



## **Shared Benedictine tradition underpins support for Jamberoo Abbey January 1, 2025**

Jamberoo Abbey is to receive a range of support from within the Benedictine family and beyond as it moves through a time of transition towards a thriving and sustainable future.

Abbess Hilda Scott OSB announced in December that, as she was approaching her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, she had resigned as Abbess, effective from December 31, recognising that “the time has come to hand the reins on to others”.

Through its membership of the English Benedictine Congregation (EBC), the Jamberoo Abbey community voted to enter into a ‘Structures of Congregational Support’ arrangement to support the Sisters as they undertake a period of reflection and work towards the election of a new Abbess.

During this period, Sister Catherine McCahill SGS, the Congregational Leader of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan of the Order of St Benedict, has been appointed by the Abbot President of the EBC, with the agreement of the Jamberoo Sisters, to be Administrator of Jamberoo Abbey from January 1, 2025.

While not residing at The Abbey, Sr Catherine will be a regular visitor and said she is looking forward to being able to accompany the Sisters during this time.

A recent visitation by the Abbot President of the EBC, Abbott Christopher Jamieson OSB and Mother Franziska Lukas OSB from Dinklage Abbey in Germany, highlighted some of the challenges being faced at The Abbey, including substantial maintenance and repair issues.

Sr Catherine said the overwhelmingly positive response to a fundraising appeal launched this year to begin addressing these maintenance issues reaffirms the special place that The Abbey has in the hearts of so many people who have spent time there seeking God, some time out, and the love and hospitality of the Sisters, amid the natural beauty.

She said the new arrangements would embrace and continue to build on that support.

“Within the EBC there is a structure for monasteries that need support. Other monasteries have been through this process of accompaniment and have gone on to elect a new Abbess or Abbot and move forward,” Sr Catherine said.

The links between the two Congregations go back to the mid-1800s when the first Archbishop of Sydney, the Benedictine monk Archbishop John Bede Polding, established the monastic community of Benedictine Sisters in Sydney and later co-founded the Sisters of the Good Samaritan to care for the needs of women, children and others on the margins in the fledgling colony. They continue to have close ties, including through membership of the Australian Benedictine Communion.

Sr Catherine said she was delighted to be able to continue their longstanding relationship of mutual support.

“I see my role as walking beside the Sisters so that they come to a point where they can elect an Abbess and have the right structures in place to underpin their future flourishing,” she said. “The Abbey is home to 20 wonderful and gifted monastic women living a rich tradition of Benedictine life and I am looking forward to being a companion to them during this time of transition.”

Sr Catherine said she would be assisted in her role at The Abbey by Good Samaritan Sisters Clare Condon, Patty Fawkner and Kerin Caldwell, along with lay people from varying fields of expertise.

**Further enquiries: [abbess@jamberooabbey.org.au](mailto:abbess@jamberooabbey.org.au)**