

Message from the Director

In our increasingly complex modern world, many people are keenly seeking out the wisdom and secrets of ancient traditions, to equip themselves with powerful tools to meet the challenges of today. Benedictine monasticism is a movement which has been a powerful transformative force for over 1,500 years, and uses the practices of discipline, silence, solitude, and meditation to promote a way of life which is stable, strong and successful. This complex, ancient and beautiful expression of our spiritual heritage has many time-tested secrets for cultivating inner peace, contentment and resilience. The retreat and study programmes of the New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies aim at unlocking these priceless treasures for our participants.

In 2025, we are excited to unveil a varied and stimulating range of retreats and study programmes. As well as weekend retreats, a number of one-day events are also on offer. In keeping with the Benedictine charism of hospitality, the monastic community is delighted to welcome as our guests persons from all backgrounds of life and all traditions. Our scenic and serene environment and the quiet prayerfulness of the monastic routine form the perfect backdrop for seeking and finding peace, enlightenment, renewal and clarity.

In pace Christi,

Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB

Below: Fr. Robert Nixon plays the piano in the monastery music room



Sunrise and the Abbey Church

One-day events

One-day events commence at 9:00am on the Saturday in the Monastery guesthouse, and conclude the same day at 5:00pm. Attendees may arrive earlier for a cuppa. Lunch is included in the cost of the day.

Weekend start and finish times

The first session for all Institute Weekends begins at 7:30pm on the Friday (participants are encouraged to attend Vespers at 6:30pm, followed by dinner, if possible). The final session each weekend will conclude at 11:30am on the Sunday.

Custom 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 in organising a special retreat for a group, please contact Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB, at institute@newnorcia.com.au.

Individual retreats

You 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.com.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. 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.

Retreat and Course Costs

For weekend events, participants are asked to contribute \$360, which includes two nights' accommodation (Friday and Saturday) and all meals, as well as admission to the Museum and Art Gallery. The cost for one day events is \$120, which includes lunch in the monastery guesthouse. Participants who wish to do so are very welcome to stay overnight and will need to book separately into the monastery guesthouse. (e-mail: guesthouse@newnorcia.com.au)

For Enquiries and Bookings

Bookings are to be made via New Norcia's webshop at www.newnorcia.com.au

For all other queries please contact Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB, at institute@newnorcia.com.au



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

www.newnorcia.com.au



NEW NORCIA

Institute for Benedictine Studies Weekend and One-Day Retreats and Courses

PROGRAMME 2025



Retreat Programme:

February 28-March 2

PRE-LENT RETREAT—UNCLUTTERING OUR LIVES AND HEARTS
(Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB)

For forty days before commencing His public ministry, Jesus retreated into the desert, fasting and living a life of absolute simplicity. In imitation of this example, the forty days of Lent should be for Christians a time of consciously uncluttering our lives and heart, and freeing ourselves from all the extraneous baggage and complexities which hold us back from the freedom and simplicity to which God is calling us. This weekend retreat will prepare participants for a fruitful and effective Lenten experience.

March 15 (One-Day Retreat)

SEEING IS BELIEVING (Virginia Jealous)

A reflective and engaging day spent looking into the heart of things, paying deep attention to objects and landscapes of New Norcia. Why does this matter? How might this bring us into closer relationship with the Divine, with what Dylan Thomas called ‘the force that through the green fuse drives the flower?’ What doors might open if we do this with those we encounter in our daily lives? Participants will spend time inside and outside, in discussion and in active silence (thinking, watching, waiting), and walking (together or in solitude).



St Francis of Assisi

April 4-6

BENEDICTINE SECRETS FOR BALANCE AND SERENITY
(Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB)

The Benedictine way of life is recognized for its promotion of balance and serenity, and the flourishing of the Order of St. Benedict for over 1,500 years is clear testimony to this reality. This weekend retreat will unlock for participants the secret wisdom of St. Benedict, for achieving a sustainable life of balance and serenity.

