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A Message from the CIB Moderator

How could it already be more than one year since the 2018 CIB Symposium held at Sant' Anselmo in Rome and now months since the CIB Conference of Delegates meeting in Cuernavaca, Mexico?! Perhaps I am showing my age by admitting how fast time runs! However quickly it has flown, this time has been rich for me personally as I have corresponded with and met so many good and faithful Benedictine women from around the world. I am in awe of the communion we share despite vast geographical expanse and different time zones, as well as languages and cultures. What draws us into communion is the one call we have received to follow Christ in the school of the Lord's service – the school of our monastic community where we seek to live more deeply into God's desire for us.



CIB Conference of Delegates participants gathered in Cuernavaca at the retreat center of the Misioneras Guadalupanas de Cristo Rey, OSB in September 2019.

Mexico provided an opportunity to come together as CIB delegates from around the world. For those of us able to attend, this was a real gift. We regretted that, for various reasons, several regions were not represented. Despite great efforts to secure the necessary visa some were unsuccessful. Perhaps others could not afford to attend – either financially or could not afford the time away from their monastery. Perhaps there were other reasons? Whatever the reasons, please be assured your presence was missed. We are richer when we are all together and able to share with one another our Benedictine journey.

The Misioneras Guadalupanas de Cristo Rey, OSB warmly welcomed each and all of us to their beautiful retreat center in Cuernavaca, a couple of hours south of Mexico City. We were embraced by their simple joy-filled lives and their solidarity with the poor. Their joyful music lifted our spirits as we gave praise to God in the beautiful liturgies. Madre Maria Teresa Razo, the superior of the Congregación de Misioneras Guadalupanas de Cristo Rey OSB, with the assistance of her sisters in Cuernavaca, attended to every detail and anticipated our every need.

Other Benedictine sisters in Mexico gave their assistance, sisters such as Patricia Henry of Torreon who gave great service as both a translator and as a bursar by converting our dollars to Mexican pesos, Susana Hernandez of the Instituto Catequistas de María Santísima, who graciously agreed to address the joint meeting of CIB and the Synod of Abbot Presidents on the topic of the Vatican Synod on Youth, and Maricarmen Bracamontes of Torreon for preparing and speaking to us about the Latin American monastic experience of Benedictinas.

We had rich gatherings in both Cuernavaca and Mexico City. In Cuernavaca, two of our Benedictine brothers, Abbot Primate Gregory Polan and Abbot President Jeremias Schröder (St. Ottilien Congregation), blessed us with their presence. Abbot Gregory filled us in on some happenings in the world Benedictine Confederation, while Abbot Jeremias shared his experiences of working together with some of our Tanzanian sisters in response to a church sexual abuse crisis there. A big thank you to these brothers who responded affirmatively to our invitation to them to join us in Cuernavaca.

We were also very happy to join together with our brothers, the abbot presidents from around the world, who were gathered in Mexico City for their annual Synod of Abbot Presidents meeting. It was a wonderful opportunity for women and men Benedictines to join together for meaningful dialogue. The topics included the recent Vatican Synod on Youth and the impact of sexual abuse in the church on our monasteries.

We were privileged to have input from Sister Esther Fangman, OSB of Atchison, Kansas, USA and Sister Maricarmen Bracamontes, OSB of Torreón, Coahuila, Mexico. Sister Esther, current prioress of a large monastic community in Kansas, gave a workshop on how to

address sexual abuse that occurs *to* and/or *by* our members. She spoke from her 40 year experience as a counselor to client survivors of sexual abuse. Esther skillfully engaged participants in role plays of various scenarios, giving us insight into how best to communicate about these sensitive issues.

Sister Maricarmen, the prioress of her monastery in Torreón, spoke about the Latin American monastic experience of Benedictinas. Maricarmen had consulted Benedictinas in different parts of Latin America in preparing her talk.

As is customary during Conference of Delegates meetings of the CIB, there were reports from each region represented as well as a few other reports submitted by absent delegates. This is always a time to learn from each other about events of significance within the monasteries of each region. The reports also give us an appreciation of the region from ecclesiastical, political and sociological perspectives. The reports were greatly appreciated for deepening our understanding of the reality of each region and the wider Benedictine world.

