

Report of the of the DIM-MID-Commission of the Germanspeaking Region 2016

(P. Cosmas Hoffmann OSB, secretary of the Germanspeaking region)

Compared to the previous years, the situation in the German-speaking region of the DIM-MID has not changed very significantly. It is still determined today by the fact that the lack of new members in the monastic communities, which become smaller and who are therefore more concerned of their own survival rather than launching new initiatives in the vast world of interreligious dialogue.

The Spiritual Exchanges in 2013 (four Zen-monks and two Zen-nuns in three German Benedictine monasteries) and in 2014 (two Benedictine monks in Zen-monasteries in Japan) could spread the idea of the DIM-MID, but no permanent working group could be established.

The most serious contribution in the German-speaking region still comes from the Mission-Benedictines, the congregation of St. Ottilien, especially of the Archabbey of St. Ottilien and the Abbey of Königsmünster.

Since many years **Br. Joseph Götz OSB**, former secretary of the Germanspeaking region, continues his work in the interreligious dialogue, especially with Buddhists and Muslims. Since 1997 the Archabbey of St. Ottilien is often the venue for the biennial conference of the **European Network of Buddhist Christian Studies**.

2015 Br. Josef went to Ladakh to participate in a conference on culture and religion in Ladakh, where he could present the Benedictine tradition.

In 2011 the **Muslim Christian Interfaith Dialogue Association** was established by the help of the Qom Theological Seminary. This association is aiming at peaceful negotiations and advancing interfaith dialogue among different denominations of Islam and Christianity. 2014 Br. Josef and P. Eduardo were invited to come to Qom after two members of the teaching staff had participated in a German course in St. Ottilien the year before. 2016 a group of eight Shia-representants went to St. Ottilien for talks based on the encyclical "Laudato si".

Furthermore is Br. Josef member of the working group for the Dialogue of the Religions of the Diocese of Augsburg and member of the Executive Board of "**Occurso**" (Institute for interreligious and intercultural encounter).

P. Cosmas Hoffmann OSB, member of the abbey of Königsmünster, participates also in various commissions and brings into them the experiences and concerns of the DIM-MID.

Commission for Buddhist-Christian Dialogue in North-Rhine-Westphalia

In January 2006 a Commission for Buddhist-Christian Dialogue in Northrhine-Westphalia was founded by members of the dioceses of Cologne, Aachen and Paderborn. The commission meets four times a year. A special meeting is here an interreligious retreat-weekend for Buddhists and Christians is organized in the "Haus der Stille" of the Abtei Königsmünster. This year, from 24th to 26th, the weekend was dedicated to the theme "Achtsamkeit" (mindfulness). Every participant presented one text on this subject from his spiritual tradition. This is followed by the exchange of thoughts, associations and experiences on this text. Christian texts were taken from the gospels of Marc und Luke, the rules of Pachomius and Benedict, Bernard of Clairvaux, Meister Eckhart, The cloud of unknowing, Simone Weil and Willi Lambert SJ. Buddhist texts were taken from the Satipatthana Sutta, from Ayang Rinpoche, Chögyam Trungpa, from Hongren and Larry Rosenberg.

Georges-Anawati-Foundation

This Foundation promotes creative and innovative projects in the spirit of its statute: projects which contribute to respectful encounter, mutual understanding and common action of men and women with Christian or Muslim roots. P. Cosmas is member of the Scientific Advisory Board, which meets four times a year to assess project proposals and carry out the annual essay contest on Christian-Islamic topics.

Commission for interreligious initiatives in Meschede

For some years there are different contacts between Christians and Muslims in Meschede. In 2005 a commission for interreligious initiatives in Meschede was founded. The members are two protestant pastors, two catholic priests and the Imam and a representative of the Muslim Community in Meschede. Two regular events are the break of fasting at the end of Ramadan with the Muslim community and the silent protest for tolerance and religious freedom in memory of the destruction of synagogues in Germany on 09.11.1938. First stop main church in town, second stop the Jewish cemetery, third stop the old synagogue. Afterwards in the old synagogue, there is a time of interreligious prayer (Christian-Muslim).