

Message from the Director

The times in which we live are deeply uncertain on many levels: it often seems as if our world, our society, and our Church are being assailed by unexpected and unpredictable tempests. In such conditions, the inner life of the spirit is of paramount importance. Amidst the turbulent fluctuations of passing material things, the human heart is increasingly drawn to eternal realities—God, the soul, and the love which is both the means and goal of our final and everlasting salvation. Our need for God has never been greater. For, in the words of Pope Francis, “God is the light that illuminates the darkness, and a spark of divine light is within each of us.”

In 2022, we are excited to offer a varied and stimulating range of retreats and study weekends. In keeping with the Benedictine charism of hospitality, the monastic community is delighted to welcome as our guests persons from all backgrounds of life. Our tranquil and scenic environment and the quiet prayerfulness of the monastic routine form the perfect setting for seeking peace, enlightenment, renewal and clarity.

In pace Christi,
Fr. Robert Nixon, osb



WEEKEND START AND FINISH TIMES

The first session for all Retreats and Study Weekends begins at 7:30pm on the Friday (participants are encouraged to attend Vespers at 6:30pm, followed by dinner, if possible). The final session for each weekend will conclude at 11:30am on the Sunday.

CUSTOM RETREATS

The NNIBS is delighted to be able to offer ‘custom’ retreats, for groups of four or more participants, subject to availability. These retreats, presented by monks of the monastery, can be adapted to the particular needs and interests of the group, and scheduled on any mutually convenient dates. If you are interested in organising a special retreat for a group, please contact Fr. Robert Nixon, osb, at institute@newnorcia.wa.edu.au.

INDIVIDUAL RETREATS

Persons are welcome to stay in the monastery guesthouse to make individual retreats. These may be done without direction, simply allowing the experience of prayer, silence and solitude to enrich and renew one’s spirit. Alternatively, it is often possible to arrange for a monk qualified in spiritual direction to meet daily with retreatants. Enquiries may be directed to the Monastery Guesthouse, at guesthouse@newnorcia.wa.edu.au.

NEW NORCIA Institute for Benedictine Studies

The New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies seeks to broaden and deepen awareness of the monastic tradition within Christianity. It offers an environment conducive to prayer, study and reflection with excellence in teaching and research. It aims to encourage participants at all stages of life to reflect on their journey of faith with the pastoral support of rich traditions in prayer, discernment and discipleship, whether as lay people, professed religious, academics, or in ordained ministry.

Course and Retreat Costs

Participants are asked to contribute \$250 which covers the course expenses and full board for two nights (Friday and Saturday) at the Monastery Guesthouse. It also includes entry into the Museum and Art Gallery.

For Enquiries and Bookings

Bookings are to be made via New Norcia’s webshop at www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au.

For all other queries please contact Fr. Robert Nixon, osb, at institute@newnorcia.wa.edu.au.



New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies
Great Northern Highway, New Norcia WA 6509

www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au



NEW NORCIA

Institute for Benedictine Studies Study Weekends and Retreats

PROGRAMME 2022



Benedictine Experience Weekends

Benedictine spirituality is more readily experienced than defined. These weekends in the monastery guesthouse (beginning with Vespers at 6.30pm on Friday, concluding after lunch on Sunday) provide the opportunity to enter fully into the monastic rhythm and balance of prayer, work, lectio divina, hospitality and community life. There will be opportunities to ponder the riches of the scriptures and monastic literature, both in group discussions and personal silence and solitude, bringing from the 'storeroom, things both new and old.' Participants are also invited to join the community for silent meals in the refectory, one of many invitations to listen with the 'ear of the heart.'

February 25 – 27 | May 27 – 29 | August 5 – 7
October 28 – 30

Cost: \$250 (includes accommodation, meals and entry into the Museum and Art Gallery).

Institute Weekends

February 25 – 27

BENEDICTINE EXPERIENCE WEEKEND I

March 4 – 6

Lenten Retreat

Fr. David Barry, osb

Lent is a time traditionally devoted to spiritual purification and refinement in preparation for the great celebration of Easter. During Lent, Christians are encouraged to adopt the practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. This retreat will help participants to embrace Lent prayerfully, with renewed energy and new insights, and with an openness to the graces it offers.



