

Ab Austro

Newsletter of
Notre Dame Priory

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Priory update

The big event of the last two months was the diaconal ordination of Br Bede. This was the first time one of our monks was promoted to the major order of deacon, and so it was a very significant event in the history of our community.

The ordination took place in St Patrick's Church, Colebrook, on the feast of Our Lady's Nativity, Friday 8th September. Archbishop Julian Porteous presided over the ceremony in choir, while the actual order was conferred by Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett, Bishop Emeritus of Lismore, longtime friend and supporter of our community. This issue of *Ab Austro* contains several photos of the event, for which we give thanks to Almighty God, to Mary Immaculate, to His Grace Archbishop Porteous, His Lordship Bishop Jarrett, and all our friends and benefactors who have helped us reach this milestone, most importantly through their prayers and sacrifices.

There have been, however, a couple other important events. On 2 August, the entire community as well as Father Mark Bachmann accompanied Father Prior to the Kempton Council Chambers where the latter was officially received as an Australian citizen by the Southern Midlands Mayor, Mr Edwin Batt. This was a milestone for Father Prior which we were happy to celebrate with him. Even though he has retained his US citizenship, he is happy and honoured to be an Aussie, and promises to work hard on his accent! We are skeptical, though, because if you can take the boy out of the country, you can't take the country out of the boy!

Our last news item concerns the annual women's retreat at Don Bosco, Lysterfield, VIC, which took place from 21 to 26 August with the participation of 27 women of all ages and walks of life. Our prayers accompany each of our retreatants as they seek to put into practice in their daily lives the insights they receive in making the Exercises.

Brother Chronicler



Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett, Br Bede Mary and Archbishop Julian Porteous

Homily of Archbishop Julian Porteous for the diaconal ordination of Br Bede Mary Cannavo, O.S.B.

Today is a day of joy for this community of brothers, the Benedictine community of Our Lady of Cana, Colebrook, as one of their number is now raised to the dignity of the office of deacon. It marks an important moment in the history of this community as the first brother is called to the ordained ministry.

The Rite of Ordination, ancient in origin, outlines the duties of the Deacon as that of ministry at the altar, baptising and preaching. A deacon is called into a deeper and more personal engagement in the worship of Almighty God in the Holy Mass. The Sacred Liturgy is first and foremost an act of worship. The centre of the Church's worship is the celebration of the Holy Mass.

Worship has a liturgical expression, but its true nature

QUODCUMQUE DIXERIT VOBIS FACITE



lies in the heart of the believer. The Lord reminded the Samaritan woman at the well that the true worship of God is worship “in spirit and in truth” (Jn 4:24).

In his letter to the Romans (12:1-2), St Paul spoke of worship as a complete giving of oneself to God: *I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.* True worship in the Sacred Liturgy flows from a pure heart.

Br Bede, the sacrifice of your own life offered in the vow of chastity and in living in accord with the Rule is the ground upon which you can offer fitting worship to Almighty God, expressed in the sacred Liturgy. A deacon is entrusted with sacramental ministry in relation to Baptism. In the sacramental ministry an ordained cleric ministers the grace of salvation through sacramental signs. While, as a monk, celebrating the Sacrament of Baptism is likely to be a rare event, having this ministry open to you reminds you that you are now, in a special way, an instrument of saving grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

A deacon is also entrusted with the ministry of preaching within the liturgy. He is a minister of the Gospel. It is the mission of the Church to announce the Gospel, to proclaim Christ our Saviour, to call people to conversion of mind and heart. This will be your life’s work. Your life as a monk will give eloquent witness to the importance of seeking first the Kingdom of God. Your words flowing from a heart that



Laying on of hand – “Receive the Holy Spirit”

seeks the Kingdom of God above all will have an efficacy and fruitfulness.

St Paul reminds us in his letter to the Romans (10:14-15) that people will not know how to call upon the Lord unless they come to believe. They will not come to believe unless there is someone to announce the Gospel to them. The people need a preacher, one who is sent to proclaim the Gospel to them. Today the Church commissions you as preacher of the Gospel.

The Ordination Rite reminds us all that sacred ministry has its power and efficacy in and through the action of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the laying on of hands is accompanied with a prayer invoking the Holy Spirit. Here we can recall that it was by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit that the Virgin Mary conceived Christ, the Son of God. The Incarnation came about through the action of the Holy Spirit. Thus, it is true that the ministry of the Church is, in the end, the means by which the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit is made real and effective in the life of believers.

Br Bede, you are aware of the dignity of the office to which you are raised today. May you always be an effective agent of the grace of God flowing through your ministry of Word and Sacrament. The Rite reminds you that the dignity of the Office of Deacon calls upon you to continue to abound in every virtue, to be mild in authority, constant in modesty, to continue to strive for the purity of innocence and



The Ordinand listens to the Bishop’s admonition

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to ensure the observance of spiritual discipline. May you witness to these qualities so that your ministry as deacon will be a constant and steady cause of edification for all who come into contact with you.

Today you place yourself before the Church in the person of a bishop who is a successor of the Apostles who themselves instituted the ministry of deacon. The grace of Orders is imparted to you by prayer and the laying on of hands. And the blessing of God is invoked upon you. You are presented with the stole and dalmatic as signs of your new office within the Church.

Today is a day of rejoicing for the Benedictine community here at Colebrook and it is an encouraging sign to all who love and support this community that it will continue to grow and be a stable presence here in Tasmania. This community is an important witness to all that seeking first the Kingdom of God is the priority for every person.

Br Bede, I encourage you to embrace the words of St Paul and today and always present yourself as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. On this feast, commemorating the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I entrust you to her maternal care and intercession.



Solemn Prostration



Litany of the Saints



The new deacon incenses the Gospel

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The bishops, clergy, sacred ministers, acolytes and community with the new deacon after the ceremony.



Fr Bede with his parents



Fr Prior and Mayor Edwin Batt



Don Bosco Ladies' Retreat