We held preliminary discussions on the future of the CIB at this new moment in history. How can we make the CIB more rooted throughout each region and how can we encourage greater participation in and awareness of CIB? We discussed the optimal frequency of meetings (currently held annually) and how to improve attendance and participation in the meetings of the Conference of Delegates.

We were pleased to have a comprehensive and enlightening report from Sister Christine Conrath, secretary of AIM International in France. Christine informed us of the many monastic projects that AIM supports in various parts of the world, giving us a clearer view of the international reach of the Benedictine charism. Sister Patty Fawcner from Australia reported on the recent meeting of the UISG held in Rome. This helped us appreciate the international experience of women religious and the impact they have in our church and world.

The delegates continued discussions on the two documents directed to cloistered women monastics, *Cor Orans*, the Instruction from the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life which followed the Holy Father's Apostolic Constitution, *Vultum Dei Quaerere*. The extended period of initial formation mandated by *Cor Orans* was a key topic. The Conference of Delegates agreed that CIB should write a letter to the Vatican expressing concern about this mandate, which changes the discretionary period of initial formation as set out in the Code of Canon Law. The CIB Administrative Council will prepare and send this letter in 2020.

In order to give a broader view of the CIB Conference of Delegates held in Mexico in September 2019, some firsthand participant accounts are included in this newsletter. Thanks to those who agreed to this service of writing and reporting.



Lynn McKenzie, OSB, CIB Moderator

2019 CIB Conference Delegate Reports

What does a European nun arriving in a huge Mexican airport need more than anything else?

A GUIDE!!

And I must say that Sr. Thérèse-Marie (Hurtebise, Belgium) and I (as well as everyone else) were delighted with and grateful for our guides, Elizabeth Judd and her husband Adolfo. They were waiting for us with open (and waving!) arms when we arrived. What a warm welcome after such a long trip! Both of them knew what we needed. They made sure that we found our way and did everything required of us, which was a very daunting task in such a big airport with so much security. They even waited and watched until we left security to go get the bus before they returned to welcome other CIB delegates.



Elizabeth and her husband, Adolfo – extraordinarily generous and knowledgeable friends of Benedictine Sisters everywhere.

And this was not the only time that we would meet each other. They were two of the good ghosts who were in the background, making sure that everything ran smoothly throughout the very full programme. Their most extraordinary feat was orchestrating our trip to Mexico City. With such guides our time there was an absolute joy which I am moved by even now as I write this and reflect on it. We learned a lot about the history and spirituality of the Mexican people and experienced their faith and the Mexican culture. In the afternoon we then journeyed on to the sun and moon pyramid. There it was possible to split us into two groups – after all, we had TWO guides! What an enriching experience!



Elizabeth Judd in action giving us a tour of the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe and surroundings

At the end of the day we had to say good bye to each other but we did so with a heart full of thanks. Elizabeth and Adolfo asked us to share with the people back at home that we had encountered a wonderful country with loving people even when, simultaneously, we were told about the extreme violence which people experience in their day to day life, especially on the streets. We were asked to tell our communities and friends about both sides of Mexico and they asked sincerely that we would pray for them. We promised to do so!

Sr. Franziska, Dinklage - Region 6, CIB Assistant Moderator

We spent a week in Mexico, wonderfully welcomed by the Benedictine sisters of Cuernavaca, two days in Mexico City, and one night at the monastery of Saint Benedict of Mexico for Sr Christine and me, because we had to make a small "extension" of our trip. We were not able to take our flight on Friday, because we did not have the right paper for transit through Atlanta in USA.

I have been asked to write about the day with our brother Benedictines, the Abbot Presidents, who had their meeting with Abbot Primate Dom Gregory Polan. The meeting was at the Mexican Bishops Conference located in Mexico City.

