



BEYOND BOUNDARIES

The newsletter of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey

www.bossey.ch



November 2023

Warm greetings from the program director

The visibility of young and emerging ecumenical theologians at the WCC 11th Assembly was a heartening indicator of the intergenerational quality of the ecumenical movement and its vision. Ecumenical education and formation at Bossey continues to nurture relationships and competencies for understanding, living with, and celebrating diversity. Through cross-contextual connections among themselves and with the wider community, students learn how the gospel of Jesus Christ is understood and lived out beyond their own experience.

The 35 students of the Bossey class of 2021/22 go down in history as ones who got the most exposure to various features of ecumenical life in the WCC. They attended the WCC 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany, and participated in the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute (GETI) and in other sessions of the assembly such as plenaries, ecumenical conversations, and home groups. Additionally, in the course of their studies, this cohort also participated in many intergenerational discussions, notably during the WCC executive committee in November 2022 and the central committee in June 2023.

During the assembly, the institute, in collaboration with Swiss Protestant churches, hosted an event at the Networking Zone, where alumni, students, friends of the Institute, and faculty came together to reaffirm and celebrate the vision and legacy of ecumenical formation at Bossey.

The institute, working with the leaders of the Paroisse Protestante de Terre Sainte – Céligny (Parish of the Protestant Church at Celigny) organised a visit to the Temple of Céligny at the beginning of the academic year, which brought students in contact with the parishioners in the local community. This has become a feature of cross-contextual connectedness and learning for our students. In 2022, we bade farewell to two longstanding and distinguished leaders, Rev. Prof. Fr Ioan Sauca who served as director of the institute, and Rev. Prof. Odair Pedroso Mateus who served as professor for ecumenical theology. Both had other roles in the WCC. Befittingly, the Dies Academicus in November 2022 celebrated their work, and we bade them farewell while benefitting from their reflections on the apt theme, "the future of ecumenical formation."



Photo: Albin Hillert/WCC

The Formation en Théologie Interculturelle course, lasting eight weekends, began in October 2022 and ended on 27 May 2023. Fourteen 14 students from French-speaking parts of Europe graduated from this new addition to the Bossey curriculum that extends the linguistic, demographic and cultural contours of ecumenical formation.

I am delighted that studies at Bossey prepare ambassadors of the ecumenical movement and foster relationships while building competencies in cross-contextual learning to incrementally contribute to mending our fragmented world.

The church's hope in the fulfilment of the reign of God rests on the restoration of relationships of God and humanity, among humans, and with all of creation. Ecumenical formation that is lifelong in its orientation that nurtures and nourishes that vision is what we offer at Bossey through the good will and support of all who share in it as we continue on the Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation, and Unity.

*Rev. Dr Kuzipa Nalwamba
WCC Program Director for Unity, Mission, and
Ecumenical Formation*



Celebrating graduation: CAS-CC 2022-2023



Photos: Ivars Kupcis/WCC

From the eyes of graduate Denis Pattinasarany of the Protestant Church in the Moluccas, Indonesia, “Bossey has shaped a lot how I see the other person, and that will impact my service in the church in future. It is very common in my country to meet people of different religious traditions. But to meet people from the same religion, but different theological traditions – that was unfamiliar to me, and this has been an incredibly worthy experience I will bring to my home church.”

dialogue and mutual enrichment offered at Bossey with the hope of returning to their countries and churches as ambassadors of the Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation, and Unity. The academic year 2022-2023 Bossey cohort was unique to start their Bossey experience participating in the WCC 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe. The immersion into ecumenical formation, which took off at the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute at the assembly, carried these students through to their graduation.

Pattinasarany’s reflection was one of many joyful moments as the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey witnessed, in January 2023, the graduation of the 2022-2023 students of the Complementary Certificate and the Certificate of Advanced Studies programmes. Twenty-seven students (nine in the Complementary Certificate Programme and 18 in the Certificate of Advanced Studies Programme), came from Burundi, China, Georgia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Lesotho, Liberia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Sierra Leone, Thailand, United Kingdom, and Zimbabwe. These students, belonging to different church traditions, embraced the culture of



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Joyful commencement: MAS 2022-2023



Photos: Gloria Koymans/WCC

Gratitude. Grace. Friendship.

As graduate Stefan Wilson, from the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago, put it: “I will light a candle in memory of this fact that the master’s class were all in one place called heaven. This ecumenism is a very small place – being your brothers and sisters.”

