
aim usa

The United States Secretariat of the Alliance for International Monasticism

www.aim-usa.org

Volume 26 No. 1 2017

aim@aim-usa.org

*The gift of the Holy Spirit
renews the earth!*



Notes Worth Quoting



Hello,
Recently a visitor from AIM spoke at our church/St. Clare of Assisi. Among the remarks that stayed with me was the mention of books and their

importance in the missions of AIM. Books are a treasure to be shared and read. Enclosed are books I felt inspired to send. Also is a check enclosed to help get them from Erie to wherever the Holy Spirit intends them to go. It is a joy and gift to read...may these books find eager readers, and may what they read be fruitful. Thank you.

Peace and blessings,
Joseph
USA

Greetings from Punalur Community,
PEACE

We are very grateful for your gift which we received from you. It will be enriching in our spiritual life. It is very good for our library. It is suitable for our community. Thank you very much. Please send our greetings and thanks to the beloved donors, Benedictine, Cistercian Communities and lay friends in the United States and Canada. We shall pray for them. May God bless them.

With gratitude and prayers,
Sister Angela Yeaudasan
SHANTI Nivas Monastery
South India

Dear Sister,

I want to wish you a blessed New Year 2017 in this Christmas season. On behalf of the community, I offer our prayer for you, for your community and for AIM USA.

I am very grateful to AIM USA for the donation we have received: a box with books and magazines in Spanish. I am sure these books are going to be useful especially now that we are getting new vocations. Books both in English and in Spanish will be useful for our continued formation as there are four monks of our community able to read books also in English. What you offer to us is a great gift for our young community. Thank you very much for your continued support.

Fr. Alex Echeandia Loro, OSB, Prior
Monasterio de la Encarnación
Peru

Dear Sister,

Thank you so much for getting these books. They are real treasures. It helps us to update our knowledge about Monasticism and deepens our commitment. We are very grateful to you.

Sincerely in Christ
Sr. Metilda George
Grace and Compassion Priory
Tamil Nadu, South India

Cover Photo: Stephanie Schmidt, OSB

Quote: Pope Francis

Dear Sister,

If it were not for AIM, we would not have received such good spiritual books for our formation and Community here at Our Lady of Light. You had sent two lots of parcels with books of various kinds. I would like to express my sincere gratitude on behalf of the community and the formation here, for your generosity. Thank you for keeping us in mind and our needs. Please continue to remember us in your prayers. May God continue to keep you.

Lovingly in Christ,
Sr. Jenita
Our Lady of Light
Bangalore, India



Warm greetings from Olivetan Benedictine Sisters of Busan!

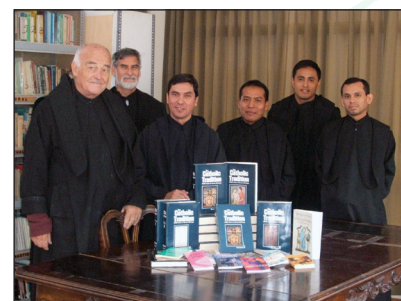
The mail with books you sent has found us well. I'd like to give thanks to you for sending us many books. They will be very helpful to us.

We have been very blessed by the Holy Father's recent apostolic visit to Korea. He truly gave us many gifts of hope, peace, and reconciliation. We hope that these gifts bear abundant fruits in Korea. Thanks to your support we'd like to ask your prayers to realize his will in Korea and the world.

With love,
Sr. M. Leo Son, Prioress
Olivetian Benedictine Sisters of Busan
Korea

Dear Sister,

This is to inform you that we have received a box of books from you. The books are very useful for us and are in good condition. Most sincere thanks to you for keeping us on your mailing list.



Ever since the monastery was founded in 1988 we have been trying to build up our library. We purchased many books, and many books were donated to us by friends and monastic agencies. Naturally, a good number of books came from AIM USA to enrich our library.

Books are very precious for us because we have here not only our novices, but also our students of Philosophy and Theology. That is because right at the beginning we made it a point to teach Philosophy and Theology to our young monks here in the monastery itself. We succeeded in that with the help of many visiting professors. Moreover, we have now a number of our own young monks trained for teaching.

Wishing you joy and peace,
Abbot John Kurichianil, OSB
St. Thomas Benedictine Abbey
Kerala, India

All PEOPLE Are One

This past summer I had the opportunity to travel with five other persons from the USA through northeastern Tanzania --- Therese Glass, OSB

Chris was a Spiritan priest, CSSp., a teacher from Holy Ghost Prep, Philadelphia, PA; two others were: Greg, the president and Jeff, the principal of that school; Marian and Therese were members of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, PA; and the sixth person, Susan, was a Maryknoll lay missionary originally from San Francisco, CA ministering in Mwanza, Tanzania.



Susan Carpenter (Maryknoll lay missionary), Sister Scholastica Dagno, OSB Cam; Sister Therese Glass, OSB, Sister Marian Wehler, OSB at St. Catherine's Monastery in Karatu, Tanzania

Frequently accompanying our group was Justin, a Tanzanian driver, who expertly, tirelessly and determinedly drove us in a Land Rover throughout the streets of Arusha jammed with

motor scooters and through the surrounding bush area while he patiently and knowledgeably answered our endless questions about what type of bird we had seen, what type of plant was growing along the bumpy, twisting road, or which tribe lived in each area we visited.

Spiritans, Maryknoll, Benedictine and African insights, stories and faith were shared as we visited various sites. These included: Spiritan ministries such as Holy Ghost High School in Tanzania with whom Holy Ghost Prep, Philadelphia, is developing

a fuller partnership; Emusoi, a Maryknoll Center fostering the education of Maasai girls near Arusha; St. Catherine's Benedictine Monastery, O Cam, whose origin was in Italy; and family members of our African driver at their home and shop.

Hospitality prevailed wherever we went. Whether our arrival was expected or unexpected, those greeting us generously shared whatever they could with us—be it food and drink, time and directions, stories, song and laughter.

Chris and Marian had served as missionaries in Tanzania in the 1980s while teaching at a seminary in the Arusha Diocese; Greg and Jeff became part of Holy Ghost Prep in Philadelphia in recent years. Marian and Therese, Benedictine Sisters from Erie, PA had taught English to African Sisters in Mtwara, Tanzania in 2001. Susan had lived for several months with the Erie Benedictines prior to her orientation to be missioned to Tanzania in 2015. And Justin who works for the Spiritans met these six in 2016 when he became our driver.

What had brought the seven persons together this past summer? . . . a call, a nudge from the Holy Spirit coupled with an open, compassionate and adventurous response from each person. Each of us had a missionary heart; each of us desired to be present to the Tanzanian people; and each of us desired to learn what we could about and from another culture. As we travelled together our missionary spirits united.

Each of us from the USA was enriched by our experiences with the Tanzanians; and each of the Tanzanians was enriched by us.

Is that not like AIM USA, The Alliance for International Monasticism? Is AIM USA not mutually enriching the lives of one another in Benedictine/Cistercian Monasteries in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America? Indeed, we are!

Indeed ALL PEOPLE ARE ONE!

2017 LENTEN APPEAL

ASIA

- In the Philippines, nine communities will share resources by coming together for continuing formation.
- Four junior monks from India will have the opportunity to study philosophy and theology.

AFRICA

- A wall around the monastery and the guesthouse in Burkina Faso will be constructed in order to protect the monks and guests from hunters and armed bandits.
- In the Congo, continuing education courses will be provided for monks, and nuns. Lay people who wish to get a better intellectual base for their Christian faith may also attend.

MIDDLE EAST

- A community in Israel needs to expand their monastic store to accommodate more visitors since this is a major means of support for the community.

Monastery to Monastery 2016 Update

St. Benedict Monastery	Bakerstown, PA
Our Lady of Grace Monastery	Beech Grove, IN
Oblates, Our Lady of Grace Monastery	Beech Grove, IN
St. Benedict Monastery	Bristow, VA
Oblates, St. Benedict Monastery	Bristow, VA
St. Benedict Monastery	Canyon, TX
Benet Hill Monastery	Colorado Springs, CO
Mt. St. Benedict Monastery	Crookston, MN
Oblates, Monastery of St. Gertrude	Cottonwood, ID
Peace & Justice Committee, Sacred Heart Monastery	Cullman, AL
St. Walburg Monastery	Elizabeth, NJ
Monastery Immaculate Conception	Ferdinand, IN
Our Lady of Dallas	Irving, TX
Sacred Heart Monastery	Lisle, IL
Oblates, St. Peter's Abbey	Muenster, Sask., Canada
House of Bread	Nanaimo, BC
Portsmouth Abbey	Portsmouth, RI
St. Andrew's Abbey	Valyermo, CA
Transfiguration Monastery	Windsor, NY

