launched in 2011 and has steadily grown over the past 18 months to include a large growing area of 1,250 m². Two polytunnels have been erected behind the library to allow for continued growing even during the cold winter months. A greenhouse, which was unused for many years, is now the place for germinating seeds for planting. Not only do the students benefit by working with the earth for care for creation, the cafeteria receives most of the harvest. This year has yielded over 30 varieties of vegetables. “When I work the Bossey garden, its applied theology” says Rev. Thomas. “Adam and Eve were put in the garden to nurture creation and human relationships. As theology students, we should be concerned with that, so being in the garden helps us understand more”. Ms. Helen Baber, from Bristol, England, was a little apprehensive at first about working in the garden, but quickly realized it was going to be an enriching experience. “I spent my first Saturday morning picking green beans. I worked with four other people and enjoyed getting to know them outside of the class room.” Most of the students have noticed the difference in quality with the vegetables they eat that come from the garden. Helen says that “you can always tell at meal times when the vegetables have come from the Bossey garden, they taste so much nicer, and I felt proud when the beans I had picked were served up at dinner the next day. It may well have changed my opinion about growing vegetables when I go back to England”. BB

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A Place of Sowing

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the graduate school. I consider this a landmark year which calls attention to our continued calendar of sowing new seeds and reaping harvest. In Hans-Ruedi Weber’s book, *A Laboratory for Ecumenical Life, the Story of Bossey*, he refers to Bossey as a “seminary” or a place of sowing. Sowing for the field of the whole oikoumene is can be seen as an “impossible enterprise” that is often full of tensions and dilemmas. The first director of Bossey, Hendrik Kraemer, had this reflection to offer, “As the Graduate School progressed, we discovered more and more that for all of us, the teaching staff, the staff of the Institute and the students themselves, it was far a bigger experiment than we had anticipated.” Sometimes the harvest takes years, or decades or a lifetime. But through challenging work, the past and current faculty and staff have nurtured a bountiful harvest of thousands of people who have come to Bossey in search for the unity that was both promised and already given in Christ. When I look at a single seed, I know that this seed can grow into a plant that can produce hundreds or even thousands of new seeds. While the work of the Ecumenical Institute is often complex and difficult, I am thankful to the founders of the graduate school who had the strength to persevere. Today while we are continuing to plant the seeds of Christian unity in our students, we are also planting seeds in our newly created organic garden project which you can read about on page one. The garden has become a metaphor for life on our campus as we are continually reminded that we reap what we sow. And it is also a reminder that in God’s will, unity is holistic and universal: it includes the whole of humanity as well as creation.

Prof. Fr. Dr. Ioan Sauca
Director

New Professor of Ecumenical Missiology Arrives

Bossey welcomes Dr. Marina Ngursangzeli Behera as Professor of Ecumenical Missiology. This faculty chair is supported by the Council for World Mission, United Evangelical Mission and Community of Churches in Mission. Dr. Behera belongs to the Mizoram Synod of the Presbyterian Church of India. She obtained her D.Th. in the History of Christianity from the Federated Faculty for on Climate Change, and Dr. Amélie Ekué, professor of Ecumenical Social Ethics. The second seminar, *Building an Interfaith Community*, takes place July 1-26 and will gather 30 participants ages 18-35 from the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faith communities. The overall question to be explored is: What can we, as people of faith, do to respond and to overcome, the pressing challenges of our time and build together mutually accountable societies based on respect and cooperation? Contact Kelly Brownlee, at kelly.brownlee@wcc-coe.org for more information.

Bossey offers continuing formation programs for 2013

Bossey is pleased to announce two seminars which will take place in 2013. The first seminar *Eco-theology- Caring for creation today and building a sustainable world for tomorrow* is scheduled for May 13-17. The course will give the opportunity to intertwine theoretical reflection with an induction on how individuals, small and middle scale organisations, as well as churches, can transform their understanding of humanity in relation with the whole of creation into practice. The course is being led by Rev. Dr. Kerber-Mas, programme executive for WCC program.
A Chapel is Born

It was 60 years ago, October 1952, that for the first time a whole semester course in ecumenical studies, the first Graduate School, was opened at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey. The years before had been a period of experimentation with different, shorter courses. But on that October day a group of 24 students from 13 nationalities and ten different church traditions came together, mainly Lutherans and Reformed, but also some Eastern Orthodox, an Old Catholic and a priest from the Mar Thoma Church. This diversity, the different academic standards and the teacher’s lack of experience with such diversity made this semester a difficult one. But no one suggested stopping the experiment at Bossey.

In the following years, until today, these winter semesters have become a stimulating and challenging experience which changes the lives and perspectives of people. There is another reason for celebration this autumn. On November 1st, 1952 the chapel of the Ecumenical Institute was inaugurated. It was the first time that people from different confessional and cultural traditions could find a space for prayer at Bossey.