At the end of June 2023, the Ecumenical Institute saw the successful graduation of Wilson and six other Masters of Advanced Studies (MAS) students. These students, coming from Cameroon, India, Kenya, Nigeria, Romania, and Trinidad and Tobago, represent the Anglican, Baptist, Presbyterian, Orthodox, and United/Uniting churches. For some of them, it was the longest time away from their homes and workplaces – for some it was 12 months and for others nine months. During this time, they had the opportunity of experiencing theoretical/academic

ecumenism but more importantly, they learnt what it means to speak about lived ecumenism. It is combination of the academic and the lived ecumenism, which makes Bossey the ecumenical laboratory par excellence. Having started their Bossey experience participating in the WCC 11th Assembly, these graduates concluded their experience with participation in another major

World Council of Churches’ meeting – the central committee that took place in Geneva at which the students served as stewards. The students expressed how the mutual exchange that takes place at Bossey enriches their journey, broadening their perspectives and deepening their understanding of the global community of which they are a part.





Welcome, two new adjunct professors

Dr Andrej Jeftić started to work as director of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches in February 2023. He is a member of the Serbian Orthodox Church. He earned his master's degree in theology from the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of the University of Belgrade in 2009. He received his doctorate from the same university in 2016 with the doctoral thesis entitled "Reception of the Holy Fathers in the Writings of Thomas F. Torrance: Patristic Theology and Contemporary Science." He worked as a teaching assistant (2010-2016) and as an assistant professor (2016-2022) at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of the University of Belgrade, and as a researcher (2022-2023) at

the Institute of Philosophy and Social Theory from the University of Belgrade. Most recently, he served as theological consultant for the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (2022-2023). He has published in different areas of research, including patristic theology and philosophy, systematic theology, contemporary Orthodox theology, philosophy and theology of science.



Photo: Gloria Koymans/WCC



Photo: Ivars Kupcis/WCC

Dr Masiwa Ragies Gunda is a member of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe. He has been working for the WCC since 2021 as the programme executive on Overcoming Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Xenophobia. Gunda holds a doctorate in applied cross-cultural biblical studies from the University of Bayreuth, Germany. He holds a Master of

Arts in Religious Studies with specialization in Old Testament Studies and a Bachelor of Arts Honors in Religious Studies from the University of Zimbabwe. After completing an honors degree, Gunda became a higher education assistant at the University of Zimbabwe, where he served as lecturer after completing a master's degree in 2003. He has over 15

years of teaching experience at the university level. He is an Alexander von Humboldt Fellow, having received the postdoctoral fellowship from 2011 to 2013 and was the recipient of a fellowship from the Philipp Schwartz Initiative for Researchers at Risk between 2019 and 2021.

A new chapter between Grandchamp and Bossey

Bossey students visited to the community of Grandchamp on 3 December 2022. In the early 1930s, some women from the Reformed Church of French-Speaking Switzerland organized the retreats and this led to the monastic community in Grandchamp, near Lake Neuchâtel. Today about 50 sisters from different churches and countries live in the community. Sr Anne-Emmanuelle and others warmly welcomed students and Sr Svenja presented the community's history, vocation, and today's life at Jubilé hall. Historically, there has been a close bond between Grandchamp and Bossey but lost touch for a while. However, this visit served to resume relations. In the chapel Arche, Bossey students attended midday prayer with other guests. When Bossey students had meals with the sisters, they began in silence with music and

later, time for conversations. After lunch, many students took a walk to the lake and they felt a chill in the air on small but beautiful lake beach. In the afternoon, Sr Anne-Emmanuelle introduced prayer in silence and Bossey students practised it with parts of the community. Then the students met the sisters in small groups and shared their prayers and questions. The encounter was closed with the tea served by the sisters. The community welcomes volunteers and two masters students, Lempang Phom and Ven. Samuel Akinola, revisited Grandchamp from 6 to 16 February 2023 during their semester break. Phom said, "Personally, my experience at Grandchamp cannot be replaced when it comes to silent meditation and prayers. The spiritual volunteering services like gardening, washing the dishes,



The chapel Arche. Photo: Joo Mee Hur

arranging and cleaning the prayer rooms, and simple meals gave me a reflection that to carry out monastic life takes discipline, dedication, and commitment through action."

Links to the sisters of Grandchamp:
<https://www.grandchamp.org/en/>

Vibrant Bossey online course

From March to June 2023, the Bossey online course took place for the third time, after the course had started with a pilot in 2021. This course builds on the long-established Ecumenical Studies courses at Bossey in addressing current changing dynamics and configurations of ecumenism. In an international cohort of students, participants explore the biblical, theological, ethical, societal, interreligious, and missiological dimensions of ecumenism. The ten-week course consists of five modules:

- Engaging in Dialogue to Build Communion and Solidarity
- Scripture, Hermeneutics and Ecumenical Spirituality
- Biblical Interpretation for Christian Unity
- Ecological Reformation: Rethinking Theological and Ethical Frameworks
- Church, Society, and Mission – Responding to Challenges in Today's World
- Celebrating a Unity in Diversity: Dynamic Understanding and Complementary Approach in Ecumenical Missiology

Twenty-three students successfully completed the course in June 2023. A workshop at the WCC 11th Assembly in 2022 had already explored how online learning and community-building contribute to a vibrant intercultural experience of ecumenism.



