



GLENSTAL ABBEY CHRONICLE

GLENSTAL ABBEY, MURROE, CO. LIMERICK, IRELAND

ISSUE 28

WINTER 2025

WWW.GLENSTAL.COM

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GLENSTAL ABBEY, MURROE, CO. LIMERICK, IRELAND

Prayer is the foundation of our monastic life and each day in the monastery is centred around times of prayer, together and in private. The backbone of our prayer is the Liturgy of the Hours – sometimes called the 'Divine Office' or the 'Work of God' – where the monks gather in the Abbey church to chant psalms and sing hymns to God, to listen to the Scriptures and to pray for the needs of the world. This daily round of worship consecrates the course of the day and night as the community gathers in the stillness of the morning, at the setting of the sun, and at the closing of the day.

W E E K D A Y S

6:35am: Matins and Lauds (Morning Prayer)

12:10pm: Conventual Mass

6:00pm: Vespers (Evening Prayer in Latin)

**8:35pm: Compline (Monday - Friday: Night Prayer)
Resurrection Office (Saturday)**

S U N D A Y S

7:00am: Lauds (Morning Prayer)

10:00am: Conventual Mass

12:35pm: Sext (Midday Prayer)

6:00pm: Vespers (Evening Prayer in Latin)

8:35pm: Compline (Night Prayer)

Liturgies are broadcast each day as per our daily timetable:

glenstal.com/abbey/webcam/

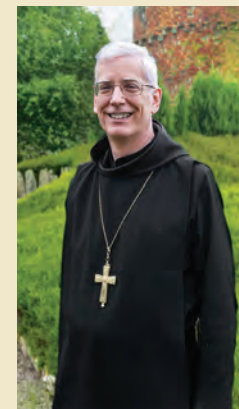
GLENSTAL ABBEY CHRONICLE :: ISSUE 28 WINTER 2025

DESIGN AND LAYOUT: Emmaus O'Herlihy OSB

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COVER IMAGE: *Christ the Blessed Silence* (detail). Christ is shown as a youthful, beardless figure with large angel wings, symbolizing his pre-incarnate existence as the Word of God.

We are perhaps used to hearing those words from the Book of Genesis that we are made 'in the image and likeness' of God. Thinkers over the centuries have mused on what this actually means. Is it our intelligence? Or our freedom?



A key can be found in the very life of God. God is one; and God is three divine persons. What about us? It is easy to forget that humanity is also one. We just think of lots of individuals. But in Christ it is different: humanity is one, and humanity is millions of persons. Human persons, like the divine persons of the Trinity, live only in relationship.

This edition of the Chronicle sees the connectivity of human life: aid to the Church in Kenya, friendship that crosses religious and cultural boundaries, the adventure of ecumenism, even the medieval anchorite apparently isolated and yet in a web of social relationships. The Chronicle itself is just one expression of our relationship with you, the readers, a relationship which we value and cherish.

