

CIB 2018 Symposium
SYNTHESIS
Sister Pauline Trivino, OSB

- We have come to the end of our CIB 2018 Symposium with its THEME:
“ All are to be welcomed as CHRIST” (RB 53:1)
- This theme of Welcome started with S. Judith Ann, our CIB Moderator, warmly welcoming us at the opening of our CIB Symposium. It was followed by Fr Abbot Primate’s welcome Inspirational Talk .
- Part of informing all the participants about the CIB the past years, Sister Judith Ann gave us her four-year report as CIB Moderator. It was a very informative report, made very interesting with photos .
- In the way the Program of the CIB Symposium has been planned and worked out, you will notice that our CIB Symposium has tried to focus on the THEME, “
“All are to be welcomed as Christ.”

I. INPUTS / CONFERENCES

The conferences clearly developed this theme of Welcoming All as CHRIST.

- Fr. Abbot Martin Werlen, in his two talks on Tradition, traditions and Zeitgeist, recommended to us those whom we should welcome as guests in our monastery. It even stressed the point that if traditions get on the way of our practice of hospitality, then we could discard these particular traditions.
- Mother Maria del Mar Albajar-Vinas and Sister Adelaida Ygrubay, our two speakers on the topic: Hospitality inside the Monastery, stressed the importance of accepting, accompanying, looking after and guiding our co –sister who is hurting and who feels neglected in community. It also made it clear that in community, the Superior’s first task is to work on her personal conversion, for only she who has dealt with her fears and shortcomings and has faced her true self, can truly be hospitable to her sisters in community and to the others.
- On the topic of “Hospitality to those outside the Monastery”, our speakers Mother Roberta Pelusa de Oliveira and Sister Theodora Ntuli both shared their experiences of welcoming all those who knock at their doors: outcasts of society, the poor, the refugees, the pilgrims the addicts, the strangers and those with eroded moral values. Sister Theodora Ntuli openly shared that it is RISKY to welcome strangers to the monastery. And she supported this with concrete examples. Hopefully, these negative experiences will not stop us from “welcoming ALL, especially strangers as CHRIST.” Let’s take this exhortation of St. Benedict as a challenge to continue welcoming All , convinced that it is really Christ we are welcoming . And together with Faith and this strong conviction let us be wise and prudent in the exercise of hospitality towards All who knock at our monastery doors.

II. Group Sharings

The group sharings which turned out to be lively and enriching became a venue for deepening the sisters’ personal understanding of the conferences given to the group.

III. Liturgy

- Our well planned Liturgy welcomed the participation of sisters in their different languages: in the Eucharist , at Lauds, Vespers, Terce and None.
- Our Opening Liturgy was expressive of the different regions represented in the CIB. Each one came forward to share a piece of cloth from the region, symbolic of what they could offer to CIB.

- We shall still have our Closing Liturgy. It will put into FULL CIRCLE our welcoming of each other. This will be symbolized by an exchange of the region's cloth which was offered at the Opening Liturgy. One region will be given the cloth of another region for which it will pray for.

IV. Guests /Resource Persons were welcomed

- We had Ecumenical Guests, Sr Mary Luke Wise and Sr Mereille Golliez, who were invited to be participants of the CIB 2018 Symposium. Their Words of Gratitude truly expressed their great appreciation for having been invited.
- Newer Members were invited to the CIB Symposium to give them an idea of how our varied and international monastic communities live its monastic life. Through one Group Activity, they were given a chance to share what they perceived as Challenges in their respective regions. Their responses were indicative of their alertness to read their situations. Hopefully, in due time as CIB leaders, they will be able to confront and address these challenges.
- Among the participants, some were requested to share on important concerns of Monastic Communities: we had:
 - Sister Scholastica Haring and Sister Lynn McKenzie teamed up to discuss with the group, contents of the Apostolic Constitution, **Vultum Dei Quaerere** (VDQ) and **Cor Orans**, an Implementing Instruction of Vultum Dei Quarere of women's contemplative life. A discussion of these two documents were indeed important and urgently necessary for moniales.
 - Sister Lynn Mc Kenzie informed the group of T4 which stands for "Wisdom Connections: Timeless Traditions in Technological Times". She stated that the purpose of T4 is to gather the wisdom of our Benedictine sisters and brothers through video and to make the information available to initial and on-going formation.
 - Sister Christine Conrath in her Annual Report showed how AIM (Alliance for International Monasticism) builds up and maintains an active alliance between all members of the worldwide Benedictine families. She ended by presenting the challenges facing Monastic Life today and the consequential concerns of AIM for the future.

V. Other Activities

The group was provided with opportunities to visit places of special interest to them:

- The group had a chance to have a Private Audience with Pope Francis accompanied by Fr. Abbot Primate. It gave every participant special Joy to have her picture taken with Pope Francis, after which each one received a rosary blessed by him
- The Newer Members were brought to the Catacombs and St.Paul outside the Walls.
- On an optional basis, the participants had an encounter with those who were members of the Sant' Edigio Community.
- All the participants went to Subiaco where we had the Renewal of our Vows at St. Scholastica's Monastery.

As we started our CIB 2018 Symposium with our Moderator, Sister Judith Ann Heble, welcoming all of us to this Symposium, we shall end it with Sister Judith Ann expressing her THANKS to all of us, participants of this our CIB 2018 Symposium for our presence and heart-warming welcome of each other.

THAT in ALL THINGS GOD MAY BE GLORIFIED.