

NACHRICHTEN PRIORAT TUTZING

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Priory Chapter 2011

Chapters are being held at regular intervals. And thus, in the Priory of Tutzing, the priory chapter for the election of the prioress was due in mid-November 2011. Yet this year it was something special, because this time all sisters could participate in the election – and not – as up to now - only the deputies.

Already two months earlier, from September 23 to 25, 2011, all sisters had been invited to Tutzing for a discernment weekend, so that the chapter could be well prepared. Actually, due to reasons of age, health or work, only about two thirds, that is, 80 sisters were able to participate.

As prelude served a coffee colloquy as an after-celebration of Sr. Hildegard's feast-day which had been sort of pushed into the background by the profession jubilee celebration of nine sisters.

Thereafter, all sisters assembled in the chapter room and were greeted by Sr. Hildegard. She also welcomed in our midst Sr. Carmen Tatschmurat, the Prioress of the Kommunität Venio, Munich, who accompanied us through this weekend and who, by valuable conferences, gave us good impulses for our discernment. On Friday afternoon, referring to the Rule of Benedict, she first explained what is the main point in such an election decision. „For the community it means to be aware of the responsibility for communal shaping of our life – and hence to give a mandate for responsibility!“



She dealt in detail with four points which are significant in this area of tension.

These points were:

1. To anticipate one another in reverence (RB 72.4)
2. Vie in paying obedience one to another (RB 72.6)
3. Serve one another⁵ (RB 72, 7,8)
4. Tender the charity of sisterhood selflessly (RB 72.8)

She stressed especially the little word „*in-vicem*“ (one another) which is decisive when a community wants to go the way together in a mature manner.

In the evening, after Vespers and supper, we met for Bible sharing. Thereby the groups were combined at random, and which turned out also very helpful for later group work

On Saturday morning, Sr. Hildegard Jansing presented as prioress her report about the developments in the Priory during the past years of her term of office. The reports of the communities had already been given beforehand to all communities for reading. A time for personal reflection made it possible to let the report „sink in“. For this and for the following exchange in groups, pivotal points on the themes of the report had been prepared beforehand. After this, the sisters met in the chapter room and in the multi-purpose hall for exchange on important questions pertaining to our Priory, and every sister had the opportunity to participate in three themes.



In the afternoon we turned to the question of which qualities are of significance for the exercise of the office of the prioress. For this, Sr. Carmen presented some pointers from the Pastoral Rule of Gregory the Great¹, which she explained by means of the allegorical images give in this Rule. Thus the talk was, on one hand, quite humorous, but on the other hand the images were quite deep and could be well remembered.

¹ the complete text can be found in the Internet under: <http://www.unifr.ch/bkv/kapitel4384.ht>.)

After this, we met in groups and spoke about specific qualities and concrete names. Then every group brought three suggestions with their reasons to the plenary. These were read to all sisters by Sr. Carmen so that all sisters had time to think about it until the next day.

Finally the Sunday was first devoted to the submission of proposals for the election of the prioress. We used the remaining time for group exchange where we talked about which sisters would be suited for the tasks of the subprioress and the priory councilors.

This week-end took place in a very open and stimulating discussion- atmosphere. Of course some interesting and important matters were also neglected, but all in all, we proceeded on our way well prepared and more united as community.

Already a few weeks later, on November 11, 2011, we assembled again, this time for the election chapter. Our General Prioress, Sr. Angela Strobel, had arrived from Rome and presided over the election of the prioress. On Friday afternoon, she officially opened the chapter and in her spiritual impulse referred to the discernment weekend. She also pointed out that listening is one basic element for successful community life; we exchanged on this in our usual groups by means of a biblical text.

On Saturday morning, after common adoration in the church, the election of the prioress took place, in which Sr. Hildegard Jansing was re-elected for another term of three years. All sisters congratulated her with a hearty PAX.



Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning had been planned for the election of the priory councillors, whereby, for the first time, all sisters could participate. But sooner than planned, all councillors were determined so that Sr. Angela Strobel could officially close the election chapter already on Saturday afternoon shortly before Vespers. On Sunday we celebrated the Eucharist in the late forenoon and concluded the days with a common noon meal.

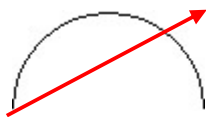
Sr. Ruth Schönenberger

„Getting older and Continuing to grow“

On October 12, 2011, Fr. Fidelis Ruppert OSB of Münsterschwarzach conducted a study day in Tutzing with the theme: „Getting older and continuing to grow,“ in which many sisters participated.

