

CONTENT

Diocesan Survey

Educational and
Networking Events

Cooperation Agreement
with Görres-Gesellschaft

Networking in our focus
countries

Personnel

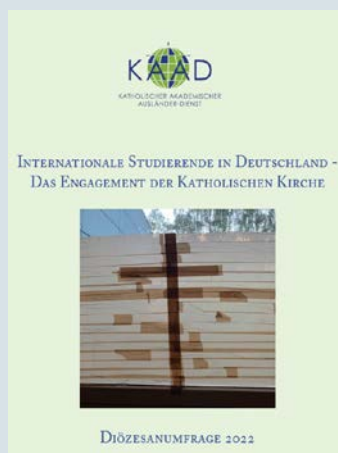
Dear scholarship holders and alumni, dear partners and friends of KAAD,

With this newsletter, we are pleased to give you an insight into the work of KAAD at the beginning of the new semester. On the following pages, we present selected activities and focus areas of our work.

We hope you enjoy reading.

Your KAAD team

Publication of the Diocesan Survey on the Catholic Church's commitment for international students in Germany



As the clearing institution of the *German Bishops' Conference* for the support of international students in Germany, KAAD, for the ninth time, presented a report in July documenting the financial and personnel services of the Catholic Church as well as the challenges and conceptual developments in the work with foreign students in Germany. The report, which also documents the use of scholarship funds by the global church institutions, is based on 63 questionnaires received by KAAD from all 27 dioceses as well as seven response forms from church institutions. This survey shows that the Catholic Church in Germany makes a significant contribution to the internationalisation of universities in general and to the support and promotion of foreign students in this country. By offering a comprehensive range of counselling (including placement in the approximately one hundred Catholic student dormitories), dialogue, scholarships and pastoral care, the Church responds to the social and pastoral challenges that students

from the Global South in particular are confronted with. The *Catholic university and student chaplaincies* in particular play a decisive role here. In addition, the German dioceses were able to award approximately one million euros in study grants for foreign students in 2021 (including smaller diocesan scholarship programmes). However, a significant increase in the numbers of international students in Germany contrasts with fewer and fewer staff members in the university chaplaincies, i. e. barely half compared to the corresponding Diocesan Survey from 2009. Especially in Eastern Germany, where the increase in students is particularly pronounced, the disparity is also great.

The report is available on our homepage; the printed copy can be ordered from the office.

EDUCATIONAL AND NETWORKING EVENTS

„The Future of our Planet – Global Perspectives in Caring for the ‘Common Home’” – 36. Annual Convention of KAAD

This year, the Annual Convention on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of KAAD dealt with the question of the possibilities for shaping the necessary social-ecological transformation. As a global community of faith with resources of many kinds, the Catholic Church has a special significance in this process. One of the focus areas of the work of KAAD, which is also a member of the *papal Laudato Si’ Action Platform*, is dedicated to the integrity of creation and the shaping of a holistic sustainable development. Therefore, in various forums, lectures, discussions and expert groups, about 240 participants from fifty countries discussed the various levers of successful transformation.



A highlight of the Annual Convention was again the awarding of the *KAAD Foundation Peter Hünemann Prize* for the year 2023: Indian *KAAD alumnus Professor Dr Babu Thaliath* was honoured for his outstanding academic work in the fields of epistemology and aesthetics, especially on the transition from mechanical philosophy to the modern natural sciences. *Babu Thaliath* received his doctorate with a scholarship from KAAD in Freiburg and Basel. This was followed by research stays in Cambridge and Berlin. Since 2013, he has been Professor of German Studies and Philosophy at *Jawaharlal Nehru University* in New Delhi.

“Understanding the Pain, Enduring the Tensions – Eastern Europe Today” – International Conference 2023 in Poland

In early June, the KAAD International Conference 2023 took place in Lublin, Poland. Starting from the present, the history of the region in view of the war of aggression against Ukraine was put in the focus of the event under the title “Understanding the pain, enduring the tensions – Eastern Europe today”. In addition to 45 participants from 13 Central, Eastern and Southeast European countries, *KAAD President Father Dr Hans Langendörfer SJ*, *KAAD Secretary General Dr Nora Kalbarczyk* and the Eastern Europe Department of KAAD, *Markus Leimbach*, *Alwin Becker* and *Sandra Stiel* took part in the event. The conference was significantly organised by *Dr Jolanta Knieja* and *Dr Jacek Bednarz* from the KAAD partner committee in Lublin. With *Martin Lenz* and *Christiana Hägele*, the *Eastern Europe Relief Organisation Renovabis* was also represented at this conference. The event was opened by the *Archbishop of Lublin, Stanisław Budzik*. One focus of the programme was a workshop on the further orientation of KAAD’s work in Eastern Europe. The attending partners and alumni exchanged their views on different aspects of this work and gave the representatives of the office valuable impulses.



