

# The Chimes



Newsletter of the Benedictine Community of New Norcia

October 2023

## Salvado Catholic College Visit

*Friday, September 15th, we had 58 Year 5 students from Salvado Catholic College attend New Norcia for a day visit.*

They started the day off at the Prindiville Room and Six Seasons Panels, completing activity sheets as they went along. This was followed by a tour of the cemetery and then Midday Prayers. After a sausage sizzle lunch the students, teachers and parent helpers enjoyed a town tour, looking at the two colleges (including a quick peek at the dormitories which they

loved and with many questions about how the students lived back when they were boarders), flour mill, Rock of Remembrance, Abbey Church and Aboriginal Interpretation Centre. For most of the students, their favourite building was the "princess castle" (St Gertrude's) and, according to them, even, the Royal Family would love to live there!



Salvado Year 5's Day Visit



## Pilgrimage from Hong Kong.

*Twenty pilgrims from Hong Kong arrived for a three day stay in New Norcia at the end of September.*

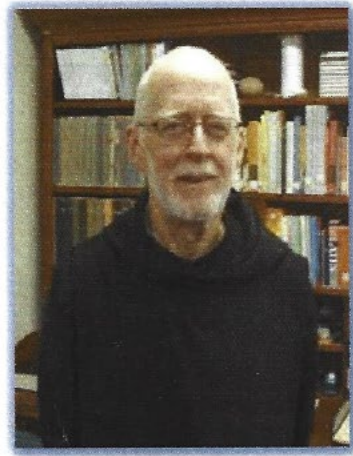
The group enjoyed a talk by Fr. Robert on the Benedictine way of life and the life of the monks in New Norcia. Fr. Robert ended the talk by giving them a special performance on the piano in the Hostel bar – they were very impressed! The pilgrims attended prayers and Mass with

the monks each day and took advantage of the beautiful weather by exploring the town and the Museum/Art Gallery. The group leader, Anthony, expressed their thanks for the hospitality provided in New Norcia and is already making plans to bring future pilgrim groups to New Norcia.

# A rare celebration at New Norcia

## BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY OF NEW NORCIA

14<sup>th</sup> September 2023



### Exaltation of the Holy Cross DIAMOND JUBILEE OF THE ORDINATION OF Fr. DAVID BARRY, OSB

*Celebrant: Most. Rev. Donald Sproxton, DD,  
Auxiliary Bishop of Perth*

It is not often that we have the opportunity to share in the celebration of such a milestone of the life of one of our monks.

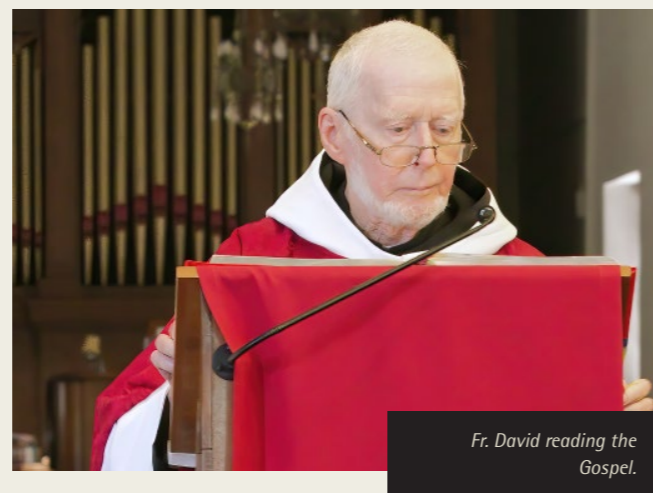
Sixty-five invited guests attended the Eucharistic celebration of Fr. David's diamond jubilee of priestly ordination, appropriately framed

within the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, in the abbey church at 11:00 am Thursday 14th September 2023.

The mass was followed by a buffet lunch in the refectory with all the invited guests, and an opportunity for Fr. David and, indeed, guests to catch up with old friends.



The entry procession.



Fr. David reading the Gospel.



Eucharistic celebration.



Catching up with friends in the refectory.

# A Special Anniversary

We had a very special celebration at the Hostel on Saturday, 23rd of September. 25 years after they were married in St Ildephonsus' Chapel with a wedding reception in St Gertrude's Dining Room, Anthony and Leanne Cormack returned to New Norcia with their bridal party, family and friends to celebrate their anniversary.

Leanne decorated the Hostel with mementos from their wedding day, their wedding photo album and lemons and ivy on the table, the same as they had on their wedding day tables. She also placed candles leading up to the front of the Hostel to replicate the candles they had leading up to the St Gertrude's on their wedding day as seen in the attached photo from 25 years ago. It was a very special night for the guests!



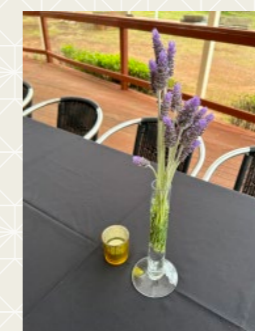
## Spring Lunch on the Deck

On the 21st September, New Norcia hosted a visit from a local social group, made up of ladies from the local district.

