

BENEDICTINE EDUCATION & A.I.M.

Introduction: At the last Congress of Benedictine Abbots in Rome in 2004, the ICBE, *The International Commission on Benedictine Education*, presented the activities and current projects; the evocation of the schools in the developing countries brought about a new reflection on the connections between ICBE and AIM. The visit of Abbot Christopher Jamison OSB to a meeting in Vanves of the international team of AIM solidified the commitment of AIM to this new found solidarity. In this report requested of me, I will distinguish three parts: the work of AIM and the new demands of our times; Benedictine tradition and education; towards a new solidarity between the schools.

I AIM AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE COMMUNITIES

I.1. The expansion of the Monasteries.

The service of AIM in 2005 covers a network of 409 monasteries. These, inscribed on our website, divide as follows: 129 in Africa, 163 in Latin America, 106 in Asia and 11 in Oceania. At the heart of each Order and between the different Benedictine Orders, relationships are many and cover organisation, the evolution of the communities and their human, Christian and monastic formation. AIM, in the service of the communities at different levels, is a privileged witness to their evolution in daily life and shares in this way in what the Anglo-Saxons call “monasticism in the making.

In the beginning, AIM was founded to uphold and co-ordinate the founding of new communities in Africa. Later, attention was turned to other continents and to dialogue between different religions. Evolution was rapid and was going to alter profoundly the face of monasticism founded by St Benedictine. In effect, the rate of growth of foundations from 1960 to our day was by 4 or 5 foundations a year. What Pope John Paul declared about the Church was also true of monastic life: the centre of gravity was moving progressively towards the south and east.

Parallel with this evolution, AIM made it their duty to accompany the monasteries established in these new territories. Representatives of AIM, forming together an international team, regularly visited the monasteries established in different continents, ready to listen to them in order to meet their needs as they arose and to help them benefit from experiences gained elsewhere. The international team was thus qualified to prepare the requests submitted to the executive Committee. Subsequently, the president of AIM and the General Secretary reported back to the annual Council of AIM, made up of the Abbot Primate Notker Wolf, OSB, Mother Moira Hickey, to the Inter Benedictine Communion (CIB), the delegates from the different orders, Presidents and members of the Benedictine Congregations. Their monastic experience turned this annual meeting into a privileged place of awareness of and reflection on monastic identity in contrast with the world: environment, material poverty, culture, spirituality, education of the young, inter-religious monastic dialogue. Effectively, AIM became the privileged witness to the daily life and the anxieties of the communities (origin, development, influence, struggles and decline).

Formation is at the heart of AIM's preoccupation. To form those who form others, to form novice masters, superiors; to promote resources for exchange between monasteries on regional, national and international levels. As the Council of AIM confirmed at En-Calcat Abbey in 2002 and at the Council of Abbots in 2004, "The objective of the Alliance between Monasteries is to favour the human, cultural and religious development of monastic communities and of the population which surrounds them." The economic, social, cultural, political and religious context becomes more and more important for an improved enculturation of the new communities.

I.2 Enculturation and development

From the first words of his Rule, St Benedict invites his disciples to listen: "Listen, my son, attend with the ear of your heart ...". In this effort, centred on listening, the monk is invited to open his whole being to the multiple aspects of the divine invitation. "This disposition is the grace proper to new beginnings. It pushes us towards God like a living wind. It increases our interior adaptability, our readiness to act. It aims to go straight to the point and entertains scarcely any self-seeking." This active listening required the people in the monasteries is the same as that of the members of the community with regard to the groups of people that surround the monastery. In this sense, all monastic life which is developing on the different continents, is called to grow towards new beginnings.

This Benedictine life, then, is put to the test in the eyes of the other, that is to say of the human and cultural milieu in which the new monastery finds itself. This inspection calls for a reciprocal knowledge and will go towards breaking down little by little the misunderstandings which are inevitable when two different environments meet. It will also tend to break down the monopoly of outlook that successive dominations have created and upheld to the detriment of the people dominated. Many communities find themselves facing economic problems, emergency situations, conflict, wars, cultural and human distress.

The last Congress of Benedictine Abbots took "Globalisation" as its theme for reflection. The reflections which were developed will help me to show better the actual supports in the new relationships which could come from this solidarity between the Benedictine schools of North, South and East. The following are some strong points from the talks held.

- 1 "Our universe, in its globalisation, remains intolerably inhuman for many people and this inhumanity affects us all", reports Andrea Riccardi, historian attached to the community of St Egidio. Between 1990 and 2000, he continued, there were five million dead and six million wounded due to war. Beyond "the impact on civilisations" there is in progress a process of reconstruction of all identities, national, ethnic and religious. In the face of a globalised economy, not only is a world wide direction missing, (see The Crisis of the ONU), but also a culture of globalisation capable of giving any orientation. The strengthening of peace, for example, this golden rule which is at the heart of every religious tradition.
- 2 Globalisation also underlies the economy. This latter, writes the past Director general of the International Monetary Fund, Michel Candessus, can engender

“economic violence”. The future will always be marked by poverty and it is foreseen that in twenty five years there will be two billion more poor people, The list will be long, beginning with 36 million suffering from AIDS, of which 26 in Africa, 6 in South East Asia, 4 in Latin America.

In short, internationalisation, far from creating uniformity of cultures, and because it is written in every corner of the globe, according to forms proper to the societies where it superimposes itself and the groups which it marginalises, creates growing inequalities. Wars, epidemics, poverty affect differently both rich and poor countries as they do the rich and the poor within these countries. As for technological innovations, these modify familial relationships and the transmission of their knowledge. But apart from privileged people, how many questions and how much suffering is found among the populations that surround our communities. These latter are called to change from withdrawal into openness, to universality with our own roots; prayer, compassion, the search for unity.

Monasteries, meeting places between different social environments and different generations, are called to be places of exchange and of recognition of the benefits brought by lasting development for all.

Thus restructuring of identities, inhumanity, genocide, poverty and disease unquestionably mark our times and cannot but influence succeeding generations in our monasteries and the educative environment which surrounds them. Dom Bernard Oliviera, OCSO, reminds monastic communities of the necessity to “re-found our existence in the essential”, “to renew the implanting of our hearts in the love of God and of our neighbour as ourselves”.....

“ to reform our institutions that they may be significant for the culture or counter-culture of our time”.

These perspectives invite nuns and monks to renew their capacity for listening in the human context in which their foundation is written. They are strongly called to transform their outlook.

I.3 Surrounding Population and their integral development.

The development of the populations around our monasteries, under one form or another, becomes a human and evangelical necessity. For the resolution of one uncertainty results in creating another uncertainty until such time as the whole man is taken care of and becomes independent. Thus, for example, the help a monastic community may give to agricultural projects to help people survive and live, may subsequently lead them to deal as a duty with health issues, the elimination of illiteracy, the education of the young and the marginalised . Reference to the first Christian community is particularly noticeable in those passages of the Rule which deal with the sharing of goods, the waiting at table, the care of the old, the sick, children, with everything that concerns the daily and material well-being of the sisters and brothers. Mutatis mutandis, this same care towards our neighbours encourages us to help improve the lot of those who live very uncertain lives, even more to let them become independent and masters of their own destiny. Education of children is a necessary course towards growth and maturity.

II BENEDICTINE TRADITION AND EDUCATION

II.1 The evangelical heart of the Benedictine Rule.

- 3 “A profound faith in the merciful presence of Christ in each of our brothers, the conviction that, gradually, monastic life will make us all share in this compassion coming from above: such is undoubtedly the heart of the Rule and the secret of the extraordinary treasure of moderation and respect which underlies all community characteristics...Discretion is as the living acknowledgement of this love. It is accompanied by humility and a confidence large enough to allow God to act first.”
- 4 “In the Benedictine vision,” writes Basil Pennington, “there is neither slave nor freeman, neither rich nor poor. Everything is in a vision of equilibrium and equality. It considers the sick, the young, the elderly all with the same paternal solicitude, and its hospitality is outstanding. St Benedict teaches the dignity of work by his own example”. *Monastic Journey to India* P. 17-18
- 5 From Pope Benedict XVI regarding the divine Word: “I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt” Ex. 3.7
“God gives the right to the powerless over the powerful. Such is his true face. Such is the nucleus of the law of the Old Testament which continually places the widow, the orphan and the stranger under the protection of God. In the same way, this is found at the heart of the teaching of Jesus, who himself took on the condition of the accused, the condemned, of the dying and who thus placed them all under the protection of God.” Joseph Ratzinger, “The God of Jesus Christ. Paris 1977 p. 13.

II. 2 The originality of Benedictine education

Many symposiums and publications have developed this subject. We propose simply to recall some essential characteristics of the Benedictine identity regarding education, and to highlight any deficiencies which we have.

II. 2.1 Benedictine Identity and Education

- 6 Benedictine education is part of the identity of community life itself, which is nourished by the Word of God, which celebrates the Lord in the Eucharist and Divine Office. The monastery lives by its work, welcomes the people who surround it and contribute in one way or another to its development.
- 7 During the first centuries, the monks knew the Psalter by heart, as well as large portions of the New Testament. Benedictine education is nourished by deeply pondering Scripture and the Liturgy. Other studies based on the classical writers from Homer to Thucydides, from Cicero and Virgil to Tacitus were impregnated with this perspective.

- 8 According to the well-known vision of Newman, Christian culture follows three stages: Benedictine education., characterised by the poetic, Dominican, distinguished by science, Jesuit, dominated by efficiency.
There is in effect, in the Benedictine tradition, a breath of nature approaching the Georgics of Virgil, which respects the rhythm of creation, of the seasons and of the days. This 'elan' can be found in the 'ora et labora', in the liturgy and the work of each day. This seeking after the essential which can be found in every moment appears as a contemplation of the Word of God. The latter clothes each moment of internalisation and activity, and colours all study and education with a mysterious presence, particular to the Benedictine tradition. The intuition developed in Chile, in the movement of the young people of Manquehue, bears witness to this, but also in a different way, did that which San Egidio achieved in Rome and across the world. AIM can contribute to a better understanding of the Benedictine tradition and also of education, nourished by Lectio Divina.
- 9 In modern times, Benedictine education is influenced by the spirit of the different Benedictine congregations: Bavarian, Swiss, English, Hungarian, Belgian, American, Philip[pino, Latin American, African. In this world of ours, relationships between the monasteries and scholarly and educational institutions are extremely complicated, because much depends on rules established by society and by the State. Because of this, Benedictine institutions are called to new challenges.

II . 2..2..Contemporary Challenges

- 10 Benedictine monks have educated men of their times. They are traditionally educators and builders of society. Certainly, they take a certain stance with regard to the world: standing apart, a critical outlook, the presentation of true values that transform the individual and society. Their vocation is both "to pass on" and "to innovate." "The evolution of Benedict himself," writes Dominic Milroy, "was paradoxical. On the basis of an ideal of solitude, he built a philosophy of community; he began by seeking out the desert and ended by civilising it....The same paradox is current in the history of all the monasteries which have drawn their primitive inspiration from his rule....Western monasticism thus becomes an internal transforming agent in their society.... There seems to exist in the Rule of St Benedict a movement which returns the monks to the works they thought they had abandoned.
- 11 In western society, Christian education has separated classical and literary formation from scientific and technical formation. In our time, this distinction seems more prejudicial than useful. A new pedagogy endeavours to reconcile these two types of formation. A meeting of the monasteries of south-east Asia (BEAP, Benedictine East Asia and Philippines) put the emphasis on the present day concept of the qualified young people of the "E-generation". Electronics plays a considerable role in to-day's world and the virtual image calls for greater discernment.
- 12 An essential educational question forms an integral part of monastic and Christian life: what is the ultimate purpose of Christian formation? Does this education integrate the relationships of the young with God, with others, with themselves? This challenge is seen in a different manner by the San Egidio movement in Rome and that of Manquehue in Chile.

II.3 Some examples of schools in disadvantaged areas

GOIAS: The family school of Goias, (Brazil)

BHOPAL: The school for young aboriginal girls in Bhopal (India)

Since 1975, a new branch of the Benedictine Congregation of St Lioba has been developed in the province of Madhyapradesh where 15 Indian communities are centred round the education of Indian girls.

Socio-economic context: Sadly, Bhopal is well-known because of the “Union Carbide” disaster of 4th December 1984. The aboriginal population covers many ethnic groups, who were the first people to inhabit India between the XXth and XIth centuries BC. Driven out by the Davidians, Arians and others, these people sought refuge in the forests, feeding themselves on what they could pick, hunt or fish. Exploited, living in destitution, they sought refuge along the roadside, in the slums. Extremely skilled and with a lively intelligence, these unlettered people are discovering the contemporary world and, once instructed, they can hold high positions.

