



*Pax, a Latin word meaning peace, is the motto of the Benedictine monks of New Norcia*

# The Chimes Newsletter



## Fr. Robert's New Translations

New Norcia's Fr. Robert has continued working on preparing translations of texts hitherto unavailable in English; he has two new publications available and one forthcoming in the near future.

One of the works, *Four Egyptian Martyrs*, offers ancient versions of the lives of four Egyptian martyrs, who died during the time of the emperor Diocletian. These fascinating stories include many astonishing miracles, as well as strange acts of cruelty and torture, and the martyrs' heroic courage in the face of these.

The second work, *The Fable of Joseph and Aseneth*, is a translation of an apocryphal narrative of the life of Joseph, the son of the patriarch Jacob, who was sold into slavery by his brothers and then rose to prominence in the service of the pharaoh and married an Egyptian woman. This story, which seems to date from around the 6<sup>th</sup> century, exists in Syriac, Greek and Latin forms, and uses the narrative as a metaphor for the soul's search for God and finding redemption through the encounter with Christ.

The third work, *Humility and the Elevation of the Mind Towards God*, is a compilation of spiritual writings by Thomas à Kempis, best known as the author of *The Imitation of Christ*. These works take a somewhat similar approach to that classic, but reveal a more mystical side of the author. It is currently available for pre-order through TAN Books, and will be published in the next month or so.

The other works are currently available through New Norcia's gift shop, Amazon, Book Depository and other major retailers.

## Another Hugely Successful Abbot's Dinner

On Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> August we were pleased to welcome 54 guests to the Abbot's Winter Table. The fare featured pork cooked in three ways, duck breast with local new season asparagus (peeled!), and a boozy version of an old favourite, apple crumble. Along with the newly released New Norcia Abbey Verdelho, the guests enjoyed a fresh Pinot Noir from France. The message received from Steven and Jacqueline Latham (see below), reflects the atmosphere and success of the evening.

*I just wanted to write to thank you for the most wonderful evening spent at New Norcia attending The Abbot's Winter table. My husband and I agreed that the evening was absolutely the most enjoyable event. There was not one single thing we could fault. From the amazing food to the friendly staff, it was an unbeatable experience.*

*Mostly we felt blessed. Blessed to be enjoying a wonderful night surrounded by beautiful people. Blessed to have New Norcia in our midst, a place that brings so much spiritual rest for the weary soul.*

*It was lovely to see Abbot John behind the bar in his chef's uniform, joyfully serving the patrons. And how spoiled we were with his culinary creations. The staff worked tirelessly throughout the night and made us all feel like royal visitors. Nothing was too much trouble.*

*We are already hoping to book again for next year, but secretly hoping more events pop up on the calendar before then!*

September 2021





# New Norcia Welcomes Interesting Visitors

Some things are best explained in pictures. In June we enjoyed an overnight visit by the West Australia Hunt Club who booked dinner and accommodation at the New Norcia Hostel. And in August the Riley Motor Club of WA, who gathered with their beautiful vehicles at the New Norcia Hostel for lunch.



Above: Abbot John carries out a blessing of the hounds.  
Below: 25 people travelled to New Norcia with their Riley vehicles. Photo by John Ogilvie





# It is a GREAT time to visit New Norcia!

The landscape around New Norcia is a patchwork of beautiful crops with canola in full flower and a diverse range of regional wildflowers, brought on by heavy winter rains. It is always a good time to visit New Norcia - but right now it is a particularly beautiful one. We thank Jim Longbottom for capturing this stunning photo.



## New Signs Around Town

New signs have been placed around New Norcia, making it much easier for visitors to navigate and find major features. The signs were designed and printed by AXIOM Partners, the footings prepared by our Grounds Team and then put into place by Sign Here Signs from Perth.





## Photography Workshop at New Norcia: October 15-17

*Stop Looking.....*

*Begin Seeing. October 15-17, 2021*

*A weekend of contemplative & minimalist photography  
At New Norcia*

*With Sylvia Grevel and Jim Longbottom  
Drawing on the wisdom of Thomas Merton OCSO*

Cost: \$225 to cover accommodation, breakfasts and dinners, together with course materials.

Briefly: This is a weekend of photography with a difference - we explore using photography as a tool for contemplation, of allowing the subject to come to you; It seeking you rather than you seeking it.. As part of the process we will be exploring minimalism in your photography.

We will be centred in the Old Convent at New Norcia.

e-mail: Ask for more information from Jim: [jimbo1948@gmail.com](mailto:jimbo1948@gmail.com)

## Keith & Bobby Hunt's 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary

We would like to congratulate locals Keith and Bobby Hunt on their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Keith and Bobby gathered at the New Norcia Hostel with their family to celebrate the milestone in July.

Abbot John renewed Keith and Bobby's vows to the surprise of their guests. They all then enjoyed a beautiful dinner prepared by Marlon.











NEW NORCIA

# Institute for Benedictine Studies

Study Weekends and Retreats

## PROGRAMME 2022

### A 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

### 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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.



*Please turn over*

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.

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 13<sup>th</sup> 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 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> 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*

## 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.

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.

Bookings are to be made via New Norcia's Webshop at: [www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au](http://www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au)

For all other queries please contact: Fr Robert Nixon, osb E: [institute@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:institute@newnorcia.wa.edu.au)

## CUSTOM & INDIVIDUAL 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 please contact Fr. Robert Nixon, osb, at [institute@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:institute@newnorcia.wa.edu.au).

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](mailto:guesthouse@newnorcia.wa.edu.au).

[www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au](http://www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au)



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



# AN EVENING OF CHOPIN

*Piano Recital at the  
New Norcia Hostel  
by Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB  
Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> December*

Frederic Chopin (1810-1849) is perhaps the best-loved of all composers for the piano and the most frequently performed in recital. His music, which is almost exclusively for solo piano, is deeply expressive and pervaded with a constant spiritual longing, as well as being filled with unforgettable melodies and striking harmonies. Though he was physically frail, he was one of the most accomplished performers of his time, and his *Etudes* set new standards of technical dexterity. The recital will consist entirely of Chopin's music and will feature all his most famous pieces, as well as a broad selection of nocturnes, valses, mazurkas, polonaises, études, preludes, and other items.

Guests will meet at 6pm at the monastery front gate, for an exclusive tour of the Monastery's beautiful and historic music room, before moving on to the Hostel.

**Tickets are \$80, all inclusive - to book visit [www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au](http://www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au)**



**NEW NORCIA**  
BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY