



COMMUNIO ROMANA

Newsletter of the Premonstratensian College in Rome

June 2026 | No. 2

A House for *Communio*

Dear Friends in Christ,

Passing through the central cloister of Collegio San Norberto, our eyes are naturally drawn to the vibrant set of eight stained-glass windows masterfully crafted by artist Andreas d'Orfey between 2004 and 2009. At the heart of this collection stands our principal patron, St. Norbert, flanked by St. Augustine of Hippo and Blessed Hugh of Fosse.

While Norbert holds a central place as the founder of the Premonstratensian family, he does not stand alone. His window is part of a broader story, surrounded by those who went before him, those who walked alongside him, and the countless generations—including us—who follow after him today. Ultimately, all of us follow Christ.

Two specific details in the windows of Augustine and Hugh beautifully reveal the charism of our Order as a whole and the particular gift this Collegio is called to offer to its current and former students.

First, the window of St. Augustine depicts him wearing his episcopal mitre, which features the figures of John, the beloved disciple, reclining upon the breast of Jesus. Second, Blessed Hugh of Fosse is shown holding a church building. Upon this structure is an image of the disciples gathered at the Last Supper, highlighting once again the moment where Jesus and John console and comfort one another on the night before the Crucifixion on Calvary.

These artistic details express for us that every Premonstratensian house is meant to be a sanctuary where community is built according to this precise model of Jesus and John. John is formed for mission by drawing close to his friend and God. Yet, even in his weakness, John is given the profound dignity to be a source of delight and encouragement to the very God from whom he awaits every blessing.



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It is precisely for this intimacy between God and us that our Premonstratensian houses exist.

Naturally, a Roman College is a residence for those assigned to study in Rome. Yet, beyond each student learning in his respective university or Athenaeum, these Roman residential communities are also contexts for revelation and education.

Arriving with rich personal histories—which can often include periods of pain, discouragement, and even failure—the young clergy and religious who reside here learn to lean on the strong arms of the Eucharistic Christ. By listening to the movements of his Sacred Heart, they are likewise led to give thanks in every circumstance.

This is a reality I happen to know intimately. Before being named rector in 2024, I lived here as a student from 2004 to 2007 when I was a junior professed Norbertine—coincidentally, just as these beautiful windows were beginning to be produced.

While my three years in Rome were a wonderful time in my life, my second year, for a variety of reasons, was quite difficult. During that time of trial, the chapel and community of Collegio San Norberto became a true refuge for me. It was here that I was schooled in very precise lessons of trust in Christ's love that helped me navigate the difficulties of that year, as well as many subsequent challenges in my priesthood.

It is my deepest hope that this house continues to be that same sanctuary today. Here at Collegio San Norberto, we strive to open our hearts so that God may transform us into a living communio of love. In this space, God's servants from all over the world can learn through experience that we are truly more than servants—we are friends of God, and friends to one another.

In the heart of Christ,

Claude Williams, O.Praem.

Father Claude Williams, O.Praem.
Rector





St. Norbert, Angel of Peace and Devoted Son of the Roman Pontiff

Fr. Ignazio Ibarra, O. Praem.

On June 6, our Collegio, together with the entire Norbertine Order and the universal Church, celebrated the feast of our Holy Father, Saint Norbert. During the festive meal, a guest asked what I most admire about him. Without hesitation, two titles from the novena I have prayed each year since my novitiate came to mind: "Angel of peace and restorer of concord" and "devoted son and faithful servant of the Roman Pontiff." This year, these invocations resonated in a particular way being in the eternal city.

A little over a year ago, the eyes of the world were fixed on the loggia of Saint Peter's Basilica, awaiting the new Vicar of Christ. When Pope Leo XIV appeared, his first words were simple and profound: "Peace be with you all." Since that moment, his pontificate has been marked by a deep and persistent call to peace. He invites us to become disciples of peace, to cultivate it, and to pray for it, "a peace that is unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering. A peace that comes from God, the God who loves us all, unconditionally."



The life of Saint Norbert offers a striking witness to this same mission. Living in an age marked by feudal violence and division, he traveled tirelessly across Europe to reconcile enemies, heal broken relationships, and restore harmony among peoples and families. For this reason, he is often depicted with an olive branch, a sign of his role as peacemaker. Yet he was more than a skilled diplomat. He was truly an "Angel of Peace," capable of touching hearts hardened by conflict and leading them toward reconciliation.

The sources recount that before entering into disputes or mediations, Saint Norbert dedicated himself to prayer and fasting, often bringing with him relics of the saints. His effectiveness did not come merely from the diplomatic experience he gained at the imperial court, but above all from his intimacy with the divine court of Christ, the Prince of Peace.

In our own world, so often marked by division, violence, and a growing indifference or even hostility toward peace, we are invited to turn to Saint Norbert. Through his intercession, may we receive the grace to become true peacemakers, steadfast amid the storms of our time, and to walk as true children of the Prince of Peace.