Entrance Class (Foyer) of young aboriginal girls: The monastery of **Begumganj**, near Bhopal runs a school of 850 pupils, middle class Hindus. In 2000, Sister Juncy took the initiative of organising an entrance class (foyer) nearby, receiving about 100 tribal girls from the ages of 5 to 15. These are Adivasis and Harijans.

Financing their formation: Each girl costs 2.500 rupees per month, that is 550,00 euros per girl per year. The Archbishop of Bhopal, Mgr Topno, of tribal origin himself, is insistant that these girls have access to higher studies “because they are generally very capable.” This financial assistance must cover three years so that the girls can obtain a diploma and find work.

If all these young girls now in boarding school finish their studies, the annual subsidy will rise to 3.300,00 euros / 7.150,00 euros / 9.900,00 euros etc.

Aims and future perspectives: the education given to the girls opens up a new future for them. Through the children, their parents and families are also reached.

ASIRVANAM: School for the poor children of Asirvanam (India)

The monastery of Asirvanam is situated on the road to Mysore, about 20 kms from Bangalore, capital of Karnataka.

Socio-economic Context: The town of Bangalore has experienced an impressive growth in its economy and population: in 30 years the population has gone from 1.7 million to 6 million inhabitants. The situation of the monastery places the monks in contact with the disadvantaged people, the very poorest. Their 450 pupils also come from the lower castes and from a tribal environment. The examples given hardly call for long commentaries.

The school and workshops for carpentry and ironwork: 450 uniformed pupils gather together

the Hindu and Muslim children from 6 to 17 years in 12 classes. (Primary School, Middle School and Upper School.) The situation is managed by lay people and two monks.

As for the carpentry work shops and or the iron works, they each accept 20 pupils for 2 years.

The financing of the buildings has been undertaken by two European organisations.(Unitas , Hands of Hope). The running costs, (13.000 euros per annum) are too heavy to be born by the communities, as are the costs of replacing the school bus.

Aims and future perspectives: The formation given allows for a better social integration, thus avoiding marginalisation and all that that entails. Bangalore also offers many possibilities for employment.

KINSHASA: Primary school of Mambre at Kinshasha. (DR Congo) LUBUMBASHI: School run by Benedictine sisters at Katanga. (DR Congo)

"Eight of ten children out of school live in sub-Saharan Africa or Southern Asia." This is a United Nations' report 2005. For more than 115 million children of primary school age who are out of school, this human right is being denied. These are mostly children from poor households, whose mothers often have no formal education either. The loss of potential does not affect children alone. Education, especially for girls, has social and economic benefits for society as a whole. With 5000 Pounds / 10 000 Dollars a Benedictine primary school in Africa could be supported all the year.

III. ICBE AND AIM (towards new solidarities)

III. 1 List of schools

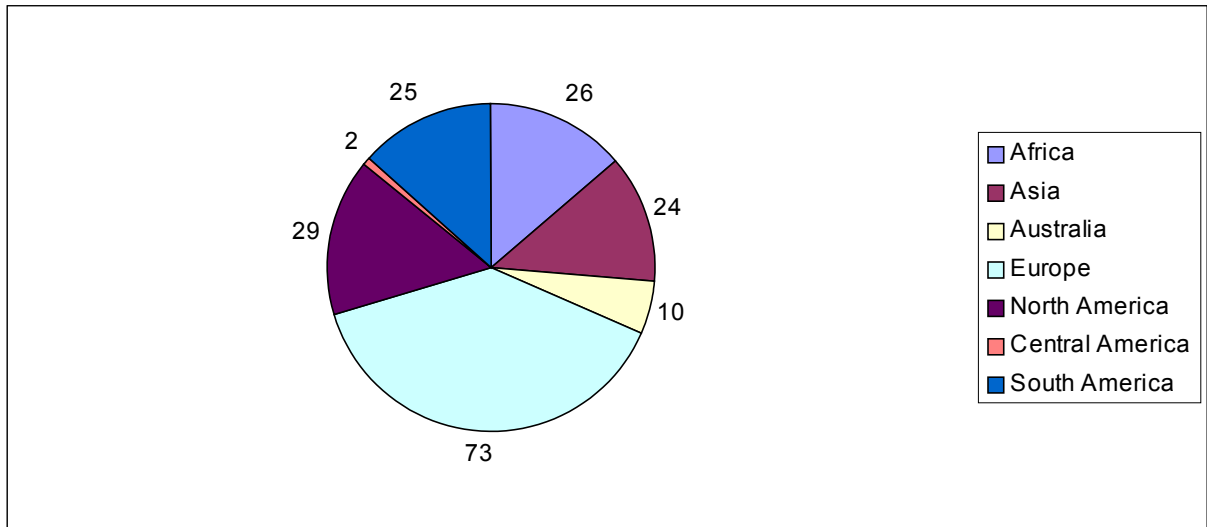
From its first conference at Worth, the ICBE learned of the existence of a number of Benedictine schools in Latin America, Brazil, Chile ... At the ICBE conference at Sao Paolo in the year 2000, the importance of these schools in the Philippines became ever more clear. Father Jean-Marie Christiaens had also drawn the ICBE members' attention to the monasteries which have schools in Africa and India. He had already spoken about them to the General Chapter of the Annunciation Congregation in the year 2000, and to the Council of AIM in Marienrode in 2003. At the Abbots' Congress in 2004, Fr Christopher Jamison supported this view, and came to Vanves in 2004 to enlist the support of AIM, which responded positively to this request. During this Congress, it would be useful to make a systematic account of all the schools concerned in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and especially in India.

The annexed charts take into account the approximate number of schools in the USA, in Europe, and in the other continents. Certain northern monasteries which do not have schools would like to support projects in under-privileged countries through a form

of partnership or exchange, through study grants, or adoptive sponsorship of children. We shall come back to this.

Global chart of Benedictine schools

The situation of the Benedictine schools, which vary in type according to their level of training, the number of students, and on occasion the quality of education which they offer, is presented globally as follows:

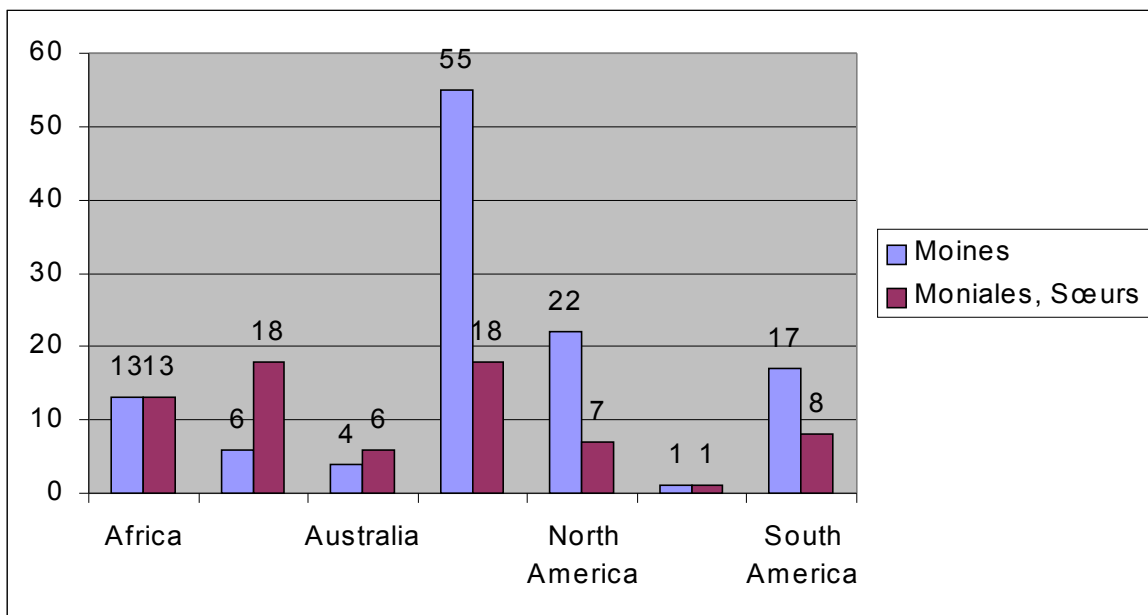


PRIVILEGED SCHOOLS: 120

UNDERPRIVILEGED SCHOOLS: 60

Latin America (part); Australia 10;
Europe: 72; Philippines (part); USA 24.