Abbot Columba McCann OSB

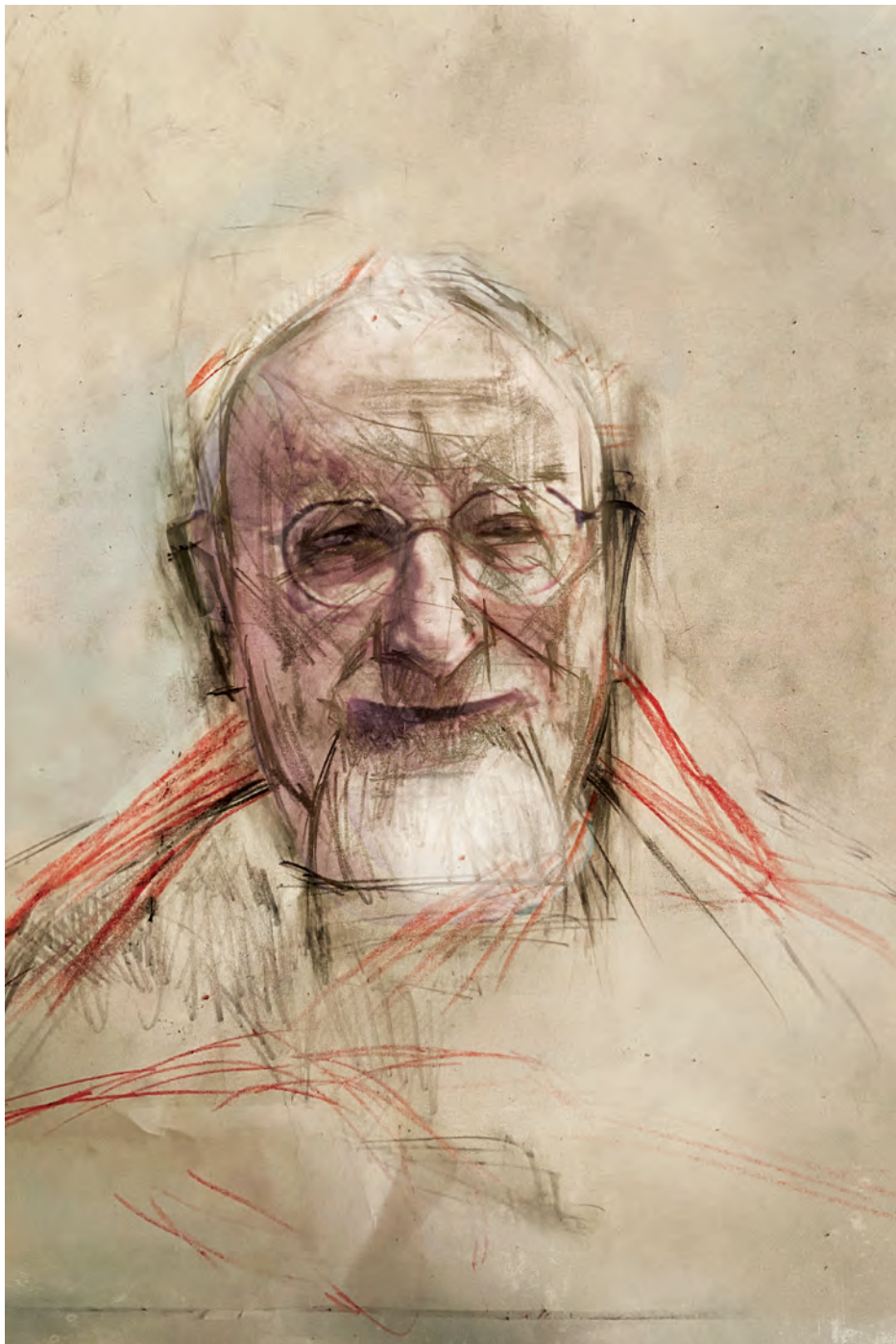


ILLUSTRATION: EMMAUS O'HERLIHY OSB

 IN MEMORIAM

Brother Timothy

Monk of Glenstal 1973-2025

Devoted monk, teacher, and influential rugby coach, Br Timothy OSB served Glenstal and the wider Benedictine world with energy, generosity, and faith, leaving a legacy cherished by colleagues, students, and friends.

Br Timothy OSB, monk of Glenstal Abbey, died peacefully, aged seventy-nine, on Saturday, 18 October 2025.

Edmund Benedict Mary McGrath was born in Dublin on 21 March 1946. Following school at Glenstal from 1958 to 1967, he read

History and Economics in University College Dublin. After graduation, he returned to Glenstal as a lay master and taught there from September 1967 to the end of the school year in 1971, specialising in business studies and in one of the great loves of his life, rugby coaching.

HENRY O'SHEA OSB

In September 1971, Edmund entered Glenstal and was clothed as a novice on 18th of that month, receiving the name Timothy. He made profession on 6 July 1973. Following profession, Br Timothy studied theology in the (Dominican) Pontifical School of Theology in Rome, while living and also studying in the Primatial Abbey of San'Anselmo, the international Benedictine college on the Aventine Hill.

Shortly after his arrival in Rome, Br Timothy began to train a rugby team for the U.K.'s Embassy to Italy and its Legation to the Holy See. His success in this venture drew him to the attention of the Italian rugby authorities. Several of the players, some now senior officials, still attribute the quantum improvement in Italian rugby in these years to Br Timothy's advice and coaching-skills.

Returning to Glenstal in the Summer of 1978, Br Timothy resumed his teaching and coaching roles in the school. He became an

important figure in Irish Schools Rugby, intent on raising standards in coaching and refereeing. His other services to Glenstal were rich and varied: bursar, novice master, joint director of the school with Father Patrick and career guidance counsellor to senior students. One highly appreciated and successful initiative was his organisation of a series of summer camps for boys and girls in the early and mid-eighties, a time when such camps were rare in Ireland. Br Timothy was assiduous in keeping contact with old boys of the school, in particular through the Glenstal Old Boys Society in its various activities and functions.

