

Lotterywest Grant Application Approved

Thanks to the enormous efforts of the BCNN executive and admin staff, Lotterywest have approved our application for \$2M for restoration and upgrading projects in St Gertrude's and St Ildephonsus Colleges over the next two years. These much needed projects include drainage and roof repairs, fire escapes (both new and upgraded), bathroom upgrades, the installation of a brand new commercial kitchen for St Ild's, with a little left over for some painting etc. All this allows us to provide an improved and safer experience for all the groups accessing these unique and beautiful venues.

Church Precinct Project



The new car park adjacent to the abbey church has been completed, and the new public toilet block (including facilities for the disabled) is well under way. This church precinct project funded by *Lotterywest* will include an opening through the picket fence, a pathway for easy access to the abbey church, landscaping, flower beds and garden benches. This upgrading will provide a more convenient and comfortable experience for all our guests, including those arriving in coaches. New Norcia is a self-funded and self-managed site, so we are very grateful for this and other significant contributions from *Lotterywest*

towards the upkeep of Australia's only monastic town. We'll have more exciting renovation and restoration stories to tell as this three-year funding program progresses.

Robert Juniper's 'Mary MacKillop'



The Benedictine Community is now the happy owner of Robert Juniper's enchanting painting entitled 'Mary MacKillop'. Curator of the New Norcia art collection Joy Legge was the successful bidder at a recent auction on our behalf. Fine art like this does not come cheaply, so this acquisition was made possible as the result of our being a beneficiary of the deceased estate of the late Peter Barke-Morton (formerly Brother Gregory). Peter, who died on the 23rd of February 2012 had wanted the community to have his collection of religious art, but tragically it was all destroyed when his house burnt down not long before his death. It seemed very fitting then that we honour his wish through the purchase of this delightful work. The painting is presently hanging in the monastery parlour for all our guests and visitors to enjoy, and will eventually be hung in St Gertrude's, which was once a boarding school for girls run by the Sisters of Saint Joseph, founded by Mary MacKillop

New Season's Olive Oil...Available Now!



250 ml bottles of New Norcia's own unique, distinctive and well sought after olive oil are now available at the New Norcia Museum and Art Gallery Shop.

Pop in to buy a bottle or two (a great gift idea for your foodie friends) or phone 9654 8056.



In anticipation of next year's crop, volunteers have been busy pruning in the olive grove!

The Solemn Feast of Our Holy Father St Benedict

On the feast of St Benedict (July 11) the monks extended their *laudate* (celebration after lunch) to include the staff and visiting guests. It was the perfect opportunity to share the bottle of VSOP cognac given to Fr Anscar as a gift and to welcome Nicola White who has begun her position as manager of the hotel and to welcome back Ashley Clarence who has resumed his role in HR and Operations.

Meanwhile, General Manager Aidan McDermott, having worked on 18th Century buildings in Ireland, reignited his own skills in the field of heritage restoration and restored the monastery tabernacle to the original altar (now in the oratory). Complete with new sanctuary lamp, monks and resident guests alike are so pleased to now have the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the monastery oratory, giving it a greater sense of sacred space – a place to call in for quiet prayer throughout the day.



Fifty Years of Liturgical Reform

An enthusiastic group of forty-five had the privilege of listening to talks by Fr Tom Elich at the New Norcia Theology and Spirituality Day, Saturday 16th June. Fr Tom, Director of the Liturgical Commission in Brisbane, Editor of *Liturgy News*, and Parish Priest of Bulimba reviewed the fifty years of liturgical renewal and reform brought about by the Second Vatican Council. Fr Tom's enthusiasm and passion was infectious, generating many questions and lively discussion. In these times of liturgical change (particularly regarding the new English translation of the Missal) we were reminded to recall the essential purpose of our liturgical lives – to meet God and one another (as the Body of Christ, the Church) through full, conscious and active participation in each celebration – to be 'doers' of the liturgy.

