



The Chimes

Newsletter of the Benedictine Community of New Norcia

June 2023



The King's Coronation Dinner at the New Norcia Hostel

Happy Autumn Happenings

New Norcia has been a hive of activity as the cooler season sets in, including two King's Coronation celebrations, a visit from the Porsche Club of Perth, and a community service day trip from Lumen Christi students.

King's Coronation High Tea

The King's Coronation High Tea was held in the newly renovated small dining room at St Ildephonsus' College on 11 May. Inspired by Sharyn Sinclair, Emma Kelly, Claire Forrester and Jane Graham, the ladies beautifully decorated the room with photos and books of Charles and Camilla. A fire was lit for the first time in the renovated fireplace, creating an ambience of genuine cordiality.

Guests were treated to a glass of champagne upon arrival and Abbot John served a complimentary, truly English cocktail for the guests – Pimms! In addition to tea (and bottomless champagne), the layered light lunch included mini cupcakes, zucchini slice, chocolate cake, vol-au-vaunts, strawberries dipped in chocolate, macarons, New Norcia's Nutcake, Pan Chocolatti and Biscotti, mixed sandwiches and scones with jam and cream.

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King's Coronation Dinner

In grand style, Lyle Georgeson and Cathie Mackie drew a group and celebrated the event on the Saturday night of the coronation, 6 May, with a dinner at the Hostel. Guests started with pre-dinner drinks and sat down to a meal of shared antipasto platters, followed by a choice of salmon, steak or chicken for mains and fruit and ice-cream for dessert.

see reviews and photos, page 2



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King's Coronation Dinner

6 May 2023

New Norcia Hostel

“Thank you all for making our coronation party such a fun night”, said the organisers. “Joyce, your organisation and communication during the planning was first class. John, thank you for all your help, especially with sourcing our favourite champagne and making outstanding espresso martinis. Carmel and Tyler – the Murray team – were both very efficient (even under challenging eftpos conditions) and Tyler, apart from looking resplendent, was a very polite and capable young waiter. The food was enjoyed by all, especially the antipasto platters and the salmon and the dessert was so beautifully presented. Fresh fruit salad and ice cream has never looked like that before”!



Coronation High Tea...continued from p. 1

Amongst the ladies and gents who attended were many locals, from as far afield as Miling, Dandaragan, Bindoon and Bullsbrook. "We knew New Norcia would do a good job", said the organising committee afterwards, "but my word, all expectations were exceeded! St Ildephonsus' looked superb, the finishing touches to the room – including the open fire – were just beautiful, and the presentation of the afternoon tea literally blew everyone away". (Comments

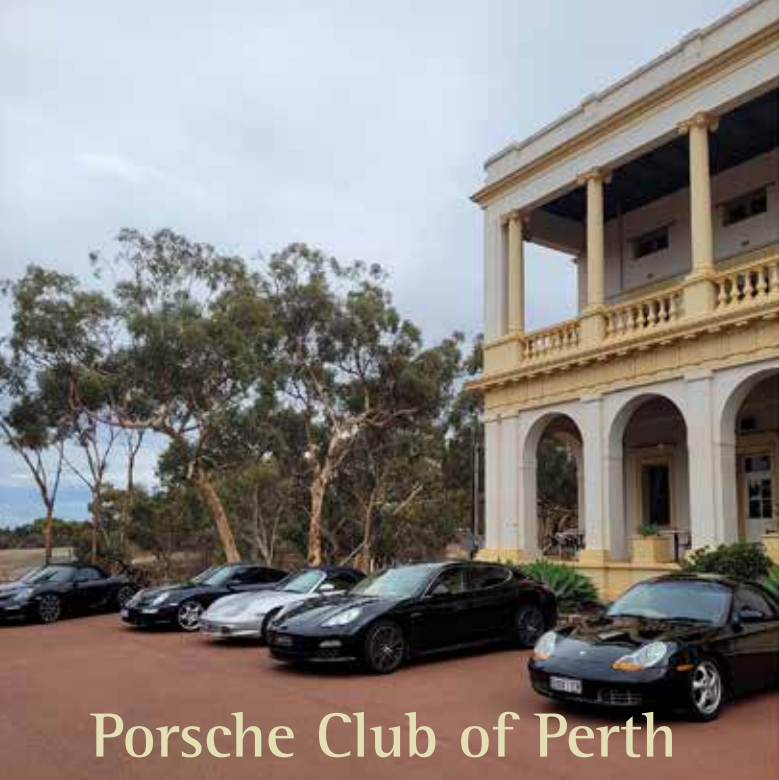
were overheard that the standard was far higher than any on offer from Perth hotels.)

