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Educational programme for pupils and families with children

Exploring the monastery cuisine

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Annotation: During the interactive programme, children will learn about the tastes and smells that were typical for the environment of not only medieval monasteries. Did monks eat meat? Did they drink alcohol? Did they taste crayfish or fresh figs? What did they sweeten with? How was monastic dining different? Would we be able to follow their rules today? You will find the answers to all these questions together with the lecturer.

Sources of information: see text and reference list *Culinary Heritage of the Cistercians in Central Europe* (Background study for the project)

Target group: children 6 - 12 years old, families with children

Duration of the programme: 60 - 90 minutes depending on the number and age of the children

Materials: spice jars with scents, tasting (pieces of bread, raisins, figs, crucifers, ...), different versions of worksheets according to the age of the children: 1. "Monastery kitchen manager", 2. "Create your own monastery kitchen"; crayons, glue sticks, scissors

Schedule and themes of the programme:

1. Introduction (can be anywhere in the exterior or interior)

A. Introduction to the program, introduction to the Cistercian Order and the functioning of the monastery; explanation of basic concepts - monk, monastery, silentium, fasting, religious orders - rules - based on things the children know from home or school

Activities: walking through the basilica or spending a moment outside in the silentium

2. Getting information, research part

A. The medieval economy of the monastery and its sectors: agricultural production (crops, fruit growing, winemaking, grain growing), fish farming, brewing, ...

Activity: discovering smells (lavender blooming in the paradise yard in season, differently prepared spices with typical scents: lavender, cumin, fennel, nutmeg, etc.) and tastes (bread, raisins, figs, dried apples, ...)

B. Description of the monastic convent with a search for the location of the kitchen and the refectory of the monks and laymen, the rules of dining

Activity: marking the spaces on the floor plan of the monastery or marking out the refectory with pegs and string

3. Creative activity

A. Creation of worksheets, see annex

4. Final discussion and reflection

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