In four phases, he presented aspects of the theme to which we could afterwards exchange intensively in smaller groups. Here are some ideas of the plenitude of this day:

Fr. Fidelis started with the sentence: „I do not feel as old as I am,“ which is often said by people. His commentary to this: „This is a stupid sentence,“ He pointed out that in Wisdom Literature it is always a matter of living according to one's age and one knows how old he is. Nowhere does it say that one should behave as if one were not old. Benedict exhorts us „To keep death daily before one's eyes.“ (RB 4,37). This sentence which comes from the Stoic philosophy, confronts us with the reality that life has an end. And we should be watchful and live without illusions. It is not a matter to be young, but to be alive. Life continues its way.



Our bodily development (black line) takes its course which first moves upward and,

after a peak, goes again downward. But, differently, the spiritual development (red arrow) ought to continue upwards. I can continue to grow, even when my bodily forces become weaker. Starting with mid-life, spiritual development ought to become more important and move upwards. The Psalm says: „They bear fruit even in old age“ (Ps.92,12).

We are living on the ground of faith. It is a holy ground. This awareness helps us to continue growing. My remaining lively is an annunciation. An old person is a proof of God, that faith supports us like a rock, and thus we can also be an encouragement for young people.



Getting involved in something new, needs to be learned. Fr. Fidelis quoted a sentence by Gertrud Sartory: „Age needs a new novitiate“. Today it takes a longer time to grow old. It is an immense span of time which we have to design. This does not happen by itself. It is worthwhile to learn something for it. It is a matter of transition, a new step.

Fr. Fidelis said that while he once was in Africa, he had the opportunity to come to

know initiation and transition rites. Thereby, three phases are of importance:

- separation phase, letting go
- transition phase, threshold phase - liminality: betwixt and between – neither - nor (insecurity, transformation)
- integration phase resp. re-integration in the new status (e.g., no longer children's games)

With these phases, a person can never know beforehand what lies before him/her, and hence, he/she feels insecure. But one needs to endure this insecurity so that a healthy growth process can happen until one is integrated into the next phase.

In a further point, Fr. Fidelis dealt with the question, where our life aims at. Referring to the Rule, he pointed out that, in the beginning, the way has to be narrow and one has to „run“ it, not just drag along, and that the final goal of spiritual life is the happiness of love. Hence, Chapter 73 of the Rule is not a summary but the goal. We cannot demand such a life of anyone, but it can become such. Formerly, we used to say that we want to become holy. But „holy“ ought to be understood in the sense that the great love breaks through and one has become good. One needs always to look whether one is on this way, and what needs to be learned on this way. But as soon as one is clear that one strives for something, then one knows also what one has to do that it becomes such. Having a goal in sight, one is also ready to invest something in it. In this context, Fr. Fidelis proposed to pose to oneself the question: What could be written into my necrology?

In a further unit, Fr. Fidelis spoke on the problem of our mistakes and vices (bad habits). Benedict says very clearly that we have to get rid of our vices. This has a special meaning for old persons. When we turn old, our life story becomes again alive. Many events turn up again from the depths, we become aware of them and are angry about them. But when one is old, one does no longer have so much strength to suppress all of it. Besides, we have time to occupy ourselves with them. Thus, some

people can no longer feel at peace. Therefore, it is very important to bid leave from our past in a spirit of reconciliation. Here, Benedict speaks also of purification from „vicia“ by the Holy Spirit. We have to let go much in order to attain peace.

It is not a matter of more praying, because with this, we can also cover up something, and below it will bubble on. It is rather a matter of becoming attentive to our bad habits and to start with purification because vices (bad habits) soil the inner house. If much is clogged up and full of garbage, then it is necessary to make order, otherwise the evil spirits spread.

In a fourth phase, Fr. Fidelis finally pointed out that the number of years also assume another significance if we look at eternity. From the view of eternity, a 70th birthday could well be a beginning rather than an end. For the soul does not age. It knows no wrinkles and no old-age infirmities. At seventy, it possesses more self-confidence than at seventeen. Even at this age, it is important to become awake to reality and not to mourn for old toys like a little child. Referring to a story by Anthony de Mello he pointed out that many people do not really want to be healed, but rather want to be consoled and assuaged, because healing is painful.

For us, it was a stimulating day with many impulses that are worthwhile to be followed up. And Fr. Fidelis in his pleasant manner is a vivid example to show that one could well grow older and remain alive.

Sr. Ruth Schönenberger

We wish you all a
Blessed New Year 2012!

Visit in the Munich Ohel Jakob Synagogue



On November 17, 2011, eight sisters from Tutzing joined a guided tour in the Jewish Center at the Jakobsplatz. About forty registered visitors had come.

