



## From the Director's Desk

Pope Francis has declared 2016 a Jubilee Year of Mercy with the hope that all believers may be enabled to have "a living experience of the closeness of the Father". In Chapter 4 of St Benedict's Rule, he lists 74 tools for living the Christian life well. The final tool in this list is to "never lose hope in God's mercy" (RB 4:74).

This "mercy" permeates the communal search for God in all of Benedict's prescriptions particularly in relation to the most vulnerable in the community and to the stranger in our midst. Like Pope Francis's call "to enable the celebration of the Holy Year to be for all believers a true moment of encounter with the mercy of God", the New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies offers an oasis where people from every faith and walk of life can freely enter into their search for deeper meaning and encounter with a merciful God. In 2016 our programmes, while continuing to offer timeless "wisdom" from the monastic tradition, will be coloured by aspects of God's mercy as called for by Pope Francis in this year of Jubilee.

Dr Carmel Posa sgs



## Annual Institute Day

**1 October / 10.00am - 3.00pm**

*Longing for Ecstasy: Monastic Theologies and Their Influence*

Guest Speaker: Professor Constant Mews



Professor Mews will consider the way monastic writing in the twelfth-century drew attention to the Song of Songs in a much more personal way. To understand and appreciate what these monastic writers had to say, we need to take seriously how much they valued what the Song had to say about longing for the experience of ecstasy.

Constant Mews is Director of the Centre for Studies in Religion and Theology at the School of Historical Studies, Monash

University. He is active in promoting studies in religion more generally, with a strong interest in interfaith work. Professor Mews has published widely on intellectual and religious history within the twelfth century, with particular reference to Abelard and Heloise, and to Hildegard of Bingen. His publications include *The Lost Love Letters of Heloise and Abelard. Perceptions of Dialogue in Twelfth-Century France* (New York: Palgrave, 1999).

**Cost: \$60 (concession \$35) Includes morning tea and lunch**

For further enquiries and bookings, please contact: Carmel Posa sgs or Jill O'Brien sgs on (08) 9654 8371 or email [carmel.posa@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:carmel.posa@newnorcia.wa.edu.au) [jill.obrien@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:jill.obrien@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. Offering an environment conducive to prayer, study and reflection with excellence in teaching and research, the Institute 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.



For all enquiries and bookings for any of the listed events please contact:

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## NEW NORCIA Institute for Benedictine Studies and Benedictine Experience Weekends

### PROGRAMME 2016





## Benedictine Experience Weekends

Benedictine spirituality is more readily experienced than defined. These weekends in the monastery guesthouse (beginning with Vespers at 6.30 p.m. 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 26 – 28 | April 29 – May 1 | June 24 – 26  
August 12 – 14 | October 28 – 30 | December 16 – 18

Maximum 12 participants

Suggested Donation: \$250 (for those who can afford it)  
Includes accommodation, meals and entry into the Museum & Art Gallery

For further enquiries and bookings, please contact:  
Guesthouse Manager (08) 9654 8018 or email  
guesthouse@newnorcia.wa.edu.au

## Undergraduate / Graduate Units

*CH1010P/DS1010P and CH8010P/DS8010P –  
Early Monastic Wisdom: The Desert and the City*

**Unit Description:** This unit offers historical study of the first five centuries of Christianity with an emphasis on the practice and belief of the community. It examines the formal clarification of doctrine through key primary texts in the light of the wider life of the church, offering an introduction to Christian traditions of theological reflection. At the New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies, this unit will focus primarily on monastic sources for Christian Thought and History.

The unit will be run in a mixed mode delivery, with online lectures/tutorials and a one-week intensive from 4–11 February at New Norcia in Western Australia.

*CH3030P/DS3030P and CH9030P/DS9030P –  
The Wisdom of St Benedict: The Rule and its Sources*

**Unit Description:** This unit explores the development and structure of the Rule of St Benedict with an emphasis on the study of primary sources and the spirituality underlying the Rule. It will examine the significance of the Rule throughout history as well as its importance as a source of formation for ministry in the life of the Church today and for the future.

The unit will be run as a one-week intensive from 21–28 September at Mount St Benedict Centre, Pennant Hills, NSW.



## Retreats

**20 – 22 May**

*Praying the Prologue of the Rule of Benedict*

Christine Manning sgs

For contemporary Christians intent on living the Gospel of Christ, the Rule of St Benedict offers much wisdom and encouragement. Over two days we will prayerfully ponder the Prologue of the Rule as it introduces Benedict's vision, purpose and teaching concerning the way of life he is proposing in his little rule for beginners.