"Most of all, thank you for giving us an opportunity to get a diverse group of friends together for an afternoon of fun and catching up", the ladies said, "something that, in this busy lifestyle we all lead, we never seem to get around to, but which is actually so important".



The organising team for the high tea (from left): Emma Kelly, Jane Graham, Charles III, Camilla, Sharyn Sinclair and Clare Forrester





Porsche Club of Perth

Porsche owners and fans swept up the Great Northern Hwy on 7 May to swoon over their sleek sedans in the picturesque setting of the New Norcia Hostel. The Club enjoyed a catered lunch, which guests reported as "so amazing!" (So were their cars!)



Lumen Christi Community Service Day

Two hundred students from Lumen Christi College in Perth came to New Norcia for a day trip on Wednesday 10 May.

The day started with mass in the Abbey Church, Fr Robert presiding. This was followed by a sausage sizzle in the Arcades before heading off to the large olive grove to help with the autumn harvest.

With community service a component of their curriculum, the students rallied to fill a large crate to the brim with the black and green fruits. Despite the pouring rain, the students reported having had a fun time picking olives.



New Norcia Achieves Bronze!

New Norcia placed third in the 2023 Tiny Tourism Town Awards, receiving a Bronze medal at the 2023 Perth Airport WA Regional Tourism Conference Dinner in Kalgoorlie-Boulder on 16 May. Directors of Visitors Services and Groups, Carmel Murray and Joyce McKee accepted the award on behalf of the monks and staff, all who contribute to making New Norcia the great destination it is!

Joyce and Carmel attended many sessions during the two-day conference, including the Visitor Centres WA Meeting, where they were asked what they thought was important for visitor centres going forward and any concerns they had. This provided our tourism team with ample ideas for moving forward and improving visitor services at New Norcia.

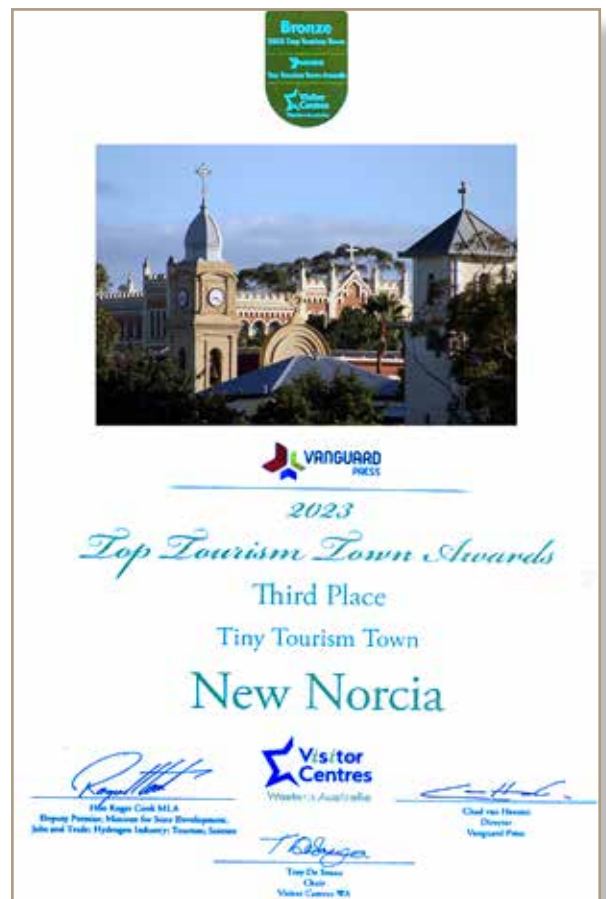
Here is their report of conference events:

