



Pax, a Latin word meaning peace, is the motto of the Benedictine monks of New Norcia

The Chimes Newsletter



March 2021

Daniel Meers' Solemn Profession

On Thursday 3rd December 2020, Dom Daniel Meers took his Solemn Profession in the New Norcia Abbey Church, and promised obedience, stability and conversion of life, for the rest of his life in this community.

Abbot John made a special welcome to the Little Sisters of the Poor, who brought with them Abbot Bernard, who is now in the care of the Sisters at their wonderful nursing home in Glendalough. He also acknowledged Dom Daniel's family and friends, who due to COVID-19, were prevented from travelling to New Norcia from South Australia.

Please find below the Homily from this joyous occasion.

HOMILY BY ABBOT JOHN HERBERT

When Dom Daniel was clothed as a novice back in 2015, he articulated with absolute clarity the primary reason he presented himself in our midst, through the words of the Prophet Jeremiah:

“You will seek me, and you will find me because you will seek me with all your heart.”

In that joyful moment the monastic community was reminded that the seeking of God is at the heart of every monastic vocation, every monastic community, every monastic endeavour.

Dom Daniel's choice to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit into religious life was not some spur of the moment mid-life decision – it was many years before he came to New Norcia, when he entered the Salesian novitiate. Dom Daniel has never ceased calling on and praying to the Lord for the Lord to make known His plans for him. In other words, Daniel has all along been seeking – with all his heart – God and God's will for him.

Our hopes for Daniel, when he found his home among us, have been realised. He has heard God saying to him through monastic life: “you will find me here”, “I have restored you”, “I have brought you back.”

In these past five years, Dom Daniel has followed St Benedict's primary instruction: “listen with the ear of the heart.” In doing so, he has discovered that this level of listening is tricky business, because our hearts can deceive us. But, through devoting himself to prayer with purity of heart, compunction of heart and intention of heart, Dom Daniel has discerned what is

“good, acceptable and perfect”...although none of us reach perfection. In living with Dom Daniel these past five years we have come to know another remarkable disposition of heart that is so evident in Dom Daniel, an endearing characteristic so welcome in any community, and that is gentleness of heart.



This gentleness of heart has indeed given Dom Daniel the ability to walk his journey towards God in the spirit of the Benedictine Rule, which is, in essence, a way of living in sync with the Gospel of love. Daniel knows that the greatest way of expressing this love is to give up his life, not in some quaint symbolic way, but truly give up his life, in ways that have produced much fruit. As he has done so faithfully, Dom Daniel will spend the rest of his life engaged in prayer, in work, in ruminating upon the scriptures, in showing hospitality, and in serving his monastic community in love.

Dom Daniel will be able to continue doing all this, because he has found the way – and that way has been revealed to him through the scriptures, the scriptures he has been pondering day-in-day-out, and will continue to ponder, because God hasn't finished with him yet.

In the first reading from Sirach we heard:

“My child, when you come to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for testing.”

I'm not sure how prepared he was, but boy has Dom Daniel been tested – by God, by himself, and by his fellow monks. He has accepted what has been dished up to him, with patience and humility and hope – and that's why he stands here now ready to commit...why we stand here with him to affirm his choice. He has remained steadfast, because like the psalmist he has been pleading:

“Make me know your ways, O lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; For you I wait all day long.”

Of course, Dom Daniel hasn't been left to do all this on his own; he was never meant to. All along he has been challenged and affirmed in the stability of this community, which aspires, as the Letter to the Ephesians suggests:

“[...to bear] with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Dom Daniel has chosen a beautiful Gospel in which to make his solemn profession – a post-resurrection story all about pilgrimage, about talking of the things of God, about our failure at times to recognise Jesus in our midst, about inviting strangers into our lives, about the centrality of the Eucharist, about the burning desire in the hearts of each of us, about the mutual support we enjoy in the sharing of the Good News.

This has been Dom Daniel's life in our midst these past years. How blessed are we that Dom Daniel now wants to continue that journey for the rest of his life with us...all we can say is thank you Dom Daniel, all we can promise is hearts burning with love, with pride, and with expectation, until the day when that same risen Lord on that road to Emmaus chooses to bring us all together to eternal life.

Mary Cuper Nominated to WA Women's Hall of Fame

We are delighted to announce that on Monday 8th March, International Women's Day, Mary Ellen Pangieran Cuper was nominated and will be acknowledged in the WA Women's Hall of Fame 'Roll of Honour.'

Since its inception, the WA Women's Hall of Fame has maintained a 'Roll of Honour' to induct women posthumously and ensure that all Western Australian women have the opportunity to be recognised. From the traditional custodians of this land for tens of thousands of years, to pioneer women who made this country their new home. These are women who often faced hardship and loss but did so with determination and resilience and all have made a significant contribution to WA's history prior 1921. Their stories are as varied as they are 'inspiring' and give a great representation of the important part women have always made to Western Australia.

