



Dear Benedictine Educator,

It is with great joy that we would like to invite you to BENET 2026, the 10th gathering of the International Conference of Benedictine Educators, to be held at the monastery and school in Melk, Austria, from Wednesday, 7 to Saturday, 10 October 2026.

The theme of our meeting will be:

Learning to Live! (cf. RB Prol. 20)

Stability and Hospitality - an invitation.

Built on the Rock of Christ, Benedictine schools have been for centuries places where students and teachers - monastic and lay- are able to belong and find home. This sense of belonging allows us to know who we are, where we have come from, and where we are going. Moreover, it allows us to welcome others and share with them the Good News of the Gospel.

In a world changing faster and faster, the charism of Benedictine education becomes ever more relevant. Technology and the media both connect and isolate, market forces push us back and forth, violence and war break out in different places, and institutions and social structures seem to be in constant flux. Below the surface, however, women and men continue to look for the same fundamental answers that, through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, give meaning and purpose to life. Borrowing the words of our Holy Father St Benedict, we can also say: "See how the Lord in his love shows us the way of life" (RB Prol. 20).

The table will be set for us at Melk, the ancient fortress that was turned into a 'School of the Lord Service' back in 1089. Since then, monastic life has steadily continued on the rock over the Danube without interruption. Records of a choir school for boys at Melk come to us from as early as 1140. In this holy place we will meet under the patronage of [St Coloman](#), the Irish pilgrim martyr whose relics are venerated in the Abbey Church.

Our theme for BENET 2026 was inspired by the motto of Melk School: *Discimus vitam* (Learning for Life). We will return from Melk to our communities and schools, having offered our gifts and enriched by others' gifts and experience in the Benedictine Tradition of Education. We will return having made new Benedictine friends and companions, renewed in our vocation, and better prepared to offer our students an education that gives them not only knowledge and skills but, more importantly, inspiration to live and to give their lives to.

Everything is being made ready, come to the celebration! (cf Mt 22: 1- 14).

In the pages that follow, you will find more details about the Conference. You will also find directions for registering, paying, and applying for a scholarship, if you need one. Please feel free to share this communication with other Benedictine educators, both from your region and from elsewhere.

Looking forward to seeing you at Melk, yours in Christ and St Benedict,

P. Julian Schaumlöffel OSB
President
[International Commission
on Benedictine Education \(ICBE\)](#)

Abbot Ludwig Wenzl OSB
Headmaster Johannes Eichhorn
[Melk Monastic Community and School](#)



ICBE
INTERNATIONAL
COMMISSION ON
BENEDICTINE
EDUCATION





Keynote Speakers

Prior Jakob Deibl OSB

P. Jakob Helmut Deibl, born in 1978; 1996: Matura at Stiftsgymnasium Melk and beginning of novitiate at Melk Benedictine Abbey; 2005–2018: Religious education teacher at Stiftsgymnasium Melk; 2009 Doctorate in Catholic Theology; 2017 Doctorate in Philosophy; 2018 Habilitation in Fundamental Theology; since 2024 Associate Professor of Religion and Aesthetics at the Catholic Theological Faculty of the University of Vienna; Editor of the "Interdisciplinary Journal for Religion and Transformation" (JRAT)

Sister Manuela Scheiba OSB

After studying economics, Sister Manuela entered the Benedictine Abbey of Alexanderdorf near Berlin (Germany), where she works primarily in the monastery's icon workshop and in teaching novices. After studying theology and completing her doctoral thesis under Sr. Aquinata Böckmann OSB, she became a lecturer at the Monastic Institute of Sant'Anselmo in Rome. For eighteen years now, she has been giving lectures on the exegesis of the Rule of St. Benedict each summer semester and also teaches courses and workshops on the Rule in many European countries, America, Australia, Africa and Asia.

Benedictine Teachers Panel

A panel of teachers from various ages and backgrounds will share with us about their experiences as educators in Benedictine schools from around the world. They will help us distinguish those elements that make a Benedictine education unique and particularly important in the times we live. They will also point to us ways in which we can better serve our students and our world. The panel will be coordinated by Miss Patricia Flynn from St Benedict's Prep Newark, USA.

