

Dear confreres, benefactors, relatives and friends.

The virtue of gratefulness is one that affords us the ability to value life with all its vicissitudes, to recognise how important being fully present is in every moment. It affords us the ability to regard even our losses not as being ends and conclusions but opportunities to reflect on our own journey in this life, a journey that aims towards God, with this in mind let us look back on the events that took place in and around our community.

**Requiescat in Pace!** On 08 June, we received the sad news that our long-serving employee Tecla Buthelezi passed away at Vryheid Hospital. She assisted our Br Ansfried Macatsch at the farm cottage for many years and had only recently taken her retirement. Known for her undying commitment to her work, her family as well as the Church, she will forever be remembered by the Abbey community, members of the Inkamana domestic and ground staff, friends and family. She was laid to rest on 11 June at her home in the Kwa-Mhlongu Area. Her requiem Mass and final commendation was presided over by Fr Siphon Mbatha, (nephew of the deceased). Our confreres Br Ansfried, Br Polycarp, Br Vincent, Fr Hermenegild, and Br Lungelo accompanied by Sr Tecla and Sr Cynthia and co-workers, went to pay their last respects. On 24 June 2017, the feast of the Sacred Heart, our Brother Anselm Sayer passed on to his eternal rest. He suffered a massive heart attack in the early hours of the morning. Confreres noted his absence from Morning Prayer as well as breakfast and proceeded to check up on him and found him in a critical condition. They proceeded to phone the emergency services. With our Very Rev. Fr Prior John Paul around his bed, Fr Cellarer Boniface administered to him the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. He breathed his last, surrounded by a number of his confreres, including our brother novice and brother postulants. By the time emergency services had come, he was already deceased. Br. Anselm was a dedicated and committed monk who had a keen sense of responsibility. He served as the community's Vocations Promoter as well as Novice Master and handled various other tasks such as being in charge of the repository. He was also in charge of the cellar and assisted as cantor, responsibilities he assumed after retiring from teaching English in our High School and being Hostel Master. With a larger than life sense of humour and a keen sense of wit, our Br Anselm will be sincerely missed by his confreres, friends, the school and boarding staff and all who knew him.

**Monks on the move:** After assisting the Benedictine Sisters of St. Alban for a short while at St. Benedict's Priory at Elukwatini, Fr Abbot emeritus Godfrey Sieber returned to Inkamana on 20 June. On 29 June, our Fr Dominic Onasseryil left for Namibia to conduct a retreat for the Benedictine Sisters of Oshikuku. On 01 July 2017 nearly all the members of the community young and old boarded our school bus and headed off to Ulundi for the consecration of the Good Shepherd Parish Church. The Solemn Liturgy was presided over by his Excellency Archbishop Peter Welsh, Papal Nuncio to South Africa. The occasion was also graced by the presence of His Royal Majesty King Goodwill Zwelithini as well as IFP leader and Member of Parliament, His Royal Highness Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi. On 03 July, our cellarer Fr Boniface departed to Namibia. On the same day our temporally professed confreres, Brothers Michael Stevens and Adrian Bisika renewed their monastic vows for another two years in our community. On 03 July, our Br Novice Anthony Zeka as well as Br. Leonard Dlamini left for Elukwatini to participate in a vocations promotion workshop held in the Diocese of Witbank. Our Fr prior left for Namibia on 04 July to attend a meeting with the Bishop of Keetmanshoop and Rev. Mother Mary Thomas of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing. The meeting was held to discuss a possible joint venture between these communities in the acquiring and running of a new mission station in the aforesaid diocese. On 10 to 11 July, our Very Rev. Fr Prior, attended the meeting of Major Superiors held in St John Vianney Seminary in Pretoria and from 12 July to 13 July attended in the same place, a meeting titled Joint Witness, which was a gathering of both Major Superiors as well as the Southern African Catholic Bishops. The meeting had as its overarching theme: Finding new paths

to Evangelisation through sharing the joy of the Gospel. It engaged on topics such as migration, human trafficking, racism and professional conduct. He returned to the Abbey on 16 July. On July 17 we also welcomed back our Fr. Cellarer Boniface from Namibia. We had the pleasure of welcoming to our community S'phephelo Mthembu, a young man from Holy Trinity Parish in Nkandla who stayed with us for several weeks. Accustoming himself with the Benedictine way of life, he availed himself for community prayers and engagements, assisted our Brother Sacristans and even led the hymns at our daily Masses. He returned to Nkandla on Saturday 15 July. On 19 July, our Fr Dominic Onasseryil returned to the community after conducting a retreat for the Benedictine Sisters of Oshikuku. He also had the chance to assist our confreres in Walfrieden in various ways including the assisting of Fr Maximilian in the Parish as well as in the outstations.

**Events:** From 19 July to 21 July our Abbey hosted a BECOSA (Benedictine Communities of Southern Africa) formation workshop. This workshop had as its overarching focus: Monastic Life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As an attempt to unpack this broad topic various speakers, addressed the various facets pertaining to it particularly in the context of Southern Africa and Africa at large. These included our own Cellarer Fr Boniface Kamushishi who addressed the issue of tribalism, Sr. Antoinette OSB (Benedictine Sisters of St. Alban) who spoke on the importance of Silence even in this present day and era, Sr. Wilhelmine Uushona OSB (Benedictine sisters of Oshikuku) whose talk spoke to the difficulties in prayer and ways to overcome them. Br Daniel OHC (Prior of Maria uMame weThemba Monastery, Grahamstown) who addressed us on the topic of Love, Friendship and Celibacy. Br Sub-prior Kevin, added and shared his own insights in these discussions and acted as one of the main facilitators of this workshop. We were pleased to have as its participants the Benedictine Sisters of Christ the King (Polokwane), the entire community of the Brothers of the Order of the Holy Cross from the Maria uMame weThemba Monastery, the Benedictine Sisters of Twasana, and the Benedictine Sisters of St. Alban as well as one Benedictine Sister of Oshikuku. Also attending were of course our own junior confreres. The workshop was concluded on Thursday 20 July with a special get-together Dinner and Social Evening with the entire community. Various games were organised, prizes and gifts were handed. In the end our Very Rev. Fr Prior expressed his word of appreciation and thanks to the organising team and all the participants. We had to bid farewell to Br Isidore Mabaso who left on Sunday 23 July in preparation for the opening of school on Monday 24 July. During his short break, he quickly refitted himself to community life, assisted our Brother sacristans who were engaged as participants in the aforesaid BECOSA formation workshop. His assistance in this regard as well as the assistance he gave to community members is deeply appreciated. We wish him a successful third term. On the same day, our Fr Ambrose Mshengu left for Pietermaritzburg for a short holiday, we trust that he will come back well and rested. On Sunday 23 July, we welcomed again our students who had come back from the short mid-year break. It was an honour and pleasure to have Fr Maurus (Missions Procurator of St. Ottilien) preside over the opening Mass. Fr Maurus came to the abbey on 17 July. In his sermon, reflecting particularly on the day's reading which was taken from the book of Exodus, he highlighted how necessary it is to be obedient to his divine will, the result of which is an overflow and abundance of blessings. During his stay with us, he has been shown various places of interest in Zululand, visited various missions in the Diocese of Eshowe, as well as visiting Fr Peter Blue at Maria Ratschitz near Dundee, a mission station run by the Nardini sisters (Malledorf). He also had a chance to visit the Benedictine Sisters of St. Alban at St. Benedict's Priory (Elukwatini). After inspecting our water harvesting project which is currently near completion, and other engagements, he will return to Germany on Friday 28 July. *Warmest wishes to all our readers. Fr Prior John Paul and the Community.*