Mary Cuper (1847 to 1877)

Born as Ellen Pangieran in Bunbury to Aboriginal yorga (woman) Yanjipp, Mary was sent to Bishop Salvado's Benedictine mission in New Norcia for education. She married in the district and became Cuper. The commencement of a telegraph line to Geraldton via New Norcia required a full-time telegraphist. Mary Ellen trained for the work and when the position of postmistress at Victoria Plains became vacant in 1873, the superintendent of telegraphs James Fleming reported that Salvado had 'an applicant in a female Aboriginal who is perfectly familiar with the telegraph Code'. Mary Ellen was formally appointed in January 1874 with an annual salary of £30.

You can see the women's journeys at this free exhibition in the City of Perth:

- PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION: Brookfield Place, Tower 1 8 – 20 March, (weekdays only), 7am – 6pm



The Second 'Abbot's Table Dinner' at the New Norcia Hostel

Saturday February 20th marked the second Abbot's Table Dinner. Below is an introduction to the summer menu from the night, written by Abbot John who is overwhelmed by the enthusiastic response to this latest initiative.

The entrée this evening is inspired by my grandmother Alma Molly's version of the classic French farmhouse terrine, which she called 'potted meat', usually made with whatever offal she could procure from the local butcher (he used to give us liver to catch yabbies). She would cook it in a pudding basin in her wood stove, over which she seemed to perpetually preside. After it had been pressed and cooled, she then wrapped it in a linen tea-towel and I'd wait in eager anticipation till she'd turn it out for supper on hot summer nights – delighting in its glistening wobbly amber jellied top – and serve it at the kitchen table with her amazing homemade pickled onions and fresh pickings from Pop's garden – grosse lisse tomatoes and crisp cucumber soaked in brown vinegar and sugar.

Fresh fish is synonymous with summer, and how blessed we are to live in this country where we enjoy it in variety and abundance. These plate-size beauties chosen for our main course are simply baked with New Norcia olive oil, fresh herbs, salt flakes and black pepper. I'm of the strong conviction that negotiating a few bones is worth the flavour achieved when cooking a fish whole... and who said one shouldn't drink red wine with fish? Nonsense; the redder the better. Along with the traditional sauce from Provence, I intended to serve Lyonnaise potatoes...but I suspect most people would (secretly) prefer chips.

A cheese board is an essential part of any French culinary experience and I hope you enjoy tonight's offerings. It is our tradition in the monastery to eat fruit in place of dessert during summer – Ah! what sheer delight to wander into the orchard and pick sun-ripened plums, nectarines, peaches, figs and grapes. Tonight's poached summer fruits, some of which come from the monastery orchard, have been enhanced with a visit to the monastery liquor cabinet.

And from a happy customer:

*To Abbot John and the fantastic team in front and behind the scenes,
A huge and heartfelt thanks to you all for the fabulous Abbot's Table Dinner in February.
The service, food, décor, music and drinks were all first rate.
We thoroughly enjoyed Mass the next day also followed by morning tea and then the gift of a tour with
Fr David of the Hall, Library and Spanish Oratory.
What a weekend experience!
Can't wait now for the next events.
Lesley and Colin Sherry*





A Prayerful and Profound Start for the 2021 NNIBS Retreat Programme

On the weekend of February 26-28, New Norcia hosted its first retreat for the year. Led by Fr. David Barry, the weekend offered an intensive opportunity to re-focus and renew the spiritual life of seeking for God, through the traditional Lenten disciplines of fasting, prayer and almsgiving. These themes were addressed particularly from a Benedictine perspective. The retreat was well supported, with about a dozen participants, many of whom remarked that it was an extremely enriching and prayerful experience.

This retreat marks the commencement of the New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies' programme of events for 2021. Other events in the near future are a weekend on Middle English Spiritual writings on March 5-7, one of our ever-popular Benedictine Experience weekends on March 19-21, and a retreat based on the writings of the great 20th century spiritual teacher, Thomas Merton, on April 16-18.

Please visit the New Norcia website, or email Fr. Robert (institute@newnorcia.wa.edu.au) to make bookings, or for more details.

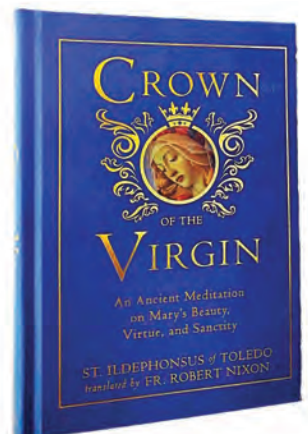
RETREATS COMING UP AT NEW NORCIA

- April 16-18: Thomas Merton as a Guide for our Inner Journey (Silvia Grevel)
- May 7-9: The Sacrament of Silence, Meditation Retreat (Dom Paul Forster, osb)
- June 11-13: The Imitation of Christ: A Spiritual Classic Revisited (Fr Robert Nixon, osb)
- June 25-27: The Blessing of Life's Eventide: Growing Older with God (various monks of New Norcia)
- July 16-18: Benedictine Experience Weekend (#2)
- August 6-8: St. Bernard of Clairvaux: A Spiritual Luminary of the Monastic Tradition (Fr Joseph Chua, ocsb)
- September 17-19: Letting Go (Sr Lilian Bong, sjc)
- October 15-17: Spiritual Biography (Dr James Cregan, University of Notre Dame)
- November 5-7: Benedictine Experience Weekend (#3)

For more information about each of these retreats, or to book, please visit our website at www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au.