In the 1990s as a further service to the Congregation – the international group of monasteries to which Glenstal belongs – Br Timothy, accompanied the then Abbot President, Abbot Celestine Cullen of Glenstal, on many of his official journeys. Friendships dating from his time in Sant'Anselmo led to a growing interest in the monasteries of our Congregation in India, most particularly in

Kerala. This led to many visits over the years. In more recent times, Br Timothy took a particular interest in our Eastern European monasteries, most particularly those of monks in Poland and the foundation for women in Ukraine. In later years and while his health

courage and a zest for life, Br Timothy left us suddenly, his passing a profound shock to all who knew him. Only weeks earlier, he had been particularly saddened by the death of his brother Leo. On Saturday, 25 October, a large crowd joined his natural and

**Under thy great sky in solitude and silence,
with humble heart shall I stand before thee face to face?**

**And when my work shall be done in this world,
O King of Kings, alone and speechless
shall I stand before thee face to face?**

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

permitted, Br Timothy became interested in the Holy Land and Egypt and in the cultures and religious heritages in the Middle East.

Facing up to significant illness over the last ten years with

monastic families in bidding him a final farewell at the funeral Mass. Leo's ashes were placed beside the coffin at Mass and both were buried at the same time, Timothy in the monastic cemetery and Leo in the Garden Cemetery. ■

I Have Called You Friends

How our differences, once sources of division, can become openings to friendship – friendship with one another, and ultimately with God, who invites us into deeper communion.

Wandering through the ancient ruins of Babylon earlier this year, I began to think about the kind of encounter that draws us into deeper knowledge of one another, and ultimately into friendship with each other and with God. Babylon

is a fitting place to begin such a reflection, for it was here – according to the biblical story – that humanity once spoke a single language and sought to reach the heavens in the Tower of Babel. In response, “the Lord confused the

JUSTIN ROBINSON OSB



THE ICON OF CHRIST AND ABBOT MENA, C. SECOND HALF OF THE 6TH CENTURY, LOUVRE MUSEUM, PARIS, FRANCE

language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth" (Gen 10:9).

It seems we have been trying to get acquainted with one another ever since. A verse in the Qur'an interests me in this regard, as it claims God has made us "into peoples and tribes so that you may know one another" (49:13). That our very differences might serve as an impulse to get to know one another is an intriguing thought. An interesting reversal of the confounding of languages and scattering of peoples at Babel is Pentecost, when the pilgrims in Jerusalem find common understanding. Pentecost gives us the first glimpse of the unity of humankind made possible by the Spirit's action.

In getting to know people better and cultivate friendships, some have questioned me as to whether a monk ought to have friends at all, and whether monks should maintain distance from others in order to remain detached from the world. A Benedictine response

would surely urge moderation: recognising that some level of seclusion is necessary for a life of prayer, with healthy boundaries that safeguard interpersonal relationships. Yet friendship also has its rightful place. As the late Abbot Timothy Wright OSB observed, "holy people are enriched when supported by men and women of like-minded faith who are able to share insights with them." Friendship, rightly ordered, does not diminish the monastic vocation; it deepens it. This understanding echoes the thought of Aelred of Rievaulx, for whom friendship took on something of the divine: "here we are, you and I, and I hope that Christ makes a third with us. No one can interrupt us now... So come now, dearest friend, reveal your heart and speak your mind."

Such a discussion on friendship is timely as we prepare to celebrate the Nativity, when God seeks and invites friendship with mankind through the Incarnation. In salvation history the narrative of God's initiative and human response unfolds, with the

incarnation of Jesus Christ a crucial moment in this story. It is in God's becoming man that we may be united to God as a loving friend. Here it is that Thomas Aquinas writes of how "friendship is based on a certain equality... those who are very unequal cannot be united in friendship. And so, that friendship between man and God might be more intimate, it was well for man that God should become man" (SCG IV.54).

one another that we encounter the divine spark in the other, opening a path that can ultimately lead us to God. Saint Benedict seemed to share this insight, famously instructing his monks to receive Christ in the guest and thus recognising the Christ to be befriended at our door. Though not mentioning friendship directly, the good zeal written about in Rule might serve as a sort of blueprint for friends: showing respect to one another,

In learning to know one another, we learn something of God, who invites us into friendship.

If divine friendship is the aim of those seeking to know, love and serve God, what of friendship between us mere mortals? Why not focus on befriending God alone? Aelred of Rievaulx recognised something of the divine in friendship, and we may even dare to speak of God as friendship itself reflected in the mutual love shared between the three Persons of the Trinity. It's in getting to know

having patience with each other's weaknesses, mutual obedience, and pursuing what is best for the other rather than for oneself.

All of this sounds rather agreeable in theory. Yet friendships can be hard – fraught with difficulties, open to misunderstandings, sometimes dangerous to boundaries, and often an effort to keep alive. Still, they are worth

it because in friendship we have the chance not only to know ourselves and one another more deeply, but also to know God, and to forge a path together toward Him. In a world where people are becoming ever more isolated, disconnected, and marginalized, cultivating friendships is more important than ever. Friendships that reach across divides and build bridges are particularly vital,

With you, in learning Arabic, I learned above all to speak and understand the language of the heart, the language of brotherly friendship, where races and religions commune with each other... For I believe that this friendship comes from God and leads to God." It takes many years of patient, generous effort to live in another culture: to learn its language, encounter its religion, understand



especially with those of different cultures and religions. Might we even go so far as to ask if interfaith friendships might teach us something of God too?