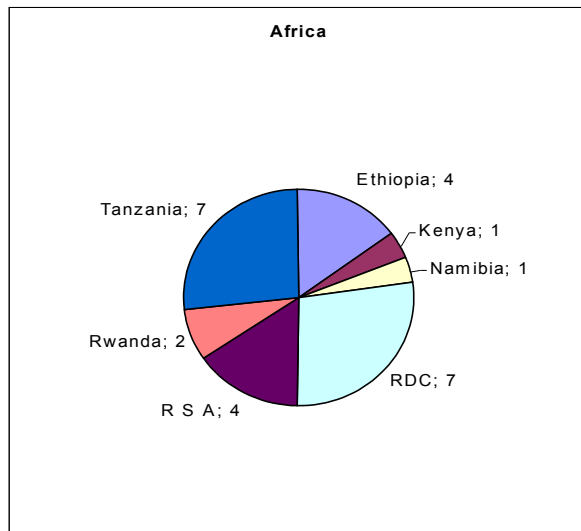
Latin America (part); Africa 26; Asia 24.



Monks, Nuns, Sisters

The schools run by monks are more numerous in Europe (55 male/18 female); in North America, USA and Mexico (22/7), and in Latin America (17/8). In Africa the number is equal (13/13). In Asia and Australia the proportions are the opposite, that is, respectively 10 male/14 female in Asia, and 4:6 for Australia.

The breakdown according to continent may be presented as follows:



(Graph)

The breakdown according to continent may be presented as follows:

III.2 PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS OF BENEDICTINE EDUCATION

Benedictine education could be defined as a dynamic and integrated process, conscious or not, of the transmission of life experiences which flow from monastic life itself. It is nourished by spiritual realities and an acute attention to the events which occur in daily living. In its unity and great diversity, it is like a source of ever flowing water, watering new generations in the most diverse social environment. It respects the constraints which are imposed by a great respect for different religions, institutions, for human groups and their culture, for persons and for local economic potential. Let us explain briefly these different

components.

Religious Components.

Three situations seem to recur:

- 13 In a non-Christian environment, with regard to other religions, it is the attitude of educationalists and teachers which above all reveals the Benedictine spirit. At Asirvanam in India, most pupils are Hindus or Moslems. Their courses start with a prayer to St Benedict, who is respected by all in their own religious faith.
- 14 Many Benedictine schools in Europe, in the Americas, in the Philippines are presented as Christian institutions and develop Christian education and teaching. There again, the monastic identity is implicitly present to a certain degree. Examples of this type of education abound.
- 15 Some Benedictine schools teach a fully Benedictine education, and the pupils are explicitly nourished and taught in the monastic tradition. It would be useful in the light of AIM to explain this form of education. The pathway of Jose Manuel Eguiguren Guzman, founder of the Manquehue movement in Chile and creator of a new Benedictine school, illustrates this perspective perfectly. Three stages can be seen in the evolution of the movement.
- 16 *In the beginning, a calling: "I was 25 and going through an existential crisis...A Benedictine monk gave me a Bible and taught me to read Sacred Scripture in such a way that it seemed Jesus Christ revealed himself to me as risen and alive, illuminating my life and filling it with meaning...It was not so much what Father Gabriel said to me that was important, but rather that he taught me to listen....*
- 17 *The movement, referring to the school to which we belong, took the name of the apostolic movement MANQUEHUE, the name of a neighbouring mountain, which means "the place of the Condors" in the language of the native Indians...A special relationship grew up between the older and the younger pupils. This special, caring relationship has become the soul of each of the three schools that we have developed... Across the years the Holy Spirit has guided the movement towards the Benedictine Rule. Members have found a very practical way of organising their lives so as to live out their baptism... As St Benedict wrote that people who are lukewarm, lazy, disorganised and negligent must prefer nothing to the love of Christ.... The movement then becomes an extension of the Benedictine community..... At present, the movement numbers 900 members, men and women, rich and poor, married and celibate; more than a third are under 25 years old. At the heart of the movement there are 25 oblates who form a little resident community. The principal work of the movement, other than the celebration in choir of the Divine Office, is in the field of education.*
- 18 *One of the most remarkable things about the Rule of St Benedict is the ease with which it adapts to all eras and all places. Technology and the media move forward, economic forces come and go, tools, instruments and social structures all change with staggering speed, but man stays the same. In all times and in all places, religious education must always be a question of evangelisation. To educate therefore is to create a space in which the men and women of tomorrow may have the experience of the existence of God. To draw them towards a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.... to teach them to listen to the God who speaks to them and accompanies them*
- 19 *Each monastery, each family must be a school of "the love" of God and of the other Our schools*

