



SAINT BENEDICT

AWAKEN WITH A
RULE OF LIFE

week

2026

STUDY DAY - AGENDA 17-18TH JULY 2026



ST BENEDICT WEEK STUDY DAY - AGENDA 17-18TH JULY 2026

The theme of the day is “**Awaken with a Rule of Life**”.

Since 2023 the LCSB has been organising a celebration of St Benedict coinciding with the 11th July feast, known as St Benedict Week <https://www.lcsb.uk/st-benedict-week>. The LCSB are dedicating the activities of 2026-2029 to preparation for the 2029 Jubilee Benedictine celebration (1500 years since the foundation of Montecassino). The Jubilee theme for 2026 is “Awaken!”

Time	Event	Who	Where
17th July Rule of St Benedict exhibition			
15.30	Gather	All	Julian Centre, UEA
16.00	Keynote talk by the curators of the Rule of St Benedict Exhibition	Dr Ed Krčma, Associate Professor of Art History, UEA and Dr Jessica Barker, Senior Lecturer in Mediaeval Art, Courtauld Institute	Julian Centre, UEA
17.00	Visit the Rule of St Benedict Exhibition	All	Sainsbury Centre, UEA
18.00	Private reception (with cocktail snacks and drink)	Very Reverend Peter Collins, Bishop of East Anglia will welcome us	Sainsbury Centre, UEA
19.30	Return to hotels/optional dinner at Cote Norwich 8pm	All	Bus, taxi or car. Lifts encouraged
18th July Study Day			
09.00	Coffee and welcome	Weston Room in Norwich Cathedral, the eleventh century Norman masterpiece	
09.30	Introduction and agenda	Adam Simon, Leader of the LCSB	Weston Room
09.35	Welcome - the Benedictines in Norwich – life in the Rule	Canon Peter Doll, Canon Librarian at Norwich Cathedral	Weston Room
09.45	Awakening the Benedictine heart - formation into a Rule of Life	Abbot Javier Aparicio Suárez, Abbot President of the St Ottilien Congregation and Abbot Brendan Thomas of Belmont Abbey	Weston Room
10.45	Living the reality of the novitiate	Fr Luke Jolly, Novice Master, Worth Abbey and TBA	Weston Room
11.15	Tea and coffee break		
11.45	Panel discussion	Abbess Anna Brennan of Stanbrook Abbey and Abbess Anne Clarke of Malling Abbey	Weston Room
12.30	Break for lunch		
13.45	Inviting people to Christ – the catalyst of a Rule of Life	Daisy Inglese, Discipleship & Digital Coordinator, LCSB	Weston Room
14.00	Young people’s panel	Daisy Inglese & others	Weston Room
14.20	In the world with a Rule of Life: the Lay Benedictine vocation	Martha Byrne Hill, Oblate of Ampleforth Abbey	Weston Room
14.40	Lay Benedictine panel	Canon Jane Winter, Malling Oblate; Neil Zoladkiewicz, Chair UK Oblates Team; Mike Woodward, LCSB; Lucy Matheson, Ampleforth Oblate,	Weston Room
15.05	Closing comments	Adam Simon	
15.15	Close		
15.30	Evensong		Norwich Cathedral

COST

Attendance	Cost
Attendee 17 th and 18 th July (includes visit to Rule of St Benedict exhibition plus food and drink), excludes hotel which needs to be booked by participant	£85
Study Day only 18 th July	£50
Booking link	St Benedict Week Study Day - Booking



Young St Benedict, Worth Abbey
 Sculpture by Richard Watts (Member of the LCSB)
 Photo by Mike Woodward

ATTENDEE BRIEF

1) Welcome & purpose

This day invites you to explore a Benedictine Rule of Life—rooted in prayer, work, community, and hospitality—and to leave with a simple, practical rule you can live.

2) Venues & movement

Morning & main sessions: Norwich Cathedral 65 The Close, Norwich NR1 4DH (Weston Room & Cathedral spaces)

Prayer: Vespers in the Cathedral (seating available; office sheets provided)

Exhibition tour: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts (UEA campus)

Getting between venues: Walking, bus and taxi options available. Volunteer stewards will guide groups and coordinate lifts as needed.

3) Accessibility

Step-free access available at all venues; accessible toilets on site.

Hearing loop in main session room (ask stewards for best seating).

Seating provided during the exhibition tour; please speak to a steward if you need priority seating or a wheelchair space.

If you have accessibility needs not covered here, tell a steward or the registration desk on arrival.

4) Food & hospitality

Lunch (study day): Sandwiches/salad buffet with vegetarian/vegan and gluten-free options.

Please inform us at registration if you have additional dietary needs.