Cistercian Community in Ethiopia Mendida-DebreBerhan

We are the only *Cistercian Community in Ethiopia and we follow the Rule of St. Benedict. Ethiopia has been a Christian country since about 340 AD. We follow the Eastern Rite of the Church which we value very much and the services are much longer than those in the western part of the Church.



People leaving our monastery

We are now an independent Monastery under the Abbot General of the Cistercian Order Mauro Giuseppe Lepori.

We began at a place called Mendida which is 157 kilometers from the capital Addis Ababa.

Today our main monastery is in Addis Ababa but we still have a community in Hosanna in the south 230 kilometers from the capital and also in Gondar which is a large historical town in the north west of the country about 740 kilometers from



A coffee ceremony (Coffee originated in Ethiopia in the province of Kaffa)

Addis Ababa as well as in Mendida. We have large schools in all parishes looking after many thousands of children. Our school in Addis Ababa goes from Grade 1 to Grade 12. We also run flourishing parishes in all these places as well.

We have a beautiful monastery here in Addis Ababa and we have a number of young monks as well as those who are in training.

In Mendida, we have seminarians and two in the novitiate at the present time. We also have a large Technical School in Mendida as well with about 350 students.

In Hosanna, we have a large parish and a school from Grade 1 to Grade 10 with 1,600 students.

All our schools are valued by all members of the communities where they are situated and there is stiff competition to gain places in them.

Altogether we have 22 priests and 3 permanent brothers as well as those who are training to be monks and preparing for the priesthood by studying at the Major Seminary in the capital.

**Our community is a young
one with only four monks over
fifty years of age.**

We value your prayers very much and do be assured of our prayers for you and your Community.



Some of our Community after a retreat in Mendida

***Cistercian:** The name Cistercian comes from Cistercium, the Latin word for Citeaux, the place in Burgundy, France, where the Order began in 1098. The Cistercian Family is now comprised of several Orders and Congregations. The two main ones being the Cistercian Order (O Cist) and the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance (OCSO).

The Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Monastery Bismarck, ND

A prayerful presence on the prairie, Annunciation Monastery stands high on a bluff overlooking the breathtaking view of the Missouri River valley. Here amid nature's beauty, 42 sisters and one novice seek a deep relationship with God through the Liturgy of the Hours, daily Eucharist, personal prayer, community living and service to the people of the Dakota prairies.

Their roots come from a visionary, courageous group of pioneering Benedictine women who in 1944 branched off from St. Benedict's Monastery, St. Joseph, MN, and were approved as an independent monastery in 1947.

Like their founders, the Sisters of Annunciation Monastery continually search for new ways to collaborate with others to meet changing needs in healthcare, education, spirituality and ministry to the poor and marginalized.

They sponsor two hospitals and a university. *Catholic Health Initiative St. Alexius Health in Bismarck, ND*, is a 306-bed medical center which provides Catholic, quality healthcare in the spirit of St. Benedict, "let all be received as Christ." This hospital was begun by Benedictine Sisters in 1885. In



Sisters assembling Christmas care packages for children and adults served by a mission in Mexico



Sisters enjoying the grounds of Annunciation Monastery, "A Prayerful Presence on the Prairie Since 1878".

1952 the sisters started *Catholic Health Initiative St. Alexius Health-Garrison*, a small critical care hospital, in Garrison, ND. The University of Mary, begun by the sisters in 1959, is located just north of the monastery. It is Christian, Catholic and Benedictine and welcomes students of all faiths and backgrounds. Serving over 3,000 students in locations in five states, the *University of Mary* has international programs in Rome and Peru.



Installation of Sister Nicole Kunze (center) as prioress in 2016. Left: Sister JoAnn Krebsbach Right: Sister Nancy Miller

Ministry on the Margins in Bismarck was begun by a sister of Annunciation Monastery in 2013. This volunteer-based ecumenical ministry offers prison ministry, prison re-entry into society programs, a food pantry, coffee house and spiritual and support gatherings. The sisters support this service to the poor through prayer, personal involvement and financial assistance.