The day started with an introductory talk and tour of the Museum and Art Gallery with Director of Visitor Services, Carmel Murray who has lived in the district all her life. The group was shown various exhibitions relating to Aboriginal heritage, and then met Fr. Robert at the monastery gates, who gave the inquisitive ladies a tour of the main rooms of the monastery, including the hall, oratory, refectory, library, and bakery, with insightful commentary on the monastic life as it's lived in New Norcia.

A brilliant musician, he surprised them with a piano recital...a moving experience for them. The group then enjoyed the hospitality of Joyce and her team at lunch on the deck of the New Norcia Hostel.

The group, reflecting upon the unique experience, wrote: "...those of us who thought we had a fair knowledge of New Norcia, learnt something new...thank you for this wonderful experience."





# Treasuries of Ragtime Piano

16 DECEMBER 2023 | NEW NORCIA HOSTEL

Ragtime piano was a genre of music which evolved in the southern states of the USA, drawing together African rhythms with Western harmonies. Centred around the piano, it produced much lively and exciting music with catchy syncopations and memorable melodies, which is still enjoyed by listeners to this day.

This soirée will present an array of ragtime music (including pieces by Winifred Atwell, Scott Joplin and many others), performed by New Norcia's Fr Robert Nixon. The evening will commence at 6.30pm, and a light supper and drinks will be served. Tickets are \$90, all inclusive.

TO BOOK, PLEASE VISIT [NEWNORCIA.COM.AU](http://NEWNORCIA.COM.AU)

## Community Retreat

*The monastic community were pleased to have their directed retreat, the first since the beginning of the pandemic, 3-10 September.*

This year we were blessed to have Fr. Bede Kierney direct our retreat. Originally a monk of Pluscarden Abbey in Scotland, now the Prior of Christo Buaze in Ghana, West Africa, Fr. Bede, a scripture scholar, based his retreat conferences on the theme of 'purity of heart', using the richness of the scriptures and the wisdom of the spiritual greats of the monastic tradition. We were also blessed to have Sr Raphael Stone of St Mark's Abbey Camperdown join us for this special time. The retreat was the first leg of her three-month sabbatical, including England, France and the Holy Land. We were also delighted to have the presence of locals Jim Longbottom and Chris Hudson, and dear friends Chief Justice Peter Quinlan, Chris Kan, Jason Smith and Phil Timms with us over these days. At the conclusion of the retreat, the silence was filled with much conversation, laughter and sharing of meals on an excursion to Rottneest Island.

Deo Gratias!



# An appreciation of our volunteers

## Part 2: Library and Collections

*With the assistance of former New Norcia librarians and collections managers, we have assembled a list of volunteers over the ages to whom we would like to extend ACL's heartfelt thanks and gratitude.*

There will inevitably be people whom we have overlooked and to them I offer our sincere apologies but would like them to know that their contributions are just as highly valued as others'. However, before I start with the Library and Museum Collections, I would like to mention two more volunteers who have proved invaluable to the work of the Archives and beyond. Firstly, Geoffrey Coad who has put his Spanish skills to

good use translating the early years of the Monastery Chronicle and also contributing to the recent Chronicles volumes published by Abbey Press. Another publication of New Norcia's that has benefited from professional input has been *The Story of New Norcia* which was edited and updated most recently by Rev. Dr John Smith.

So, in no particular order but starting with the Library, a huge thank you to Leonie Johnstone who came several days a week for quite a few years between 2000 and 2010. She fully catalogued many hundreds of secular books, thus greatly reducing the backlog. Others who helped in cataloguing were Jenny Redman (around 2000), Marie Welsh (2009-2012) and even Peter Hocking did some volunteering in the 1990's. More recently, Jim Longbottom who has catalogued

nearly 20,000 titles! It should be pointed out here that all of those 20,000 titles were recent donations to New Norcia thus ensuring that Salvado's dream of "a library in the desert" continues to this day. In the early 2000's, Shane Dowling discovered the famous Kabbalah manuscript when he volunteered to catalogue books in the old monastery library; the Kabbalah is now in Jerusalem. Accessioning was carried out by Anita Pagotto (2010 to 2012) who came once a month from Serpentine to accession new periodicals, and Julie Blyth who came in the 1990s to check the accessions of the rare books in the compactus before she moved to Oxford. Talking of periodicals, between 2008 and 2012, Robin Dunn took on the project of reorganising the periodicals which were shambolic, according to former librarian, Sue Johnston! Paul Hogan came for years in the 1990s to help sort and shelve books whilst from 2005 to 2010, Fr. Ian Esmond was tireless in putting up shelving, sorting donations, and helping to completely reorganise the Reading Room.