**Cost: \$260**

**8 – 10 July**

*“Seek Peace and Pursue it”*

Margaret Malone sgs and Abbot John Herbert osb

The word Pax, peace, is often used as a motto of Benedictine monasteries. Within the daily rhythm, quiet and prayer of New Norcia, we will explore what it means to seek peace and then what we must do to pursue it. We will reflect on peace within our own hearts and peace with one another, those with whom we live and work. What then are the implications for a world that seems so devoid of peace?

**Cost: \$260**

**11 – 13 November**

*The Coming of the Lord*

Jill O'Brien sgs

Advent is a time of gathering anticipation for the birth of the Saviour in our history, in our hearts and in our future. Come and spend some time in conversation and prayer exploring the significance of this joyous time for our lives and our world.

**Cost: \$260**



## Reading Weekends / Weeks

**5 – 11 February**

*A Week with the Ancient Desert Fathers and Mothers*

Carmel Posa sgs

The first Christian monastics emerged from the deserts of Egypt in the fourth century. They included illiterate peasants, repentant prostitutes, draft-dodging soldiers and soaring intellectuals. The literature left to us from this colourful group of individuals provides us with a wealth of wisdom for a spiritual life of prayer and love of God.

This is a chance to spend a week immersed in the wisdom of Ancient Monasticism and ponder its significance for our lives in the world today in the context of the praying monastic community. Participants will join in with the Undergraduate and Graduate Students of Pilgrim Theological College from the University of Divinity, Melbourne, in exploring the wisdom of ancient writers such as Antony the Great, who insisted that “our life is with our neighbour”.

The text book for this study week will be *Desert Christians: An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism*, by William Harmless sj available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or through the Institute for ~\$30

The reading week will be held at New Norcia in Western Australia.

**Cost: \$800**

**8 – 10 April**

*Listening to Hildegard of Bingen*

Carmel Posa sgs

By popular request we are repeating our weekend reading of Hildegard which was held in 2014. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) was canonised and declared a Doctor of the Church by Benedict XVI in 2013. This extraordinary woman was not only a renowned abbess in her own time, she was also a prophetic visionary, theologian, herbalist, physician, poet and composer of liturgical texts. Her writings continue to be a source of both spiritual nourishment and challenge to us in our times. This weekend will examine a variety of Hildegard's writings and explore how they can offer us deeper insights into understanding life today.

The text for this weekend is: *St Hildegard of Bingen: Doctor of the Church*, by Carmen Acevedo Butcher, available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or through the Institute for ~\$15

**Cost: \$300**

**17 – 19 June**

*Can the Eucharist and Life Meet?*

Jill O'Brien sgs

Is the Eucharist something we celebrate just on Sunday or does it hold some meaning for our daily lives? This weekend will explore the deeper meaning of the Eucharistic celebration drawing on its ritual actions, liturgical symbols, prayer texts and commentary to help participants in the liturgy name and reflect on the meaning that the Eucharist has for daily life.

The text for this weekend is: *Mystagogy of the Eucharist*, by Gilbert Ostdiek ofm. Available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or through the Institute for ~\$20

**Cost: \$300**

**29 – 31 July**

*Living a Life of Mercy*

Margaret Malone sgs

What does it mean to believe in a merciful God? How do we show mercy in our lives? How do reconciliation and forgiveness connect with mercy? How are mercy and justice related? What does the Beatitude “Blessed are the merciful” mean? This is a very relevant topic in the Jubilee of Mercy which Pope Francis has proclaimed for 2016 and this reading weekend will enable a conversation to address these important questions in our time.

The text for this weekend is: *Mercy: The Essence of the Gospel and the Key to Christian Life* by Cardinal Walter Kasper, available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or through the Institute for ~\$25.

**Cost: \$300**

**22 – 27 September**

*A Week with Benedict's Rule*

Carmel Posa sgs

This is a chance to spend a week immersed in the wisdom of the Rule of Benedict and its significance for our lives in the world today in the context of the praying monastic community. Participants will join in with the Undergraduate and Graduate Students of Pilgrim Theological College from the University of Divinity, Melbourne, in exploring the text of the Rule from the richness of its opening word, “Listen”, to its final claim to be only “a little rule for beginners”.

The unit will be run from Mount St Benedict Centre, Pennant Hills, NSW.

**Cost: \$800**

**14 – 16 October**

*Being a Christian*

David Barry osb

Baptism, Bible, Eucharist and Prayer are basic to our being Christian. They work together as channels of the divine life of grace to bring about our transformation and our conformity to the image of a Jesus who continues to move compassionately among wounded and sinful people. The weekend will provide an opportunity to renew and deepen our grasp and appreciation of our Christian calling through a close reading of Rowan William's little book, *Being a Christian: Baptism, Bible, Eucharist, Prayer*.

The text is available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or through the Institute for ~\$15

**Cost: \$300**