

The Chimes



Newsletter of the Benedictine Community of New Norcia

Vol. 26 No. 3 May 2026



A wedding in St Ildephonsus' Chapel

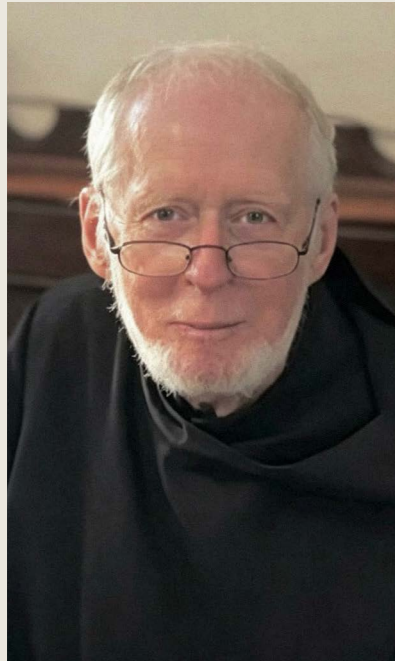
On Saturday 18th April, beneath the vaulted arches of St Ildephonsus' Chapel, Darcie and Lester exchanged their vows with Abbot John presiding. The liturgy was accompanied by a live harpist – music that seemed entirely at home in the chapel's cool, still interior.

Afterwards, guests gathered on the adjacent lawn, where Eddie and his team had prepared drinks and canapés served by Carmel, Leonardo and Andrea. It was one of those warm autumn afternoons that New Norcia does particularly well – open sky, long light, and that quality of stillness that this place always seems to carry.

Weddings at New Norcia tend to be unhurried. There is something about the setting – the monastery, the architecture, the centuries of prayer embedded in the stone – that invites people to be fully present.



Darcie & Lester



A new chapter at Glendalough: welcoming Father David

Father David moved into the Little Sisters of the Poor at Glendalough on Thursday, 23rd April, and he's settled in beautifully.

There's a real sense of peace in his arrival; David feels deeply that this was the perfect time for him to make the move, and he has stepped into this new chapter with total confidence.

The Sisters, staff, and residents have given him such a warm welcome - it's clear they are truly happy to have him there. He's already found a comfortable rhythm, staying active with his daily walks and

receiving wonderful, attentive care from everyone around him.

It's been a joy for him to reconnect with old friends and start making new ones. A real highlight has been reuniting with Abbot Bernard; they're now neighbours with rooms close by, which has been a great source of happiness for them both. David is keeping up with his daily prayers and the Divine Office, and he's already a regular at the 4:30 pm rosary and concelebrates at daily Mass. It's lovely to see him so well-supported and so clearly at home in such a kind, caring community.



Benedictine Union AGM

New Norcia was pleased to offer hospitality to members of the Australian and New Zealand Benedictine Union for their Annual General Meeting on Friday 22nd May.

Representatives attended from Tarrawarra Abbey (Victoria), Arcadia Monastery and Jamberoo Abbey (New South Wales), Tanby Monastery (Queensland), and the Good Samaritans, whose ministry extends across Australia. It was a good and welcome gathering.



Confirmation at Pentecost

On the Solemnity of Pentecost, Sunday 24th May, the Holy Trinity Parish of New Norcia rejoiced as three young people received the Sacrament of Confirmation — a joyful way of bringing the Easter season to its close.

Charlize, Lara and Jack Botha-Kelly had been preparing carefully for their big day, working through the confirmation course at home with their parents, and supported throughout by their parish priest and the broader parish community.

Fr Robert prepared the liturgy with his customary care. Tracy Sievwright presented the candidates to the assembly, and their grandfather Jim Kelly served as their sponsor.

At the end of Mass, Sr Hilda presented each of the newly confirmed with their

confirmation certificates and a gift from their fellow parishioners. A festive morning tea followed in the monastery parlour, complete with a very generous cake, enjoyed by all.

Confirmation is the sacrament through which the Holy Spirit is given more fully to those who have already been baptised, strengthening them for the Christian life ahead. For Charlize, Lara and Jack, Pentecost — the feast that celebrates the coming of the Spirit upon the Apostles — could not have been a more fitting occasion.