We left Cuernavaca in a bus, travelling to Mexico City, to experience an innovative and really rich meeting. Conferences and sharing, in groups of same language, gave us the opportunity to reflect on important current events. The first conference and discussion on the youth today, with a report of the Synod of the Youth, by Sr Susanna Hernandez, a Mexican Benedictine who was invited to the Conference and the Synod. The second conference on the awful reality of abuses in the Church; Sr Patty Fawcner, Congregational Leader of Good Samaritans, Australia, and Austrian Abbot President Johann shared their experiences in their own congregations which led to very good and rich discussions among us. Then together we joined the nearby Benedictine Abbey of Tepeyac to pray Vespers with the community. The brothers prepared a surprise for us at the end of the day: a "Mexican fiesta". The feast started with two rites. The first consisted of a procession with Mary and Joseph looking for a home in Bethlehem (the Posada). We were twice refused but we could finally enter a welcoming house, where we got wonderful drinks. And then came the second rite - the piñata: it is a symbolic struggle against sins, Christianized now... A large papier-mâché ball with seven peaks represents the seven deadly sins. You have to break the peaks with a stick... When the peak breaks, small balls fall to the ground, and we could exchange them with wooden games - that is supposed to represent the benefits that God gives after having eliminated evil.

After that game, we were invited to enter a great hall, and there was a huge dinner and opportunity to taste the different Mexican specialties, offered in several stands representing all regions of Mexico. During the meal, there was a beautiful presentation of dances and songs in various traditional costumes and "mariachis". Dom Guillermo, Abbot president of the Subiaco Cassinese Congregation, did thank all people at the end of the evening on behalf of all, and sang a traditional song, accompanied by the group of musicians - as you know he is Colombian and knows the culture in Mexico. At the end of the fiesta, we were able to admire a fireworks display - it seems to be a usual way of ending such wonderful parties.

Thank you all for these beautiful encounters and discoveries, from one country to another, from one side of the ocean to the other. The most important for me, I think, is the fraternity we could

share, day after day, during our meeting, during all these days between us, whatever our origin is. The only barrier or dam in sharing was the language. But there is no need because our hearts could speak gratitude!



Une semaine au Mexique merveilleusement accueillies par les sœurs bénédictines de Cuernavaca et du monastère de Saint Benoît de Mexico pour Sr Christine et moi qui avons du faire une petite "rallonge"... Mais il m'a été proposé de vous parler plutôt de la journée avec nos frères, abbés présidents, réunis autour de notre abbé primat dom Gregory Polan, à la conférence des évêques du Mexique. Nous avons donc quitté Cuernavaca pour rejoindre Mexico en car et vivre cette rencontre innovante et riche. Conférences et échanges par groupe de langue nous ont permis de réfléchir ensemble sur des points importants d'actualités : les jeunes avec un compte-rendu du synode des jeunes auquel Sr Suzanna avait participé et la triste réalité des abus dans l'Eglise avec le témoignage d'une supérieure et d'un abbé. Puis tous ensemble nous avons rejoint l'abbaye bénédictine voisine de Tepeyac pour prier avec la communauté l'office des Vêpres. Une surprise nous attendait pour finir la journée: une soirée mexicaine. Elle a commencé par deux rites. Le premier consiste en une procession avec Marie et Joseph cherchant un logis à Bethléhem. Refoulés par deux fois, nous pouvons enfin entrer dans une maison accueillante où l'on nous offre à boire. Là se déroule le second rite - la piñata : christianisé, c'est une lutte symbolique contre les péchés... Une grosse boule en papier mâché avec 7 pics représentent les 7 péchés capitaux. Avec un bâton, il s'agit de tout casser... alors se répandent des petits jeux de bois à récupérer qui représentent les bienfaits que donne Dieu après avoir éliminé le mal. Ensuite nous sommes attendus sous un hall où nous allons en guise de diner pouvoir goûter aux différentes spécialités mexicaines proposées dans des stands présentant chacun une région. Et pendant que nous nous restaurons, des danses en costumes divers et des chants nous sont présentés. Dom Guillermo, abbé président de la Congrégation de Subiaco Mont Cassin, remerciera chaleureusement au nom de tous, nos hôtes et nous gratifiera d'un chant accompagné par le groupe de musiciens. Il est Colombien. La soirée se clôture par un superbe feu d'artifice.

Merci à tous pour ces belles rencontres et découvertes d'un pays de l'autre côté de l'océan. Mais ce qui me marque le plus est la fraternité qui s'est vécue durant tous ces jours entre nous quelque soient nos origines. La seule frontière dans nos échanges fut la langue. Mais cela n'empêche pas les cœurs de parler!