“What better and more symbolic place could have been found than the former winepress adjacent to the medieval tower?” Hans-Ruedi Weber, former associate director of Bossey asked in his historical overview “A Laboratory for Ecumenical Life". The chapel design was simple, with one movable table without ornament, so that the space could be arranged in varying ways according to different traditions. Despite some additional equipment this simplicity of the chapel is still preserved today.

When visitors enter the chapel, their attention is immediately drawn to a simple wooden cross which runs from floor to ceiling against the wall behind the altar. To the left is a beautiful stained glass wall, created by Brother Marc from the Taizé community and paid for, among others, by Asian women through the Movement of the Least Coin. The image of the chapel is complete with a small wooden lectern on the left side of the altar that has in addition to a Bible placed upon it a metal cross and an icon of the Trinity which are donations from former students or from churches. For some Protestant visitors, it is striking that there is another icon of the Trinity close to the entrance with the typical oil lamp in front as is the custom in Orthodox churches, which is for some students an important element of their spirituality. A typical Protestant and European element in the chapel is the small organ, which was donated in the 1960s. At the same time students can find instruments from other cultures, such as an African drum.

From the beginning the Bossey chapel has been a central place in the life of the Institute. It is in worship that Christians most keenly experience their divisions. During worship the differences between the churches become most visible, not only in the fact that the Eucharist cannot be shared, but in different customs. When a Reformed student is shocked that he is praying together with people who pray to the Virgin Mary, or if an African experiences that European worship contains too much silence and boring slow music, or if Chinese students are asking about the meaning of icons and other Asians about the meaning of candles, if Baptists see Catholics and Orthodox making different signs of the cross – these are experiences which make them reflect how Christians can pray and worship together, not only as a community for a semester, but as Christians who have good news – together – for the world. BB
Bossey alumni gathered as part of the Southern California Ecumenical Council’s 100th anniversary celebration. From left to right: Meilin Chen, Katie Archibald-Woodward, Karin Erlenbusch, Xin Liu, Stephen Ireri, Michael Kinnamon, Mary Jacobs, Bill Jacobs, Sally Welch, Ignacio Castuera, John George Huber, Tom Rausch, Phyllis and Bryce Little.

Bossey alumni gathering at the home of Harlan and Madelyne Stelmach in Berkeley, CA. From left to right: Robert Blaney, Madelyne Stelmach, Harlan Stelmach, Marijke Fakasieki, Paul Young Jr., Ioan Sauca.

Students earning the Master in Advanced Ecumenical Studies in June 2012. From left to right: Bogdan Stana, Romania; Mihail Dinu, Romania; Anu Talaviaara, Manager of Academic Affairs; Sunlight Khai Hmo, Myanmar; Chih-Mei Tang, China; Gergő Kovacs, Hungary; Sukumar Ramapuram Samuel Vijay, India; Juan Chavez Quispe, Colombia; Amelé Ekué, Faculty; Prof. Dr. Ioan Sauca, Director; Dagmar Heller, Faculty; Komla Degbovi, Togo; Ivan Kuks, Belarus; Lawrence Iwuamadi, Faculty; (not pictured, Ivan Dutkovskyyi, Ukraine, Chammah Kaunda, Zambia)

Delegation from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland visited the Ecumenical Institute October 31, 2012. The group was led by Rev. Dr Kimmo Kääriäinen


Bossey Here and There and Throughout the World . . . .
Inauguration of WCC Library at Bossey

The World Council of Churches announced the opening of its consolidated library housed at the Ecumenical Institute. The formal dedication took place October 24 and was attended by WCC staff, Bossey students, faculty, and friends. The event was also attended by the participants of the Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions who were holding their annual meeting in Geneva. “This consolidated library, which combines the Geneva and Bossey collections, will offer students and researchers one location for conducting ecumenical research while affording the WCC and Bossey Institute the capacity to grow its research facility,” said Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the WCC. Consolidation of the WCC library took place from February through July this year when the Geneva-based collection was systematically reviewed and volumes sent to Bossey. Other books in the Geneva collection, including duplicate volumes, were donated to seminaries around the world through the Theological Book Network. The consolidated collection, still numbering about 110,000 volumes and dedicated to ecumenical research and education, is more tightly focused on the history of the ecumenical movement, Christian denominations, biblical hermeneutics, social ethics, missiology, contextual theologies and interfaith dialogue. (excerpt from WCC e-news)

Another Academic Year Begins

The academic year 2012-2013 opened in September with the arrival of 28 resident students from Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Europe and Latin America. The Master of Advanced Studies in Ecumenical Studies degree programme lasting for a full academic year began with five students from four different countries and churches. Nine students from nine churches and seven countries confirmed their enrolment to the Complementary Certificate in Ecumenical Studies taking place over the autumn semester until the end of January 2013. The other one-semester long study programme, the Certificate of Advanced Studies in Ecumenical Studies, conducted for the third time within the framework of the Continuing Education of the University of Geneva, commenced with 14 students from 11 churches and eight countries. In addition to the resident students, the Ecumenical Institute has currently six non-resident students originating from five countries in Master of Theology in Ecumenical Studies and Doctorate in Theology programmes. BB

From left to right, Andreas Waldvogel (librarian), Martin Junge (General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation), Dagmar Heller, Pierre Beffa (retired librarian of WCC library)
Did she invent the annual Bossey visit to Rome?

