

## May 2025 News from St Benedict's Priory

This past month, Br Mpumelelo was able to enjoy time with family and friends in KZN, including a visit to the Sisters of the Community of Jesus' Compassion. After his return, our monastic community enjoyed a braai lunch together while celebrating Br Mpumelelo's birthday with him. Earlier that same weekend, we had also enjoyed a time of celebration of Esther de Gruchy's birthday together with her family and friends.

Br Josias hosted a first online session of South African Associates meeting together to begin discussing the book, *A Hidden Wholeness (The Journey Toward an Undivided Life)* by Parker J Palmer. The Associates will continue the book discussion on a monthly basis. Br Josias continued to spend time at the local Ithemba special-needs centre most weeks.

Br Aelred participated in another module of the online Spiritual Direction course he has been attending. Brothers continued to provide spiritual accompaniment to individuals online.

The annual Volmoed Colloquium took place earlier this year, in May, to coincide with the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, which produced the Nicene Creed, the subject of this year's Colloquium. We hosted the Colloquium group to our Vespers prayer on the Friday evening, and they attended our Eucharistic celebration on the Sunday morning, which was also graced by the presence of a contingent from the nearby Camphill special-needs community. Individual guests continued to attend our daily chapel prayers.

The local Anglican archdeacon responded enthusiastically to our query regarding the possible availability of properties in the local Diocese. He lost no time in arranging for us to view a couple of sites, and generously hosted us to a meal in his home.

Br Roger met online with the Order's Council in preparation for our annual Chapter gathering. There were also annual reports to be written and budgets to be drawn up. Most of our monastic community departed on the last Monday in May, making our way to our Holy Cross Monastery near West Park, in upstate New York in the USA, which is where I am as I write this. We arrived some days before the meeting officially starts, to spend time with the community here while in their normal rhythm of life and prayer.

While there will be no daily chapel prayer at Volmoed in our absence, Br Daniel and Rev John de Gruchy between them will ensure that the Sunday morning Eucharists continue.