Refreshments: Coffee/tea served at arrival and during the morning break. Water available throughout.

5) What to bring

Water bottle (refill points available)

Notebook & pen (or use the worksheet provided)

Light layer (Cathedral spaces can be cool)

6) How we'll participate

We'll keep a gentle Benedictine rhythm: brief moments of silence after talks; timekeeping that honours the speakers.

To ask questions: write them on provided cards or raise your hand during Q&A.

Mobile phones to silent; photography discreet and not during prayer.

7) Quiet & prayer spaces

Side chapels are available for silent prayer. A priest or spiritual companion may be available for conversation.

8) Safeguarding & wellbeing

Please wear your badge in all spaces and follow steward directions.

If you feel unwell or need assistance, speak to any steward. First aid is available.

9) Contacts

General enquiries: Sharon Power admin@lcsb.uk

On-the-day lead: Adam Simon leader@lcsb.uk

RULE OF ST BENEDICT EXHIBITION

Living by the Rule: Contemporary Meets Medieval

Sainsbury Centre, Norwich, 16 May – 4 October 2026 [Living by the Rule](#).

Exhibition Introduction by the Curators

Living by the Rule asks: How are our daily lives organised at their most granular and habitual levels? According to what priorities, and subject to which forces? What is the relationship between art and both the following and breaking of rules? And what models from the deep past might be drawn upon to shine a new and strange light upon present realities?

The Rule of Saint Benedict has proved one of the most enduring guides to shared living in world history. It was written in the 6th Century, during a period of extraordinary political turbulence, and offered a framework for a radically different kind of life. *Living by the Rule* will explore the way in which such a deeply meditated model places pressure upon the structure and priorities of everyday life today. As Lorraine Daston has recently explained, the idea of a 'rule' encompasses not just explicit laws, but also principles, guidelines, and norms. She has shown how, with its insistence upon discretion and the authority of practical experience, the Rule of St Benedict has provided a model of extraordinary suppleness and longevity, almost unparalleled in the history of institutions. Yet this kind of 'thick', flexible rule - full of caveats, examples and exceptions - has been displaced in modern times by a proliferation of thin, rigidly applied, and minutely specific rules and regulations that are divorced from and even hostile to subjective involvement. How might Benedict's rule, in both its appeal to contingency and in the content of its central principles - community, stability, measure, and obedience - bear upon today's highly administered and unsettled times?

Living by the Rule is curated by Dr. Jessica Barker, Senior Lecturer in Medieval Art at the Courtauld Institute, and Dr. Ed Krčma, Associate Professor of Art History at UEA, specialising in modern and contemporary art. Bringing together extraordinary objects from medieval monastic contexts - manuscripts, misericords, architectural fragments, church furnishings, and sculptures - and contemporary works in a variety of media, the show will vividly present the richness and complexity of the dialogue between medieval experiments in a different way to live, and modern reflections upon how life is (and might yet be) organised. In this we propose neither to idealise the medieval past nor to demonise the present. The monastic experiment, as it gained in power and influence, soon became caught up in the gears of the world, with its inequalities and structures of exploitation, and there are surely many reasons to remain hopeful in what can appear a frightening present.

The exhibition will be organised into sections that explore both the histories and principles of the monastic rule (measure, stability, obedience, etc.), and everyday practices as they were articulated in relation to key spaces within the monastery. These are: the refectory (communal eating and drinking, shared vessels, consumption), the cloister (reading and writing, walking, connective space); the chapter house (organisation, authority, discipline), and the choir (Divine Office, work, shared song, transcendence). Medieval selections are guided by a focus upon specific monastic communities at particular moments in their history (Canterbury, 11th and 12th centuries, and Norwich 14th and 15th centuries, for example). Contemporary works have been chosen for how they respond to rules and rule cultures today, whether it be in their subject matter, their formal structure, or the way they were made.

Contemporary Artists

- Pavel Büchler
- Andrea Büttner
- Moyra Davey
- Tacita Dean
- Melanie Gilligan
- Vivienne Koorland
- Samuel Levi Jones
- Susan Morris
- Kate Pickering
- Elizabeth Price
- Ingrid Pollard
- Alison Turnbull
- Lucy Skaer
- Christopher Stewart
- Danh Vo
- Richard Wright
- Charlotte Zinsser

Manuscripts (all loans agreed in principle— not complete list)

