

# GENERAL NEWS



Attending the official opening of the new Library, Glenstal Abbey, were Noreen and Eoin Ó Suilleabháin, Newport, with Stephanie Walsh and Brother Coleman, librarian. (LL)

## New Glenstal Abbey library is opened

By DEIRDRE McGRATH

A NEW monastic library on the grounds of Glenstal Abbey, which has the capacity to house 120,000 books, has been officially opened and blessed by Abbot Christopher Dillon.

The ceremony was followed by the unveiling of a dedication plaque by Richard Hurley, architect, and Tom Hayes, building contractor, Killaloe.

The new library is fully equipped with computer and information technology resources, and provides conference facilities and meeting space for 120 people, explained librarian Brother Colmán Ó Clabhaigh.

"There is full wheelchair access, and it was built to hold double the capacity of the old library which has 58,000 books," said Brother Ó Clabhaigh.

"It is open to external readers and we have good links with the universities."

"It is primarily a theological library, but there are large Irish history, biography, art, and music sections, and we have a big collection of journals."

Most people who visit the library from outside the immediate area, are looking for journals on theology and monastic studies, that are not available at the university libraries. The library also houses rare works of facsimiles such as the Book of Durrow, the Book of Kells, and the ninth cen-

tury Book of Armagh.

The large early printed book section contains a 1576 abridgement of French legal procedure, a first edition 1654 of Sir James Ware's *De Hibernia et Antiquitatibus Ejus* as well as a first edition, 1705, of the English translation of the work of Ireland and its Antiquities.

The theological section contains sixteenth and seventeenth century folio editions of the work of St Thomas Aquinas, William Durandus, St John Chrysostom.

The modern section contains autographed books by Edmund Burke, Daniel O'Connell, W B Yeats, and Winston Churchill, among others.

The Glenstal Prayer Book, which was compiled by monks from the abbey, was also launched at the ceremony.

The book has been described as being a handy size with no crowding and which can easily fit into a coat pocket.



Margaret McDonnell, Glenstal, perusing the bookshelves. (LL)

It has a monastic flavour and contains prayers by monk saints such as St Anselm and prayers to Saint Benedict. There are also prayers by great women monastic saints, such as St Hildegard and St Mechtilde, as

well as folk prayers from the Irish which are printed in the original Gaelic as well as in translation.

Among the attendance was the Archbishop of Cashel, Dr Dermot Clifford, Rev Michael Nuttall, of the Church of Ireland, Adare, Fr Tom Ryan PP, Murroe, and Fr Joe Delaney PP, Newport.

Also present were librarians from the Cistercian monasteries of Mount Melleray, Moone, Roscrea, and Glencain, along with representatives of the library staffs of NUI Galway, Cork, Mary Immaculate College, and the University of Limerick.

People from the local community also attended the opening along with American and Irish benefactors, whose generosity enabled the project to be completed, said Brother Ó Clabhaigh.

Guests joined the community at Mass in the Abbey Church, and at a celebratory lunch in the school.



Eamon Mellert and Tim O'Neill, Bank of Ireland, with Dolores McCall, patron (LL)