Pierre Claverie OP offers us a compelling answer. Addressing his Algerian Muslim listeners at his episcopal ordination, he said: "I owe to you also what I am today.

its way of thinking, and befriend its people. Pierre Claverie did precisely this with such sincerity that the people of Oran called him "the Bishop of the Muslims." Thousands attended his funeral after his assassination in Algeria in 1996.

Cultivating these kinds of interfaith friendships can be difficult but

necessary – especially abroad, where encounters between religions may be rare, and at home, where shifting demographics make them increasingly common. During a recent visit to Saudi Arabia, a friend turned to me and said, "You know, you're the first and only foreigner and Christian that I've known." Our friendship would have been impossible had

interreligious dialogue both arises from friendship and, in turn, deepens and strengthens it. It was Babylon's ruins that reminded me how we have long struggled to understand one another across the lines of language, culture, and faith. Yet it seems the very scattering at Babel that once divided us can become – through patient encounter with the help

In a world where people are becoming ever more isolated, disconnected, and marginalized, cultivating friendships is more important than ever. Friendships that reach across divides and build bridges are vital.

I not learned to speak his language, both of speech and of heart, and had we not spent time patiently trying to understand each other's cultural and religious differences, our varied histories, and our distinct ways of seeing the world. Over time, our friendship has grown to be deep and genuine – despite our significant differences – and we have each grown within our own faith as a result. In this way,

of the Holy Spirit – the ground on which friendship is built.

In learning to know one another, we learn something of God, who invites us into friendship. Thus the Tower of Babel becomes not an ending, but the impetus for encounters that draw us into deeper knowledge of one another, and ultimately into friendship with each other and with God. ■



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BUILDING HOPE

JOHN O'CALLAGHAN OSB

"Giving without hope of return..." (Luke 6:35)

2025 saw the completion of a few little projects in Africa. Firstly the parish of Magadi in southern Kenya completed its church building project, with furnishings. This took

at least seven years as funds were scarce. Only a little help was given by Glenstal but at last the Catholics have their own church; having a non-denominational building

available was causing tensions with other groups, especially on Sunday mornings. (Photo No. 3)

Secondly, two sanitation blocks were funded for two schools. The Catholic Mount Carmel Primary school is very poorly situated and indeed is collapsing into a river and there is no space provided for sports. There are only fifty pupils - but they nonetheless need proper sanitary latrines. Thanks to a