like our monasteries, are places where we learn and practice love in this way. There are two ways in which we can let this inspiration impregnate our life at school: either to go direct to the text of the Rule of St Benedict and apply it to our life, or, in an indirect way, simply to allow a Benedictine manner to be seen and to act, impregnating the life and example of those who live by it. Both methods of "benedictinising" our lives are indispensable.... Take care not to stifle the Benedictine instinct. Practically, we have published a pocket edition of the Benedictine Rule, which has been very useful in our schools; we make sure that every teacher is aware of it and knows how to use it and that our pupils discover it in the course of their religious instruction and by their duties in the house.

These testimonies, to which may be added those of the community of San Egidio, and even the personal development of Enzo Bianchi, and of the community at Bose, reveal the importance of a way of life founded on Holy Scripture, the person of Jesus Christ and the Benedictine tradition. Relationships between parents, teachers and pupils find an incomparable dimension, based on the love of God, of others and of self.

Institutional Components.

Fr Christopher Jamison, OSB and the ICBE propose to establish bonds of solidarity between educational institutions from the different continents through the intermediary and support of AIM. It is a magnificent project in which AIM has agreed to become involved. These bonds between a western institution and an institution recognised by AIM sets up what one calls in English "a twinning". (French: jumelage)

Twinning means "to join two entities (towns for example) with a view to establishing bonds and exchanges between them. In the case of towns, these bonds are cultural and tourist; with regard to Benedictine institutions, they will be about relationships, education and finance. American Benedictines, through AIM-USA, have created tighter bonds with southern Africa, (Tanzania, Namibia, South Africa, and these links have been increased to include the Australian Benedictines of the Good Samaritan.

The inequalities between the different regions of the world, and within the heart of the populations, together with the rapid evolution of the new generations call for a great suppleness in adapting. The evangelical heart of the Benedictine Rule and a better understanding of crossing cultures, will do the rest. As a pearl of an African proverb so admirably puts it: "Every meeting has four dimensions. Before you are the people and circumstances which are favourable to the meeting. On your right you discover the face of the other; on your left dwells the Word. Lastly, behind you is the future. You will set off again richer from what is experienced and expressed.

Each of the four stages implies many elements; each of the four stages implies many elements; from the meeting, the discovery of the other, the acceptance of his look towards one's self, the dialogue which raises misunderstandings before allowing a truly transcultural meeting, followed by the opening up to the future. So many aspects which engender a dialectic between recognising the similarities and understanding (or not) the differences. These institutional engagements move towards the meaning of partnership and not of mutual dependence.

Personal Components.

Bonds already exist between European and African families through sponsoring the studies of a child. A certain number of conditions must be respected in order not to create

discrimination between the children and their families. For example, financing a whole class and not only a few children; or again paying for the midday meal for a whole school or a group of classes.

On the European model, I do not know what the American legislation is, the European favours the sensitising of western countries to the situation in other continents. Subsidies may be accorded by the member states and freedom from taxes may be given from set amount (30 euros). Stays of several weeks have thus been allowed between the Abbey school of St Andrew's in Bruges and institutions in Asia (Vietnam), in Africa (Senegal and RD Congo), and in Latin America (Mexico). Fr Jean Marie Christiaens, OSB, rector of this school has a wide experience of these current examples of solidarity.

The sensitisation goes beyond the contact between the young of the countries concerned, because it touches also the educators, the teachers and the families. These bonds become at times more durable and more personal.

Economic Components.

We will come back to this in the following point (III. 3) developing concrete models which could be put in place.