April 25-27

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI—PROPHET OF PEACE AND FREEDOM
(Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB)

St. Francis of Assisi is amongst the most deeply loved and admired of all the saints in the Christian tradition. He is identified with the embrace of radical Evangelical poverty, simplicity and freedom, and the encounter with the Divinity through the created world. Emerging from the chaos and turbulence of plague- and war-ravaged 13th -century Italy, he remains a source of deep inspiration for many people in the contemporary world. This weekend will draw upon the earliest primary sources, including the writings of Francis himself and the primitive hagiographical accounts, to present an authentic picture of this beloved figure.

May 24 (One-Day Retreat)

MEDITATION AND UNION WITH GOD

The practice of meditation and the experience of union with God form a key part of the mystical life of many of the saints, and also appear (in varying forms) in most of the great religious traditions of the world. Meditation consists of a deliberate stilling of the mind and spirit, and liberating it from distractions, illusions, sensory perception, and its usual assumptions and perspectives. In this way, the spirit is opened up to a unitive vision of a higher reality- God Himself, and the true self. Through this discipline, practitioners are able to arrive at peace, freedom and inner joy. This one-day workshop will combine a general orientation and the experience of specific practices.



June 21 (One-Day Retreat)

CHRISTIAN STOICISM (Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB)

The ancient Stoic philosophers promoted an approach to life based on trust in Divine Providence and the cultivation of inner strength, freedom and dignity. Throughout the centuries, many Christian saints have turned to the thoughts and words of these great philosophers, showing that the psychological and existential insights they offer complement and clarify the teachings of Christ. This one-day workshop will delve into the wisdom of the Stoics, showing how it can help modern Christians to develop resilience and inner strength.

July 11-13

MONASTIC WISDOM FOR EVERYDAY LIFE (Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB)

The principles of monastic life include focus, perseverance, patience, and self-discipline. These are values which run counter to our mainstream culture, where self-indulgence, distraction, and rush are very much the norm. Yet these lead to a dissipation of strength and energy, and ultimately a loss of happiness, independence and freedom. This weekend retreat will explore how the principles of monastic living can be applied to everyday life, to harness your inner strength, and achieve resilience, success and contentment.

August 22-24

LETTING GO (Sr. Lilian Bong, SJA)

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 aging, of relationship changes, and families growing up, etc. On the other hand, there can be things in our hearts—anger, regret, grief, attachment and pain—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 weekend retreat will provide companionship and guidance in this process.

September 13 (One-Day Retreat)

THE APOCROPYHAL GOSPEL- MEETING THE JESUS OF MYTH AND IMAGINATION (Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB)

In addition to the four Gospels contained within the New Testament, a considerable number of other Gospels also exist. Although these works embody myth and creative imagination rather than historical truth, they offer intriguing, surprising, and sometimes challenging perspectives, embodying a range of alternative understandings of the person of Jesus. This weekend will present an overview of the history and context of the non-canonical Gospels, and an illuminating survey of some of the more significant and interesting of these apocryphal writings.

October 3-5

BENEDICTINE SECRETS FOR BALANCE AND SERENITY
(Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB)

The Benedictine way of life is recognized for its promotion of balance and serenity, and the flourishing of the Order of St. Benedict for over 1,500 years is clear testimony to this reality. This weekend retreat will unlock for participants the secret wisdom of St. Benedict, for achieving a sustainable life of balance and serenity.

October 25 (One-Day Retreat)

PRAYING THE ROSARY—AN INTRODUCTION (OR RE-INTRODUCTION)

The Rosary is one of the most beloved and trusted practices in the Catholic tradition, and generations of the faithful have found it to be a wonderful source of peace and a powerful and efficacious prayer. But there are many people unfamiliar with it, or who have grown away from it. This one-day workshop will provide background on the origins and evolution of the Marian Rosary, and guidance about how to use it effectively.

November 14-16

BENEDICTINE SECRETS FOR BALANCE AND SERENITY
(Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB)

The Benedictine way of life is recognized for its promotion of balance and serenity, and the flourishing of the Order of St. Benedict for over 1,500 years is clear testimony to this reality. This weekend retreat will unlock for participants the secret wisdom of St. Benedict, for achieving a sustainable life of balance and serenity.



The New Norcia Apiary