Time passes, but Ofelia Ortega remains very Ofelia. Her energy and enthusiasm for the prophetic engagement of the Church in the world do not seem to suffer too much as the years go by. A year ago or so, during a meeting of the Central Committee of the WCC, I prevented her from having a much deserved coffee break by asking her some questions about her Bossey experience as a graduate student back in the winter of 1967-1968. Like most members of the Bossey family often do, she spoke of that transforming experience with much excitement. Those were the days in which the second Vatican Council captured in a very fresh way the imagination of ecumenists around the world. Ofelia and her German roommate, Erika Kuesnner, asked themselves whether it would be possible for two female (Protestant) Bossey students to visit the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church. The answer from what was then the Vatican Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity was positive. Travel arrangements were quickly made and the two found themselves in the new frontier of the modern ecumenical movement. For a couple of days, they enjoyed an intensive introduction to the Church of Rome and met many people serving the Church in different dicasteries. Their Rome guide, was Fr. Tom Stransky, future Rector of the Jerusalem-based Tantur Ecumenical Institute for Theological Studies and one of the future editors of the Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement. Back in Bossey, they wrote an enthusiastic report about the experience and suggested that Bossey and the Roman Secretariat for Christian Unity should consider the possibility of offering Bossey students the opportunity of making the ecumenical experience they had just made. The annual Bossey visit to Rome was born, a crown jewel for the Graduate School and the beginning of that famous picture with the Pope that many of you are so proud to look at from time to time. (interviewed by Rev. Dr. Odair Mateus Pedroso)

Good-bye to Master Students of the academic year 2011-2012

After a stay of almost one year at the Ecumenical Institute Bossey in June 2012 ten students from Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Reformed, Evangelical and United church background defended successfully their Master thesis in Advanced Ecumenical Studies. The staff of the Ecumenical Institute said farewell to them at a moment of celebration at the château, sending them back to their countries Bolivia, Hungary, India, Taiwan, Belarus, Ukraine, Myanmar, Togo, and Romania. A photo of the students, along with their names, can be found on page four. We wish them all the best and God’s blessing for their further studies and their professional career in their churches.

Beyond Boundaries wishes to all its readers Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2013!
Heller Elected President of Societas Oecumenica

We are happy to announce that Dr. Dagmar Heller, Bossey professor of Ecumenical Theology, has been elected as president of The European Society for Ecumenical Research Societas Oecumenica. The organisation was founded in 1978 and its members are departments for ecumenical studies at European Universities of all confessions, Church related institutes for ecumenical studies as well as individual theologians from European countries who work in the field of ecumenical studies. The main instrument for the work of Societas Oecumenica is the biennial consultation with lectures, workshops and open fora. “I was absolutely taken by surprise when the search committee of Societas Oecumenica approached me with the question whether I would be willing to be a candidate for presidency” says Heller whose election is effective immediately. “The election made me feel honoured, and I enjoyed the first two sessions at the end of the Belfast meeting which I had to moderate immediately. I hope that we will be able to strengthen the commitment of the members of Societas to the ecumenical quest in general and to research and teaching in this field in particular.” For Bossey as a member of Societas Oecumenica she notes that “I hope that my presidency will be helpful in terms of networking and visibility for Bossey.”

Bossey alumni gathering being planned in Busan, Korea

The 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches will take place in Busan, South Korea, October 30 to November 8, 2013. The assembly theme, God of life, lead us to justice and peace, was inspired by the diversity of Asian contexts and by a growing sense of urgency to care for life and seek justice. We are planning to hold a global Bossey alumni reunion during the Assembly. More information in the 2013 spring edition of Beyond Boundaries.

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The Ecumenical Institute at Château de Bossey was founded in 1946. It is attached to the Autonomous Faculty of Protestant Theology of the University of Geneva and part of the World Council of Churches (WCC) representing some 560 million Christians on all continents of the globe.

Since 1946, thousands of women and men from numerous countries and most Christian confessions and cultures have come to Bossey for seminars, conferences and academic study programmes. Many have testified to life-changing experiences in this “ecumenical laboratory”. More information about the academic programme or how the contemporary hospitality facilities in splendid historical surroundings overlooking the French Alps may be of use to you can be found at www.bossey.ch.

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Beyond Boundaries is a periodic newsletter of the Ecumenical Institute at Château de Bossey.

Editorial Team: Kelly Brownlee, Dagmar Heller, Odair Pedroso Mateus and Anu Talvivaara. Printed at the Ecumenical Institute in November 2012. The Ecumenical Institute shall not be under any liability to any person in respect of any damage, however caused, which may be incurred or which arises directly or indirectly from reliance on information in this publication.