

The Chimes



Newsletter of the Benedictine Community of New Norcia

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Left to Right: Greg Manzie, Ian MacLeod, Teresa Reha, Abbot John, Klara Hebestreit, Peter Hocking.

A very special gift to the Benedictine Community

On the May 19th, Teresa Reha, accompanied by her friend Klara Hebestreit under the guidance of long-term art restorer Greg Manzie travelled to New Norcia specifically to donate a very special painting from the estate of her late husband to New Norcia, a safe home for the artwork.

The artwork is painted on wooden panels and bears a small metal name plate with the artist's name Juan de las Roelas. Roelas, 1570 – 1625 was a Flemish painter whose entire documented career took place in Spain. At the end of his career, he was painting in the Baroque style that we are so familiar with in New Norcia.

The painting has been in the Reha family since before World War II when they lived in the former Czech Republic. It has an intriguing story of survival from the onslaught of war and the Nazi occupation, then survived the Russians and Communism under the care of Yaroslav Reha who later gave the painting into the care of his son Mirko. Mirko eventually (Teresa thinks perhaps in the Dubček era) fled the Czech Republic to Austria to escape the communists and it is here that he met Teresa, and they were married. Later they migrated

to Australia. At a later stage they shipped a crate of belongings from their former house in Austria, and the painting was a part of the shipment.

Teresa told of how Mirko always believed that the painting should belong to a museum and, because it depicts the passion of Christ, and was purportedly painted in Spain, she resolved to gift it to New Norcia, where more people could enjoy it and be nourished by it.

In receiving the painting, Abbot John said that it will enhance the continuing narrative of the Benedictine Community here in New Norcia. Here it has been placed in a safe home at last.

It is a clearly a portrait of pain, one that may assist many people to feel a deep connection of their own pain to the passion of the Christ.



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Easter joy continued with the gathering of Jasmine and Simon Neal for the baptism of their twin daughters Kari Rose and Harper Mae.

Although they live in Perth, Jasmine stems from the Maher family, so it was very fitting to have the baptisms at New Norcia.

Many family members who gathered on the beautiful autumn morning (Saturday 10th May) were also baptised at the same New Norcia font – so it was a very special occasion indeed.

Jasmine was also baptised by one of the monks, the late Fr. Antony Lovis OSB, who was parish priest at New Norcia for many years. He was very close to the Maher family and made a significant impact on the lives of many of its members.

Abbot John felt it was both an honour and a privilege to be part of the family tradition, and the Neal family were deeply grateful for the guidance they received, and for the Benedictine Community welcoming their children into the faith with "warmth and grace."



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On a beautiful, sunny, late Autumn day a group of home schoolers and their parents came to New Norcia for a day visit.

Having heard about New Norcia after watching a documentary about the art at the Museum/Art Gallery, the organiser, Melissa, thought it would be a wonderful experience for the students.

The children and parents thoroughly enjoyed the town tour, asking lots of questions and "oohing" and "ahhing" over the amazing architecture and stories about New Norcia and the experiences of the monks and school students throughout the years.

They ended their day with a visit to the Museum and Art Gallery, completing question sheets and buying treats from the gift shop.

We loved having them in New Norcia, the children were very polite and enthusiastic about the day and the parents all said that they would be back with other family members in the future.

Repainting the monastery buildings: Stage 1 (façade) and Stage 2 (Central Cloister)

Machinery and men from LT Plastering were on site to commence the preparation of the monastery building walls for painting. The task is huge, with all the walls having to be pressure cleaned to remove the flaking paint, and prepare all cracks and imperfections for repair prior to commencement of the painting works. This is, of course, a heritage building, so all work is being done accordingly.

At this very moment the cloister is looking a little sad, but of course we have stripped it back to the fabric of the building in many places, and after all the preparation works have been completed, we will ready for the painting process, and the buildings will be returned to their former glory.



La Table de l'Abbé

The Abbot's Table



New Norcia Hostel



16th August 2025

While monastic life may seem to be in stark contrast to the restaurant scene, it is the spirit of hospitality which is at the heart of them both. Monastic life – and indeed, cooking – are about being in tune with, and having respect for, the rhythm, balance and produce of the seasons.

This event celebrates a set four-course French menu of fresh seasonal produce and will showcase New Norcia wood-fired bakery products, olive oil, Abbey Ales and Abbey wines.

An event to share with family & friends – or strangers – in this special place, a town like no other.

In the spirit of community, guests will sit together at long and round tables, set throughout the New Norcia Hostel.

This is a fine dining event, in a unique heritage setting.

- Pre-dinner drinks begin at 6.00 p.m.
- All-inclusive dinner: \$180 per person

Accommodation is booked separately at a cost of \$130 per room - groups@newnorcia.com.au



Scan to book
on our webshop



Lighting upgrade in St Gertrude's and St Ildephonsus' chapels

The special lighting for the chapels of St Gertrude's and St Ildephonsus' chapels were in need of upgrade, so that they could be more efficiently operated by tour guides and others using the chapels. These two chapels are two of the absolute jewels of New Norcia, as can be seen in the photograph.