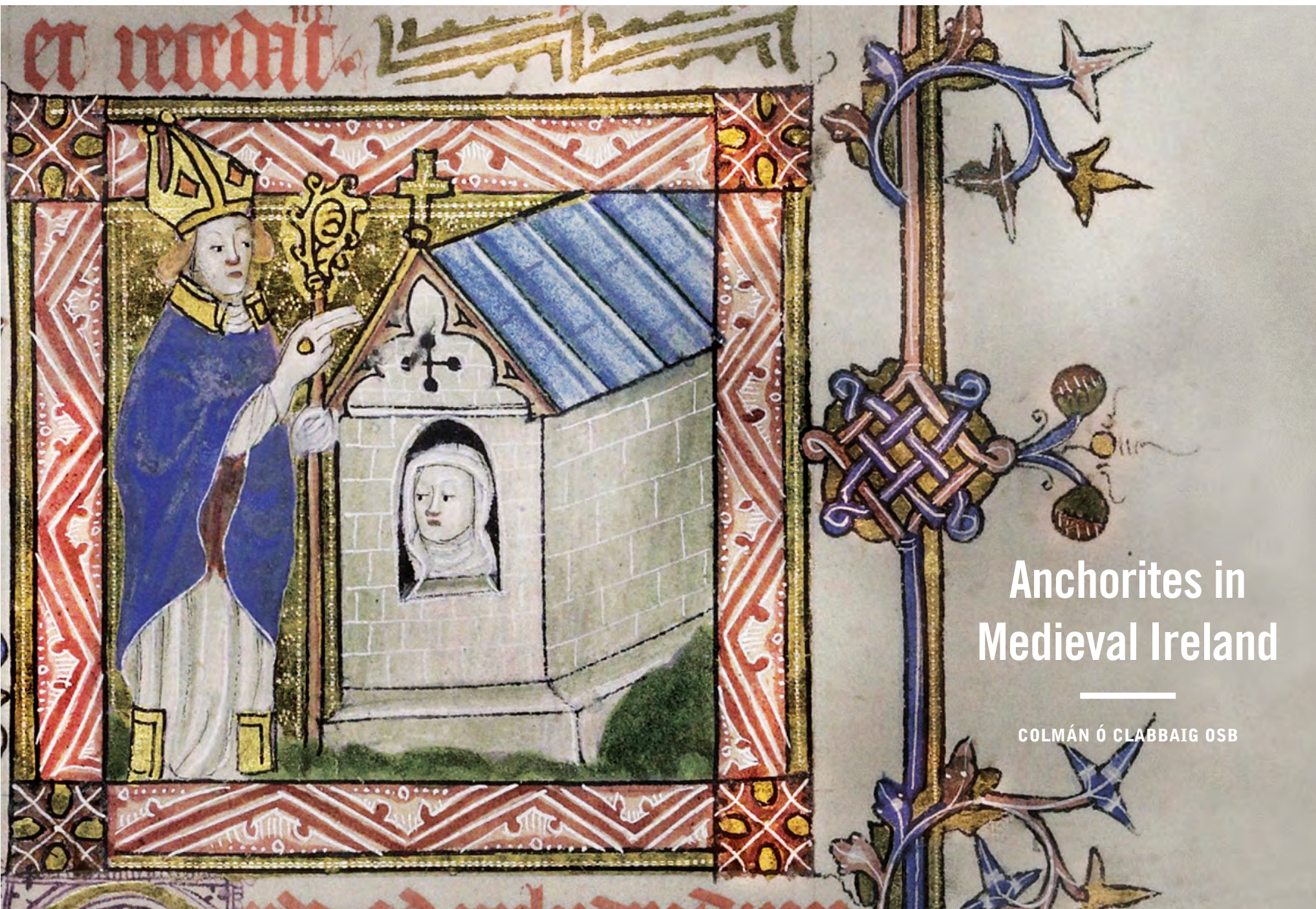
to school and back home every day since there is no boarding facility. Until a Glenstal Oblate couple heard about it there was a just a shed with two dilapidated latrines for all persons. Thanks to the Oblate couple, conditions improved. (Photo No.2)

Finally, a classroom project was completed. Use was made of a space between two former classrooms that could easily be

The small but transformative projects completed this year in the Magadi region of Kenya have brought dignity, safety, and renewed hope to local communities.

donation they now have three good ones. More such latrines were also constructed at Komitii school, in the region of Magadi. This has 268 young people (113 girls and 155 boys) and fourteen teachers. Nine are employed by the government and five paid by parents. The catchment area is approximately 10km radius. Most students walk

transformed into a good class room. That happened to the delight of students and teachers alike! (Photo No. 1: 'Opening day' with students and my colleague 'Joel' snipping the ribbon.) We thank those who contributed. Every cent donated reached its target which means donors also achieved what they intended. ■



Anchorites in Medieval Ireland

COLMÁN Ó CLABBAIG OSB

The vocation of an anchorite or recluse is the most austere form of the monastic vocation. Under ecclesiastical supervision, its practitioners commit to a life of radical solitude, prayer, fasting and asceticism within the confines of a small cell known as an anchorhold. It is now rarely undertaken, although it remains an option for members of Camaldolese Benedictine communities.

famous of these is the mid-fourteenth-century mystic Dame Julian of Norwich whose book *Revelations of Divine Love* is one of the most beautiful works of Christian spirituality as well the earliest surviving English language text attributed to a woman.

The experience of these medieval recluses is increasingly attracting scholarly attention. This interest

Women, in particular, were drawn to this solitary life and many of these anchoresses became renowned as spiritual guides.

The most famous of these is the mid-fourteenth-century mystic Dame Julian of Norwich

Despite the demanding regime, anchorites were once common on the religious landscape of medieval Europe and exercised a profound spiritual influence on their contemporaries. Women, in particular, were drawn to this solitary life and many of these anchoresses became renowned as spiritual guides. The most

extends to Irish recluses and the forthcoming publication of three previously unknown texts relating to the anchoritic life in medieval Ireland is a significant development.

The texts were discovered in by Dr Donna Thornton of UCC who kindly drew them to the attention

of Br Colmán and Fr Senan in 2005. The restrictions imposed by the COVID pandemic provided the ideal opportunity to transcribe, edit and translate the texts which have been published in the current edition of the journal *Archivium Hibernicum*.

The texts are contained in Maynooth Manuscript RB 201, a compendium of religious texts transcribed in Drogheda in 1627 by Dr Thomas Arthur (1593–1675), a celebrated medical doctor and antiquarian from Limerick. The original documents from which they were transcribed formed part of the library of Archbishop James Ussher (1581–1656), Anglican archbishop of Armagh, a noted booklover and one of Dr Arthur's patients. Preserved today in the Renshan Library, St Patrick's College, Maynooth, the volume is a substantial codex measuring 30.5 x 19.5 cm, containing 249 pages and written on paper in a clear secretary hand.

