

Jamberoo Abbey Newsletter

2012-2013



Photo: Jamberoo Abbey retreat cottages

*I would like for us all...
to have courage,
the courage to walk in the Lord's presence,
with the cross of the Lord.*

Pope Francis

Advent 2012

At the beginning of Advent we were called by God's Word to "stay awake praying at all times". Abbess Mary took this theme for her first Advent reflection: "Have



we remained awake, praying, watching and waiting for the many ways in which God speaks to us and comes to us?

As we allow the words and symbols of Advent to marinate within us let us continue to keep alive the call to AWAKEN and on this Sunday add the ingredient of JOY.

The prophet Zephaniah told us in this morning's reading to

Shout for joy

Exult with all your heart....

For the Lord is in our midst

Not only is Zephaniah exhorting us to be joyful but he continues with an even more amazing phrase:

He will exult with joy over you,

Renew you by his love;

Dance with shouts of joy for you as on a day of festival.

Not only do we rejoice and exult because God is here with us, but God rejoices, sings and more....he dances over us because we are here with him!

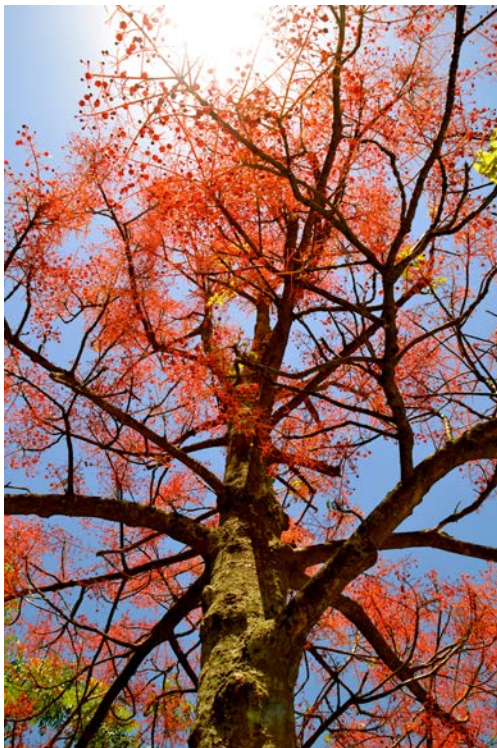
Teilhard de Chardin writes:
'Someday, after we have mastered the winds, the waves and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love. Then for the second time in the history of the world we will have discovered fire.'
As we near the birthday of the Light of the World, we need to look into our souls for the gifts of love and JOY that God has freely given each of us.

Let us STAY AWAKE, PRAYING AND REJOICING so that our hearts are prepared to receive the uprising life force awakening within us and our world at this time so that, within our hearts, we will harness for God the energies of love and discover FIRE.

I would like to end with a passage from St Dimitri . He says:

'To kindle in your heart such divine love, to unite with God in an inseparable union of love, it is necessary for you to pray often, raising the mind to Him. For as a flame increases when it is constantly fed, so prayer, made often, with the mind dwelling ever more deeply in God, arouses divine love in the heart. And the heart, set on fire, will warm all the inner person, will enlighten and teach you, revealing to you all its unknown and hidden wisdom, and making you like a flaming seraph, always standing before God within your spirit, always looking at Him within your mind, and drawing from this vision the sweetness of spiritual joy.'

The Inner Closet of the Heart - St Dimitri, Metropolitan of Rostov"



Before Advent, on November 9th, we witnessed “A Blessing of Commitment”



for Joel Afable Rivera and Georgina Leila Lloyd. Their marriage took place on 1st May 2011, in Cambodia. Georgina (Georgie) is one of Sr. Hannah's daughters.

This beautiful couple, Joel and Georgie, were eager to renew their commitment and to meet our community. Our Chaplain, Fr. Paul Gurr, composed a meaningful ceremony for this occasion.



Just into Advent, on December 5th, Oblate Marilyn Caruana and her husband



Denis, celebrated 25 years of marriage. The couple live in Jamberoo and Marilyn is with us every day for most of the Liturgy of the Hours. Denis and Marilyn are also part of our Sunday Congregation for Mass. Once again, Fr. Paul created a meaningful Ceremony and thanked God for the role models Denis and Marilyn have been through 25 years of Marriage.

