

INTRODUCTION ON SR. AQUINATA BOECKMANN, OSB  
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A known protestant pastor by the name of Bernd Jaspert who initiated the International Rule of Benedict Congresses in 1971 shares these views on Sr. Aquinata Boeckmann's Commentary on the Prologue to Chapter 7 of the Holy Rule,

*“...the present work would match the great rule commentary of her teacher, colleague and friend Adalbert de Vogue, perhaps even surpassing him in learning and clarity.”*

On Sr. Aquinata's Chapters 8-52 of the RB, Jaspert continues,

*“Even more consistent than de Vogüé, and applying modern exegetical theology...she treats section after section so that they become easily understood and applicable from their historic context, ‘Sitz im Leben’ to today's monastic praxis in monasteries living according to the Rule of Benedict.”*

We agree with Jaspert's claim of Sr. Aquinata's “masterful accomplishment.” Her studies at the State University of Munich on Theology and French and her doctorate in Spirituality on Religious Poverty in Munster, her 40 years of teaching experiences at the Pontifical University of Sant' Anselmo and the numerous RB courses, retreats and seminars in many monasteries of monks, nuns and sisters of all continents she conducted plus her active involvement in the Alliance for International Monasticism have honed Sr. Aquinata's “well-grounded and humane view of monastic life.” Borrowing from the words of Terence Kardong, her student at Sant' Anselmo, Sr. Aquinata is a

*“... kind of guru for monastic programs all over the world. She is multicultural. When she goes to a foreign country, she not only goes there to impart her wisdom and*

*information. She also goes there to learn how other people live and how they think. Her cosmopolitan breadth of vision in turn informs her writing and her lecturing in Rome. She is probably the most cosmopolitan monastic scholar since the demise of Fr. Jean Leclercq.”*

When teaching was then predominantly limited to male professors, Sr. Aquinata, a missionary Benedictine sister of Tutzing, trailed the blaze by being the first woman professor of Sant’ Anselmo and Regina Mundi. Among her thousands of students, two have become bishops, 60 as abbots, others as abbesses, prioresses, formators and a lot of others have held key positions on an inter-congregational level.

At Regina Mundi in Rome she set up a German renewal course for Religious which ran for nearly 20 years. Among the more important conferences she conducted were those to the German Abbots in 1975, the CIMBRA (in Brazil) in 1980 where she gave later five longer RB courses, two of which with Adalbert de Vogüé in Rio de Janeiro for 40-50 participants, likewise to the American prioresses and American Benedictine formation personnel. For 20 years she handled the RB conferences for French and Belgian monasteries in Maredsous, Belgium.

Of interest are the many books she has written on the Holy Rule of St. Benedict. She served as delegate in six General Chapters of our congregation and thrice as member of the Preparatory Commission of our General Chapter.

Sisters, I have to stop here otherwise my introduction on Sr. Aquinata might be longer than her conference. Sisters, may I now present to you Sr. Aquinata Boeckmann on her fifth time as resource person in the CIB assemblies.