



In a meeting marking the 125th anniversary of the Confederation, the Pope recalled the vital work of hospitality, education and dialogue that Benedictines have contributed to the Church throughout the world

Pope Francis met on Thursday with a group of Benedictine abbots and monks who are marking the 125th anniversary of the foundation of their confederation.

In his words to the group, the Pope highlighted the work of hospitality, education and dialogue for which the Benedictines are renowned in countries across the globe.

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Pope Francis recalled the Benedictine motto, 'Prayer and work and study' which, he said, encapsulates the spirituality of the order. He said that prayer and meditation on the Word of God generates in our hearts a renewed zeal which leads us to share the gifts of God's wisdom with others through our daily work.

Discernment in spiritual life

The Pope said that St Benedict, in his day marked by a profound crisis of values and institutions, was able to discern the essentials of spiritual life, placing the Lord firmly at the centre. He said Benedictines today must practice the same discernment in order to recognise the things that come from the Holy Spirit and the worldly things that come from the devil.

In today's hectic environment where people have no time to listen to God's voice, the Pope said, Benedictine convents and monasteries become oases where women and

men of all ages, backgrounds, cultures and religions can discover the beauty of silence and the harmony of God's creation.

Hospitality and dialogue

Pope Francis encouraged the Benedictines to continue their important work of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, offering hospitality to all who come through their doors.

Finally, he thanked them for the work of their schools and universities in different parts of the world which continue to offer students a 'school of service to the Lord'.