Saint Norbert was also a devoted son and faithful servant of the Roman Pontiff. He consistently sought the Pope's guidance and blessing for his mission and for the Order of Prémontré. As a bishop, he defended the freedom of the Church with courage and fidelity. Notably, he worked to restore unity during the conflict between Emperor Lothair III and Pope Innocent II, firmly supporting the legitimate pontiff against the antipope Anacletus.

His example calls us to deepen our filial love for the Holy Father and to make our own his desires and intentions: to live in communion, to build unity, and above all, to become instruments of Christ's peace. Our Holy Father Saint Norbert, pray for us!

Frater Ignazio Ibarra Juárez, a native of Mexico, is a junior from St. Michael's Abbey in Orange, USA, where he entered in 2020. He is currently serving as secretary to the rector of the Collegio. He arrived in Rome at the beginning of the summer 2025 and completed his Master's degree in Theology this past May.



Audience with Pope Leo XIV. Foto: Vatican Media

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*May we receive the grace to
become true peacemakers, steadfast
amid the storms of our time.*

”





Mother's Day Mass at Domus Australia (May)

On Mother's Day, the Collegio community, accompanied by the Abbot General, gathered to pray for all our mothers—both living and deceased—and to honor the Mother of God under her title of Our Lady of the Rosary.

The community traveled to the Chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary at Domus Australia, where they were warmly welcomed by the Rector, the Very Reverend Joseph Hamilton. Father Isaiah Kawczynski, O.Praem. served as the main celebrant for the Mass, and the Abbot General delivered the homily.



Ecological Stewardship at Borgo Laudato Si' (May)

Several members of the house recently visited Borgo Laudato Si', where they were given a guided tour by Father Juan Gutierrez of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The visit offered a deeper look into the mission of ecological stewardship within the Catholic tradition.



Pentecost Sunday at Santa Balbina (May)

On Pentecost Sunday, the Collegio celebrated the solemnity at the neighboring Basilica of Santa Balbina. The community was welcomed by the Franciscan Sisters, who serve as custodians of the church. Joining the Sisters for the liturgy were several residents of their home for the aged, alongside faithful from the local neighborhood. Father Paul Schexnayder was the main celebrant, and the Collegio's Rector, Father Claude Williams, preached.



Solemnity of St. Norbert (June)



On St. Norbert's Day, the Collegio welcomed numerous guests to celebrate our patron and the founder of the Canons Regular of Prémontré. Representing many nationalities and states of life, the assembly was honored to have Cardinal Arthur Roche, Prefect of the Dicastery for Divine Worship, as the main celebrant and homilist. Notably, the Bishop Emeritus of Ivrea, Mons. Edoardo Cerrato, concelebrated, and Abbot Primate Jeremias Schröder, OSB, assisted in choro.



Closing of the Academic Year (June)

On June 14th, the Collegio welcomed Cardinal Mario Grech to preside and preach at the Mass for the closing of the academic year. In his homily, the Cardinal drew meaningful connections between Sacred Scripture, the history of our Order and College, and our shared responsibility as disciples of Christ to be missionaries.

Cardinal Grech was accompanied by his parents, Giorgio and MariStella and his younger brother, Carmelo.



Our Deepest Thanks

As this academic year comes to a close, we sincerely thank you for your generous donations to Collegio San Norberto. Your support helps sustain our community and the academic, human, and spiritual formation of our residents. Please know that your generosity is deeply appreciated and remembered in our prayers.



Continuing Our Journey Together

We invite you to continue walking with us. Your prayers remain our greatest treasure, and your financial support ensures that Premonstratensian College remains a center of formation and service. If you sense a call to contribute this year, please find the donation details below:

For Donations in US Dollars:

Please send a check made out to:
Norbertine Generalate, Inc.

Mailing Address:
St. Norbert Abbey
1016 North Broadway Avenue
De Pere, Wisconsin 54115

With our prayers and deepest appreciation,

The Community of Collegio San Norberto

For Donations in Euro:

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JUBILEE PRAYER

O God, source of all goodness, we ask you to pour out your mercy upon Collegio San Norberto in Rome and upon all who reside here.

We pray that your Holy Spirit may watch over this dwelling, keeping all who live here safe from everything that is evil or divisive. May this College be a true place of welcome and daily refreshment for the men who dwell within its walls.

May the spirit of brotherhood flourish here, forming a city fortified in Christ—a place where the brothers, helping one another, may build each other up in faith and charity.

Grant to those who are in this College the grace that maturity and learning may increase among us, always accompanied by humility and gratitude. May the gift of Communio, which is your divine gift and the precious charism of our Premonstratensian family, shine brightly in this community in Rome. May our witness become a beacon for the edification of the whole Church.

Grant us spiritual health and wisdom, giving us, from your generous hand and through the intercession of your Virgin Mother, all that we need to live with justice and wisdom in your service. Walk with all of us in this community who find ourselves in need or in difficulty of any kind.

May Collegio San Norberto be recognized as a place of joy and understanding, where the goodness of Christ is made incarnate for each of us who lives here and for all who visit.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



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Scan and visit our website if you would like to learn more about us or get in touch.

Collegio San Norberto – Rome

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