“Dealing with a Violent Past, Guilt and Collective Trauma – an Approach” KAAD Seminar in Auschwitz



Many KAAD scholars come from countries where traumatic violence is part of the past and present. In order to deal with one's own history of violence and seek ways of overcoming it, the seminar “Dealing with a Violent Past, Guilt and Collective Trauma – an Approach” took place in May under the direction of *Dr Marko Kuhn* and accompanied by *Father Dr Ulrich Engel OP* and *Helen Meier* in Oświęcim, Poland – better known under the German name “Auschwitz”. The different forms, content and functions of the memory of Auschwitz still have a major impact on relations within and between countries. In addition, the

analysis of what happened there and its consequences is exemplary for dealing with experiences of violence and its aftermath, making this town a place where the topics of the seminar could be dealt with in a special way. The central element of the seminar was the visit to the *memorial site of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp* and the encounter with *Zdzisława Włodarczyk* as a contemporary witness. The now 89-year-old woman survived the Birkenau extermination camp as a child and reported on her unimaginable experiences. This very emotional encounter was a highlight of the seminar for the scholars and formed the basis for the question of the (im)possibility of forgiveness. In order to integrate all these impressions into the different perspectives and contexts of experience and interpretation of the participants, the seminar was characterised by attempts to come to terms with violence. This was done both on the political and social level and with regard to the participants' own stories of violence. The seminar was closely accompanied by *Pastor Manfred Deselaers*, who has lived in Oświęcim for over thirty years and is dedicated to German-Polish and Christian-Jewish reconciliation work.

Annual Conference of the Cusanuswerk in cooperation with KAAD

In June in Baarlo near Venlo (Netherlands), the Annual Conference of the *Episcopal scholarship organisation Cusanuswerk* took place in cooperation with KAAD and with around 750 scholars, alumni and guests. The topic of the conference was: “The Power of Helping – the Importance of Voluntary Commitment”. The focus of the conference was on one of the essential elements of a successful civil society: volunteering. Together with the participants, experts from academia and church organisations, the corporate world, politics, culture and media discussed the social and individual importance of helping and volunteering. KAAD organised one of the conference forums and was represented by eleven scholars from seven countries (Egypt, China, Georgia, Kenya, Philippines, Uganda, Ethiopia), who each reflected on their own ‘culture of helping’ and brought this reflection as their contribution to the annual conference.



Cooperation agreement with Görres-Gesellschaft



In March, KAAD and *Görres-Gesellschaft (Görres Society for the Cultivation of Science)* confirmed their interest in working together more closely in the area of promoting qualified academics at a meeting at the KAAD office in Bonn. To this effect, they concluded a cooperation agreement, which was signed by *Father Dr Hans Langendörfer SJ*, President of KAAD, and *Professor Dr Bernd Engler*, President of *Görres-Gesellschaft*. The cooperation intends to link the international KAAD community with the German Catholic science organisation through exchange, events and seminars.

NETWORKING IN OUR FOCUS COUNTRIES

Networking trip to Bangladesh and Thailand

At the end of May, the *Head of KAAD's Asia Department, Dr Anselm Feldmann*, travelled to Bangladesh and Thailand. The visit to Bangladesh was intended to enable a first personal meeting with the partner committee represented by *Dr Benedict Alo D'Rozario* and *Father Patrick Simon Gomes* (1st and 3rd from left in photo), who is also the re-elected *President of Caritas Asia*. For KAAD, it is a particular concern to deepen the cooperation, to strengthen the partner committee and to establish an alumni association in the future. Meetings with the *Archbishop of Dhaka, Bejoy Nicephorus D'Cruze* (center right), *Jan Janowski* (Germany's Deputy Ambassador in Bangladesh), *Dr Andreas Kuck* (Head of the Country Office of the *Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*) and KAAD alumni in Dhaka also contributed to a better understanding of the needs in the country.



In Thailand, the focus was on the exchange with and support of our Myanmar scholarship holders. To this end, networking with non-governmental organisations and church institutions in Northern Thailand was expanded. In Chiang Mai, *Anselm Feldmann* met with *Father Dung Pham SJ* from the *Catholic Student Network in the North of Thailand*. The programme, which is led by *Father Dung*, offers educational programmes mainly for students from ethnic minorities in the North of Thailand. These minorities often live on both the Thai and Myanmar sides of the border.

Meeting of representatives from the Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart with KAAD alumni from Syria in Lebanon



In April, a delegation from the *Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart* met in Beirut with KAAD alumni who were sponsored with funds from the diocese. The delegation consisted of members of the Diocesan Council and the Diocesan Committee and was accompanied by *Head of the Global Church Main Department* and *chairman of KAAD Canon Msgr Dr Heinz-Detlef Stäps* and *Head of Caritas International Dr Oliver Müller*.

On the part of KAAD, *Head of the Middle East Department Nils Fischer* organised the meeting with alumni and the members of the Lebanese Partner Committee *Auxiliary Bishop Professor Dr Jules Boutros* and *Professor Dr Ziad Fahed*. The special feature of the scholarships of the diocese is that they enable refugees from Syria and Iraq to study in Lebanon at Lebanese universities. The *Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart* has been involved in the qualification of refugees since 2019 and in this way creates prospects for the future in the Middle East region.