Clotilde Lesigne,
Region 3 Substitute (France)

As a new participant at the 2019 CIB in Cuernavaca, I was uncertain about what to expect. I had previously heard the reports from the delegates who attended other CIB gatherings, but I still did not have a clear grasp of the importance of my presence at CIB as a delegate of Region 9 (USA and Canada). The experience of attending the CIB helped to broaden my understanding of just how small our world is; especially once you can connect names and faces to people who live in the numerous countries around our world.

Shortly into the meetings, Sister Lynn Marie McKenzie, Moderator of CIB, asked us to name how we were feeling at that given moment. My response was, "At home." I shared that although we live in different countries, speak different languages, live our Benedictine way of life according to varied cultures, that our Benedictine language is universal. We hold the same beliefs and values about our Benedictine charism. We acknowledge the cries from the people of our world who summon us, as Benedictine women in today's times, to be the voice and arms of hospitality, peace, and unity. We are being called to give witness as people with diverse backgrounds living in peace and harmony with all of God's creation, thus honoring our "Common Home" as named by Pope Francis.

As a new participant, my eyes were opened to the hopes and fears of Benedictine women around the world, not just of my Region. I felt my heart becoming enlarged as it stretched to hold the hopes and fears of my sisters in other parts of the world. I felt "one" with the sisters gathered in the room. Perhaps the Sherman Brothers captured my first experience of CIB best when they wrote:

*There's just one moon and one golden sun
And a smile means
Friendship to everyone
Though the mountains divide
And the oceans are wide
It's a small world after all.*

As a CIB delegate of Region 9, I feel a responsibility for helping to convey this sense of "oneness" with the other women religious superiors of my region. It is important that we all realize that when we speak and act, we do so not just for ourselves, but for our Benedictine Sisters in Christ all over the world. Together, may our words and deeds continue to give God glory and honor.

Sister Tonette Sperando, OSB,
CIB Delegate, Region 9

On behalf of the Congregation of Guadalupe Missionaries of Christ the King OSB and representing Region 10 of ABECCA, I thank each of you for still savoring and blessing God for the gift of the presence of the CIB in Mexico and specifically in our Retreat Center in Cuernavaca, Mor. God continues to give us the opportunity to offer our hospitality on time through you. This unique experience for us has left its mark on our heart and memory as a congregation. Discovering the importance of approaching and valuing ourselves as Benedictine sisters with the beautiful richness of our different cultures, languages and realities of our regions made us experience the closeness, the sorority among us, recognizing us as presence of monastic life with its own voice in the Church guided and impelled by the spirit of the Ruah.

The experience of shared moments of prayer in the Eucharist and Liturgy as we celebrated together our faith, dialogue and encounter in the dining room sharing food. During the Conference, the contributions received from Abbot Primate Gregory, Abbot Jeremias, from Sisters Esther and Maricarmen, who gave us their reflection and enlightenment, generated a clearer vision of the reality around the theme of sexual abuse and the importance of caring for our sisters.

The departure for the Encounter with the Abbot Presidents was pleasant and valuable in the sharing. The welcome in the mother house of the congregation, the visit to the Basilica of Guadalupe and Pirámides (Archaeological Zone), gave us the space to continue knowing each other, sharing and embracing our love as sisters. Pati Henry, Elizabeth Judd and her husband, Adolfo, for their support in the Team work we were able to do and to M. Cristina for allowing Sister Susana Hernández to participate.

May our good God's tenderness and compassion accompany us in the different tasks that he has entrusted to us in favor of life and of our communities. Let us continue to accompany the journey of the realization of the Synod of the Amazon, hoping to see fruits of life and communion for our brothers and sisters.

Sisters, a hug to each one of you. A thousand thanks.

María Teresa Razo Laguna, OSB, Region 10 Delegate
Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator

As a Benedictine from Torreón, Mexico, I was privileged to be a part of the CIB Conference Meeting in Cuernavaca, Mexico, from 5 – 14 September, 2019. From the early planning stages until each participant boarded her flight home, it was a beautiful experience. The Benedictine sisters who hosted us and the beautiful setting at their Guadalupe Center combined to facilitate a relaxed, prayerful, joyful setting for our meetings.