Following the visitor centres meeting, after a quick lunch, we moved onto the main conference sessions. We heard from a variety of speakers including Evan Hall, Tourism Council WA CEO, the Major of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Patrick Hill, Outback Highway Development Council Chairman, about creating "Australia's Longest Shortcut" from the goldfields of WA to QLD – turning the road from gravel to bitumen and what this will do for tourism along this long stretch of road. We also heard from Tim Moore, Kalgoorlie's Archives Officer about the history of the Goldfields and watched an amazing video of people living and working in the goldfields many years ago. We also heard from Sue Hanson about Goldfields Aboriginal Cultural Tourism about the naming of places with traditional names, how they are setting up local Aboriginal businesses along tourists routes, etc.

Eddie Ulrich and her son Danny Ulrich also gave a talk about their tours – Goldfields Honey Ant Tours. Eddie and her son are indigenous and they take tour groups out to the desert to hunt for honey ants in the traditional way – digging holes in the ground – they showed a video and it looks like a lot of fun. We spoke to Eddie during the lunchbreak and she was a very friendly, lovely lady. The day concluded with an evening Welcome Function at the Museum of the Goldfields.

On Tuesday we heard from various speakers about how tourism is going in WA following COVID, industry trends and what the vision is for the next 10 years, jobs in tourism, etc. We also heard from General Manager of Mandurah's Visitors Centre about the process to bring the Giants of Mandurah to Mandurah, all the planning, consultation and building and then the devastating arson attack on one of the Giants. Mandurah has been announced as the venue for the 2024 WA Regional Tourism Conference.

We also heard from Hon Roger Cook MIA, Deputy Premier and Minister for Tourism in WA. Tuesday concluded with a dinner and awards night at the Mining Hall of Fame – a fun night!



Vale Doris Walton

Long-time New Norcia oblate Doris Mary Walton passed from this life on 24 April 2023. The funeral mass was held at the St Vincent Pallotti Chapel, Rossmoyne. The service was jointly overseen by Fr Ray Hevern and Abbot John Herbert. Her ashes were buried, covered by the Benedictine Oblate Scapular, at the New Norcia Cemetery the following Saturday.



So, on 18 May 1943, as the record showed, this 5'1" brown-eyed, dark-haired young woman with a scar on her mid right calf was "marched in and taken on strength by AWAS". She was discharged 1001 days later, having progressed rapidly up through the ranks to corporal and then sergeant in the HQ Second Australian Army.

What is not in the record is that Doris acted as secretary for then General Sir Thomas Blamey, head of the Australian Army. Blamey was not known as a tactful person and I'm sure that her rapid promotion and success in the

job says a lot about her intelligence and skill, even at a young age.

In the post war period she was a great help to my mother, who was bringing up her first born, my late brother, Michael, while my father was often absent for long periods on naval duties. Michael and Doris were always close.

It was during that time that Doris met and married her beloved, the love of her life, Cecil Robert Walton. Cec, as he was known to us all, had also been a soldier. On 9 April 1949 they married and within six months were living in Leederville and running a shop. Doris told me that as shop keepers they were a total disaster. They were just too kind: they did not chase debts and they gave away stock to people in need. However, they stuck with it until the early 1960s when Cec joined the Department of Agriculture as a Control Officer and they moved to Rossmoyne.

Freed of the duties of running the shop, Doris had more time for other interests. She became an avid golfer and was a long-time member at Melville Glades Golf Club. She always credited her stamina, even over these later years, to the many hours on the golf course.

Doris loved music and was a regular at the Perth Concert Hall. Wagner was her favourite composer but her passion was Gregorian Chant. There were three great loves in her life: her husband, her family, and her God.

Unfortunately, Cec passed away far too young, in 1988, and Doris spent another 32 years without her "beloved". But her love for him was always there in the way that she spoke about him. Most nights she had a little whiskey and that ritual was a continuance of one they had shared together.

Doris was a devout Christian and would regularly go to church at St George's Anglican Cathedral in Perth where she played an active role in church life. She regularly went on retreat at St Mark's Benedictine Anglican Monastery in the western district of Victoria. Attending retreats became increasingly more difficult as Doris aged, so the Abbot at St Mark's suggested she might like to go to a retreat closer to home. That it was a Catholic monastery should not matter, "as it is the same God".