Photo: Ivars Kupcis/WCC



Health and wholeness: Interreligious Studies 2023



Bossey hosted the Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) in Interreligious Studies from 3 July to 11 August in 2023 on the theme of Health and Wholeness of Life in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It consisted of online distance learning from 3 July to 23 July 2023 and residential learning at the Château de Bossey from 24 July to 11 August 2023. Bossey is situated just outside Geneva and WCC staff in the fields of Health and Healing, Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiatives and Advocacy (EHAIA), Ecumenical Water Network, and Food for Life Campaign actively supported in inviting competent speakers from international organizations and non-governmental organizations. It was a small group of the students but relatively well balanced by denomination, religion, and gender. The students expressed their high satisfaction with the speakers and the lectures, and so did the speakers with the students' lively discussion. In Geneva, the students visited not only the United Nations and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum but also a synagogue, mosque, and church of the local interreligious partners. This course ended with a statement of the common position and a tree planting ceremony.



To learn more, read stories related to the Ecumenical Institute, at:
<https://www.oikoumene.org/what-we-do/the-ecumenical-institute-bossey>

Photo: Gloria Koymans/WCC

For the second time, Bossey offers “Théologie interculturelle”

In June 2023, 14 students graduated from the second “Cours en théologie interculturelle” (in French language) at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey. The course is a cooperative effort of French and Swiss WCC member churches and different organisations (Office Protestant de la formation, Neuchâtel - DM, Lausanne – Défap, Paris, CEVAA, Montpellier and Témoigner ensemble à Genève), all concerned and involved in questions around formation in intercultural and contextual theologies. Patricia Fatima Santos, from Église évangélique Pentecôtiste Sion, said she chose the course because the theme was very interesting to her. “We all come from different church denominations, diverse cultures, and different countries,” she said. “Here, we can listen and

learn from one another—and it is this difference that makes us very rich.” As societies are becoming more and more intercultural and diverse, an intercultural theological training for church leaders and active members of churches is much needed.

Simon Vianou, a student from l’IPT Faculté de théologie de Montpellier, with a mother from Nigeria and a father from Benin, grew up surrounded by different cultures. “As soon as I discovered this course, I found it very interesting and wanted to know more about it,” said Vianou. “Whenever I attend this course, I learn about the cultures of each individual.” The intercultural theology course is a vital tool and step on our pilgrimage to more

reconciliation, to more justice, and more unity among the churches. We need to understand each other, and the intercultural theology course gives the tools on how this understanding can be done respectively. The third course will start in October 2023. You are most welcome to watch the film about the course in “Théologie Interculturelle”.

Scan to see video from the course:



Photos: Gloria Koymans/WCC





Dies Academicus 2022: exploring the future of ecumenical formation

On 1 November 2022, the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey hosted its annual Dies Academicus, a day dedicated to celebrating the past and charting the future of ecumenical education and formation. This event brought together scholars, students, and leaders in the field of ecumenism to discuss “Ecumenical Formation at Bossey: Perspectives for the Future.”

The day began with a morning prayer, setting the tone for a day of reflection and discussion. Participants then moved to Salle Lausanne/Geneva, where dean of the Ecumenical Institute, Rev. Prof. Simone Sinn, delivered a warm welcome and introduced the day’s program. An engaging ice-breaking session allowed students to interact with the speakers and explore the history of Bossey and its role in the ecumenical movement.

The event featured prominent speakers, including Rev. Prof. Dr Odair Pedroso Mateus and Rev. Prof. Fr Ioan Sauca, both then retiring pillars of the Bossey faculty, as well as Prof. Dr Elisabeth Parmentier, dean of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Geneva. They shared their insights on “Ecumenical Formation at Bossey: Perspectives for the Future.”