On December 22nd, just before Vespers at 5.00 p.m. Mother Abbess received a phone call from Chesalon Nursing Home (Anglicare, Nowra), to say that Sr. Immaculata's condition was deteriorating rapidly. Mother Abbess, Sr. Frances and Sr Mechtild watched with Sister through the night. She died peacefully at 2.30 a.m. on December 23rd.



Sr. Immaculata's Funeral took place on December 28th, during the Octave of Christmas. It was a joyful funeral for one who had given seventy-two years of her life to God. Two of her cousins were present: Frances Killaly and her husband Jim (from Canberra); Vicki Slee and her husband Darryl (from Western Australia).

The Victorian Presentation Sisters (Sr. Immaculata's first Congregation), were represented by Sr. Joan Marshall and her sister, Patrice.



Many of our Oblates who knew Sister Immaculata during her years in the Hermitage, also came to support us.

On January 8th, the potential threat of bushfire saw us forced to evacuate the Abbey. We were some of the thousands of people around the State who were



asked to stay away from bushland and forest areas until the danger passed. We left the Abbey at 8.00 a.m. on January 8th. Some sisters in the fire team stayed behind to turn on the sprinkler system and put the final protection into place if necessary.

Most sisters went to the School Hall in Kiama

where Fr. Chris Roberts generously offered us hospitality. Other generous people who provided accommodation for the night were Narelle Herald, Oblate Cecilia Larkin, Mary-Anne Boyd, Diane Rechs, and Leoni Degenhart. Marion Haigh (who cooks for us during the week) came to the presbytery and provided a meal for us. She also helped to mobilise local parishoners who brought camp stretchers and bedding when it became clear that some of us would have to spend the night there. We were most grateful to all those who helped us in our hour of need. Fr. Chris not only housed nuns, but also three of our dogs! His own dog Paddy, was also the essence of hospitality. Sadly, Paddy died in the Easter Season this year.



With the “all clear” given, we returned (very happily!) to the Abbey on January 9th including our three Cottage guests who had also been housed elsewhere overnight. Upon returning home we had Vespers together informally followed by a meeting to assess the evacuation. We discussed the positives and negatives of the experience with a view to being better prepared for next time.

The heat of January was oppressive and took its toll on most of us. On



January 8th when the temperature soared to 41 degrees many of the gardens were scorched. And yet, even the Gingerlilies managed to flower by February 2nd – just below the scorched tops. Nature is so resilient. On the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, gentle rain began to fall in the middle of the day, easing the heart and the terrible fear and threat of fire. Thanks be to God!

We continued to watch the fires burning around New South Wales, in the Tasman Peninsula and in

Victoria, and to hold all those affected in our prayer.

Sr. Naomie Ruth missed the drama of bushfires and evacuations as she was preparing to fly to the U.K. Sr. Naomie shares:

“I left the Abbey amid the bush fire evacuations on the night of Monday the 8th January, and stayed with my Dad Robert, in Sydney, until my departure for the U.K. on Saturday, January 12th. I arrived at Manchester Airport on Sunday, January 13th.

It was 45 degrees when I left Sydney airport and 5 degrees when I arrived in Manchester airport! I then made the two and a half hour trip by train, bus and taxi to St. Beuno's Ignatian Spirituality Centre in beautiful North Wales. From January 14th – 17th, I attended the Enneagram Workshop led by Irish Jesuit, Fr. Myles O'Reilly. It was very lively, funny and enlightening.

It gave me a greater self-awareness and understanding of myself and those with whom I



Beuno's team. It was a fantastic smorgasbord of creativity – praying with pastels, clay, paintings, symbols, images and sculpture. St. Beuno's has a beautiful Art Space where retreatants are encouraged to try their hand at using art as a medium for prayer. We dipped into many forms of prayer such as imaginative, contemplative, memory, the prayer of Examen, *Lectio Divina*, Centring Prayer and Dreams. Praying the Labyrinth was a new and powerful experience and I felt drawn to it immediately. Yet again I have received a few more gifts, tools and skills for the spiritual journey ahead.



interact – how others think and act, the strengths and weaknesses, the unconscious patterns and behaviours, the core beliefs and assumptions which radically shape our lives. It is a wonderful tool in the spiritual journey.