And so Doris' close association with New Norcia began. The monastery became such a part of Doris' life that she made the decision to continue worshipping God within the Catholic faith. Which is why we are all here today in this place, a simple chapel to say goodbye to a beautiful soul.

"Thank you for your wonderful hospitality, and the loving way that Doris was laid down in her final resting place", said her nephew, David Lee, who attended the ceremony along with other family members at New Norcia. "It was the culmination of a week where I believe we truly honoured Doris in the manner she wanted and deserved".

Excerpts from her eulogy, by David Lea:

Doris was born in Sydney on 2 June 1924, the third of six siblings. Her father, Charles Oscar Harold Polson, emigrated to Australia from Gothenburg, Sweden as a stoker on a ship. He travelled to the NSW goldfields and then worked and lived in the Rocks area of Sydney, where there was a thriving Swedish community. Too short to be allowed to join the army at the outbreak of WWI, he volunteered as soon as the height restrictions were relaxed. He was badly gassed late in the war and invalided home. He was unable to work but did create a substantial vegetable garden to sustain his growing family. As a young child, Doris was constantly at his feet and always praised him for his wisdom and guidance.

Her mother, Hilda Christina Young, was also half Swedish. Hilda's father was a Lungquist, but changed his surname to something more palatable to the locals. Doris never forgave him for that as she was proud of her Swedish ancestry and saw no good reason to hide it. For much of her life she corresponded with her Swedish relative in Gothenburg.

Doris went to Upper Fort Street School in the Rocks area and the emphasis was always on the "upper", as if to distinguish it from the rougher areas of the Rocks. Clearly the school was very strong on diction as Doris had a lifelong pride in her pronunciation and abhorred the decline in education standards she saw around her. She would still recite the "Ballad of Toad" word perfect, and with every syllable clearly enunciated well into last year.

The family moved to Earlwood and Doris attended Canterbury Girls High School, where she completed her intermediate certificate. Following school, she ended up as a stenographer clerk at the Universal Guarantee Company in Sydney. However, not so long after her 18th birthday she applied to enlist in the Australian Woman's Army Service. She told me she did so to honour her father.

The Moser pipe organ in the Abbey Church, a unique, beautiful and historically significant instrument, has now reached its 100th birthday. In celebration of this important occasion, New Norcia and the Organ Society of Western Australia will



A Day of Recitals, Talks, and Lunch
Saturday, 12 August, 10.00am to 3.30pm

present a day of music performances and talks highlighting the remarkable features and capacities of the instrument, and celebrating the history both of the organ and of musical culture within the monastery.

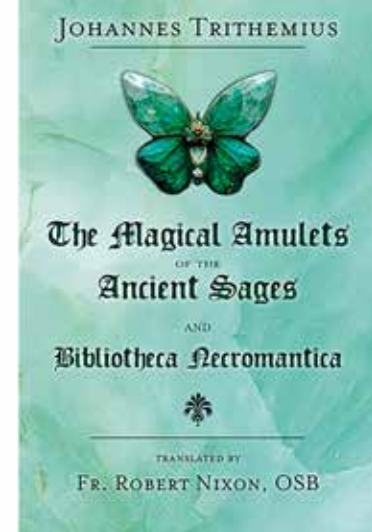
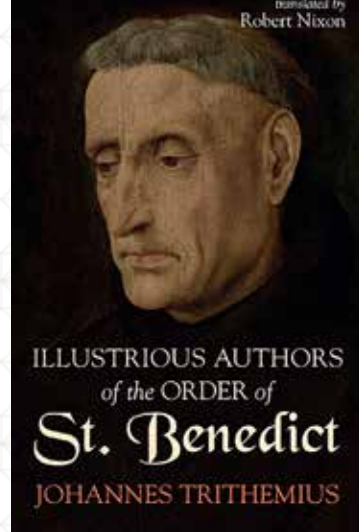
Two New Translations of the Writings of Abbot Trithemius by Fr Robert Nixon

New Norcia's Fr Robert has two new translations recently published, both works by Abbot Johannes Trithemius.

