of the General Chapter, suspended the exercise of the autonomy of the communities of Mount Melleray, Roscrea, and Mellifont, and authorised Dom Brendan Freeman, Father Immediate, to name a Monastic Commissary for all three communities in accordance with the *Statute on Fragile Communities*.

(5) On August 3rd 2022 Dom Brendan Freeman appointed Fr Rufus Pound as Monastic Commissary of Mount Melleray, Roscrea, and Mellifont. Dom Rufus is a monk of Mt St Bernard Abbey who had been claustral prior at Mellifont since November 2021. He will carry out his responsibilities in accordance with the *Statute on Fragile Communities* and with the plan mentioned above. Further details will be given at the General Chapter in September.

Mvanda

Mother Anna Chiara Meli, Titular Prioress of Notre-Dame de Mvanda (Diocese of Kikwit, Dem. Rep. of Congo), has reached the age of retirement mentioned in ST 40.A of the Constitutions.

On July 18, 2022, Dom Nathanaël Koninkx, Abbot of Westmalle (Belgium) and Father Immediate of Mvanda, after consultation with the Community and with the consent of the Abbot General, appointed **Mother Anna Chiara Meli** as Superior *ad nutum* of the Community.

Miraflores

Dom Pedro Barrientos completed his term as Abbot of the Monastery of Miraflores (Diocese of Rancagua, Chile). On August 6, 2022: the Community elected as Abbot for a six-year term **Father Teodoro Ekongo Satchenda**.

Dom Teodoro was born in 1977 in Bailundo (Angola). He entered Bela Vista (Angola) in 2004 and made his solemn profession in 2011. He changed his stability to the community of Miraflores in 2018.

Berryville

On August 10, 2022, at the end of his first term as Abbot, **Dom Joseph Wittstock** was re-elected Abbot of the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Berryville (USA), for a new six-year term.

Latroun

The Abbot General made a special Visitation at Latroun, from 17 to 23 July 2022, together with his councillor Dom Emmanuel Cottineau. Dom René Hascoët, abbot of Latroun since 2011, offered his resignation to the Abbot General who, with the consent of his Council, accepted it. The resignation will become effective on August 16th.

Since Sept-Fons (whose abbot is Father Immediate of Latroun) is currently *sede vacante*, the Abbot General, judging it to be a "case of necessity" (cf. Cst. 82.5), after consulting the community of Latroun, the Apostolic Visitor of Sept-Fons, the Father Immediate of Sept-Fons, the Patriarch of Jerusalem and with the consent of his Council, decided to appoint a monastic commissary for Latroun for two years.

Dom Guillaume Jdrzejczak, abbot emeritus of Mont-des-Cats, has been appointed monastic commissary of Latroun. His term will begin on August 16.

News about Sept Fons

At the request of Dom Jean-Charles Nault OSB, *Pontifical Assistant* of the community of Sept Fons, the Abbot General can announce the following about the election in Sept Fons:

"As we knew, the outcome of the election, held on August 6, 2022, needs the confirmation of the Holy See. The Dicastery will give it after the 15th of September."

Meanwhile, as an Order, we continue to pray patiently for the community of Sept Fons and its Apostolic Commissary.

Illah

October 15, 2022: the Community of Illah (Diocese of Issele Uku, Nigeria) elected as Titular Prior for a six-year term **Father Bernard Okechukwu**.

Dom Bernard was born in 1960 in Azagba-Ogwashi-Uku (Nigeria). He entered Illah in 1992, made his solemn profession in 1999 and was ordained a priest in 2002.

Paraíso

On October 12, 2022, the Foundation of Santa María del Paraíso, in the Diocese of Latacunga (Ecuador) was erected as a Simple Priory, in accordance with the decision of the General Chapter of Assisi 2022, Second Part.

On October 15, 2022, **Father Jesús Penalva Carrillo** was elected the first Titular Prior of the Community. The election was confirmed by Dom Juan José Domingo, president of the election and Father Immediate, by delegation of the Abbot General.

Dom Jesús was born in Cieza (Spain) in 1963; He entered San Isidro in 1987, made his solemn profession in 1993 and was ordained a priest in 2005. He was Superior of the Foundation since 1997.

La Palma

The mandate of Mother Martina Benito Prado, abbess of La Palma since 2002, having come to an end, on October 22, 2022 the Father Immediate, Dom Juan José Domingo Falomir, abbot of San Isidro de Dueñas, nominated as Superior *ad nutum* of La Palma **Sister Carmen Jesús Serrano Ruiz**.

Mother Carmen Jesús was born in Purullena (Granada, Spain) in 1966. She was a perpetually professed member of the *Instituto Discípulas de Jesús* and transferred to La Palma in 2016 and made her solemn profession in 2020. At the time of her appointment, she was mistress of novices.

Abakaliki

On October 29, 2022, the Mayor Priory of **Abakaliki**, in the Diocese of Abakaliki (Nigeria) was

erected as an Abbey, in accordance with the decision of the General Chapter of Assisi 2022, Second Part.

On the same day **Mother Regina Nebo** was elected the first Abbess of the Community for a term of six years. The election was confirmed by the Abbot General.

Mother Regina was born in 1951 in Kafanchan (Nigeria). She entered Abakaliki in 1985 and made her solemn profession in 1994. She had been a Councillor of the Abbot General from 2008 to 2018. At the time of her election, she was titular prioress of the community.

Happy birthday, Dom Bernard!

On November 8, 2022, Dom Bernard Lefebvre of Aiguebelle (France) turned 100.