The guided tour started at the Community House. We walked along the Passage of Remembrance to the main synagogue. In this passage, as a place of remembrance, are on one side, on a glass wall, the names of the Jews of Munich recorded, who were persecuted by the NS-Regime, altogether 4500 names. On the opposite wall accompany us the words „remembering – mourning – reminding – admonishing“ and then, „learning – reconciling – speaking – living“ from the past to the present time. In the middle of these words is a big „David-Star“ in remembrance of the six million murdered European Jews. During the guided tour, historical dates were mentioned which made us always anew dismayed. Thus, from November 10 to 15, 1938, 1050 Jewish men from Munich only were deported to the KZ in Dachau. The number of Jewish men and women from Munich rose to 10,000 who were deported to different concentration camps.

Surprising, however, that already in 1945, the re-foundation of the „Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde“ („Israelitic Cult Community“) took place.

On November 9, 2003, the foundation stone was laid for the Ohel Jakob Synagogue, and three years later, also on November 9, the synagogue was blessed. This date was chosen intentionally in remembrance of the „Reichskristallnacht 1938“. The modern, very attractive building points in its architecture to the old Israelitic Temple. Thus, the walls have a firm base of stone and are meant to remind of the “Wailing Wall“ in Jerusalem. The roof above is made like a tent, pointing to the „Tent of God“ during the time of the People of Israel’s march through the desert. The Thora-Case points into the direction of Jerusalem and contains the „Most Sacred“ – this title stands for the Thora-Rolls. Above the Thora-Case are the words. „Be aware before whom you stand“ in Hebrew letters. To its left and right are, on cedar-wood, in golden letters the initial words of the Ten Commandments. Here it is not possible to describe the entire place, but it is worthwhile to participate in such a guided tour which grants an insight into the liturgical frame of our Jewish sisters and brother in the FAITH.

Today, about 9500 faithful belong to the Jewish Community in Munich. On November 9, this year, they could celebrate the fifth anniversary of their synagogue.

Sr. Benedicta Depuhl

„A Heart for Children“ Impressions around a TV Gala Show

Yes, this invitation to the TV Gala Show „A Heart for Children“ was a very special invitation. Sr. Raphaela Händler would receive the „Golden Heart“ – the honorary price of the Show. As this event happened in Berlin and we from Dresden were nearest to it, Sr. Marie Therese Brodmann and I gladly accepted the invitation.

The preparations by the TV-Broadcast Station were well planned. We were informed that we receive train tickets, be picked up at the main railway station in Berlin, stay at the same hotel as Sr. Raphaela, and need not care for the further events. The tickets

were delivered by the courier and this caused some complications because he could not find „Family OSB“ on the address list at the house door, and also the Caritas in the house did not know a „Family OSB“!! – But then everything went on smoothly. All services rendered to us were offered in a very polite and friendly manner.

It was nice for us to meet Sr. Raphaela and her two blood sisters, and we were able to visit some places in the centre of Berlin, for ex., the St. Hedwig Cathedral, the government quarters, and others.

At 6:00 p.m. we were driven to the place where the ceremony would happen and very helpfully guided through the big house, meeting many famous people, many of whom we knew only from the news or not at all. We knew a number of actors, the Countess of Monaco the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, famous athletes at least from television news.

Then an extra story came when we were guided to a side entrance and asked to enter black limousines. These brought us around a complex of buildings to the main entrance. We were instructed not to open the door by ourselves; it would be opened for us!! And then came the walk over the red carpet – through flashes of lightning like in a thunderstorm, into the main door!!

Of course, the actual event was in the evening. We sat at our good places from 8:15 until about 11:45 p.m. and could follow everything very well. Thomas Gottschalk found a good balance between the pictures of children in need and the message that it is good and possible to help. It was very impressive to see how many people, famous and unknown ones, participated in the donation gala. There were also again and again in between reports inserted about persons who have helped and continue to help, in Germany and in various countries of the world. There were also children present who had experienced help and life-saving.



Sr. Raphaela was honoured for her engagement against AIDS in Namibia and in Tanzania, for her efforts towards education especially of girls and for her care for sick children. She named very clearly the motives for her engagement: her vocation into the following of Jesus and his call as Missionary Benedictine and as physician for the sick in Africa. The Oscar-Price winner Helen Mirren spoke the Laudatio for Sr. Raphaela, and standing ovations from the audience thanked her. We shall not forget so soon this special evening.

Sr. Marie Therese and I were a few times briefly to be seen on the screen. On Monday, a lady from Dresden called me and said she saw me on Sunday evening in the church and on Saturday evening on television. Then I told her jokingly that, from now on, I could always be seen in church and on TV – fortunately she did not take this quite seriously.

We are grateful for our experiences in Berlin. It is wonderful that even prominent persons of movie and sports, in business and in politics and in many places of our country, they are people who engage themselves for children, for persons in need!

Sr. Hedwig Willenbrink

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