Ian and Oleksandr from our Grounds and Maintenance team set up scaffolding in the chapel in St Ildephonsus' College to enable the team from UNIOS Lighting and Pauly Electrical Contractors to access lighting and make the necessary adjustments for the new controllers. Thankfully, the scaffolding was not required in St Gertrude's College chapel, as all this work was happening in the same week as the olive harvest.



Much to celebrate

Along with Easter joy, there was much to celebrate at the Autumn Abbot's Table, 17th May at the New Norcia Hostel.

Twenty years ago, Luana MacDermott celebrated her 30th birthday and the Hostel (then the Hotel), and we were delighted to have her back for her 50th!

We were also blessed to have Abbot John's older brother Paul and his niece Sarah at table. They were the first guests to stay in the newly renovated Kelly's Cottage.



Olive harvest

In early May the Grounds and Maintenance team, bolstered by three additional people from Mercy Care in Perth, harvested the available olives from our groves.

Sadly, the harvest was small again this year, though better than 2024 when we had no olives to harvest at all. This year the harvest yielded around 400 litres of oil, and was over in just one week.

The photos depict the process. We set mats, or the mechanised "oli net", under each tree, then use a combination of electric rakes and hand picking to harvest the olives. They are then hand cleaned and placed in large green bins. Those bins are then transported across to the York Olive Oil Company for processing through their very modern plant.

The photos depict the process.

The team, L to R: Levan, Shady, Ian, Sona, George, Chris, Oelxandr, Hector, Dimitri. The Mercy Care workers are all Honduran refugees.

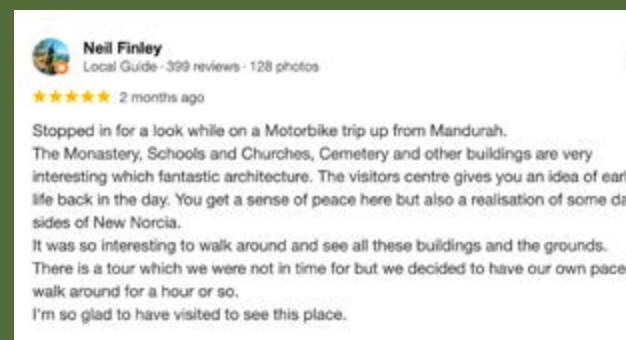


We value your feedback

At New Norcia, your feedback helps shape a better experience for every visitor. We actively listen through a variety of channels:

- Our in-house visitor survey
- Reviews on TripAdvisor and WikiCamps
- Conversations and comments on Facebook and Instagram

Whether it's a suggestion, a story, or a snapshot—every bit of feedback helps us grow and improve.





VALE Edward (Ted) Smith

Long-time friend, retreatant, and benefactor
Edward Patrick Smith (Ted), a devout Roman Catholic, sadly passed away at the age of 92, on 12 May 2025 at Regis Nursing Home in Nedlands.

Ted was a true gentleman and took much interest in all things New Norcia.

The monks fondly recall a visit to Ted's former home, the Tukurua mansion in Cottesloe, which he lovingly restored over many years.

Abbot John represented the community at his Requiem Mass at Holy Rosary church, Nedlands and on Wednesday 21st May.

May he rest in peace.

Coming Events

From June 2025

21st June 2025

One Day Retreat: Christian Stoicism

11th–13th July 2025

Monastic Wisdom For Everyday Life
(Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB)

16th August 2025

Abbot's Table: Winter 2025

22nd–24th August 2025

Letting Go (Sr. Lilian Bong, SJA)

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

Liturgical Calendar

June – July 2025

Sunday 22 June

The Body And Blood Of Christ
(Solemnity)

Tuesday 24 June

Nativity Of St John The Baptist
(Solemnity)

Friday 27 June

The Most Sacred Heart Of
Jesus (Solemnity)

Saturday 28 June

St Irenaeus (Memorial)

Sunday 29 June

Sts Peter And Paul (Solemnity)

Thursday 3 July

St Thomas (Feast)

Sunday 6 July

Fourteenth In Ordinary Time

Friday 11 July

Our Holy Father Benedict
(Solemnity)

Saturday 12 July

St John Gaulberti
(Optional Memorial)

Sunday 13 July

Fifteenth In Ordinary Time

Tuesday 15 July

St Bonaventure (Memorial)

Sunday 20 July

Sixteenth In Ordinary Time

Tuesday 22 July

St Mary Magdalen (Memorial)

Friday 26 July

St Joachim & Anne (Memorial)

Sunday 27 July

Seventeenth In Ordinary Time

Tuesday 29 July

Sts Martha, Mary & Lazarus
(Memorial)

Thursday 31 July

St Ignatius Of Loyola
(Memorial)



NEW NORCIA
BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY

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