Dom Bernard was born in Haubourdin (France), on November 8, 1922 and entered Bonnecombe on September 4, 1941. He had been Abbot of the Bonnecombe Abbey from 1961 to 1965. After the suppression of the monastery, he fixed his stability in Aiguebelle. He served the Order as Secretary of the Abbot General from 1966 to 1971 and as Definitor from 1971 to 1974.

Mokoto

It was planned that on 13 November next, the **monastery of Mokoto** (RD Congo) would be officially elevated to the rank of abbey and an abbatial blessing would take place.

Unfortunately, these ceremonies have had to be cancelled due to the resurgence of violence and the tensions this is causing in the region around the monastery.

We ask all communities of the Order to remember, especially in their prayers, the brothers of Mokoto, the Sisters of La Clarté-Dieu and the Bernardines Sisters of Esquermes in Goma, as well as the population that has suffered for so many years from the recurrent violence.

Boschi

Dom Lino Colosio, prior of Boschi (Diocese of Mondovi, Italy) since 2008, presented his resignation to the General Chapter in September 2022. The General Chapter accepted the resignation and it became effective on the 1st November 2022.

On 05 November 2022, Dom Ginepro Riva, abbot of Tamié and Father Immediate of Boschi, appointed Father Giovanni Gazzera as superior ad nutum of Boschi.

Dom Giovanni was born in Benevagienna (Italy). He entered Boschi in 1994, made his solemn vows in 2000 and was ordained priest in 2012.

La Merci Dieu - Ocsó

On 6 November 2022, the decree of agregation between the community **of Notre Dame de la Merci** Dieu (France) and the Order of the Cistercians of the Strict Observance was signed at the Abbey of Bellefontaine.

The signing was possible after the Conventual Chapter of La Merci Dieu on 14 August 2022, with the permission of the local bishop, and the General Chapter of the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance on 19 September 2022 (vote 57) approved the agregation.

The documents were signed by M. Maria Gemma Sano, prioress of La Merci Dieu and Dom Bernardus Peeters, Abbot General of the Cistercians of the Strict Observance, in the presence of Dom Jean-Marc Chéné, abbot of Bellefontaine.

Westmalle

Dom Nathanaël Koninkx, abbot of Westmalle (Diocese of Antwerp, Belgium) since 2005, reached the age of retirement mentioned in ST 40.A of the Constitutions offered his resignation to the General Chapter in September 2022. The resignation was accepted by a vote of the General Chapter and became effective on November 1st, 2022.

On November 1st 2022, Dom Guido Van Belle, abbot of Zundert and Father Immediate of

Westmalle, with the consent of the General Chapter, appointed **Father Benedict Van Overstraeten**, monk of Westmalle, as Monastic Commissary of the community of Westmalle.

Dom Benedict was born in Lebbeke (Belgium) in 1952 and entered Westmalle in 1980. He made Solemn Profession in 1987 and was ordained priest in 2016.

Daily Office Readings

To assist those who prepare readings for the Liturgy of the Hours, Fr. Justin has sent three PDF files containing the list of Scripture Readings for Vigils, Lauds and Vespers, and Sext for every day of the liturgical year 2022-2023.

These readings can be accessed at the following link: ["Ressources - Liturgy - Cistercian Lectionary"](#)

Las Escalonias

On 21 November 2022, the Abbot General, with the consent of his Council, at the request of the Father Immediate, has suspended the exercise of the autonomy of the community of **Las Escalonias** (Diocese of Córdoba, Spain), in accordance with the Statute for the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities (nrs. 10+16).

On the same day, **Dom Javier Urós Murillo**, Abbot of La Oliva and Father Immediate of Las Escalonias, was appointed *Monastic Commissary* of the community of Las Escalonias.

Lantao

On December 7, 2022, at the end of his first abbatial term, **Dom Paul Kao** was re-elected Abbot of the Lantao (Hong Kong) for a new six-year term.

Esmeraldas

On December 8, 2022, the Mayor Priory of **Esmeraldas**, in the Apostolic Vicariate of Esmeraldas (Ecuador) was erected as an Abbey, in accordance with the decision of the General Chapter of Assisi 2022, Second Part.

On the same day, **Mother Celia Quezada Santos** was elected the first Abbess of the Community for a term of six years. The election was confirmed by Dom Joseph Tedesco, Abbot of Mepkin and Father Immediate of Esmeraldas according to the delegation from the Abbot General.

Mother Celia was born in 1976 in Yantzaza (Ecuador). She entered Esmeraldas in 1997 and made her solemn profession in 2003. At the time of her election, she was Titular Prioress of the community.

Ampibanjinana

On December 10, 2022, at the end of the mandate of Mother Agnès Brugère, the community of Ampibanjinana (Madagascar) elected as Prioress **Sister Angela Ndriambololonirina** for a six-years term.

Mother Angela was born in 1978 in Madagascar. She entered Ampibanjinana in 2002 and made her solemn profession in 2008. At the time of her election, she was bursar of the community.

El Encuentro

On December 14, 2022, the Community of El Encuentro (Archdiocese of Morelia, Mexico), elected as Abbess for a six-year term, **Mother Aurora Chavez Farias**.

Mother Aurora was born in 1953 in Trapuato, Guanajuato (Mexico). She entered El Encuentro in 1983 and made her solemn profession in 1989. She was Abbess of El Encuentro from 2002 to 2014 and at the time of her election she was Prioress of the Community.
