

NOTRE DAME PRIORY

Newsletter

APRIL 2017

QUODCUMQUE DIXERIT FACITE

ISSUE TWO



Holy Week at St Patrick's Church, Colebrook



NOTRE DAME PRIORY'S FIRST HOLY WEEK

We didn't really know what to do. Provisionally accommodated in Lindisfarne with only a tiny house chapel, we were loath to spend there the holiest days of the year. But Colebrook, where St Patrick's Church is at our disposal, is 45 mn away. We could go back and forth every day, but that would have been very time consuming. Could we stay somewhere near? Why not in the town hall? Or under a tent? Enter our dear friends, David and Elisabeth Daintree who graciously offered to accommodate us in their lovely ... shearing shed!



We thought: it can't be worse than Bethlehem, and it will be a great way to experience a little hardship at the time of Our Lord's Passion. Actually, Elisabeth and David did such a good job of dressing up the shearing shed, that it was rather comfortable. We all had beds, mattresses, warm sleeping bags, and there were even a couple electric heaters. We slept well, even if our sleep was interrupted by the chant of the cock,

reminding us of poor St Peter on that first Holy Thursday night, but as we were to rise at 3:30 AM for the office of Tenebrae, we can't say the rooster deprived us of much sleep.

The ceremony of the Washing of the Feet, due to our few numbers, saw the somewhat unusual, if not novel, liturgical practice of the brethren who were having their feet washed being at the same time the cantors singing "Ubi caritas",



while Father Prior knelt at their feet in imitation of Our Lord.

Good Friday saw the ancient monastic custom of solemn prostration before the image of the crucified Saviour.



Holy Saturday, after the morning office of Tenebrae, was spent rehearsing chant for Easter and looking at prospective properties in the area (more on that next month). Our Paschal

Vigil barely got off the ground — the acolyte's flame was nearly blown out as the new fire was already being extinguished for security reasons — we almost had to bless the fire a second time! But just in the nick of time, the fire was saved, allowing the lighting of the paschal candle.

Fr Prior, who, on Holy Saturday afternoon, had started feeling the aches and pains of the virus that had been taunting us for several days, managed to make his way through the over 3 hour vigil. The community then had a small celebration back at the shearing shed before each of us went to take our much deserved repose.

On Easter Sunday, after the *Missa Cantata*, we made our way back to Lindisfarne for the paschal feast, and then celebrated Vespers before the Blessed Sacrament exposed. Glory be to our beloved Saviour, victorious over sin and death —



Alleluia!

Letter from Father Prior

Beloved Friends,

Surrexit Dominus Vere, Alleluia! The paschal triumph of Our Lord Jesus Christ reminds us that life does not end with death, but rather death is the way to life. In the northern hemisphere, this truth is mirrored by the rebirth of nature after the long sleepy death of winter, and so beautifully sung in the *Salve Festa Dies* of Easter Sunday. Here in the southern hemisphere, where I have spent my first Easter, if we do not witness the springtime rebirth, we can appreciate the autumn rains which revive the dried out countryside and lead into the, hopefully, more copious outpourings of winter rain. These of course are only images, destined to help us grasp the essentially spiritual grace of Easter: life is restored to our souls dead through sin, opening for them eternal life with God which we had forfeited by our refusal to serve Him and keep His commandments.

The victory of Easter is also there to remind us that, whatever may be our trials and difficulties, the victory over sin and death has already been won. This is the truth that gave joy and fortitude to the martyrs amidst their torments, perseverance to monks and nuns in the long cloistered dedication of their lives, fidelity to spouses tempted to give up on their family and go elsewhere. It is what gives us confidence to pursue our calling and move forward in trying to build a monastery in Tasmania. An important part of that effort is, at the moment, finding the land where we can put down roots for future generations. Our search is, I think, getting close its conclusion, but I continue to entrust this all-important intention to your fervent prayers. Details on that will hopefully be given in next month's issue...

Among significant events of this past month, we had a visit from the Sisters of the Immaculata (<http://sistersoftheimmaculata.org.au/>). It was a wonderful opportunity to get to know this vibrant young community with whom we share the great longing to see our beloved Saviour known and loved and adored by all, especially by those who at the present moment seem the furthest away. *Thy Kingdom come!*

From 26 April to 6 May, I will be leading a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. This has been in the works for a long while, as I was invited by well-known author and Jewish convert Roy Schoeman to be chaplain, all my fees being provided by Tekton Ministries Pilgrimages in the US. Since I have never been to the Holy Land, I simply could not refuse this once in a lifetime invitation, and am very much looking forward to it. Please keep me in your prayers, and also the brethren in Lindisfarne who, rest assured, will not be left to their own devices, as two good priests are coming to stay with them.

Wishing you and all those dear to you every blessing of peace and joy in the Risen Lord during this paschaltide. Through Mary Immaculate,

Fr Pius Mary Noonan, O.S.B.

To keep up with Notre Dame Priory, visit our website at www.notredamemonastery.org

To make a donation:

Via bank transfer: Commonwealth Bank of Australia - Account name: Notre Dame Priory
BSB: 062-654 Account number: 1024 4562

Via cheque: In Australian dollars, make payable to "Notre Dame Priory" and send to:
Notre Dame Priory, 3 Bay Road (post box on Lowelly), Lindisfarne, Tasmania 7015, Australia

In US dollars, make payable to "Notre Dame Priory" and send to:
Notre Dame Priory, % 1202 Park Hills Court, Louisville, KY, 40207, USA.