First English Translations of Writings of St Ildephonsus Now Available

The American publishing firm, TAN Books, has recently released an edition of the book *Crown of the Virgin* by St Ildephonsus of Toledo. Translated by New Norcia's Fr. Robert Nixon, this is the first time the writings of this widely venerated Spanish saint have been made available in English. The book costs \$39.99 and is available from New Norcia's gift shop or online at www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au



Easter at New Norcia

We are pleased to share with you the Easter Timetable at New Norcia - we would love you to join us for the liturgies of this most Holy Week. There is still accommodation available during the Easter weekend. If you would like more information, please contact Bernadette at the Guesthouse on 9654 8008 or guesthouse@newnorcia.wa.edu.au

Easter 2021 at New Norcia

HOLY THURSDAY - April 1

Mass of the Lord's Supper, 7.30pm

GOOD FRIDAY - April 2

Celebration of the Lord's Passion, 3.00pm

HOLY SATURDAY - April 3

Recital - A Musical Odyssey with Schubert, 10:30am

EASTER SUNDAY - April 4

Easter Vigil 4.30am

Mass of Day 9.00am

Solemn Paschal Vespers 5.30pm

Enquiries: (08) 9654 8018 or information@newnorcia.wa.edu.au



The 28th Ecumenical Carols

In early January a large crowd gathered in the Abbey Church to enjoy the 28th Ecumenical Carols and the beautiful voices of the Georgian Singers. The photos below capture the afternoon perfectly.



Repairs & Maintenance Around Town

The Grounds Team has been busy as always with upgrades and repairs required around town. Here are some of the projects that have been carried out in the past few months.

THE OLD CONVENT

The Old Convent is now fresher and more inviting, with repaired and re-painted walls, new artworks and installed new pieces of furniture. Carmel Murray, Museum and Art Gallery Manager, has breathed new life into the bedrooms by installing fresh new bedding. The building is available for small and larger groups looking for accommodation, for more information please contact Joyce on 9654 8018.



BAKERY UPGRADE

The bakery has undergone major maintenance including the installation of new vinyl floor sheeting, stainless steel sheeting on the walls and a dust hood. These upgrades have allowed the bakery to produce a wider range of products, including hand-made sausage rolls and pasties which are now available at the Roadhouse.

ST ILDEPHONSUS' COTTAGE

Ceilings have been replaced and re-painted, along with the walls. The work is now complete and the building is now available for groups of up to six people. For further information about accommodation in the cottage contact Joyce on groups@newnorcia.edu.au or 9654 8018.



ORATORY ROOF

The roof was damaged and sheets of tin lifted during a storm earlier this year, the same day the monks left for their summer holiday by the sea. Top Gun Roofing and Quicksaf Perth were called in to instal scaffolding, replace the sheets and re-secure the roof.



Photo by Jim Longbottom

Mother's Day

at the New Norcia Hostel

Saturday May 9th 2021

Celebrate Mother's Day this year in the historic New Norcia Hostel!

Join us from 12 noon for a delicious three-course lunch which includes a Spanish bean soup, porterhouse or pork roast, and fruit, trifle or sponge for dessert.

The bar will be open from 11:30 am to purchase drinks.

Visit our webshop at www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au for more information or to book.
Please advise us of any dietary requirements.

Lunch is \$40 per person. Please note, numbers are limited.

Hand-Made Sausage Rolls & Pasties

Now available from the New Norcia Roadhouse! All have been hand-made and baked in New Norcia's original wood-fired oven.



“Une Soirée Française”

An Evening Concert of French Music at the Hostel

On Saturday 13th March New Norcia held its second music concert at the New Norcia Hostel. Guests were given special access to the Monastery Library where they saw historic French maritime books from New Norcia’s Rare Book Collection. They then enjoyed food and drinks and music by Fr. Robert in the Hostel – the atmosphere from the evening was said to be wonderful. The next music concert, the Roaring 20’s, will be held on 19th June. More information can be found on the following page.



IXΘΥΣ

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SAVE THE DATE

Thursday, 27th May

New Norcia Studies 27 launch at the Palms Community Centre - Cnr Nicholson and Rokeby Road, Subiaco

The Mayor, the City of Subiaco and Abbot John cordially invite you to the launch of the 27th edition of New Norcia Studies.

This year we are delighted to welcome Mr Daniel Lynch, The Executive Director, Office of the Archbishop, who has very kindly agreed to launch the journal for us.

More information will be available on our website in April.



WE INVITE YOU TO THE

MUSIC
OF THE
ROARING 20'S



NEW NORCIA HOSTEL

19th June 2021

Come and enjoy the fun, music and food of the 1920's in the New Norcia Hostel, established 1927.

Guests will meet at 6.00pm in the Abbey Church to view the intricacies of our famous Moser Organ, built in Germany in 1922, and explore other features of New Norcia from the era.

Dress code: all things 1920's | Tickets \$60, all inclusive
Visit www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au to book.