

Mepkin Affiliate Program (MAP)

2022 Monastic Institute

June 29-August 1, 2022

June 30 -31: "Christianity in an Interspiritual Age"

These presentations will explore the shift in religious understanding occurring in direct relationship to the process of globalization. As boundaries between religious traditions blur and individuals increasingly identify as "Spiritual but not Religious," what is the future of religion, and specifically the Church? We will look at Interspiritual dialogue and contemplative as necessary facets of a Christianity that can survive into the third millennium.



The Rev. Matthew Wright, M.Div. is an Episcopal priest. Pastor of St Gregory's Episcopal Church, Woodstock, NY. He is a writer, and retreat leader working to renew the Christian Wisdom tradition within a wider Interspiritual framework. He is a student of Cynthia Bourgeault and a teacher...

July 4 – 16: "The Rule of Benedict for Today"

The approach is spiritual. Participants will probably experience these study days like a retreat. Based on the exegesis and hermeneutics of the Regula Benedicti, significant passages from it enter into an interdisciplinary, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue with selected concrete phenomena from the political, economic, sociological and cultural world of today's society. In addition, the relevance of RB and Benedictine monastic spirituality is highlighted through various suggestive references (literature, poetry, art).





Sister Manuela Scheiba, OSB is a member of the Monastery of St Gertrud in Alexanderdorf, Germany, and teaches monastic studies at Rome's Sant' Anselmo University.

Manuela was born and raised a Protestant in East Germany and converted to Catholicism in 1982 during her study of economics at Berlin University. She had hoped to study philosophy or languages but that proved impossible in the Communist country. "It was impossible to get admission to study languages because that means that you can also travel and they didn't want me to leave East Germany," she said. "And I gave up the idea of philosophy because there was no freedom of thinking or speech." After converting to Catholicism, Manuela entered St Gertrud's in 1988 and following her solemn profession, was asked to take up further study in Rome. She undertook monastic studies at Sant' Anselmo, under the leading Benedictine scholar, Sister Aquinata Bockmann OSB, later also completing a Doctorate of Sacred Theology. She said that the Rule of St Benedict never ceases to be fascinating and relevant, "The Rule does not speak only to people living in a monastery, because the basis of the Rule is baptismal spirituality, something that is applicable to all Christians and all denominations."

July 18 – 30: "The Essentials of Cistercian Life"

1. Overview: Spirit of the Order
2. Monastic practices
 - a. Liturgical prayer
 - b. Work
 - c. *Lectio Divina*



3. Fraternal life: From multiplicity to unity
4. Ordering of love
5. Cistercian values in today's world
 - a. Thomas Merton and the recovery of contemplation
 - b. Witness of Christian de Chergé



Fr. Cassian Russell, OCSO was born in Indianapolis, Indiana. He was raised in the Methodist church and came to live in Georgia as a Trappist following as straight a line as possible: an undergraduate degree in anthropology from Indiana University (Bloomington, IN), certification as a Montessori

teacher, life in Senegal as a Peace Corps volunteer, 2 years as a novice at St. Gregory's Abbey in Michigan, confirmation as a Roman Catholic and a doctorate in early childhood education from University of Georgia. From his mid-20s he regularly prayed the liturgy of the hours; this practice led him deeper into the traditions of monastic life. As a monk of Our Lady of the Holy Spirit, he has served his community in a variety of roles: MC, cantor, novice director. He served the American Region as secretary of formation and collaborated with a team guided by Michael Casey to prepare *Experientia*, a program of readings to deepen the understanding of our own Cistercian vocation.

for further information and to request an application contact Fr. Guericheckel at guericheckel@gmail.com.