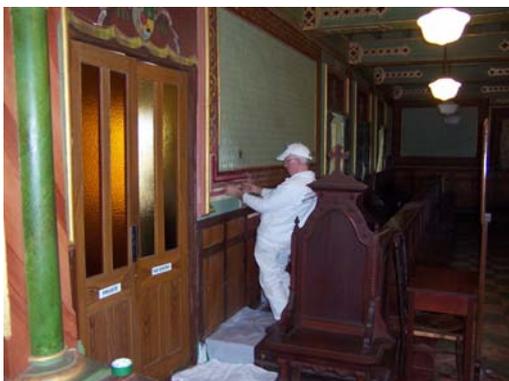


Fr Tom (second from left), Monsignor Kevin Long (third from right) and a group of seminarians from St Charles were among the appreciative audience.

After prayers in St Ild's chapel, participants enjoyed table fellowship during lunch in the Honour Hall.



Spanish Chapel Update



Heritage Painter Tony Van Didden is pictured here hard at work repainting a section of the decorative paint work on the recently repaired western wall...and look what he found after his careful removal of wall paper in the former sanctuary! It was a great relief to restorers and benefactors alike to find much of the art work still intact and, although quite dirty, in reasonable condition. This slow and detailed restoration project is being made possible through the kindness of our *Friends*, to whom we remain truly grateful.

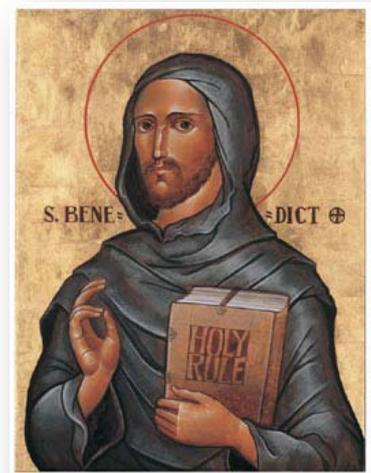
Abbot John's Homily

Anyone who has read the *Rule of St Benedict*, or even made an attempt to begin reading it, would have picked up fairly quickly that in the prologue Benedict is echoing the wisdom tradition of the Hebrew Scriptures, most particularly the Psalms and the Book of Proverbs, as we just heard in the first reading:

“My child, if you accept my words and treasure up my commandments within you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding”... (and so on)... “you will find the knowledge of God... and understand every good path.”

We could say that *listening* and *seeking God* are two essential aspects of the Benedictine life – and indeed of all walks of life from within whatever religious tradition (Christian or otherwise) our listening and seeking takes place.

However, it is so easy to gain the impression that living the Christian life, the Benedictine life, has everything to do with *our* faithfulness, *our* commitment, *our* prayer. Self-effort is only half the story. The biblical story and the life envisioned by the *Rule* speak of the God who seeks us – the God who walks this life with us through the humanity of Jesus and the guiding wisdom of people like St Benedict – the God who in mercy desires fullness of life for us – the God who reaches into the depths of our hearts – the God who, through the Spirit transforms and nourishes us with a balanced diet of monastic prayer, work, spiritual reading, hospitality and community.



So, Christian life, Benedictine life, is less about what *we* do and more about what *God* does for us through our Christian or monastic observance. In other words, it's not so much about living in conformity with doctrine and ethical ideals, or just about belonging to the church and living in harmony with the gospel or the *Rule*...important as these things are. It's more about what impact the presence of the *living God* is having in the stark reality of our day-to-day lives made up as they are of a multitude of experiences and emotions.

To truly give honour to St Benedict on this feast we might ask: Is our Christian life, our Benedictine life, giving glory to God? Is it rooted in the spirit of forgiveness, healing, peacemaking and the building up of the community? Does it include enough silence and solitude for attentiveness to God and openness to the Spirit so that we may be drawn out of our own introspection and preoccupations into true communion with God and our neighbour? Is it fostering a disposition towards humility (to live the truth), towards obedience (to hear and respond to the needs of others), towards stability (to foster growth), towards conversion...to allow our Christian lives, our Benedictine lives, to make a difference, both now and in the eternal life they promise?

