

The Union of the European Conferences of Religious Major Superiors meets in the Roggenburg Monastery - "Together on the way to face the challenges of religious life in Europe".

The 19th General Assembly of the Union of the European Conferences of Major Superiors (UCESM) will take place in Germany from 9 to 14 March 2020. The venue is the Premonstratensian Monastery of Roggenburg, southeast of Ulm. Over 70 participants are expected to attend the meeting, including 45 presidents and vice-presidents of national Conferences, secretaries general and delegates from 25 European countries.

The topic of the meeting is "Together on the way to face the challenges of religious life in Europe". Sister Katharina Kluitmann ofc, President of the hosting German Conference of Major Superiors (DOK), states: "We religious in Europe face great challenges everywhere, albeit in different ways in the different cultures and realities. But some challenges are similar or the same - or delayed. Where and how can we link up, enrich and encourage one another? I am pleased that we at DOK can offer a learning and meeting space for this".

The international meeting of the European religious will be opened on 9 March by the President of UCESM, the Piarist Father Zsolt Labancz. The current situation of the religious orders and the Church in Germany will be presented by the President of DOK, Sister Katharina.

The days of 10 to 12 March will be dedicated to thematic work. The Prefect of the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Cardinal João Braz de Aviz, will take part in the conference. He will discuss the challenges of religious life in Europe with the participants of the meeting. Other speakers at the General Assembly will be the Capuchin and Milan Auxiliary Bishop Paolo Martinelli ofmCap and the religious and historian Sr. Nicole Grochowina from the evangelical community Christusbruderschaft Selbitz.

The elections for some of the members of the UCESM Executive Committee will also take place during the event. On 12 March, a Eucharist is planned in Augsburg with the designated Bishop of Augsburg, Dr. Bertram Meier. Another guest to the conference will be the Apostolic Nuncio in Germany, Nikola Eterović.

UCESM represents 38 national Conferences of the Major Superiors of religious congregations and orders from 28 European countries and thus about 195,000 religious men and women throughout Europe. The conference languages of the General Assembly are German, English, Italian and, for the first time, Russian.

The Roggenburg Monastery - venue of the 19th UCESM General Assembly - was founded in 1126 as a Premonstratensian monastery. The Premonstratensians built the baroque complex that still exists today and shaped the town until secularisation at the beginning of the 19th century. After 180 years, a new Premonstratensian convent occupied the historic monastery complex from 1982 onwards. Thanks to the pastoral care in the parishes and the Educational Centre for Family, Environment and Culture, Roggenburg once again became an important place for the whole region.