Trithemius was an interesting and complex character, and a leading figure in the 16th century German Church. As a young man, he fled from an abusive, violent, and repressive home, in search of knowledge, advancement, and a better life. And it happened that, as a penniless and homeless vagabond, he was caught one night in a bitter snowstorm in a dark and desolate forest. He saw the warm lights of a Benedictine monastery nearby, and so sought refuge therein. At once he fell passionately in love with the monastic atmosphere of silence, study and solitude. He soon became a monk, making his profession on his 20th birthday.

Almost miraculously, within less than a year of his entering the monastery as a homeless pauper, he was elected abbot of the community. And immediately thereafter, he became a trusted advisor and confidant to the Holy Roman Emperor, and many of the German nobility, and so was one of the most influential figures in all of Europe, revered both for his learning and his prudence.

Although Trithemius is well-known as an author, very few of his works have been translated into English. Fr Robert has recently translated his *Illustrious Authors of the Order*



of St Benedict, for Wipf and Stock (USA). This is a classic and authoritative reference work, presenting fascinating and sometimes picturesque details of the lives and works of some 143 significant Benedictine authors, from about AD 500 until 1500. The other work is entitled *Magical Amulets of the Ancients Sages*, published by Hadean Press (UK). This volume presents various obscure late Medieval texts (diligently collected and copied by Trithemius) which describe the spiritual powers of various stones, crystals and amulets.

Included also in this publication is Trithemius' curious *Bibliotheca Necromantica*, in which he carefully reviews and appraises the various 'underground' books on magic and the occult arts in circulation in his times, which he had meticulously collected for his monastery's own library.

Both works may be obtained through New Norcia's giftshop and webshop.

A group of 38 retreatants from across Australia, aged from their early-20s to late-80s, gathered in New Norcia in mid-May to engage in five days of silent retreat. The focus of the retreat was living in God's Will, based upon the *Book of Heaven* – 36 volumes of writings by the Servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta.

The retreat master was Tony Hickey, a Catholic layman from the UK, who has over three decades' experience of leading retreats globally. Unusually, and yet most successfully, Tony Hickey led the retreat from his home in England by broadcasting via WhatsApp on a phone connected to a loudspeaker – thereby reaching the retreatants in New Norcia.

As is true for any retreat, its fruitfulness can depend significantly on the setting and ambience. With comfortable beds offered in a variety of single rooms (twin rooms for the married couples), and with a large selection of peaceful places – both internal and external – in which to be still, to reflect, to pray and to contemplate, New Norcia offered the perfect setting for us to engage with God's gifts of creation, redemption and sanctification.



Divine Will Silent Retreat

by James Parker

The incredibly warm welcome and hospitality from all the staff, the quality and quantity of food provided, along with the prayerful and warm support of the monks, were all conducive to making every aspect of this silent retreat very comfortable and most memorable.

There is little wonder that the retreatants repeatedly request the desire to return to New Norcia whenever another silent retreat is mooted. We certainly hope to return for as long as the Benedictine community will permit us to do so.

Ready for Bus Tours: St Ild's New Dining Room



Above and below are the elegant scenes awaiting guests as they hop off the bus to enjoy lunch in St Ildephonsus' newly renovated large dining room.



Australasian Catholic Press Association 2023 Conference

"Speaking with the Heart, the Truth in Love" is the theme for this year's Australasian Catholic Press Association Conference. Inspired by Pope Francis' 2023 World Communications Day Message and taken from St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians (Eph 4:15), the Conference is set to take place in Perth, Western Australia, at Rendezvous Hotel Scarborough, 6-7 September 2023.

The Conference is open to all Catholic communications professionals across Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific, with member and non-member rates available for the first time. For more details, visit: <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1040425>



The Abbot's Autumn Table

“You must be imaginative, strong-hearted. You must try things that may not work, and you must not let anyone define your limits...your only limit is your soul.”

