

STATEMENT ON THE FORMATION OF LAY CISTERCIANS

Introduction

We recognize the need for a common statement on the formation of Lay Cistercians that respects the autonomy of individual communities. This formation is necessary to build the Lay Cistercian identity as adopted at Huerta in 2008.

It is important to recognize the difference between formation and a formation program. True formation takes place through on-going **conversion of life**. Our openness to be formed, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is an expression of our desire to embody the Cistercian values.

Within the framework of this statement, each community develops its own formation program.

Content of Formation

Among the basic elements that can foster our conformation to Christ through the Cistercian charism, we recognize the importance of the following resources:

Lectio divina

The Rule of St. Benedict

The Cistercian Patrimony

The Divine Office (Liturgy of the Hours)

By incorporating these elements into our lives, we open ourselves to the transforming grace of the Spirit.

The content of a formation program will be adapted to the specific circumstances and needs of the individual community and its members. Every member needs a basic grounding in Christian faith.

It is important to emphasize that formation is furthered within the lay community itself, by the mutual relationship with the monastic community that accompanies them, the example offered by that monastic community, and the co-responsibility of the two communities to be a living expression of the Cistercian charism.

One of the roles of the **International Association of Lay Cistercian Communities** is to encourage its member communities to share their own formation resources through encounters, exchanges, forums, websites and other means.

Adopted unanimously at Lourdes
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