

Applications for September 2016 residential membership of the Community of St Anselm are open until the end of February. Non-residential applications are open until the mid-April.

Five months ago the Archbishop of Canterbury invited young Christians from around the world to spend a year living in a new monastic-inspired community based at his residence, Lambeth Palace in London.

His vision for the Community of St Anselm was for young people to follow an intensive pattern of prayer, study and serving local communities that the ancient monastics would have recognised, before taking this experience back into their lives.

The community is made up of residential members who live at Lambeth Palace, and non-residential members who commit to the same Rule of Life while continuing in their work or studies in London. Applications to join the Community as a residential member in September are open until the end of February, while non-residential applications will remain open until in mid-April.

The members, who come from many different countries and church denominations, divide their time between prayer and worship, study, and working alongside vulnerable people with local charities in London.

In interviews with the BBC broadcast today, residential members spoke of how they decided to apply and their experience of living in the Community so far.

George Karanja, a 28-year-old theology graduate from Nairobi, Kenya, who is training to be an Anglican priest, said: "I was following the Archbishop of Canterbury on Twitter, and when he welcomed young people to live and study and stay with him in Lambeth Palace, I decided to apply."

Agnès Vanhems, a 27-year-old Roman Catholic journalist from Lille, France, said: "It was the right time and the right place to give this time to God to talk to me", and an opportunity to discover "how I can live the Gospel in my professional life.

"What I will keep is if you put God in your heart, everything is possible. Everything can change. It's really a lesson of life. I think I have more love and more curiosity to discover others, and to love them in their differences."

Joshua Brocklesby, a 26-year-old former advertising executive from Buckinghamshire, UK, said: "I think a lot of people were surprised, but I think they also understand why I'm doing it. They were really supportive, because they understood it was a chance to grow in a way that we don't normally get the chance in normal life."

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