From my first experience many years ago at a C.I.B. symposium, I have repeatedly been amazed and energized by the unity in diversity that we celebrate when we gather. Language, culture, even our varied ways of living the Benedictine charism, cannot distance us from one another. The ties that bind are prayer, community, liturgy well celebrated, friendship and so many other dimensions of our Benedictine life.

I came away with a heart filled with gratitude for the gift we have received from Benedict and Scholastica and for the women who have handed that treasure down to us through many generations. In my grateful heart there was also an invitation: to live our life well and fully in these challenging times: to seek God in the multiple manifestations that surround me; to grow in humility and truth as “wounded healers” in our broken Church and world.

Patricia Henry o.s.b. Region 10

Recently, I had the privilege of being with Benedictine women from all over the globe in Cuernavaca Mexico. They were women who not only loved their Benedictine tradition, but loved touching the lives of others within their locale. Courageous women who face the pain of immigrants and the dangers of political upheaval. I must say, I realized how insulated I am as an American Benedictine.

Of course, we didn’t spend time “just” meeting on official business, but we also experienced the flavor of Mexico City, with a population of 13 million persons. The traffic was challenging, but the beauty of the people came through to me when we visited the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. There were hundreds or maybe thousands of people, who with a stillness of prayer respected their love for Our Lady. There were men, women and children walking the paths of reverence for thousands upon thousands of souls who left a part of their longings at this holy sight.

Following our stay at the Basilica we journeyed to Museo De Sitio Teotihuacan, known as the Mayan Pyramids. It was a quieter space with fewer people, and it was majestic. Following our time there we ate at the “most” unique restaurant I have ever been in. La Gruta, or the Grotto. It was a cave hollowed out over the years that held about 100 guests. It was filled with candlelight and stories of young men coming to manhood. The atmosphere was magical with delicious food. Our trip back to Cuernavaca took us 4 hours, when without the traffic, should have taken 2 hours. Oh well, “you can’t have everything.”

Thank you to the Conference of Benedictine Prioresses of North America for giving me this opportunity to broaden my perspective of Monastic Life in Mexico and the devotion of the Mexican people to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Clare Carr, OSB Region 9 Substitute

Montserrat Online Master’s Course

Sant Benet Monastery in Montserrat, Catalonia (SPAIN)

The 18 topics covered in the online and in person program are inspired in the Rule of Benedict and constitute a spiritual path moving from ‘know thyself’ to ‘fulfilment’.

If you are interested in our master’s program, we invite you to register for the SINCLÈTICA SPRING LECTURES in March 20-22, 2020. **The topic of the SINCLÈTICA SPRING LECTURES will be**

THE BODY: - 5 different professors will be sharing 5 ‘pearls’ on the BODY from the perspective of literature, Bible, fine arts, theology and music - ‘pearls’ are works of art (literature, fine arts, music), theological writings or Biblical passages that the subjectivity of the professor finds particularly helpful or illuminating; **monastic wisdom has always known that experience and knowledge cannot be separated**; a key element of our master’s program is that the professor will share with the students not only her/his expertise on the subject, but also her/his personal link to it. During the streaming, on-line participants will be



able to interact with the professors and with the on-site students (via Zoom platform) - the language is English; subtitles in Catalan and Spanish will be added to the videos a week later. For more information, including a short video by the abbess of Sant Benet Monastery in Montserrat where the course will originate, please go to this link: <https://teresaforcades.com/sincletica/>.

All interested please write to Sr. Teresa Forcades, OSB at secretariaTFV@monestirsantbenetmontserrat.cat

Sr. Teresa Forcades, OSB of Sant Benet Monastery in Montserrat, Catalonia (Spain) – the designer of the course and one of the professors (theology).



Patty Fawkner's column in Good Oil, e-magazine of the Good Samaritan Sisters of Australia

In keeping with our discussions in Mexico during our CIB Conference of Delegates meeting in September 2019 about the sexual abuse crisis in the church and its impact in our monasteries, below is the beginning of a column written by Sister Patty Fawkner, congregational leader of the Good Samaritan Sisters (Benedictines) of Australia. The link to the full column is provided below.