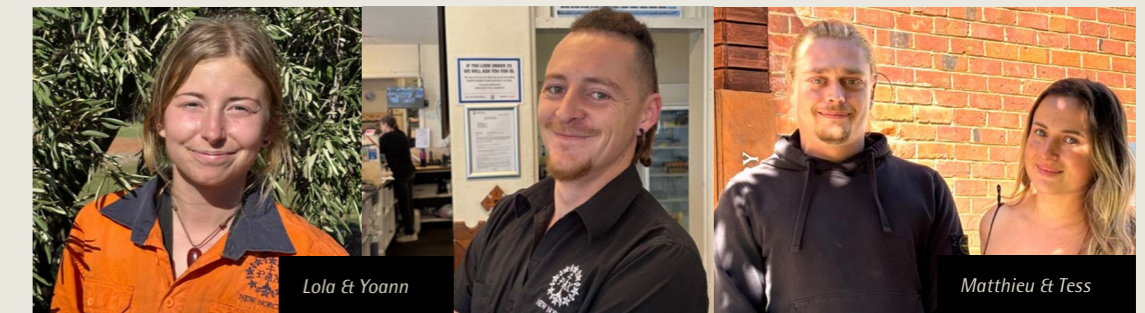


Dimitri is a happy man. And when New Norcia's olive harvest gets underway, that tends to be contagious.

Dimitri, who works in our Grounds and Maintenance team, is a Greek national with a deep and abiding love of all things olive. As reported in a previous edition of The Chimes, he spent considerable time last year pruning many of New Norcia's 700 olive trees in preparation for exactly this moment.

The 2026 harvest is now underway, with six refugees from various parts of the globe, engaged through Mercy Care, forming the backbone of the picking team. They are joined by Chris, New Norcia's gardener, and by Dimitri himself as supervisor. The wider Grounds and Maintenance team, Nick, Shady and Olexandr, are also involved as their other duties allow.

Dimitri estimates that around 80 per cent of the groves are bearing fruit this season — a particularly promising year, and one he has been quietly looking forward to for some time.



Bienvenue! New faces in the New Norcia family

New Norcia's international contingent continues to grow with four French backpackers now well settled into life at the monastery — bringing energy, good humour and an impressive work ethic to the community.

Yoann and Lola are two French backpackers who have been with us for about six weeks now. They are so settled in their different roles these days that it is impossible to get a photo of them together. They have been in Australia for quite a while, first Brisbane and then Apollo Bay on the Great Ocean Road working in hospitality.

At New Norcia Lola is doing excellent work keeping our buildings clean for visitors and Yoann is working in Groups and in the Roadhouse. Today Lola is out in the olive grove assisting with the harvest and Yoann is in the Roadhouse. They have settled in really well and we are very happy to have them with us.

Welcome to Matthieu and Tess, our two newest French backpackers. Tess has been in Australia for seven months and Matthieu for six months. Matthieu will be working with the Grounds and Maintenance crew, and Tess will be working primarily with Groups looking after accommodation venues as a part of that team. It will be a welcome change for Tess whose "baptism of fire" to Australia was as a bar worker in the Halls Creek Hotel. Welcome to the New Norcia family!



May has been a richly creative month for New Norcia's engagement with the visual arts – the opening of the 23rd Mandorla Art Award in Perth, an artist in residence at work, and the Old Trading Post gallery welcoming more visitors than ever before.