From January 18th – 23rd I attended another workshop entitled "Creativity and Imagination in Prayer", led by the St.



From January 24th to March 1st, I made the full 30 day Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. This was an epiphany in my spiritual journey and one I will treasure for the rest of my life. The two workshops were a wonderful preparation for this retreat. My time at St. Beuno's was an enriching and transformative experience and it will always remain in my heart as the home of my resurrection.

From March 1st – 15th, I had the joy of spending time at new Stanbrook Abbey in Yorkshire. Mother Andrea and the sisters showered me with their Benedictine hospitality and I felt very much at home, back into the rhythm of monastic life and enjoying the beautiful countryside.



Unfortunately the weather was not so kind during my stay but I did manage to visit Ampleforth Abbey which was indeed grand.

I returned to Australia on 17th March, and spent a few days with my Dad, Robert, before returning to the Abbey on 21st.”

At the end of January, Sr. Magdalen attended a six day silent retreat at the Vaughan Park retreat centre in Long Beach, New Zealand. The retreat was

led by the Rev. Cynthia Bourgeault, an Episcopalian Priest, author and retreat director. Sr. Magdalen shares of her experience as follows:

“Cynthia is well known for her work and teaching over many decades on



Centering Prayer. The Retreat was structured around four Centering Prayer sessions each day, walking Meditation and two rich teaching sessions on ‘The Cloud of Unknowing’.

The technique of Centering Prayer, as many of us know, had its origins in ‘The Cloud of Unknowing’,

and as a basis for her teaching, Cynthia used two translations of ‘The Cloud of Unknowing’: the 1956 translation by Ira Proffoff which was used to highlight the subtle psychological insights of ‘The Cloud’, and the modern translation by Carmen Butcher which allows a more relaxed and accessible reading of the text.

Cynthia, also a Medievalist Scholar, brought to the teaching her own love of, and expertise in, this area of medieval writing. In each teaching session Cynthia teased out the deep and rich teachings inherent in ‘The Cloud’ and integrated them into the practical ‘how to’ of daily centering prayer practice. In this way, the teachings were able to be integrated into the practice, and gave the participants the opportunity to deepen their experiential immersion in the reality of ‘The Cloud of Unknowing’.”

On her return, Sr Magdalen shared the fruits of her retreat with the community. It was obvious that it had been a deeply enriching experience which will continue to unfold in her own life and prayer as well as her teachings and sharings with our guests during the Meditation sessions in the Cottages.



Our Titular Solemnity (February 2nd) fell on a Saturday this year. Bishop Peter always comes to the Abbey on this day if he is able, and celebrated Mass with us at 9.00 a.m. followed by morning tea. We are always grateful for Bishop Peter's presence with us and his support in so many ways.

Lent began on February 13th, and rather flew past us as the focus shifted to the shock resignation of

Pope Benedict XVI, announced two days before Ash Wednesday. Four weeks into Lent, Pope Benedict as we all know, resigned, the first Pope to do so in 600 years. On February 28th, Catholics watched eagerly as the See of Rome was vacated, and a Conclave called to elect a new Pope. 1.2 billion Catholics saw the election of Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio to the See of Rome, on March 13th, 2013. He became the 266th Roman Pontiff. Coming from Buenos Aires, he was one of 115 Cardinals eligible for election. His first statement was to acknowledge the priesthood of the people of God, asking them to pray for him. So, by Easter Sunday, March 31st, the Catholic World had a new Pope – Pope Francis.

In March, Sr. Maureen Therese left for a course in Rome. She shares as follows: "In March this year, I was asked by Abbess Mary to do a course for Monastic Formators.



The most wonderful aspect of the course is that it is held in Italy. We had six weeks in Rome and then a further six weeks in Assisi. It is easily understood why the course is held in Rome, as it is full of history and the beginnings of the Christian Church. To go to Assisi seems odd, as it

is such a Franciscan stronghold, but I soon discovered the significant connection between St. Francis who lived in the 12th century and St. Benedict who lived in the 6th century. St. Francis visited many of the places where St. Benedict either lived or had a connection. In Assisi we visited the Benedictine nuns to whom St. Francis took St. Clare when she was fleeing Rome to eventually join him. It is thought that St. Clare stayed with the Benedictine Nuns for over a year. The Poor Clare Nuns who originated from that first community with St. Clare as their Abbess, are still very strong in number.