In addition to the anchoritic material discussed here, the volume contains the lives of thirty

early Irish and British saints and a copy of the *De Statu Ecclesiae*, an important twelfth-century treatise on Irish church reform by Bishop Gille of Limerick (d. 1145).

THE ANCHORITIC MATERIAL

The first text consists of a previously unknown Rule for anchorites composed by Canon Godwin of Salisbury in the first third of the twelfth century. Little is known about Godwin other than that he was precentor of Salisbury cathedral and was thus responsible for overseeing the liturgical life of the cathedral and supervising its library. An inscription on his tomb at Old Sarum cathedral indicates that he was ordained by St Anselm (1033/4–1109), archbishop of Canterbury, and that he was already precentor by c.1122 when he witnessed a charter issued by Bishop Roger of Salisbury (d. 1139). He was part of a circle of scribes and scholars who fostered a lively intellectual and theological culture in Salisbury and was particularly interested in the theoretical and practical aspects of the anchoritic life.

The second document provides an abbreviated form of the liturgical rite by which an anchorite was consecrated to his or her life of solitude. It focuses on the period when, after Mass has been celebrated, the candidate was led to the anchorhold by bishop or prelate, the cell was blessed and the candidate was enclosed within. The rite of anchoritic profession combined elements of the funeral

were ever used in Ireland, they do give a clear indication of how the anchoritic life was conducted and overseen.

THE ANCHORITE'S LIFESTYLE

Canon Godwin's rule consists of a prologue, twenty-eight short chapters and a colophon and is written in a warm and affectionate

For all the emphasis on solitude and separation, the anchorite existed at the centre of a web of social relationships.

liturgy and the rite of religious profession and frequently included the blessing of an open grave within the anchorhold where the anchorite would be buried when they died.

The final document, dated 1401, gives the text of the formula used by an anchorite when making profession of vows. While there is no indication that these texts

style. It gives a remarkable insight into the lived experience of the anchorite's vocation. Recognising the demands of the recluse's calling, the author is at pains to counsel moderation when it comes to ascetic practices like fasting, abstinence and keeping vigil. Likewise, while warning against extravagance in clothing, he advises that the anchorite should wear enough to keep warm. He also

admonishes against abusing alcohol and over familiarity with members of the opposite sex. Godwin is particularly concerned that the recluse avoids listening to or relaying gossip and that both they and their servants behave in an upright and edifying manner.

of their cells on three days of the week and to observe silence until after the service of Prime has been celebrated each morning. He also forbids them from acting as custodians of the property of others in their cells.



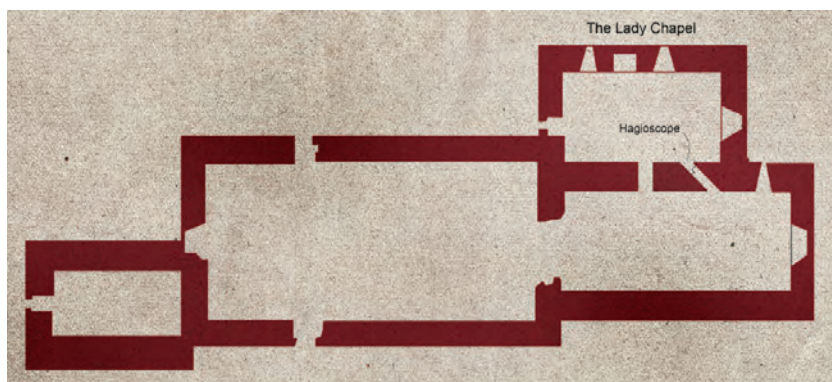
Hagioscope or squint of the anchorite's cell at Athassel Priory, Co. Tipperary.

These references demonstrate that, for all the emphasis on solitude and separation, the anchorite existed at the centre of a web of social relationships and Godwin is keen that they maintain an appropriate balance and decorum in social and pastoral interactions. Godwin urges his listeners to avoid receiving visitors at the windows

Manual work within the cell is encouraged as long as its primary motivation was not greed. The text is addressed to male and female anchorites and makes provision for both literate and illiterate candidates. Those who could read the psalms or the Hours of the Virgin Mary were encouraged to do so while those who could not were

urged to mark the different hours of the Divine Office by multiple recitations of the Our Father. He expected, however, that everyone would be able to recite at least some psalms and prayers by heart.

services and communicate with servants and visitors. Godwin's references to altars and windows in the anchorhold presumed an environment wherein the ancho-rite communicated with servants



ABOVE: Anchorhold at Kilkea church, Co. Kildare. RIGHT: PI 12 The rite of enclosing an anchoress from Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 79, f. 96 (detail). © Parker Library, Corpus Christi College Cambridge.