In Collections we were extremely fortunate to have had long-term volunteers Ian and Lesley Baker who helped with vestments and all sorts of general tasks. Bernadette Edmondson, Anne Spencer, Ann-Marie Leahy and Carole-Ann Lunn, known as the Artworks on Paper ladies, came regularly for many years. Other volunteers included Barbara Eastlake, Diana Davies and, all the way from the UK, Claire and David Bolton, who did do a lot of wonderful work reviving the Abbey Press with Geoff Moor's expert help. Volunteering their professional expertise were Sally-Ann Hasluck, Claire-Frances Craig, Joy Legge and Ian MacLeod who has made an invaluable contribution to the newly reformed Collections Committee. Taking a break from Archives recently, was Vida Whale who mastered the intricacies of the Mosaic program to such an extent that she is now travelling around Australia helping out in museums and giving them the benefit of her new-found skills.

To all these wonderful volunteers and others whom, sadly, we have omitted to mention, a huge thank you from New Norcia!

Peter Hocking  
Archivist

# From the Archives – A Puzzling Document

Just recently, Richard Williams of Wodonga in Victoria, donated a certificate to the archives which seems to have a New Norcia and Victoria Plains connection. However, nobody connected with the Archives can shed any light on it. The certificate appears to be addressed to a Mr H R Birch on the occasion of his becoming a Benedictine but we do know that one of the signatories, Gerald De Courcy Lefroy died in 1877 and that the beneficiary would appear to be Henry Birch who worked for the mission in about 1877.

Richard says: "If only this thing could talk, maybe not! Certainly it has travelled some kilometres since being in my possession. I originally found it in a heap of non-descript rubbish in an old chook shed at the rear of a house we bought in Flamborough Street, Doubleview, in the early 70's. It's been to several locations throughout the south west of W.A. and finally to here in Wodonga, Victoria. It has taken me/us fifty years to find a home for it!"

Over the years, Richard has done some research and tells us that some of the signatories on the certificate are, in his opinion, influential men. He notes that "the artist, W Bonney, was a calligrapher and a draughtsman for the Government for a time. The gentlemen, C Crossland and H Hardy, were surveyors of note in the late 1800's who formed a company which is still operating in W.A. today. This is quite remarkable as they are now the oldest surveying business in Perth. The Lefroy family goes back to the very early days of Western Australian settlement. But, I can find nothing on Cosmo W Gibson other than he may be of a strong Catholic family/background. As for Messrs J D Hughes and Bowned (?) – they are a complete mystery."

Can any of our readers tell us anything at all about the document or about the people mentioned in it?

Peter Hocking  
Archivist



**FR ROBERT NIXON, OSB**

**FRIDAY 27 OCTOBER 2023**

**7:30 PM**

**ST PATRICK'S BASILICA,  
FREMANTLE**

47 ADELAIDE ST

Performing original compositions from his new album **Celestial Void**, as well as beloved works of Chopin and Liszt

Entry by Donation



## Baptisms

On Sunday 10th September, Abbot John in his role as parish priest, baptised three children from local McQuiod and Quartermaine families in St Ildephonsus' chapel.

The families enjoyed a traditional Sunday roast prepared by Marlon and his team, and served by Joyce and her team, in the newly renovated dining hall afterwards.

# Calendars now available

Hot off the press - the 2024 New Norcia calendar features the works on paper of Fr. Lesmes Lopez OSB. An exhibition in St Ildephonsus' large and small dining rooms.



This calendar shows the liturgical calendar as celebrated by the Benedictine Community of New Norcia. Purchase the calendar online at: [shop.newnorcia.com.au/products/calendar-2024](http://shop.newnorcia.com.au/products/calendar-2024)

# Coming Events

From October 2023

20 October 2023

Library Lecture Day 2023 – Thinking outside the box/library building

27 October 2023

Fr. Robert Nixon OSB, live at Fremantle Basilica

18 November 2023

Abbot's Table: Spring 2023

24 – 26 November 2023

New Norcia Guesthouse – Benedictine Experience Weekend V

Visit our website for a complete list of Coming Events - [newnorcia.com.au/whats-on/events-calendar/current-events](http://newnorcia.com.au/whats-on/events-calendar/current-events)

# Liturgical Calendar

October 2023

Sunday 1 October

Twenty-Sixth In Ordinary Time

Tuesday 3 October

Bl Columba Marmion (Optional Memorial)

Wednesday 4 October

St Francis of Assisi (Memorial)

Friday 6 October

St Bruno (Memorial)

Saturday 7 October

Our Lady of the Rosary (Memorial)

Sunday 8 October

Twenty-Seventh In Ordinary Time

Sunday 15 October

Twenty-Eighth In Ordinary Time

Tuesday 17 October

St Ignatius of Antioch (Memorial)

Wednesday 18 October

St Luke (Feast)

Sunday 22 October

Thirtieth In Ordinary Time

Saturday 28 October

Sts Simon & Jude (Feast)

Sunday 29 October

Thirtieth In Ordinary Time



**NEW NORCIA**  
BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY

The Chimes is a monthly publication of the Benedictine Community of New Norcia. To subscribe to the digital version, email [publications@newnorcia.com.au](mailto:publications@newnorcia.com.au).

© 2023 | Benedictine Community of New Norcia

New Norcia Road, New Norcia WA 6509, Australia  
T: (08) 9654 8018  
[www.newnorcia.com.au](http://www.newnorcia.com.au)