One of the greatest gifts I was given during this course was that I was present in St. Peter's Basilica on the night of the election of Pope Francis. There were 23 of us on the course – a mixture of Benedictines and Cistercians. We came from America, England, Australia, China, Nigeria, and Tanzania. We all



spoke English, more or less! I thought it was significant that we encompassed so many Nations, and almost every continent.

Back now to St. Peter's and the election of Pope Francis. The weather was cold and wet. We had initially been in the Basilica attending Mass. One of the Monks pointed out, that the place where we were celebrating Mass was directly under the place where the 5th voting of the new Pope was being held, - in the Sistine Chapel. After Mass we ended up out in the cold square, waiting with thousands of people, hoping that this vote would be the one. And of course it was! When the white smoke went up, the most incredible roar went up from those who could see the smoke. Our group was very close to the balcony where the Pope would eventually appear. We waited for another forty-five minutes in the rain, and truly wonderful it was when Pope Francis appeared on the balcony! This was the most memorable event of the three months I was in Italy.



Now to give you an idea of what the course was about. In a nutshell, it was very challenging! We had a long day, made up of five one hour conferences, as well as Eucharist in the morning, Middle Hour, a rest and then more lectures, followed by Vespers. Meals were also slotted into the Horarium. The day ended with Compline

at 9.00 p.m. The days were full, but so rich in teaching and sharing, not only

with the Lecturer, but most especially with the others on the course – Benedictines and Cistercians from around the world. We had talks on Human Development, Monastic Life, the Desert Fathers and Mothers, Psychology and Spiritual Direction. These were just some of the topics, probably the ones that have been significant for me.

The course has been going for ten years. During this time, three members of the Jamberoo Abbey community have attended this course, and all of us agree that it is an extraordinary experience because of the input and the



historical places which connect us with St. Benedict. To visit both Rome and Assisi, and to spend so much time there has been one of the greatest gifts given to me by my community and especially by my Abbess.”

A couple of weeks after Easter our Chaplain, Fr. Paul, left for the rest of the year – promising to return before Christmas. He had Congregational



commitments and also planned on personal sabbatical time. He has served us faithfully for over 20 years, and never fails to celebrate daily Eucharist with us. He took his “Elijah” with him for some of the time. “Elijah” is his motorbike, not the Prophet! During the time Fr Paul was away, a number of priests graciously offered to

celebrate Sunday Eucharist with us. We are very grateful to all of them for sharing their time and energy so generously with us. Many travelled a long distance to get here and all of them went to great lengths to celebrate our Liturgy with reverence and creativity. Thank you!



Our Sr Benedetta headed off for a 30 days retreat at Canisius College, Pymble. She enjoyed the experience immensely and returned singing the praises of the Jesuits, the retreat staff and the newly refurbished centre in Pymble. It was wonderful to welcome her back to our community, refreshed and renewed.

During our R & R, the Farm changed hands. Lee-Ann Wein and her friend Birdie share as follows: “We came, we saw, we planted – two weeks with



Hildegard of Bingen. Our two weeks with St. Hildegard of Bingen began when the Abbey community started their annual R & R. Birdie, my friend, and I stayed to care for the chickens and ducks at the Abbey Farm. What a fruitful two weeks!

In between collecting the eggs, letting out the chickens, taking the vegie scraps to the compost and putting the chickens away at night, I explored many recipes in the book, 'From Saint Hildegard's Kitchen – Foods of Health, Foods of Joy.' We enjoyed fresh ingredients from the Abbey Farm – spuds, carrots, beetroot, dill, spinach, and tomatoes.

We brewed spiced teas to cure our head colds, and I began to learn how to make sourdough. Birdie is a passionate gardener and spent her days digging in the Vegie Garden. With busy chickens for company, the compost got going again, new autumn beds were designed, we installed an old bath tub and made it a worm farm.