THE ANCHORHOLD

The peculiar demands of the anchoritic vocation gave rise to a distinctive architectural form: the anchorhold or *reclitorium*. These generally consisted of small cells abutting the northern side of churches with an internal altar and windows through which the occupant could follow church

and visitors through an external window while an altar or shrine within the cell provided a focus for personal devotion and recollection. Surviving examples of Irish anchorholds like those at Athassel, Co. Tipperary, and Kilkea, Co. Kildare, also have internal window ('hagioscopes' or 'squints') that looked into the church building thereby enabling the occupants to

observe Mass and the Divine Office being celebrated within the church building.

CONCLUSION

While the very idea of voluntary lifelong incarceration will strike most people as either perverse or pathological and few are likely to be drawn to this lifestyle, the insights of the anchorhold may have something to teach us. As the modern human lifespan increases, particularly in the developed world, it is likely that most of us will spend long periods in solitude towards the ends of our lives. Finding ways to use this solitude creatively and purposefully is a challenge but a contemplative regime of prayer, reflection, intercession, gratitude and presence in an increasingly frenetic and alienated world has much to recommend it.

In an age of anxiety, the ability to offer the assurance that, in the words of Julian of Norwich, 'all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well' could well be the message the world needs to hear. ■





PHOTOS: VATICAN MEDIA

Together as One

Working in the Vatican office for Christian unity has shown Fr Martin a quieter reality behind the curial stereotype: daily collaboration, shared prayer, and unexpected moments of grace across Christian traditions.

For the past three years, I have been working in a Vatican department named the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity. I'd be the first to admit that it's not exactly a mellifluous title. Added to that, the very idea of the structure of which the Dicastery is a part, the Roman curia, puts a lot of people off. The curia is often portrayed as a shadowy bureaucracy, removed from the real life of the Church,

but always conspiring and plotting for power and control. The reality, in my experience, is much more ordinary. The curia is simply a collection of departments which exist in order to support the Pope's ministry in the Church. It exists to help the Bishop of Rome in his service of the servants of God.

The job of my Dicastery is to develop and build the Catholic

MARTIN BROWNE OSB

Church's relations with other Christian communities, and to encourage ecumenical awareness and action by Catholics. My principal tasks include relations with Anglicans, Methodists and the Salvation Army, along with the preparation of the annual Week of

Father that his followers would be one and so working for Christian Unity is a response to his prayer.

2025 has included some particularly memorable moments. Being in Rome at the time of the death of Pope Francis and



PHOTO: REVd TARA CURLEWIS

Prayer for Christian Unity. A lot of that work is very ordinary, with lots of meetings and intense theological work. It is interesting and often demanding, and I believe it is important. On the eve of his Passion, Jesus prayed to the



PHOTO: VATICAN MEDIA

the election of Pope Leo was an incredible experience. The interest and solidarity of the leaders of so many of our ecumenical partners was profoundly moving. We know that the office of Pope has long been a point of division between the

Catholic Church and other churches. Despite this, Christians were united in mourning Pope Francis and in praying for Pope Leo, thus testifying to a deep unity that transcends difference.

More recently, two more ecumenical guests came to Rome – King Charles III and Queen Camilla. Many world leaders visit the Pope, but this visit was especially significant, since King Charles is Supreme Governor of the Church of England. I was privileged to be intimately involved in the planning and celebration of the two religious services during their visit. Praying in the Sistine Chapel with the Pope on my right and King Charles on my left is not something I will ever forget! Later, in the Basilica of St Paul outside the Walls, which is both a Papal Basilica and a Benedictine abbey, an ancient link between the basilica and the English monarchy was revived, when the King was welcomed as a Royal *Confrater* (brother). He was seated in a chair which will remain in the basilica permanently as a reminder of his visit. I joined the schola of

the Benedictine community at St Paul's in singing the Gradual chant, *Ecce quam bonum* – "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" It was a deeply moving moment.

Just over a week later, Pope Leo proclaimed Saint John Henry Newman a Doctor of the Church. Before he was a Catholic priest and cardinal, Newman was a priest of the Church of England. The sermons that he preached as an Anglican clergyman in Oxford, later published in several volumes as *Parochial and Plain Sermons* are among his most important writings. These 'Anglican' writings form part of the treasury of Newman's theology that was assessed before his proclamation as a Doctor. It was a powerful ecumenical sign and many Anglicans rejoiced in it.