St Gertrude the Great



Mandy and Robert Haines visited New Norcia on the 19th July to present the community with a beautiful statue of St Gertrude the Great.

“The statue that we now know to be Saint Gertrude has been in our family since the early 1970s. My father who was an antique dealer purchased her in UK with a view to selling her to one of his customers who was an ecclesiastical specialist in Germany. The statue was taken to Germany where she was much admired and would have been purchased. However the lady dealer my father took her to

said that whilst she would buy the statue, explained that my father should keep Saint Gertrude as she would watch over him and his family and keep them safe. My father not being a religious man but very superstitious promptly decided to take the statue back to England.

Saint Gertrude remained in my parent’s antique shop in Broadstone, Dorset until 1982 when we migrated to Western Australia. My husband Robert and father established an antique business in Cottesloe in 1982 and the statue once again took her place in the shop. I would hasten to add never for sale.

When my father first purchased the statue he understood her to be Saint Teresa of Avila, she is carved from a solid piece of wood, plaster coated and painted, probably made in the 17th century. In the time she has been in our family she has not received any restoration work, only dusting and an occasional wash.

Whilst we operated our business we undertook quite a lot of restoration work in particular to silverware and over the years dealt with a number of pieces from various churches and convents. After quite some years it was suggested to us by one of the nuns for whom we had undertaken some work that our statue may not be Saint Teresa, but possibly another Saint, maybe Gertrude.

It has taken us quite some time to establish for sure the identity of the statue, but with the help of Tony Baker and Graeme Napier we now know she is Saint Gertrude the Great.

It had always been our intention to return the statue to where she ‘belongs’ hence knowing that she is Benedictine it was only right that she went to the community at New Norcia. Our decision to offer the statue was confirmed when we learnt of Saint Gertrude’s college. My husband and I are thrilled that the community at New Norcia have welcomed Saint Gertrude and that she will remain at New Norcia.”

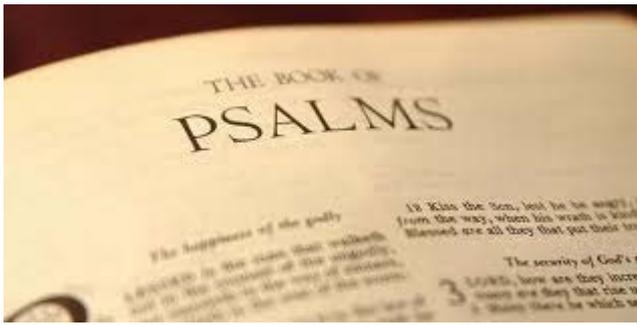
Mandy Haines

Monastery Retreat



The monastic community is looking forward to welcoming retired Bishop Geoffrey Robinson (Sydney) to lead its annual retreat 14-20 August. Bishop Geoffrey is the author of several books – his latest “*Loves Urgent Longings*” is the story of his own spiritual journey in which he speaks frankly and honestly about the Church in all its complexity.

Living and Praying the Psalms



The New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies Annual Lecture was held on Sunday 15 July at 2.00pm in the Seminar Room of the Education Centre here at New Norcia. Approximately 35 people attended the lecture this year. Our guest speaker was Dr Elizabeth Boase. Liz is Co-Director of Biblical Studies at Uniting College for Leadership and Theology, a member college of the Adelaide College of Divinity. She lectures at Flinders University in Old Testament and her research interest is

in the Book of Lamentations and the lament psalms. She has a variety of publications including *The Fulfilment of Doom*, which focuses on the interpretation of the Book of Lamentations. She is currently working on Trauma Studies and Eco-Theology and the Bible and has recently returned from a sabbatical which included conference presentations in both the UK and Denmark. Liz is also involved in ministerial formation for lay and ordained ministries in the Uniting Church and is a regular preacher within the Uniting Church of Australia. The topic of her lecture to the Institute was: *The Cursing Psalms: What are they, why are they there and how do we pray them today?*

Appropriately, we began the lecture with the chanting of Psalm 139.