It wasn't long before rows of garlic, broad-beans, peas, onions, kale and leeks were all snugly planted in their new beds. Working amongst the citrus as it started to ripen around us was very exciting, especially the limes and lemonade lemons. The sourdough starter took off, naturally fermenting from yeasts in the air. We made Tamarillo Chutney and Tomato Relish. We enjoyed having our hands in the earth, our faces in the sunshine, and our stomachs full of goodness.



We are so grateful to have been entrusted by the community to spend this time in the Abbey enclosure with St. Hildegard. *'The earth which sustains humanity must*

not be injured, it must not be destroyed.' (St. Hildegard of Bingen)."

News of Bishop William Murray's death came through from the Bishop's Office on April 21st. Mother Mary and Sr. Hildegard went to St. Francis Xavier's

Cathedral on May 1st for the Pontifical Mass of Christian Burial. It was a wonderful show of support for Bishop Murray who, for many years has been in Nursing Home care following a stroke. Bishop Peter spoke magnificently, and Bishop William's niece spoke on behalf of the family. For us, it was an important connection with a Bishop who had presided at the Opening and Blessing of our Abbey on Trinity Sunday, 1989, and who had Consecrated our Monastic Church on April 23rd, 1990.

For the Sisters who stayed at the Abbey, the holiday was of a sombre nature, because two of our sisters were keeping watch with their own mothers who were near death. Mother Mary was at "Chesalon" Nursing Home with her mother Marjie, who was in her last days. Sr. Ancilla was at "Elanora" Uniting Church Aged Care home at Shellharbour, with her mother Shirley who was battling cancer of the bowel.

Marjorie Ethel Barnes died on 16th May, surrounded by her family. Many of us attended her funeral on May 22nd, at St. Michael's Catholic Church, Nowra. Our Sisters played the Organ and sang during the Requiem Mass. Afterwards we joined the family for Marjorie's burial at the Shoalhaven Memorial Crematorium, Worrigee.



Shirley Faye Leech died on 20th July, and was finally free of the terrible pain of cancer. Sr. Ancilla has the ashes of both her mother and father - they died within nineteen months of each other. Fr. Paul will celebrate a farewell Liturgy for both Ancilla's parents in the new year and their ashes will then be returned to the earth here at the Abbey.

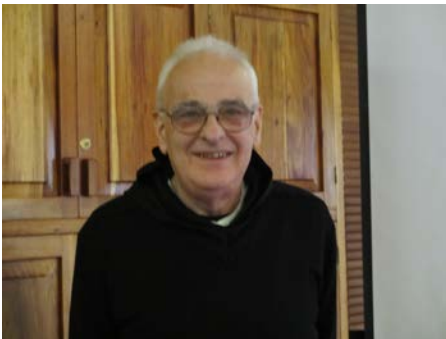


Our Lady's Nurses For The Poor have been closely bonded with our Community for over forty years. This year they celebrated the Centenary of their foundation (15th April, 1913). Commitments in our own community prevented our being present on April 13th for the Centenary Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney. A few days after the Centenary



Mass however, two of the Brown Nurses, Sr. Margaret Mary and Sr. Patricia Lord came for a visit and shared the highlights of the Centenary Mass with us. A group of us were able to be present at St. Brigid's Church Coogee, on June 9th for another Mass of Remembrance and Thanksgiving for a hundred years of service in the Australian Church.

Fr Michael Casey also joined us once again this year to share his expertise.



We are very lucky that Michael enjoys coming to Jamberoo and that he is always so willing to include us in his scholarship. This year Michael focused on the vow of "Conversatio". One of the most interesting aspects of the week was an introduction to what were called "signature activities". These are the specific activities which define us as a particular community. Michael shared his own Cistercian

signature activities and later in the month we spent a number of community meetings, defining and claiming our own as the Benedictine community of Jamberoo. We are always very grateful to Michael for all that he shares with us. It just seems to get better every year!

Sr Agnes-Le has come from our foundation house of Our Lady of the Desert to spend a year with us. It is an absolute joy to have her here to deepen the ties we have with the sisters back home in New Mexico and our brothers of Christ in the Desert. Sr Agnes has entered into our life with great enthusiasm sharing her creative gifts in our Craft Department and her culinary skills in the kitchen! Those of us who love Vietnamese food are delighting in all manner of spicy noodle dishes! She is also taking the opportunity to work on her English and organ playing and learn new skills whilst here. Welcome Down Under Sr Agnes!



Tim Fischer, former Australian Deputy Prime Minister and later ambassador to the Holy See, dropped by one morning in November for a cuppa and a chat!



Tim was visiting friends in Kiama and asked if he could come to meet us. He shared some of the highlights of his time in Rome and presented us with a copy of his book entitled "Holy See Unholy

Me". It was a great joy to meet Tim and talk with him.

On June 26th we welcomed the Benedictine Union here at Jamberoo Abbey for the Annual Meeting. This was only the second time the Union Meeting has been held here and even though we have welcomed the various members individually many times over the years, it was a special



joy to have them with us in an official capacity as representatives of the Benedictine communities in Australia and New Zealand. The meetings took place over three days and included prayer, presentations and input, community reports and in depth sharing.

Sr Veronica's "Blue Sapphire Art Gallery" was officially opened in June this year. You will recall from previous newsletters that Veronica recently completed a fine arts degree at Wollongong University. At the end of this time, she had a significant number of paintings to display and of course, since then, she has continued to produce new works. Many of you have seen her work displayed in the guestry over the past few years and now, she has her own small gallery complete with lighting and a small office. Guests who wish to view the gallery can enquire at the front door. All are most welcome!

This exhibition was titled:
Prayer & Work



Sr. Carmen suffered another fracture to her spine because of her advanced Osteoporosis. She was admitted to hospital in July. Sr Carmen went from hospital to Nursing Home Care, at Ridgeview Nursing Home in Albion Park for a short time. She is now home at the Abbey and celebrated her 90th birthday on 21st December. As always, she enjoyed the celebration immensely and was full of praise and thanks to God for the blessings he has showered on her. Her presence among us gives us great joy! The sisters caring for her feel privileged to be able to spend time with Carmen and give back a little of the love and care that she has shared so generously with us over many years.



TWO SOLEMN PROFESSIONS On July 11th, the Feast of St. Benedict, Sr. Mary Bernadette (Debora Mirayanti Sunarjo) made her Solemn Monastic

Profession. Her friend, Fr. John Hodgson, was



the Celebrant. Her motto, printed on the front of her booklet was: “Jesus I trust You.” Above the motto were the powerful words from Scripture: “I have loved you with an everlasting love.” Throughout her booklet were significant quotations from Monastic and Spiritual writers – words which had spoken to her heart along the journey thus far. Her ceremony, so full of word, symbol and deep joy was very moving.

Sr. Mary Bernadette was supported by some members of her family who had come from Indonesia, and by her many friends from her former parish of Chatswood, North Sydney. Unfortunately, her father who has been unwell was not able to be present but has no doubt seen the video and photos and heard first hand accounts of



the big day! The hundreds of roses in the church were provided by Oblate Cecilia Larkin (for both solemn professions) who also did a large part of the catering. Cecilia was born on the Island of Sumatra, so was well- acquainted with foods which would be suitable for the occasion. We were treated to a great range of Indonesian cuisine both hot and cold!



On August 23rd, Sr. Caritas Rodrigues made her Solemn Profession. Bishop Peter Ingham was the Celebrant and preached the Homily.



Fr. Frank Anderson, msc was with us at the time, and heard one of his own compositions sung by our Schola: "The Galilee Song". This song has always been one of Sr Caritas' favourites.

The cover of Sister's Booklet had her motto: "My Lord and My All. Thank You."

The back page had the words: "Follow Me" with the chorus from the Galilee Song.





This second Solemn Profession was on the same day as Sr. Antonia's 70th birthday. Birthday celebrations were postponed until September 6th, so that Sister's feast day (Our Lady of Solitude) and her birthday could be combined on the one day. It was a beautiful and most memorable celebration with Mass, Morning Tea, a festal Dinner, and Supper together after Vespers.

During Supper Sr. Elizabeth read some of Ella Curtis's Memoirs. Ella was Antonia's mother who died in 1997, and her Memoirs, written

before her death, are cherished by her three daughters and her grandchildren. They are Memoirs of a Woman of the Outback, who worked beside her husband and brought up her family. They tell us what we all know: life on the land is not for the faint-hearted.