In caring for spiritual needs, the *Hospitality Center* within the monastery provides a place of prayer, quiet, and peace where retreatants can nurture their spirits.

Annunciation Sisters pray to find fresh responses to the changing needs of the people they serve, to further the mission of Jesus with passion and zeal, and to creatively carry the Benedictine tradition and spirit into the future.

AIM USA News

Much gratitude is due to **Sister Karen Joseph, OSB**, Monastery Immaculate Conception, Ferdinand, IN, as she completed her service as a member of the AIM USA National Board. Sister Karen served six years on the AIM USA board. We welcome Fr. Joel Macul, OSB, Christ the King Priory, Schuyler, NE as a new board member.



Fr. Joel Macul, O.S.B.

Born in 1947, Fr. Joel entered the Benedictine Mission Seminary at St. Paul's Abbey, Newton, NJ, in 1960. He professed for the abbey in 1967 and was ordained in 1976. Service in the monastery included working at the abbey's summer camp for boys, giving retreats, being a member of the monastery formation team, teaching Scripture at Don Bosco Seminary College and serving as claustral prior. In 1991, he was assigned to Prince of Peace Priory in Nairobi/Tigoni, Kenya. There he taught Scripture in Tangaza College and the Catholic University of Eastern Africa as well as the novices in the monastery.

He returned to the abbey in Newton in 1996 and was elected abbot in 1997. The community soon began a discernment process about its future that eventually led to the decision to phase out the monastery and close. This was done in 2002. In the meantime, the Benedictine monks of Waegwan Abbey, South Korea, agreed to come to Newton. He helped them during their transition period, living with the small Korean Benedictine community.

During the past fourteen years, he took on work for the Congregation that involved, among other things, being a delegate for a community in South India, translating and editing books and articles related to the history of the Congregation in East Africa as well as Korea. In September 2016, he was asked by the abbot of Münsterschwarzach in Germany to serve as superior of the abbey's dependent priory in Schuyler, NE. His abbatial motto, *Dilatato Corde*, With an Expanded Heart, reflects what he has experienced in his life, touched by several cultures and worlds.

IN MEMORIAM

We remember Erie Benedictine Sister, **Maureen Tobin, OSB**, who died January 21, 2017. Sister Maureen graciously shared her financial expertise with AIM USA from 1990-1996.

Abbot Patrick Regan, O.S.B., died at St. Joseph Abbey, St. Benedict, Louisiana on February 8, 2017. Among other outstanding accomplishments, Abbot Patrick was one of the founding members of the AIM USA board and served as president from its founding in 1987 to 2001. He was also a member of the International AIM Board.

Annual Board Meeting



Sitting: Abbot John Klassen, OSB, (*Collegetown, MN*), Sister Mary David Hydro, OSB, (*St. Leo, FL*), Abbot Francis Michael Stiteler, OCSO, (*Conyers, GA*), Sister Mary White, OSB, President, (*St. Paul, MN*), Abbot John Brahill, OSB, Vice President, (*Aurora, IL*).

Standing: Sister Theresa Zoky, OSB, Executive Director, (*Erie, PA*), Sister Nancy Miller, OSB, (*Bismarck, ND*), Sister Karen Joseph, OSB, (*Ferdinand, IN*), Sister Pia Portmann, OSB, (*Norfolk, NE*), Mother Maureen McCabe, OCSO, (*Wrentham, MA*), Sister Anne Wambach, OSB, (*Erie, PA*).

Mass Stipends

AIM USA has been sending Mass stipends to Benedictine, Trappist and Cistercian monasteries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America since 1992. These stipends are extremely important to our mission monasteries. No amount is too small. They are sent to both male and female communities. The Masses are offered as soon as the stipends are received.

Your monetary gift to **AIM USA** gives hope to Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries around the world.

AIM USA, 345 East 9th Street, Erie, PA 16503

or www.aim-usa.org

Thank You!

Visit Our WEB Page

Visit our web page at www.aim-usa.org for exciting information on AIM USA's commitment to developing monasteries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Tell us what you think.