Following the presentations, a lively discussion took place in a plenary session, providing attendees with the opportunity to ask questions and engage in thought-provoking conversations about the future of ecumenical formation. During lunch, participants had

the chance to network and continue their conversations in an informal setting. Afterward, the event continued with group discussions on various perspectives of ecumenical learning, such as its prophetic message in the contemporary world, its role in negotiating ecumenical controversies, its potential in conflict transformation, and its significance in intercultural-theological practice. The Dies Academicus 2022 was not just an event of academic significance; it was also a celebration of the rich history and contributions of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey. After more than 75 years since its founding, Bossey remains at the forefront of ecumenical formation and education. This gathering marked a significant moment as it honored the contributions of two retiring faculty members, Rev. Prof. Fr Ioan Sauca and Rev. Prof. Dr Odair Pedroso Mateus. Their dedication to ecumenical education has left a lasting impact on the institute and the field as a whole. Dies Academicus 2022 at Bossey was a day filled with meaningful discussions, insights, and a sense of continuity in the mission of ecumenical education. The event served as a reminder that the spirit of unity and dialogue continues to shape the future of the ecumenical movement.



Photos: Ivars Kupcis/WCC

Apply for the academic year 2024-2025!



Photo: Ivars Kupcis/WCC

The application process for all courses in Ecumenical Studies is through an online portal WCC Trakstar Hire platform. The platform requires careful preparation; filling data and uploading required digitized documents named following a protocol. The platform is accessible once for one application dossier.

Complementary Certificate (CC) in Ecumenical Studies

Intended for students having completed a university Bachelor's degree certificate in Christian theology, or in a closely related discipline. The programme is accredited by the University of Geneva with 30 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits to be achieved during one semester (mid-September - end of January).

Application delay 30 November 2023, apply through:

<https://wcccoe.hire.trakstar.com/jobs/fk0xtf5/>

Master of Advanced Studies (MAS) in Ecumenical Studies

Intended for students having completed a university Master's degree, preferably in Christian theology or in a closely related discipline. The programme is accredited by the University of Geneva with 60 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits to be achieved during two semesters (mid-September-end of June).

Application delay 30 November 2023, apply through:

<https://wcccoe.hire.trakstar.com/jobs/fk0xtfu/>

Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) in Ecumenical Studies

Meant for students having completed a Bachelor's degree

certificate in Christian theology, or in a closely related discipline or demonstrating a suitable level of theological literacy. The course is accredited by the University of Geneva under the Swiss Higher Education Programme for Continuing Education in accordance with the requirements of the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities (CRUS) with 25 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits to be achieved during one-semester (mid-September – end of January).

Application delay 30 November 2023, apply through:

<https://wcccoe.hire.trakstar.com/jobs/fk0xtfk/>

Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) in Interreligious Studies

Intended to contribute to the issues of religious pluralism and intercultural acceptance in a society based on migration



Student life at the library

and globalization, the CAS in Interreligious studies aims at an international audience of young people (age between 20 and 35 years) interested and engaged interreligious dialogue, religious leaders, students, lay persons and professionals with a suitable level of religious literacy and/or experience in the field of interreligious dialogue and engagement, especially among the three Abrahamic religions. The course is accredited by the University of Geneva under the Swiss Higher Education Programme for Continuing Education in accordance with the requirements of the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities (CRUS) with 10 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits to be achieved during a period of 6 weeks (3 weeks distance learning, 3 weeks residential).

Application delay for summer 2024 to be announced using the same platform as other courses.

Bossey Online Course in Ecumenical Studies

The course offers succinct introductions into the classic dimensions of ecumenical studies. Through specific assignments, students are guided in exploring ecumenical relations in their local context, sharing about it in a global cohort of students and deepen their understanding through theological study. Strengthening the students' agency and the students' capacity for theological discernment is vital in this study program.

Application delay for spring 2024 to be announced using the same platform as other courses.



Photo: Marcelo Schneider/WCC

At the beginning of each academic year, the library of the Ecumenical Institute is introduced to the new students. In addition to the classrooms, chapel, and dining room at the Château and Petit Bossey, the library is for them a particular space on the campus. It is, like other libraries that the new students might know from their previous schools or seminaries, an academic library with a rich collection of resources devoted to theology, but with a special focus on the ecumenical movement. This makes the Bossey library unique worldwide, offering documents that you will not easily find anywhere else. The students of the institute are somehow privileged users, compared for instance to the WCC staff located at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, because of the proximity between the location of the library and the place where they live for several months. While on the campus, they have the opportunity to access the library even when the part-time librarian is away and that the library is closed to the public. This is possible thanks to the library committee, established at the start

of every academic year among the students. About 10 to 12 students every year are in charge of opening, closing and keeping an eye on the library when the class is off, in the evening and during the weekend, according to a schedule managed through the library committee. The care and attention that students usually pay to the library makes the place even more unique: the Bossey library is indeed a friendly and welcoming space, suitable to quiet study, but also to encounters, and in the end, a place where ecumenism can somehow be experienced and lived. As told to the students by the librarian at the beginning of the year: "the library is yours!"



Photo: Nari Pedro

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