SGS monthly column
November 2019 issue

In response to the tragedy of institutional child sexual abuse, Sister Patty Fawkner considers the distinct 'stages' currently being journeyed through by the Church.

As trainee teachers we were introduced to 'stage theory'; that of Jean Piaget's theory of the Four Stages of Cognitive Development, Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development, James Fowler and Faith Development, Lawrence Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development, and of course, the more widely known Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's Stages of Grief.

It occurs to me that in regard to awareness of, and response to, the tragedy of child sexual abuse within our Church, many of us make a similar journey through distinct stages.

The first stage is **Denial and Disbelief**. When I was a very young Sister, another community member began supporting a young man who claimed that, as a child, he had been abused by a priest. Naïve and disbelieving, I could not get my head around this situation. I thought, but did not say, "Why are you befriending a trouble-maker?" **Blaming the Victim** accompanies this stage. . .

For the full column by Sr. Patty, click on this link: <https://www.goodsams.org.au/article/stages/>

A new biography of Basil Hume, OSB by Gertrude Feick

[Cardinal Basil Hume: A Pilgrim's Search for God](#) (Gracewing, 2019)

This book, just published in 2019, is written by a scholar, yes, but more importantly, I think, by a follower of the Rule of St. Benedict. Sister Gertrude began her monastic life as a Benedictine sister of Queen of Angels Monastery, in Mount Angel, Oregon. Since then she became a Cistercian (OCSO) of Redwoods Abbey in Whitethorn, California.

Sister Gertrude has provided a treasure for us in this book that began as her doctoral dissertation in completing her Doctorate in Sacred Theology from the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome. However, it does not read as an academic paper, but rather as a meditation on the life and wisdom of Cardinal Basil Hume, OSB, published on the 20th anniversary of his death. Her chapters include much of what Hume said and wrote in both published and unpublished works. Feick writes of Hume, the Man, Hume the Monk, Hume the Pastor, and Hume the Preacher. A recent reviewer of Feick's book wrote: "Feick has developed a moving set of meditations that would be very fruitful for personal reflection during Lent and Holy Week." This same reviewer concluded that, "The voice of Basil Hume resounds from its pages! Because of its strong Benedictine flavor Feick's book has immediate appeal to those following a Benedictine way of life and to those interested in Benedictine spirituality."

(Sue Hallams, SGS, "Cardinal Basil Hume: A Pilgrim's Search for God: Review," *Tjurunga* 92/2019, pages 84-86, at 86.)

AIM International Council meeting held in León, Spain in November 2019

I have known for many years of the existence of AIM (Alliance for International Monasticism) and had some vague knowledge of the good they do in our monastic world. Only in the last few years since becoming involved in CIB have I begun to learn more about AIM. The AIM executive secretary has been in attendance at CIB meetings, so first I met Sister Gisela Happ and then the current secretary, Sister Christine Conrath. The more I talked with them the more I learned. The biggest lessons about AIM came in attending my first meeting of the AIM International Council.

As CIB Moderator I am included in the membership of the AIM International Council. This was my first year to be able to attend the meeting of this group. It was my honor and pleasure to be in attendance with other wonderful followers of the Rule of St. Benedict, including Benedictines and Cistercians (both O. Cist and OCSO).

As noted on the AIM International website (www.aimintl.org), AIM works for the growth and development of monastic life throughout the world today. The AIM vision, as posted on the website is: AIM has as its principal task to make known the life and needs of monastic communities.

AIM responds to these needs by supporting communities in their birth, growth, development, trials and difficulties. AIM stimulates reflection on the challenges facing contemporary monastic life in fields such as education, poverty, environmental issues, justice and peace.



*The people who make the work of AIM possible!
Thank you!*

CIB Moderator Visit to Monasteries in Spain

Because I was attending the meeting of the AIM International Council held in León, Spain, I took the opportunity to visit also a number of the monasteries of Spain. What an experience of a lifetime!

I say here a special word of thanks to M. Rosario del Camino (Oviedo), Region 2 Delegate, for planning the first 2 weeks of my time while I was there, and M. Maria del Mar (Montserrat), Region 2 Substitute and CIB Administrative Council member, for planning my third and final week there.