Financial gifts can be made directly between two institutions or through the intermediary of ICBE/AIM. I think it is important that these requests are transparent and known to all. One can see the place for an annual report showing the Benedictine monasteries which are supported, without necessarily revealing the amounts distributed.

These subsidies could be divided in the following way:

- 20 Cost of construction;
- 21 Teaching materials;
- 22 Teachers' salaries
- 23 Bursaries for pupils
- 24 Various .

A principal adopted by AIM requires an acknowledgement by receipt of the subsidy received. This is important because, in certain countries, (e.g. India), banks do not convert money quickly. It is therefore a good idea to make a brief report every six months relating to what has been done with the money received as well as a final report. One could also think in terms of a central fund directed by ICBE which could support urgent needs.

III. 3 CONCRETE MEANS

We could agree to adopt three ideas, in a limited sense, the better to distinguish between the type of relationships developed between the respective institutions: TWINNING - PARTNERSHIP - SOLIDARITY. The first would be in the field reserved to ICBE; the two others would be linked to AIM.

- 25 **Twining and the ICBE:** ICBE holds dear the image of the schools considered as Benedictine and is in favour of twinning between schools that are better off. This first sort of action consists in participating in the very life of another institution and in its social projects._

For example: one European school sends its pupils to join the pupils of another institution which is comfortably off (San Paolo, Rio de Janeiro, Manilla) to share

together in a common project

This enables young westerners to discover other cultures, another way of living out the Gospel, a monasticism often near to the one they know but certainly more dynamic.

- 26 **Partnership. ICBE/AIM :** The social divide between northern institutions and those of more deprived places, calls for a different approach, that of partnership. This partnership will aim at realising projects together: for example: work with pupils in building a classroom, in developing an internet-café, etc. It is conceivable that monasteries that do not have a school could set up these projects and support a Benedictine school in another continent. AIM could collect a list of monasteries who propose to do this and transmit it to the ICBE.
- 27 **Financial Solidarity ICBE/AIM :** This could be seen in a bi-lateral way, or as common funds directed by the ICBE with the participation of AIM which would need to be specified. It is conceivable that requests and payments could be dealt with every six months, following the example of AIM in supporting monasteries. Further it is essential that both parties are aware of the requests and the payments and that all institutions declare their sources of this co-financing. A centre of information would be created.

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CONCLUSIONS.

- 29 The proposition of ICBE is a wonderful opening for the young of the American and European institutions. A better knowledge of other continents is a source of enrichment and of mutual development. Already many initiatives are taking place in this sense: education of the young in action (stays of 2 or 3 weeks to take part in communal activities with other young people, Latin-Americans, Africans, Asians and young people from Oceania.); promoting sponsorship to support the education and formation of underprivileged children; visits...
- 30 In the countries where AIM works, it is important to listen, to have respect, to become well-informed and to respect local culture before becoming engaged in a unilateral manner. For example, in Peru village schools exist and it is not appropriate to impose the Benedictine spirit. In Ethiopia, it is good to encourage the development of the official schools. In Vietnam, it is essential to be prudent in speech...Each country, each situation invites us to respect and to listen.
- 31 The distinction made between twinning and partnership underlines how much discretion is necessary. One must not scandalise the youth of one country by the abundance of goods that others hold, affluence of dollars etc...
- 32 Monastic Life is itself a form of education for the individual and for the community. It is also an education of the whole person, going beyond formation, strictly so-called. The transmission of monastic values can informally permeate every part of life, especially in the areas of welcome and hospitality. Our educational institutions are found within the same vision.

P. Martin Neyt, OSB.
President of AIM.

Exposition of the Plan for ICBE & AIM Projects

I. AIM AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE COMMUNITIES.

- 33 Expansion of monasteries
- 34 Enculturation and development;
- 35 Surrounding population and their integral development.

II. BENEDICTINE TRADITION AND EDUCATION

- 36 The evangelical heart of the Benedictine Rule;
- 37 The Originality of Benedictine education. (Benedictine education, contemporary challenges)
- 38 Some examples of education in underprivileged areas (Goias, Asirvanam, Bhopal, Kinshasa, Lubumbashi...)

III. ICBE AND AIM: towards new solidarities

- 39 List of schools
- 40 Principal components of Benedictine education (including religious, institutions, personnel and finance.)
- 41 Concrete means.

CONCLUSIONS.