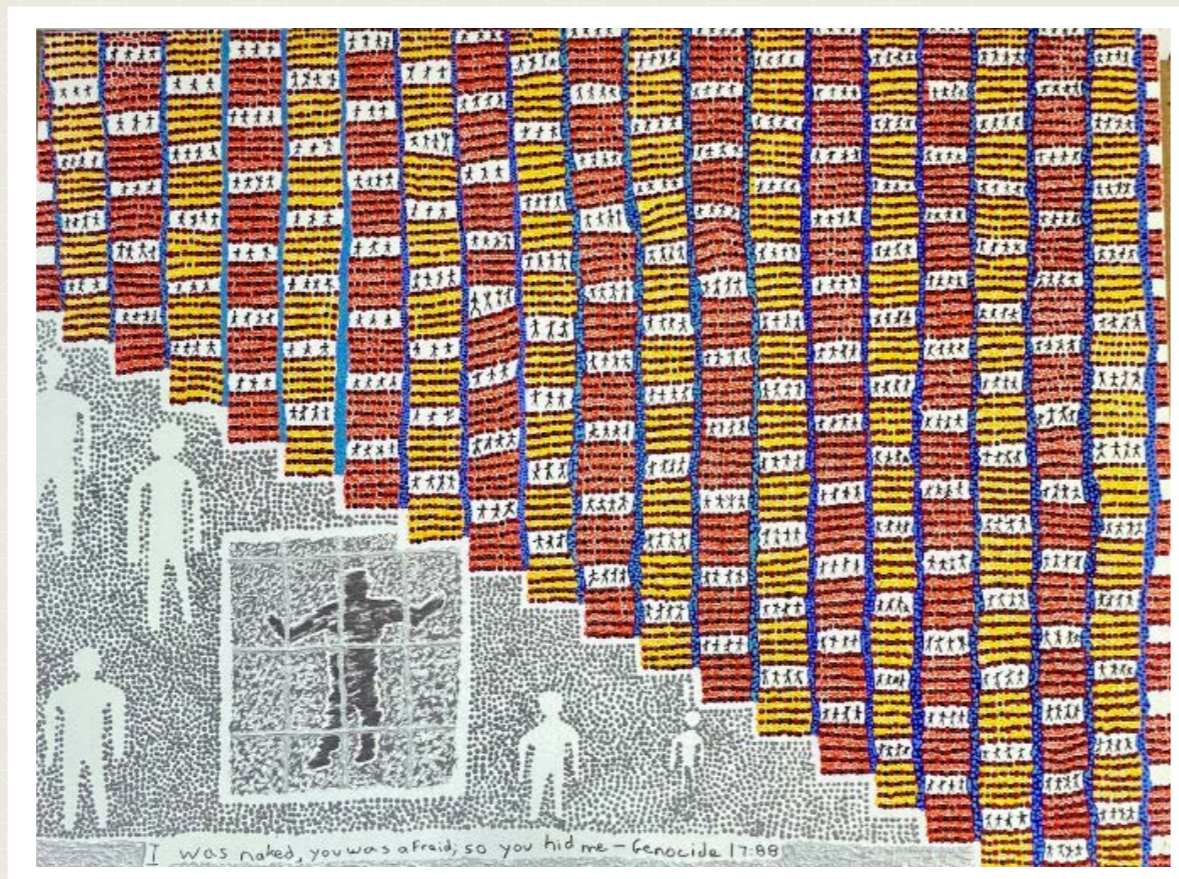
23rd Mandorla Art Award

On the evening of Friday 8th May, Abbot John, Carmel Murray, Victoria Fam and Jim attended the opening of the 23rd Mandorla Art Award at the Holmes à Court Gallery 10 in Perth. Forty-one finalist artworks were on display, and guests had an hour to explore the works before the official opening and prize-giving.

The 2026 award went to Glenn Loughrey from Victoria, for a powerful work addressing Aboriginal incarceration and deaths in custody since the Royal Commission – a deeply considered and affecting piece that drew considerable attention on the night.

The exhibition is open to the public until Friday 29th May, when New Norcia will return to the gallery to present the People's Choice Award. Gallery hours are Wednesday to Friday 11.00am–5.00pm, Saturday 12.00–4.00pm.

Glenn Loughrey - winning artwork



Artist in residence: Victoria Fam

Among those at the opening was Victoria Fam, a Singaporean artist currently completing a two-week residency at New Norcia – the first of two planned visits this year.

Victoria has been a regular visitor to New Norcia over several years, drawn by the peace and prayerfulness she finds here. In her working life she is a palliative care social worker, and it is her faith, she says, that keeps her grounded amid the suffering she witnesses daily. Drawing and painting are how she prays – expressions of her conversations with God – and the residency has given her uninterrupted time to do that work.

Her family, who have long been intrigued by her frequent visits to New Norcia, are travelling from Singapore to see this place for themselves. We pray her residency is fruitful and blessed. She will return in October to complete the second part of her stay.



The Old Trading Post gallery: now open longer

The Mandorla Gallery in the Old Trading Post – at the southern end of the Museum and Art Gallery building, officially opened in October last year – is now open for longer each day, giving visitors more time to engage with the work on display.

The extension has been made possible by the efforts of IT manager Michael Lee and Grounds and Maintenance

workers Shady and Olexandr, who have created an office on the northern end of the front verandah and connected the building to the monastery's computer network. A volunteer is now working from the gallery most mornings, keeping it open and welcoming to passing visitors.