My first few days after arriving in Spain were spent at the monastery in León for the meeting of the AIM International Council. It was my first time to attend and participate in the AIM meeting. (See separate article about the AIM International Council meeting in León.)

I visited the following women's monasteries:

- Monasterio de Santa María de Carbajal in León, founded in 966
- Monasterio de Santa Cruz in Sahagún, founded in 1546
- Monasterio de San Pedro de Dueñas in San Pedro de Dueñas, founded in the 11th century
- Monasterio de Santa María de las Dueñas in Alba de Tormes, founded in the 13th century
- Monasterio de la Ascensión in Zamora, founded in 1970
- Monasterio de San Pelayo in Oviedo, founded sometime before 994 (exact date unknown)
- Monasterio de San Pelayo in Santiago de Compostela, founded in 1499 (but previous to that was a men's Benedictine monastery that was founded in the 9th century)
- Monasterio de la Transfiguración del Señor in Trasmañó, founded in 1567
- Monestir de Sant Benet in Montserrat, founded in 1952 as a union of 2 monasteries, one from the 13th century and the other from the 19th century
- Monestir de Sant Daniel in Girona, founded in 1017
- Monestir de Sant Pere de les Puelles in Barcelona, founded in 945.

In addition, I also visited the men's monastery of Santa Maria de Montserrat, founded in the 11th century, and home of *La Maroneta* (the Black Madonna) which is visited by millions of pilgrims each year.

Cont.

What a blessing this time of pilgrimage was for me! The experience of *communio* with my Spanish sisters of St. Benedict (las Benedictinas) was palpable. Each house welcomed me with open arms and warm Benedictine hospitality. At each of the monasteries I visited I shared some about what CIB is, stressing always the first word of CIB, *COMMUNIO*. It was a sacred time for me and gave me a stronger sense of the sisterhood we share in our ancient Order of St. Benedict. Las Benedictinas de España viven la Regla de San Benito con fidelidad y belleza.



With community of San Pelayo in Santiago de Compostela



M. Rosario (Oviedo), Sr. Lynn, and
M. Inés (San Pedro de Dueñas)



From left to right, M. Rosario (Oviedo), Sr. Lynn,
M. Ernestina (León) and Sr. Monica (León)



Community of Monestir de San Benet in Montserrat

Communio Internationalis Benedictinarum
Moderator

Sr. Lynn McKenzie, OSB
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DATES FOR FUTURE CIB MEETINGS TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDARS

30 April - 7 May, 2020

CIB Administrative Council Meeting

to be held at the Monastère Notre-Dame D'Hurtebise, Saint-Hubert, Belgium

Members of the CIB Administrative Council:

- Lynn McKenzie (CIB Moderator)
- Franziska Lukas (CIB Assistant Moderator)
- Therese Marie Dupagne (Belgium)
- Maria del Mar Albajar (Spain)
- Caritas Swai (Tanzania)
- Terese Razo Laguna (Mexico)

September 2020

Conference of Delegates

to be held at the Guest House of the nuns of San Giuseppe Monastery in Assisi, then travel on to Rome

Congress of Abbots

meeting at Sant' Anselmo

4 September 2020	Arrive in Assisi (may fly into Rome Fiumicino Airport)
5, 6 & 7 September 2020	Meetings
8 September 2020	Travel to Rome together from Assisi
9 – 15 September 2020	Congress of Abbots
16 September 2020	Depart Rome

*Be sure to watch for an email with important registration information for these meetings.
Important to register early in order to obtain visas as necessary.*

September 2022

Next CIB Symposium

in Italy – exact dates to be announced

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CIB Administrative Council members at meeting in Cuernavaca, Mexico

From left to right:

Franziska Lukas, Lynn McKenzie, Patty Fawcner, Therese Marie Dupagne, Maria del Mar Albajar

(Missing from photo: Caritas Swai who was unable to attend the meeting in Mexico)

Patty Fawcner has resigned from serving on the Council but remains a delegate from Region 15 - Oceania. Teresa Razo Laguna (Region 10 delegate from Mexico) has taken Patty's place on the Council.

New CIB Administrative Council member, Tere Razo Laguna (on right)

She will attend her first Council meeting in May 2020 in Saint-Hubert, Belgium.