—Auguste Gusteau, *Ratatouille*, 2007

Such were the words that inspired the Abbot's Autumn menu on 20 May, as guests converged upon the New Norcia Hostel for another fine meal at the hands of our Abbot Chef (also our Chief!). The fine and flavourful ratatouille was a soothing accompaniment to the pan-fried lamb French cutlets, in parmesan, pistachio and herb crust, with snow-pea purée, honey-mustard cream, and crispy fried potatoes with garlic and gin salt – the Plat Principal of the superlative six-course banquet.

Here's what the Abbot had to say...

It will come as no surprise to you that watching television is not a big part of a monk's life, so much so that it's taken me sixteen years to catch up with the Disney-Pixar computer animated film *Ratatouille*.

In the world of monastic life in which one is often engaged in rather serious reading in one's search for God, it is somewhat refreshing from time-to-time to read a novel or watch something light-hearted. When it comes to matters of the human heart, humour is indeed just as important as humility, and even in a whacky film such as *Ratatouille*, in which a rat sets out to prove he can cook just as well as the great chefs of Paris, there are often hidden messages of wisdom.

Apart from the central theme “Anyone can cook!” this tale provides some essential ‘food for thought’ about discrimination, limitations, aspirations, identity, relationships, team work and trust. It demonstrates that in whatever walk of life we find ourselves, we all have an integral role to play. Moreover, whether it be in the monastery, the kitchen, the office, the sports team, the family home, we are mutually bound to call each other into that role.

With all this talk about ratatouille, it made good sense to include this classic dish on this evening's menu. Coincidentally, the secret to a successful ratatouille relies firstly on cooking each vegetable separately, to bring out its unique flavour, before cooking them all together to form one harmonious dish. We hope you'll enjoy our version of it, and that your hearts will be cheered by the sharing of food, wine, conversation...and don't forget to throw in a little humour!



Florence Ang & Agnes Lim flew from Singapore for the Abbot's Table (below). Agnes offered this montage of Saturday night's Abbot's Table (above).



Coming Events

JUNE

30 June - 2 July 2023: The Apocryphal Gospels—Meeting the Jesus of Myth and Imagination

22 July 2023: Thomas Merton: Answering in Wisdom – Hagia Sophia

28-30 July 2023: Benedictine Experience Weekend III

12 August 2023: Centenary of New Norcia's Pipe Organ

Visit our website for a complete list of Coming Events
newnorcia.com.au/whats-on/events-calendar/current-events

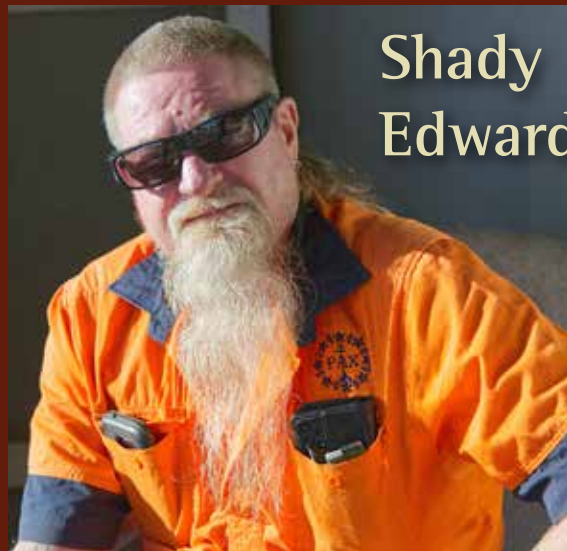
Staff Focus

Graeme Edwards is known all over town as Shady, a nickname he picked up many years ago. Shady came to New Norcia over eight years ago to work with the Grounds and Maintenance team. He is a qualified Cabinet Maker/ Carpenter and has had extensive experience working on heritage buildings, so this role was a good fit for him and his skills.

Shady can, and does, turn his skills to anything and everything. One of the things he loves is the variety of the work, never the same from day to day. He can be working on a heritage building, using the backhoe to dig up and repair a water leak, driving the ride-on mower or tractor with a slasher, harvesting olives, or any one of another hundred jobs that go together to keep the community ticking over.

Shady lives with his wife Helen (Helly) in Bindoon on 1.2 hectares (3 acres) with Ralph the “sheepdog” and Storm. He has 4 daughters, 7 grandchildren and (surprisingly) one great-grandchild. (He says he started young). One of the things he loves about the job here is the 35-minute peaceful drive to and from work, no traffic!