Staff Contacts

Executive Director:

Sister Theresa Zoky, OSB
director@aim-usa.org

Office Manager:

Sister Ann Hoffman, OSB
aim@aim-usa.org

Coordinator Missionary Cooperative Program:

Sister Therese Glass, OSB
missionary@aim-usa.org

AIM USA Phone: 814-453-4724

Benedict saw the entire world in a single ray of light. (Dialogues)

The gift of the Holy Spirit renews the earth!

**Excerpts from Pope Francis's
Pentecost Homily
May 24, 2015**

“As the Father has sent me, even so I send you... Receive the Holy Spirit” (Jn 20:21-22). The gift of the Spirit on the evening of the Resurrection took place once again on the day of Pentecost, intensified this time by extraordinary outward signs. On the evening of Easter, Jesus appeared to the Apostles and breathed on them his Spirit (cf. Jn 20:22); on the morning of Pentecost the outpouring occurred in a resounding way, like a wind which shook the place the Apostles were in, filling their minds and hearts. They received a new strength so great that they were able to proclaim Christ's Resurrection

*“The world needs
men and women who
are not closed in on
themselves, but filled
with the Holy Spirit.”*

in different languages: “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:4). Together with them was Mary, the Mother of Jesus, the first disciple and the Mother of the nascent Church.

The gift of the Holy Spirit renews the earth. The Psalmist says: “You send forth your Spirit...and you renew the face of the earth” (Ps 103:30). The account of the birth of the Church in the Acts of the Apostles is significantly linked to this Psalm, which is a great hymn of praise to God the Creator. The Holy Spirit whom



Christ sent from the Father, and the Creator Spirit who gives life to all things, are one and the same. Respect for creation, then is a requirement of our faith: the “garden” in which we live is not entrusted to us to be exploited, but rather to be cultivated and tended with respect (cf. Gen 2:15). In every creature, we will be able to see reflected the glory of the Creator, as another Psalm says: “How great is your name, O Lord our God, through all the earth!” (Ps. 8: 2, 10).

The world needs men and women who are not closed in on themselves, but filled with the Holy Spirit. Closing oneself off from the Holy Spirit means not only a lack of freedom; it is a sin. The world needs the courage, hope, faith and perseverance of Christ's followers. The world needs the fruits of the Holy Spirit: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Gal 5:22). The gift of the Holy Spirit has been bestowed upon the Church and upon each one of us, so that we may be able uncompromisingly to battle against sin and corruption, devoting ourselves with patient perseverance to the works of justice and peace.



United States Secretariat—Alliance for International Monasticism

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Erie, PA
Permit No. 888



Benedict saw the entire world in a single ray of light. (Dialogues)

“We celebrate today the confounding event of Pentecost...a reversal of the fragmentation of human community and a totally new creation, a creation not bound by the old categories of Jew or Gentile, slave or free, man or woman. We are to bring into being an inclusive human community based on the love we have for each other. You and I must be about that now and in this place. It is an unfinished work.”

These words were directed to the Community of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie in 2001 by the then Prioress, Sister Christine Vladimiroff.

And an unfinished work it is, even today!!

The Feast of Pentecost has much to say to our troubled world. It presents us with a message of hope, even as our world is more fragmented, more hostile, more divisive. We are confident that the Holy Spirit has come to us as Jesus had promised, and can help us to heal the fragmentation, end the hostilities, and bring peace to those divided.

As Benedictines, we have much to offer our troubled world. Our charism of community life and our lived example of this shines out as a brilliant light to show the world that authentic community life can be lived, whether it be in a monastery, a neighborhood, a city, a country, or the world. It is possible to live together in mutual respect and love, supporting each other as we reach out to others, learning from and working with them in non-violent ways for the good of the whole; working together, sharing and protecting the earth; living with a genuine concern and love for the earth and all its people.

Believing in the gifts we have received through the coming of the Holy Spirit, we can, as individuals and communities, “express [ourselves] in foreign tongues and make bold proclamation as the Spirit [prompts us].

Let us be filled with the rushing wind. Let the Holy Spirit take hold of us. Let the tongues of fire shedding brilliant light bring intense warmth to ignite a burning passion in each of us so that *“the face of the earth may be renewed.”*

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Theresa Zoky, O.S.B.".

Sister Theresa Zoky, O.S.B.
Executive Director, AIM USA
director@aim-usa.org