Liz gave us an exceptionally clear, captivating, and focused critique of the imprecatory psalms and their place within our private prayer, communal liturgy and public worship. Her presentation was challenging and moving, drawing us both into the potential dangers of the use of the cursing psalms and their integral place in mature worship and personal prayer. Question time proved to be lively and further extended our understanding of the importance of these psalms in our relationship with God.

The lecture also coincided with the end of the Annual Benedictine Experience week-end retreat at the Guesthouse which also focused on Benedict's use of the psalms in the Rule and was thus an apt conclusion to the retreat run by Abbot John Herbert OSB and Sr Margaret Malone SCS.

Liz's paper will appear on the website for the Institute in the immediate future.

New Norcia and "The Great Bike Hike", Monday 20th August 2012.



The Great Bike Hike is a celebration of people and places. A team of up to 12 riders, including several **paralymians**, will be cycling nearly 2,500km from Perth to Broome in August and September 2012. New Norcia has been designated a **major stopover & celebration** point for the Great Bike Hike, the schedule of the day is outlined below.

- 3pm The Great Bike Hike arrive at the Education Centre
- 3.15pm Welcome Speeches –Abbot John, Geoff Erickson
- 3.45 pm -5.15pm Activities;
- Activities led by Abbot Bernard Rooney and Dom Greg Scott – Aboriginal Art and tours of the Prindiville room
- Activities with Anna Jamieson –Be Active Coordinator Moora
- A talk by Mark le Flohic –Medal winner at the Sydney Paralympics.
- 5.30pm Complimentary Sausage Sizzle

For more information; Lucy Nicholson on 96 548 018 or office4@newnorcia.wa.edu.au

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO ATTEND AN AFTERNOON OF DISPLAYS, ACTIVITIES, TALKS AND FUN

Opening of “Through the Artists Eye” Mandurah Performing Arts Centre.



Left to right; Paul Thompson, Director of Art on the Move, Jude Savage, Chair of Art on the move, Dom Christopher Power and Ilsa Bennion, education officer , Art on the Move.

New Norcia’s first travelling exhibition opened at the Alcoa Gallery at the Mandurah performing Arts Centre on the evening of Friday 13th July. The Exhibition entitled, *Through the Artist’s Eye. Contemporary Artworks from the New Norcia Collection*, features 25 paintings selected from the Benedictine Community’s large and increasingly important collection of contemporary art. The collection has been steadily developing since the Robbery of old Master works in 1986.

Through the Artists Eye explores New Norcia from a number of different directions –some artists focus on the buildings, others on its history especially Salvado’s work with Aboriginal peoples; the eye of a third group has been attracted by a range of Christian and monastic concepts that lie below the surface of the town but exert a strong and shaping influence on its culture. The exhibition, which was suggested by Paul Thompson, Director of Art on the Move, (the State organisation which tours art and craft shows), was created over the last two years by New Norcia’s exhibitions consultant Joy Legge, collections manager, Margie Eberle and Dom Chris.

Through the Artists Eye, will be on exhibition at Mandurah until 11th August and will then travel to Katanning, Esperance, Geraldton, and Bunbury until mid 2014. While the exhibition is aimed at a general audience, Art on the Move’s, Ilsa Bennion , has prepared a comprehensive education package for primary and secondary students visiting the exhibition. Thanks to Gary Aitken and the Alcoa Gallery around 60 art lovers celebrated the Mandurah opening in great style and, in defiance of the date, the tour was launched without a hitch.

August Events

Spirituality Programme

10th -12th Teresa of Avila and the Experience of God: Abbot Bernard Rooney

The Great Bike Hike visits New Norcia

20th Education Centre at 3pm

Museum and Art Gallery

26th Opening of the 2012 Mandorla Art Awards Exhibition – on display till 23rd September



NEW NORCIA
BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY

Hotel 96 548 034

Join us for our Sunday Carvery



Soup of the Day
With Crusty bread roll
\$8.50

Carvery
Adult \$19.50
Children (under 16) \$14.50

Soup & Carvery
\$26.00

Served 12 - 2.30pm