Before coming to New Norcia, Shady spent some years in Karratha, where he was a manager for Baker Hughes, and was instrumental in commissioning a plant on the Burrup to manufacture drilling fluids for oil and gas exploration. He then



Shady
Edwards

commissioned another of those plants in Mauretania in Africa, where he was FIFO, month on, month off, for a time.

In his spare time, he loves to chill out with family and reads a lot of Robert G Barrett books from the series about Les Norton...who Shady chuckles about. Les is a big red-headed Queenslander who drinks a lot and gets in his share of scuffles. Shady spends quite a bit of time in Mandurah these days caring for his 80-year-old mother with Mesothelioma.

He dreams of visiting Uluru one day and still thinks he might make the big jump out of a plane with a parachute! He draws great inspiration from family, watching them achieve their goals, grow and develop into mature adults and great parents.

SUNDAY 4 JUNE – TRINITY SUNDAY (Solemnity)

(Ordinary Time, Week 9)

Monday 5 June – St Boniface (Memorial)

SUNDAY 11 JUNE – THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (Solemnity)

(Ordinary Time, Week 10)

Tuesday 13 June – St Anthony of Padua (Memorial)

Friday 16 June – THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS (Solemnity)

SUNDAY 18 JUNE – ELEVENTH IN ORDINARY TIME

Monday 19 June – St Romuald (Memorial)

Wednesday 21 June – St Aloysius Gonzaga (Memorial)

Saturday 24 June – NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST (Solemnity)

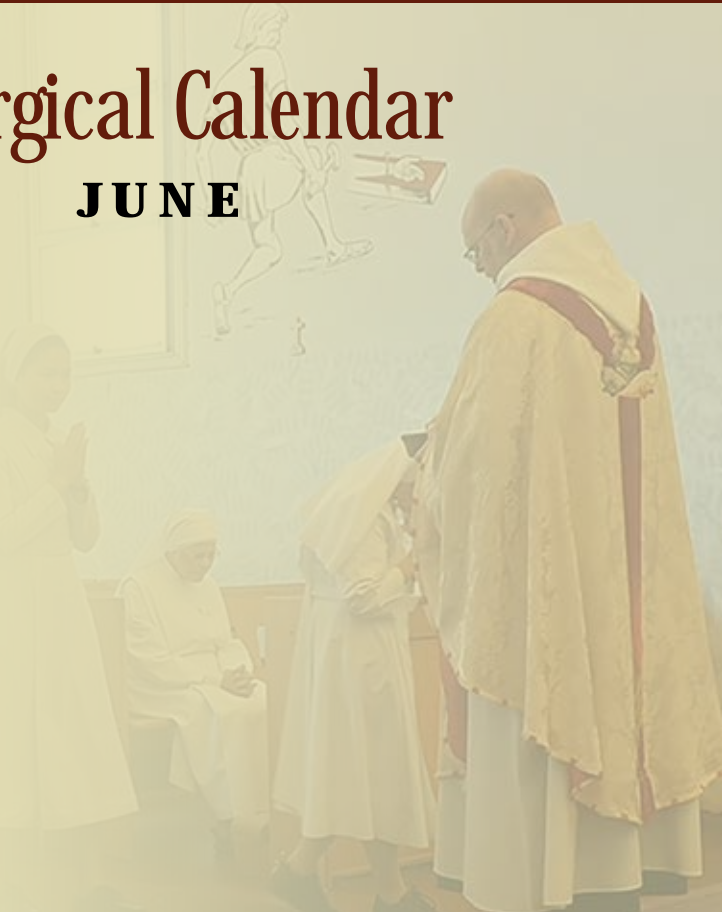
SUNDAY 25 JUNE – TWELFTH IN ORDINARY TIME

Wednesday 28 June – St Irenaeus (Memorial)

Thursday 29 June – STS PETER AND PAUL (Solemnity)

Liturgical Calendar

JUNE



“A monk always manifests humility in his bearing no less than in his heart”.

Benedict of Nursia