Workshops

BENET 2026 Melk will include two slots for the presentation of Workshops. Participants will be able to choose from a wide variety of initiatives and ideas presented by other participants and have the opportunity to discuss them in smaller groups. Directions for presenting a workshop at BENET 2026 Melk will be shared closer to the date.

Arrival and Departure

- Participants are expected to arrive in Melk on Tuesday 6 October 2026. Guided tours of Abbey Melk will be offered to BENET delegates at 3pm and at 4pm on that day. On Wednesday 7, Registration Desks will open at 9am and the Opening Session will begin at 10.30am.
- Departures should be planned for no earlier than the morning of Sunday 11 October. BENET will close with a Final Mass, supper and social time in the evening and night of Saturday 10.
- Melk is a short train trip away from Vienna International Airport (VIE). Directions of travel from VIE airport to Melk will be provided to participants closer to the date.



Registration and Hotel Booking

Participants need to register for the BENET Conference and book their accommodation at a local hotel. These will be two separate processes and participants must make sure to do them both.

1. REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT – Registration for BENET 2026 Melk will be open until 15 August 2026.
 - Each participant must fill the [BENET 2026 Registration Form](#).
 - After filling the form, you will receive an email with the instructions on how to pay the conference fee which is €500 per person.
 - After completing your payment, you will receive a confirmation email. You will then be registered for BENET 2026 Melk.

If you need a scholarship, proceed to fill the regular [BENET 2026 Registration Form](#), skip the payment step and follow the scholarship application instructions below. Once you are granted a scholarship, you will be registered for BENET 2026 Melk.

2. HOTEL BOOKING AT MELK

If you are applying for a scholarship, you do not need to book accommodation in a hotel. Participants on scholarships will be accommodated with Melk families who have kindly offered their hospitality, at walking distance from the Abbey.

The following hotels at Melk, all at walking distance from the Abbey, will be welcoming BENET participants. Please explore the links below to explore the different alternatives and then book yourself in the accommodation of your choice via email provided. Since these hotels are reserved for BENET participants, it is not possible to book directly through the website for BENET dates. Please write to the email provided and mention the code BENET26.

[Hotel Wachau](#)

Code: BENET26

Email info@hotel-wachau.at

[Wachauerhof Hotel](#)

Code: BENET26

Email office@wachauerhof-melk.at

[Dream Factory, Green Hostel Melk](#)

Cheap hostel in the city center, opened in 2025.

Code: BENET26

Email melk@dreamfactory-hostels.com

If you are travelling as a group, you may want to book a place at Melk through Airbnb or a similar service. Please make sure your accommodation is at walking distance from the Abbey.

You can also apply to be privately accommodated, even if you don't need a scholarship for traveling or for the conference fee. If you want to do so, please fill up the [Scholarship Application Form](#) and mark the 'Accommodation Only' option.



Scholarships

By the generous contribution of many Benedictine monasteries and schools and other donors around the world, ICBE is able to offer a number of scholarships for participants who need them. You can read the [Scholarship Application Process Description](#) and apply for a scholarship by filling the [Scholarship Application Form](#).

Monks and nuns applying for a scholarship will be requested to attach a recommendation letter from their monastic superior. Lay teachers will be requested to include a letter from their school's Principal or Head Teacher.

Scholarships will be allocated according to resources available after consultation with the corresponding regional ICBE Delegate. Scholarship allocation will try to reach as many countries and schools as possible, so it is unlikely that scholarships are granted to more than one applicant from a single school.

Scholarship application deadline is Monday 4 May 2026.

Please do not incur any expenses until you have been granted a scholarship, otherwise ICBE will not be able to reimburse you.

Should you have questions or need help for your Scholarship Application Process, please contact the ICBE Delegate from your region (see list and emails at the end).

VISAS

Depending on the passport you hold, you may require getting a VISA for Austria in advance of your travel. You can check if you need a VISA for Austria at visaindex.com. Applications for a VISA to Austria can sometimes take quite long, a few months in some cases. So please make sure to start your application as soon as you can.

VISA applicants for Austria usually required to present an Invitation Letter. You can ask for an Invitation Letter through the BENET 2026 Melk Hospitality Desk. See contact details below.

ETIAS entry requirement to Europe

Please be aware that European countries are launching [ETIAS](#) in the last quarter of 2026 (specific date of operation not yet informed). ETIAS travel authorisation is an entry requirement for [visa-exempt nationals](#) travelling to Europe. It is likely, therefore, that BENET participants who do not need a VISA to Europe will need to apply for an ETIAS to be able to travel in October.