Now with her own daughters getting older, the stories need to be told and passed on to her grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. There was also a short DVD of family events from the past. It was accidentally found in the home of one of her sisters, and brought into line with current technology so that we could all enter into the history of this beautiful family.



Just before Advent, on 27th November, many of us set out for Varroville to spend a day with our Poor Clare and Carmelite sisters.



It is some years since we have been able to get together so it was a special joy for the three enclosed communities in the diocese to gather and share prayer, friendship and a lovely meal.

We are grateful to the community in Varroville for hosting the occasion and for the prayerful support of our Poor Clare and Carmelite sisters.



Sr Mary Bernadette went to the Philippines to attend the RB study course with Sr Aquinata Bockmann. Her account follows:

RB Study: Pariter In Christo

I am so very grateful to Mother Abbess and my sisters for giving me the opportunity to attend the RB Study course directed by Sr Aquinata Bockmann



OSB. The course was held at St Scholastica's Centre of Spirituality, Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing, in Tagaytay, The Philippines, from 12th Oct to 6th Nov 2013. It was an intensive study of the Rule of St Benedict from chapter 8–52, with the title “Pariter in Christo”, which means “All Together in Christ”.

I left Jamberoo early in the morning on 10th October and arrived at Manila airport in the evening. There I met with some other sisters from different countries, and also two Benedictine sisters from Tagaytay. Due to traffic, we did not arrive at Tagaytay until about midnight.

There were 42 participants on the course - mostly from the Philippines, and six from overseas: Australia, Namibia, Tanzania and Italy. The horarium was full. We prayed the Liturgy of the Hours every day starting with Lauds at 6.30am followed by Eucharist, Midday prayer, Vespers and then Compline at 8pm. Sr Aquinata gave the lectures from 9 – 11.45 am every day except Sunday, and in the afternoon we had personal and group study.



The lectures were very full and were presented in a very interesting way. We learned not only about the Rule itself but also the sources from which St Benedict drew his materials, such as: Rule of the Master, The Conferences and the Institutes of John Cassian, The Rule of St Augustine, Basil, etc. It was very interesting and helpful to learn and then discuss the similarities and the differences between them in the class the next morning with some comments from Sr Aquinata.

On Sundays we had a rest, and sometimes an outing especially some sight-seeing for the overseas participants. A few days before our final day, we had a full-day outing together in one big bus which gave us an opportunity to deepen the bonds that had grown between us.

The course closed with a program delivered by all the participants in groups. Some wore their national costumes and danced, some sang, and others did role-plays. The topics had to be chosen from what we had learned during the course. It was a very enjoyable night.

In the middle of the course, there was a terrible earthquake in the south of the Philippines as well as bushfires back home in New South Wales. All of us, in Tagaytay, were thinking and praying for the victims in both countries. I left the Philippines on 6th November and arrived back at Jamberoo Abbey on the 7th, a day before the typhoon hit the Philippines. Since then we, in Jamberoo Abbey, have dedicated our prayers for all the victims of the natural disasters especially in both countries for the



whole month of November. At those moments, I felt a real bond between Australia and the Philippines.

Finally, many thanks to the Benedictine Sisters in Tagaytay for their generous hospitality, and to Sr Aquinata Bockmann for her enlightened teaching. Thank you.



OBLATE NEWS:

Oblation Ceremonies took place on May 25th as part of an Oblate Retreat Weekend.

Those who made commitment were:

- Phyllis Rodrigues of Lake Illawarra, N.S.W. Phyllis took the name “Magdalen”.
- Clare Sydenham, of Turrumurra, Nth Sydney. Clare took the name “Therese”
- The Rev. Jeannette McHugh, of Canberra. Jeannette took the name “Therese”.
- Phillip Wilson, of Kiama Downs, N.S.W. Phillip took the name “John”.

- On August 9th, Hilary Scarce from Brisbane made her Oblation. She took the name “Teresa Benedicta of the Cross”, being the feast of St. Edith Stein, and thus an appropriate day to take St. Edith’s name. Hilary was accompanied and supported by her husband Brendan.
- Virgilio Rodrigues of Nowra took the name “Joseph”.
- James Kim. Of Turner, A.C.T. kept his own name because of his spiritual rapport with the apostle James.