March 25–27

A Course in Reading Gregorian Notation for Musicians (Study Weekend)

Fr. Robert Nixon, osb

The term 'Gregorian chant' is often used to refer generically to all the non-polyphonic repertoire of the Latin Church. This large and varied body of repertoire by no means represents a single or unified style, tradition or approach; and the performance and notational practices of Gregorian chant in current use emerged as a result of a 19th Century reform movement. This course will provide a theoretical background, and practical instruction in how to read Gregorian notation, for those who are already able to read standard musical notation.

April 1 – 3

Writing Your Spiritual Autobiography

Silvia Grevel

Writing is a wonderful tool to discover our deepest self, that part of us that is hidden most of the time. Finding words that express our most inner being is essential for living a fulfilling life, in relationship with the ultimate Being. Thomas Merton and Etty Hillesum are two contemporary spiritual guides who have lived this journey of going within. We will follow their lead in tracing the 'Inward Stranger'.

April 29 – May 1

Love Stronger than Death: The Martyrs of the Diocletian Persecution

Presented by various monks of the monastery

During the first several centuries of Christianity, the followers of Jesus were subject to numerous and cruel persecutions, and sometimes bizarre and gruesome tortures and executions. For this persecuted Church, martyrdom was both a confronting reality and an eloquent testimony to the power of faith. During this time, written accounts of the acts of the martyrs flourished as a genre of spiritual writing, and present much that is moving and inspiring. This weekend will explore the stories of those holy women and men who faced martyrdom under the Diocletian persecution, which was the largest and most bloodthirsty of the early campaigns to suppress Christianity.

Left: Portrait of Pope Pius V. Artist unknown. Copy after Titian (Italian c1488-1576). Oil on canvas. Currently on display in the Museum & Art Gallery.

Cover: St Gertrude's College. Photo credit: Jim Longbottom

Back panels: The old flour mill, Photo credit: Jim Longbottom Astrophotography; and the Monastery Cloister.

May 27 – 29

BENEDICTINE EXPERIENCE WEEKEND II

July 15 – 17

St. Bonaventure: The Journey of the Mind into God

Fr. Robert Nixon, osb

St. Bonaventure was a Franciscan mystic, theologian and philosopher of the 13th century. He offers a passionate and transcendent spirituality, infused with ardent love and illuminated by a profound mystical wisdom. His *Journey of the Mind into God* is a beloved and influential spiritual text, outlining a systematic pathway for deeper encounter with the mystery of the Godhead. Bonaventure's three-stage *Journey* commences with the perception of the Divinity in creation; then, in the inner nature of one's own soul; and finally, through the elevation of the mind above all thoughts, concepts and images, to illumination by a "superessential ray of divine darkness."



August 5 – 7

BENEDICTINE EXPERIENCE WEEKEND III

August 19 – 21

An Introduction to Church Latin (Study Weekend)

Fr. Robert Nixon, osb

Since the very beginning of the Roman Catholic Church, Latin has been its principal language for spiritual and theological literature, as well as for the celebration of the liturgy. A knowledge of Latin is an important resource, which unlocks the vast and rich treasures of the writings of the Church Fathers and saints of Western Christianity in their original form. This weekend will provide a concentrated introduction, which will equip participants with enough knowledge to continue their own studies with confidence.

September 9 – 11

'Letting Go'

Sr. Lilian Bong, sjc

As we journey through life, we are in a continual process of 'letting go', in many different ways. This letting go can be the result of the loss of loved ones, of the process of ageing, of relationship changes, and families growing up, etc. On the other hand, there can be things in our hearts – anger, regret, grief, attachment – of which we would like to let go, but find it difficult to do so. Yet, in learning to 'let go', we can embrace God's plan for us more deeply, and thus come to live with greater fullness and freedom. This retreat will provide companionship and guidance in this process.

September 30 – October 2

Meister Eckhart: Seeking the God of Radical Otherness

Fr. Robert Nixon, osb

Meister Eckhart was a great Dominican theologian, philosopher and mystic of the 13th and 14th centuries. His contemplative approach to God through radical detachment has attracted much interest in recent times, and seems to speak profoundly to the contemporary world. His writings are filled with striking and beautiful paradoxes which sometimes challenge our conventional attitudes. This retreat will offer an introduction to Eckhart, and a reflective exploration of his principal writings.

October 28 – 30

BENEDICTINE EXPERIENCE WEEKEND IV