

**Daily log**  
**CIB Symposium 2010**  
**Sister Nancy Bauer, OSB**  
**Entry: September 13, 2010**

*Guten Tag.* Yes, Monday, September 13, was German Day at the CIB Symposium. The German-speaking Sisters were German-singing Sisters for our liturgies. And the rest of us “Vater unser-ed” the best we could whenever we came to the Lord’s Prayer. At Eucharist, we also experienced some of the culture of India as the participants from that country stood in front of the altar lifting up plates of incense, candles and flowers during the Eucharistic prayer. After Mass, Sister Jacinta Mathew, the young Sister from India, performed a traditional prayerful dance.

In our sessions on Monday, we heard from the young Sisters who were present, each representing one of the 19 CIB regions. They were seated in a circle in the center of the room and the rest of us sat in a larger circle around them. They were gathered as if at a coffee shop, having a conversation about what they had heard during the Symposium. We eavesdropped on their conversation as if, according to our facilitators, we were “flies on the wall.”

The young Sisters spoke in particular about a comment that Sister Maricarmen Bracomontes made in her keynote address. Sister Maricarmen said she had heard young Sisters in her region express their desire that religious communities be more “human.” The young CIB participants talked about what that might mean, some of them affirming that their communities are very human, and some describing ways that their communities could become more human. They agreed that there will always be challenges in religious life because we are communities of humans and not angels. We “flies on the wall” were relieved to hear that the new members do not expect us to be angels.

After hearing from the young, we heard from Sister Gisela Happ, General Secretary of the Alliance for International Monasticism (AIM). The purpose of AIM is to promote development of monasteries around the world, especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America. AIM helps fund construction and renovation of buildings, education, formation, and special projects. AIM paid travel expenses for several of the CIB Symposium participants. The AIM website is worth checking out.

To close out the session, we watched a French film entitled, *L'homme qui plantait des arbres* (*The Man who Planted Trees*). It is an allegory about a

shepherd named Elzéard Bouffier who plants trees in a barren area near Provence, bringing life and hope back to the land and the people of the region.

During siesta time in the early afternoon, the Sisters from the United States enjoyed a reception at Sant'Anselmo for Miguel and Marian Diaz. Miguel Diaz is the U.S. ambassador to the Holy See. Before this appointment, he taught theology at two Benedictine colleges in Minnesota — the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph and St. John's University in Collegeville. Three Sisters from Saint Benedict's Monastery, sponsor of the College of Saint Benedict, were present at the CIB Symposium and were happy to see Miguel and Marian again.