From the Director’s Desk

The central adhan of Benedictine monasticism is the ‘search for God’. Within the context of monastic life, this search for God is multivalent and all-encompassing, embracing the disciplines of formal prayer and community life, as well as the mysteries of silence, solitude and contemplation. Yet this adhan is not confined to professed monks only, but extends, in various ways, to all Christians. Indeed, to all engaged in a ‘spiritual search’ of one kind or another. As the Gospel assures us, “They who seek, surely will find.”

The programme of the NNIBS for 2019 offers an extremely interesting variety of retreats and study weekends. The focus of the retreats is primarily spiritual—i.e., the approach to God through prayer, silence and sharing. The focus of the study weekends is primarily educational and philosophical. Yet, both approaches substantially intersect and articulate—there is no spirituality without knowledge, and no knowledge without spirituality. To love God is to know God, and to know God is to love God.

We hope that you will find something of interest to you here, and look forward to your visit to New Norcia in 2019.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Robert Nixon, osb
(Director)

NEW NORCIA
Institute for Benedictine Studies

Study Weekends and Retreats

Programme 2019

NEW NORCIA
Institute for Benedictine Studies

Annual Institute Day

Benedictine Spirituality
And the Search for God

Keynote Speaker:
Fr. Anilja Jayasumana, osb,
Director of the Sylvesterine Benedictine Minor Seminary, Sri Lanka,
Vice-Rector of St. Anthony’s College, Kandy, Sri Lanka
Saturday, August 3, 2019
Cost: $70
Includes lunch and morning tea

For Enquiries and Bookings
Bookings are to be made via New Norcia’s website at
www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au.

For all other queries please contact:
Fr. Robert Nixon, osb
Institute@newnorcia.wa.edu.au

New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies
Great Northern Highway, New Norcia WA 6509
www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au
Benedictine Experience Weekends

Benedictine spirituality is more readily experienced than defined. These weekends in the monastery guesthouse (beginning with Vesper at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, concluding with lunch on Sunday) provide the opportunity to enter fully into the monastic rhythm and balance of prayer, work, lectio divina, hospitality, and community life. There will be opportunities to ponder the richness of the scriptures and monastic literature, both in group discussions and personal silence and solitude, bringing from the “storehouse, things both new and old.” Participants are also invited to join the community for silent meals in the refectory, one of many invitations to listen with the “ear of the heart.”

March 15 – 17 | May 31 – June 2

November 8 – 10

Cost: $250. Includes accommodation, meals and entry into the Museum and Art Gallery.

Retreats

March 1-3

Lenten Retreat
Fr. David Barry osb

Lent is a time traditionally devoted to spiritual purification and refinement in preparation for the great celebration of Easter. During Lent, Christians are encouraged to adopt the practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. This retreat will help participants to embrace Lent prayerfully, with renewed energy and new insights, and with an openness to the graces it offers.

June 21-23

Christian Meditation
Kathryn Houston (National Director, School of Meditation, World Community for Christian Meditation)

Meditation is a spiritual practice of central importance, not only in Christianity but in the other great religious traditions of the world. It is also a particular charism of Benedictine monastic life, and assists in the cultivation of inner peace, focus and spiritual, mental and physical well-being. In the 20th Century, the Benedictine priests, John Main and Laurence Freeman, led a revival of interest in the art of meditation. This retreat, presented by Kathryn Houston, will provide guidance and an experiential insight into the practice of Christian meditation.

August 16-18

Transcending through the Stages of Life
Sr. Lillian Borg, S.J., St. Dominick Meers, OSB

The transition through the various stages of life - from youth to adulthood, from adulthood to middle age, from middle age to old age - can present both challenges and rewards, of a personal, spiritual and physical nature. The various events in life, such as the discernment of a vocation, changes in state of life, or illness and injury, can also form confronting and challenging transitions. This retreat will focus on the spiritual approaches which support these transitional stages of life, and help to transform them into experiences of true grace and profound renewal.

October 11-13

The Dark Night of the Soul: St. John of the Cross
Abbot John Herbert, OSB

St. John of the Cross was a Spanish mystic of the 16th Century, whose best known work is The Dark Night of the Soul. The difficult spiritual classic explores an ‘ephatic’ or imageless approach to God, where the sacred is often experienced as a deep darkness, and the soul’s journey towards God progresses through ‘spiritual dryness’ and a series of seeming losses of consolations and insights. This retreat will immerse participants into the via negativa - the approach to the Divine Radiance through the apparent darkness of suffering and doubt.

Study Weekends

March 29-31

Spirituality in the Works of Oscar Wilde
Dr. Liam Lynch

Oscar Wilde is represented in the popular imagination primarily as an irreverent wit and literary aesthete. Yet his works reveal a profound pre-occupation with questions of a spiritual nature, and are deeply imbued with images and concepts drawn from Christianity, especially Roman Catholicism. Amongst his lesser known writings is much religious poetry, and writings on the ethical and axiological problems facing modern humanity. This study weekend will offer fascinating and surprising insights into the work of this great writer.

May 10-12

Philosophical Movements in the Mediterranean World at the Time of Christ
Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB

As the time of Christ and in the centuries which followed, a number of diverse and interesting philosophical movements flourished in the Mediterranean world: Platonism, Stoicism, Epicureanism, Skepticism and several others. These movements, which each offered their own answers to the question of how to live a ‘blessed life’, formed the intellectual stock out of which the nascent Church sprang. Moreover, they influenced deeply the authors of the New Testament and the Patristic age, and consequently profoundly contributed to the development of Christian thought. Over the course of the weekend, these philosophical schools will be explored, mainly through examination of primary texts.

July 12-14

The Desert Fathers: The Earliest Christian Monks
Presented by various monks of the Monastery

The term ‘Desert Fathers’ refers to Christians who, from the late 2nd Century, adopted eremitic and/or coenobitic modes of life in the deserts of North Africa and the Middle East. The thoughts, sayings and anecdotes of these remarkable and curious figures are well documented in various ancient writings, which in the course of time came to serve as models and inspirations for both Western and Eastern monasticism. The Desert Fathers continue to offer rich insights and challenges to modern Christians. This study weekend will offer an introduction to amazing world of the Desert Fathers.

September 13-16

The Theology of the Garden of Eden
Dr. James Cregan

The Garden of Eden holds a central place in the Christian imagination. Not only does it bookend the Bible with its promise of God’s overriding grace, the symbolism of Eden also informs and energises the narratives of creation, revelation, and redemption at the heart of its sacred texts. Yet, for various reasons, a developed theology of Eden is still substantially lacking in Christian discourse. This study weekend provides an opportunity to explore the many dimensions of that theology, and in doing so bring to awareness some of the ways the ancient biblical understandings of Eden were appropriated, integrated, and transformed by the New Testament authors as they sought to convey their own perception of the New Creation in Christ.

CUSTOM RETREATS

The NNBRS is delighted to be able to offer ‘custom’ retreats, for groups of six or more participants. These retreats, presented by a monk 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@newbriarica.edu.au.