At the beginning of the Mass, the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints recalled that the petition of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales requesting that Newman be declared a Doctor,

was accompanied by “the fraternal support of the Church of England”. He was referring to a letter to Pope Francis from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in February 2024, in which they said “we hold Newman to be a truly ecumenical theologian

at the Mass, and the Pope highlighted the ecumenical significance of the moment:

“Following the historic prayer meeting with His Majesty King Charles III, celebrated a few days ago in the Sistine Chapel, your presence today expresses our



PHOTO: VATICAN MEDIA

whose thought, like the early Doctors of the Church, will continue to shape the way in which the faithful think about their faith, discipleship and ecclesial home for generations to come”.

The Church of England was represented by several bishops

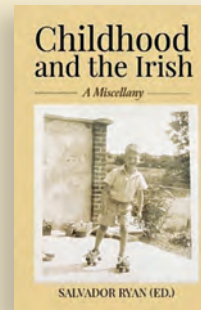
shared joy at the proclamation of Saint John Henry Newman as a Doctor of the Church.”

As we continue to share each other’s joys and sorrows, may our churches grow ever closer and thus fulfil the desire of the Lord Jesus for his followers. ■

Abbey Updates

1,500 YEARS OF IRISH CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE

Childhood and the Irish: A Miscellany is the latest in a series of themed books published by Wordwell Press. Edited by Professor Salvador Ryan, St Patrick’s College, Maynooth, it contains eighty short essays dealing with all aspects of the experience of childhood in Ireland from the early Middle Ages to the present day. These include a chapter by Br Colmán entitled ‘Children of the Cloister: Instructing the Youth at St Thomas’s Abbey, Dublin,’ which explores the educational programme offered by the community of Augustinian Canons to their students there in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Seeking to form them in ‘morals and manners’, the Canons relied heavily on a text known as *Urbanus: The Book of the Civilised Man*. This covered, in unflinching detail, every social situation that a young man might



encounter and gave candid advice on how to deal with it. It makes for highly entertaining and somewhat surprising reading as Br Colmán shows in his analysis. *This book is available from the Glenstal Abbey Shop.*



NEW FACES IN THE CASTLE’S FRONT ARCHWAY

Two badly weathered corbels in Glenstal Castle’s front archway were recently replaced with new carvings by stonemason David Weir. One depicts Winnie Barrington (left), daughter of Sir Charles Barrington, who died on 14 May 1921 following an IRA ambush at nearby Coolboreen. The other represents Mrs Dolores McCall (right), an extraordinary benefactor to the monastic community at Glenstal whose

generosity has made the castle's restoration possible. It is fitting that these two women now greet all who pass beneath the archway: Winnie, whose death altered Glenstal's history, and Dolores, whose quiet intervention saved a deteriorating structure.



GLENSTAL SCHOOL RAISES FUNDS FOR MILFORD HOSPICE

School Captain Peter Purcell and vice Captains Jack O'Riordan and Sonny McCartan presented a cheque to Milford House for €5,760.20 on behalf of Glenstal Abbey School following the Coffee Morning fundraiser held in September. Sincerest thanks to everyone who contributed to such a worthy cause, close to the hearts of many of us here in Glenstal.

MONASTIC FORMATORS PROGRAMME

We congratulate Br Colmán Ó Clabaigh on his appointment

as coordinator of the Monastic Formators Programme at Collegio Sant'Anselmo. Held biennially in Rome and Assisi, this twelve-week course trains monks and nuns responsible for formation.

PAINTINGS: THE HUMAN BODY'S BOLD BECOMING

Featuring a collection of paintings by Br Emmaus O'Herlihy, this 150-page coffee-table book is animated by the early Christian conviction that 'the flesh is the hinge of salvation.' Bringing theology and art into vivid conversation, *Paintings* explores the implications of the Word made flesh and the role of the human body in Christian faith. By placing its emphasis on physicality, vulnerability, and the human form's openness to grace, this book aims to expand the visual imagination of faith and invite fresh insight into the Gospel's call to life.

Available online at glenstal.com and Glenstal Abbey Shop from 15 December. ■



Glenstal Abbey Garden Cemetery

Glenstal Abbey Garden Cemetery provides a prayerful and peaceful environment for the interment of cremated remains. Each plot can accommodate one or two urns and is marked by a plaque of local grey granite for engraving individuals' names and dates.

Selecting a cemetery and space is an important decision. Advance planning gives you peace of mind and shows care and concern for your family for whom the final arrangements become less of a burden.

If you have questions or would like to arrange a personal tour, please email us at gardencemetery@glenstal.com or call the Bursar's Office at 061 621045.

ONLINE NEWSLETTER

Bringing you the latest news, views and events from the monks of Glenstal Abbey at the start of every month.

To receive your online newsletter, please complete the form on our website via this QR code.