Acknowledging the suffering and injustice – Solidarity visit to Tigray, Ethiopia

In July 2023, the head of KAAD's *Africa Department, Dr Marko Kuhn*, together with two leaders of the Ethiopian KAAD network KASHA (*KAAD Association of Scholars at the Horn of Africa*) visited the Eparchy of Adigrat in northern Ethiopia, which is the place of origin of many scholars and alumni of KAAD. Until recently, a horrific war with many civilian casualties raged in the province of Tigray. The host, *Bishop Tesfaselassie Medhin*, has been strongly associated with KAAD for many years. The purpose of the visit was to express solidarity and to get an idea of the tireless work before and during the war as well as after the active fighting. Equally impressive and depressing was the visit to the *Adigrat State University*, a flourishing university before the war and its technical equipment being among the best in Ethiopia. During the occupation of Adigrat by Eritrean troops, they used the university grounds and its buildings as their army base. Destruction and looting were the result. Then, after the shift of the front line, soldiers of the Ethiopian Federal Army lived here and the area came under shell fire from Eritrea. The KAAD / KASHA delegation was able to get an idea of the traces of this destruction. It was very impressive to hear and experience how the management team of *Adigrat University*, under the leadership of *President Professor Zaid Negash*, is now daring to start again with modest means and the few parts of the building that have already been cleaned up and will soon be welcoming the first students again.



PERSONNEL

The Deputy Chairman of KAAD e.V. and *Chief Executive of the Eastern European Relief Organisation Renovabis*, *Father Professor Dr Thomas Schwartz*, is attending the World Synod currently taking place in the Vatican as a guest.



We are pleased to welcome a new member to our Academic Council: *Sister Marie-Pasquale Reuver OSF* is the new reviewer for the ecclesiastical assessment of the applications of the Scholarship Programme 2 as well as the Eastern Europe Programme. She was appointed by the *Conference for University Pastoral Care* and by the KAAD General Assembly as the successor to *Father Matthias Haas*. The Franciscan nun from *Sießben Monastery* is the head of the *Ecumenical University Chaplaincy Hohenheim* and has been involved with KAAD's scholarship work since she began working there in 2021. Before her time as a Catholic university chaplain, *Sr Marie-Pasquale* worked as a clinic chaplain in two psychosomatic clinics.

Frater Michael Schöpf SJ, a member of our Academic Council since 2018 and responsible for the ecclesiastical assessment of the S1 Programme scholarship applications, was appointed Director of the worldwide *Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)* by *Superior General Fr Arturo Sosa SJ* as of 01 September 2023. For the last two years he has already been Deputy Director of the JRS. *Michael Schöpf SJ* joined the Society of Jesus in 1989 and successfully completed his studies at the *Munich School of Philosophy* in 1993. After that he gained experience in refugee projects in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda until the late nineties, before joining JRS in 2005. In Germany, he was Chairman of the Advisory Board of the *Episcopal Relief Organisation MISEREOR* and advisor to the *Migration Commission of the German Bishops' Conference*, as well as a guest lecturer on migration research at various universities in Germany and Austria. *Michael Schöpf SJ* considers the high number of fleeing children (about forty percent worldwide) and the expected increase in people seeking protection as a result of climate change as a challenge for his new work.

20th Anniversary of service



An important event took place during this year's Annual Convention: the 20th Anniversary of service of our two *Fathers Professor Dr Thomas Eggen-sperger OP* and *Professor Dr Ulrich Engel OP*. For twenty years now, exactly since May 2003, they have been supporting our worldwide network and the office as spiritual advisors. In addition to the various events of the KAAD annual programme, which they accompany, they offer their own events such as retreats or the famous trip to Rome. They are an essential spiritual support for our scholarship holders and the team at the KAAD office.

Prevention Officer

KAAD has introduced its 'Institutional Protection Concept for the Prevention of Sexualised Violence against Minors and Adults in Need of Protection or Assistance', which was developed on the basis of the 'Framework Regulations - Prevention of Sexualised Violence against Minors and Adults in Need of Protection or Assistance in the Area of the *German Bishops' Conference*' and defines comprehensive prevention. KAAD is fully committed to the preamble of this framework regulation, "to offer all children and young people as well as adults in need of protection or assistance a safe learning and living space in the spirit of the Gospel and on the basis of the Christian idea of man". Therefore, the office of a Prevention Officer and Ombudswoman was established and assigned to *Martina May-Topalidis*, Head of Administration at KAAD. She is available in cases of suspicion or complaint. At the same time, she is also a contact person independent of the regional units for complaints of any kind.



Outlook

This year, events in Ghana, Peru, Costa Rica and Indonesia, among others, are still scheduled. In the framework of KAAD's non-material support in Germany, seminars on topics such as "Current Challenges for Ethnic Minorities in Asia", on "Questions of Reintegration and Return" or on "Decolonisation and Contextualisation of Education in African Countries" are planned.