OUR SICK:

- On February 7th Sr Agnes was admitted to Intensive Care at Figtree Private Hospital. She was away two weeks or more while her ulcerated leg was attended to professionally and consistently.
- Sr. Frances had a fall during R & R and was taken by ambulance to Sutherland Hospital where she faced surgery on her hip. Following surgery and a time at Sutherland, she then went to Bowral hospital for rehabilitation. It was good to have her closer to the Abbey, so that we could call in and see her more often. Sister has made an amazing recovery from this surgery and is walking as well as many of us.
- Sr. Elizabeth had surgery early this year, receiving the first of two Cochlear Implants. It hasn’t been an easy road but she perseveres with the work of adjusting to the technology. She received the second one in November

REST IN PEACE

Those who have died since our last newsletter:

Sr. Immaculata Briglia: December 23rd, 2012.

Most Rev. William Murray, Emeritus Bishop of Wollongong: April 21st, 2013.

Sr. Monica Musgrave, rsm April 28th, 2013. (Cottage Guest and Community friend for over twenty years).

Marjorie Ethel Barnes: May 16th, 2013. (Mother Mary’s Mother).

Shirley Faye Leech: 20th July, 2013. (Sr. Ancilla’s Mother)

Elfriede Mostowik: 2nd September, 2013 (Fr. Claude’s Mother).

Cornelius Abdipranoto: 9th September, 2013. (Father of Oblate Cecilia Larkin).

Mr David (Aelred) Russell, 7th December 2013, Oblate and dear friend of the community.



OUR CANINE NEWS:

Our two Belgian Shepherds died within months of each other. Mimi was returned to God on November 23rd, 2012. She was 13 years and five months, and was suffering serious illness. "Pets At Peace" took care of Mimi's cremation and when the Ashes were returned, Fr. Paul led us in a burial service.



Mimi's brother Brinkley, died of old age on Holy Saturday night, 2013. "Pets At Peace" came out on Easter Sunday and took Brinkley's body to be cremated.

His ashes were kept until Fr. Paul was available to celebrate another burial. This was carried out just

before July 11th. Fr. Paul came home for a Lay Carmelite Profession and offered to do Brinkley's burial. Sr. Mellitus was grateful. She has cared for these beautiful gentle giants for 13 years, and it was only fitting that they be farewelled with dignity. They lived long lives, probably longer than expected for such a large breed.

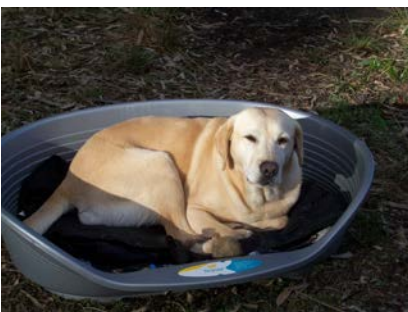


RANI is still with us and still cared for by Sr. Magdalen. She was able to go away with Sr. Magdalen and Sr. Mary Bernadette during R & R, thanks to the Sisters of St. Joseph who gave them a house at Thirroul.

BEAU: During our R & R, Lee-Ann Wein and Birdie looked after and worked on our farm. Lee-Ann's dog, Beau, came along for the change. Lee-Ann has also been staying at our Cottages and helping with the painting of Candles, so we see Beau from time to time.



CORA



Fr. Frank Anderson, who stayed with us for the month of August brought his beautiful Labrador, Cora, who felt right at home. Cora attended Mass and some of the Liturgy of the Hours whenever Fr. Frank was there.

POLLY

Polly is not sure about these huge visiting dogs mentioned above! On a couple of occasions at Mass she raised her voice, just to let us know that she is in charge here! Polly continues to be cared for by Sr Hildegard and is a faithful little friend to her. They make a good pair setting off along the cloister together on the bike!



SCALLYWAG



Scally moved across the border in August and has taken up residence in Geelong but he comes back regularly whenever Jennine visits to help us with candles in the Craft. He loves being back where he is a special friend to many in the community and he behaves as if he is still king of the castle! He also loves being allowed off the leash so he can chase the ducks and rabbits! He continues to live up to his name!

Have a Blessed 2014



Jamberoo Abbey Community