Contacting your ICBE Regional Delegate

You are welcome to contact your regional ICBE Delegate listed below, who will be happy to answer your questions about BENET or direct you to the right person to ask.



BENET 2026 Melk Hospitality Desk

Should you have questions or need assistance with your registration, payment, hotel booking, an invitation letter for your VISA application, or any other issue, please contact the BENET Hospitality Desk at Melk at hospitality@gymmelk.ac.at.

Do not contact the BENET Melk Hospitality Desk about your scholarship application because those will be channelled through ICBE and your regional ICBE Delegate, as explained in the [Scholarship Application Process Description](#).

ICBE and BENET

ICBE is the International Commission on Benedictine Education. It was established by the Abbot Primate of the Benedictine Confederation, Dom Notker Wolf OSB in 2002. Its mission is to support and connect Benedictine schools around the world. Please find below a list of the current delegates of ICBE and feel free to use the links to contact the one in your region.

ICBE organises BENET, the World Conference of Benedictine Educators. The 2026 version at Melk will be the 10th version of BENET.

Benedictine Educators also meet in Regional Meetings, usually in between worldwide BENETs. Students from Benedictine schools also meet in the International Benedictine Youth Congresses. These Youth Congresses also have worldwide and regional versions.

BENET Meetings

Year	Meeting	Hosting Community	City, Country
1999	BENET 1	Worth Abbey	Worth, UK
2002	BENET 2	Abadia São Geraldo	São Paulo, Brazil
2005	BENET 3	St Mary's Abbey	Morristown, New Jersey, USA
2007	BENET 4	Movimiento Apostólico Manquehue	Santiago, Chile
2010	BENET 5	Erzabtei Sankt Ottilien	München, Germany
2013	BENET 6	Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing	Manila, The Philippines
2016	BENET 7	Pontificio Ateneo Sant 'Anselmo	Roma, Italy
2019	BENET 8	Good Samaritan Education	Sydney, Australia
2023	BENET 9	Mosteiro de São Bento	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
2026	BENET 10	Melk Abbey	Melk, Austria



ICBE Delegates

	Name	Community	Country	Email
1. President	P. Julian M. Schaumlöffel OSB	Gymnasium der Benediktiner, Meschede	Germany	president@benedictineeducation.org
2. Vice-President	Dom Geraldo Gonzalez y Lima OSB	São Geraldo, São Paulo	Brazil	domgeraldo@hotmail.com
3. Treasurer and Co-delegate for North America	Jim F. Duffy	St. Benedict's Prep, NJ	USA	jduffy@sbp.org
4. Secretary	Cristobal Valdés Raczynski	Manquehue	Chile	cvaldes@manquehue.org
5. Delegate for Southern Africa	Irmhild Fourie	Inkamana	South Africa	principal@inkamana.org
6. Delegate for East Africa	Sr. Lucy Ndung'u OSB	Nairobi	Kenya	shirondungu50@gmail.com
7. Delegate for Asia	Fr. Robin Checkathadathil OSB	Holy Face School	India	robincheck@gmail.com
8. Delegate for European Isles	Marius Carney	Glenstal Abbey School	Ireland	mcarney@glenstal.com
9. Delegate for Hispanic America	Ignacio Tupper Castillo	Manquehue	Chile	itupper@colegiosanbenito.org
10. Delegate for Brazil	Dom Tomás Peres	Colegio São Bento, Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	d.tomas@corporativo.msbrj.org.br
11. Co-delegate for North America	Mike Nickolai	St. Louis Priory, MO	USA	mnickolai@priory.org
12. Delegate for the Pacific	Gabrielle Sinclair	Good Samaritan Education, Sydney	Australia	gsinclair@goodsameducation.org.au
13. Delegate for Southeast Asia	Sr. Rosario Obiniana OSB	Manila Priory	Philippines	srrosarioosb@gmail.com
14. Co- delegate for Europe (German Speaking)	P. Florian Ehebruster	Seitenstetten	Austria	florian@stift-seitenstetten.at
15. Co- delegate for Europe (German Speaking)	Elisabeth Krenhuber	Kremsmünster	Austria	elisabeth.krenhuber@gmx.at