Look out for the sign on the road.



La Table de L'Abbé

The Abbot's Table 2026

In case of cancellations/availability please email museum@newnorcia.com.au

WINTER
22nd August 2026

SPRING
21st November 2026



La Table de l'Abbé: an evening of service & celebration

Peter Smith 1912-1949 French café c.1936 oil on canvas

On Saturday 16th May, the Autumn Abbot's Table brought together guests for an evening that was, quite deliberately, as much about how a meal is shared as what is on the plate.

The theme drew from St Benedict's sixth-century Rule – specifically its chapters on the joys and discipline of shared meals in community. While the entrée, cheese and dessert courses were served in the usual fashion, the main course – a Poule au Pot, slow-cooked in cast iron – arrived at each table in the pot, to be served by an appointed diner. The remaining guests were invited to pass the side dishes and wine to one another: a gentle, practical enactment of the Benedictine principle of mutual service.

The menu, crafted in Abbot John's characteristically elegant French style, moved from a warm autumn tarte through to a layered gâteau of roasted nut meringue and chocolate marquise, each course accompanied by a well-chosen wine. An Abbatial dispensation regarding the prescribed hemina of wine was noted in the menu – and gratefully received.

The evening was graced by a musical interlude between courses: Allegra Giagu performed with Fr Robert, adding a further layer of beauty to a very fine occasion.



Soirées 2026

Fr Robert Nixon

A BAROQUE EVENING

3rd October 2026

Scan below to book tickets



FRENCH IMPRESSIONISTS

5th December 2026

Scan below to book tickets



The Parables of Rumi- a special presentation of the musicians of New Norcia, at St. Joseph's Subiaco

New Norcia's Fr. Robert Nixon, together with other musicians and singers who are involved in music at New Norcia, will be presenting a special recital in St. Joseph's Church, Subiaco, on Friday, July 31.

The performances will be musical reflections on the mystical tales and poetry of Rumi, a 13th century Persian poet, reflecting ancient wisdom and inspiring insights into God, eternity and the human soul. The music will draw upon many diverse traditions, and feature a range of instruments, including piano, voice, and string and wind instruments from the West and the East, drawing listeners into a deep experience of meditation. Donations will be gratefully accepted upon departure.

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.


SCAN BELOW:




We are on
TRIP ADVISOR



Follow us on
INSTAGRAM



Follow us on
FACEBOOK





 **Helen C**
...

2 contributions

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More than expected

It's rare to visit a town and be blown away by the outstanding standard of the artwork, woodwork, history, stories, museum, value for money. A place I will definitely revisit and encourage others to visit too. Only an hour and a half away, its one of Perth's best kept secrets! Michelle, our tour guide is passionate and knowledgeable, very enjoyable tour especially the rendition of Amazing Grace in the music room. Too much to see in 1 day. Loved every minute of it! Heartily recommend









Visited **October 2025** • Travelled solo
Written 29 October 2025

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Wonderful experience.

Fascinating story of determination and faith. Wonderful experience and some beautiful architecture and the chapel interiors are absolutely incredible. Tour guide (lovely lady originally from Manila but long term Aussie) told a wonderful story with feeling and humour. She also has a lovely singing voice! Museum on site is well worth several hours to view with stories, artifacts and some incredible paintings. A full day experience to get full value.

Visited **October 2025** • Travelled as a couple
Written 12 October 2025

Coming Events

From June 2026

20th June 2026

Fr Robert Nixon Soirée

A Chopin Recital, New Norcia Hotel

31st July 2026

The Parables of Rumi

Musicians of New Norcia,

St Joseph's Church, Subiaco

22nd August 2026

La Table de l'Abbé – Winter Dinner,

New Norcia Hotel

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

From June 2026

Monday 1 June

St Justin (Memorial)

Wednesday 3 June

Ss Charles Lwanga &
Companions (Memorial)

Sunday 7 June

The Body and Blood of
Christ (Solemnity)

Thursday 11 June

St Barnabas (Memorial)

Friday 12 June

The Most Sacred Heart
of Jesus (Solemnity)

Saturday 13 June

St Anthony of Padua
(Memorial)

Friday 19 June

St Romuald (Memorial)

Wednesday 24 June

Nativity of St John the
Baptist (Solemnity)

Monday 29 June

Ss Peter and Paul
(Solemnity)



NEW NORCIA
BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY

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