- Rule of St Benedict, the oldest surviving copy in the world, c. 690 (Bodleian MS Hatton 48)
- Rule of St Benedict, owned by Canterbury Benedictines, c. 975- c. 1025 (BL Harley MS 5431)
- Eadwine Psalter, owned by Canterbury Benedictines, c. 1155-60 (Trinity College MS R.17.1)
- Thorney Computus, 1110, Thorney Abbey (St John's College, Oxford, MS 17)
- Gorleston Psalter, owned by Norwich Benedictines, 1310-24 (BL Add MS 49622)
- Ormesby Psalter, owned by Norwich Benedictines, 1250-1330 (Bodleian Library MS Douce 366)
- Instructions for the cellaress of Barking Abbey, c. 1453 (BL Cotton MS Julius D VIII)
- Inventory of the plate in the monastic refectory, Canterbury, 1462-86 (Canterbury Cathedral Archives CCA-DCc/Inventory/34)

Sculpture/Objects/Decorative Arts (loans in train— not complete list)

- Canterbury Cathedral portable sundial, C10th (Canterbury Cathedral)
- Sculpted heads from the choir screen/cloister, C12th (Canterbury Cathedral)
- San Zeno Wheel, Verona (Benedictine monastery), c. 1450 (currently with dealer, London)
- Misericord from Gloucester Cathedral, Wyvern Collection.
- Rochester Mazer, owned by Rochester Priory, 1532 (British Museum)
- Sculpted capitals from the Romanesque cloister, Norwich Cathedral (Norwich Cathedral)
- Dragon head and warrior from the Ethelbert Gate (Norwich Cathedral)
- Seals and seal box (Norwich Cathedral)
- Ely Cope, 1470-1500 (Ely Cathedral)
- Wooden choir canopies, C14th (Ely Cathedral)
- Etheldreda Panels, owned by Ely Benedictines, c. 1455 (Society of Antiquaries)

NORWICH CATHEDRAL AND THE RULE OF ST BENEDICT

Norwich Cathedral was founded in 1096, but the history of the see of East Anglia goes back to the Burgundian first bishop St Felix, who arrived around 630. The see had a peripatetic existence before the Normans chose Norwich to be the principal town of East Anglia. Herbert de Losinga had been Prior of Fécamp and Abbot of Ramsey, and he founded Norwich as the final iteration of that uniquely English phenomenon, the cathedral-priory. The cathedral was completed in 1135 and remains the most complete Romanesque English cathedral.

Although the monastic community was dissolved in 1538, its transition to secular cathedral was almost seamless. One night the prior and monks went to bed as a monastic community, but the next day the same men became the dean and canons of the new foundation. Unlike Reformed cathedrals in other parts of Europe, English cathedrals retained their personnel, structures, and *raison d'être* to a remarkable degree. Worship, learning, hospitality, and charitable work remained the heart of their vocation.

At least from the second half of the nineteenth century, deans and chapters of Norwich have explicitly cited our monastic heritage as an inspiration for mission and ministry in our own day. At that time the Chapter began restoring historic chapels and altars for use. A stained glass window of Benedictine saints was installed in 1960. In 1995, Chapter decided it would no longer rest content with simply maintaining the existing fabric of the Cathedral. It was determined to take the risk of starting to rebuild on the ruined monastic foundations in order to enable mission and ministry for the 21st century. A new Refectory and Library Reading Room opened in 2004 and with the Hostry (2009, originally the guest house and now a visitor and education centre) remain the largest building developments at any ancient English Cathedral since the Reformation.

The renewed Benedictine identity is not simply a matter of buildings. The Rule of St Benedict is read daily at Evensong and our working ethos is based on the monastic vows of stability, mutual obedience, and conversion of life. St Benedict's injunction that every visitor should be welcomed as Christ is the inspiration of our volunteer welcomers. Such foundations are ever more necessary as the Cathedral's life becomes ever busier. In addition to its clergy and employed staff, more than 500 volunteers enable it to fulfil its mission of worship, hospitality, and learning to more than 600,000 annual worshippers, pilgrims, and visitors. As in the Middle Ages, the Cathedral is always looking for ways to innovate, using the latest technologies in its buildings to support its mission. New music is composed and performed. New art is commissioned to enhance the Cathedral and inspire its worship.

At the heart of its existence, in the offering of prayer and praise, nothing essential has changed. Ever since the foundation of the Cathedral, morning and evening, whether in the dark stillness of dawn or the warmly lit intimacy of Evensong in the Choir, the same petition emerges out of silence: *Deus, in adiutorium meum intende. O God, make speed to save us.* The same immemorial responses are said and sung to their appointed end, the present generation keeping faith with Herbert de Losinga's intentions and with those who have gone before and those who will come after. Norwich Cathedral stands to express a conviction that in the midst of an every-changing world, God in His love and faithfulness for his creation never changes.

Canon Peter Doll



Norwich Cathedral



The Bauchon Chapel,
Benedictine window



The Peace Globe



The Weston Room, Norwich Cathedral



The Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia

