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The Monastery of Klosterneuburg was founded in 1114 and passed on to the Canons Regular of St. Augustin in 1133, with the purpose of establishing a religious, social and cultural centre. Today, the monastery is an important cultural tourism destination, a religious and social institution and a significant economic business. For example, it manages the oldest and one of the most distinguished wineries in Austria.



The Monastery of Klosterneuburg – Past and Present

Historical overview

Just a few years after relocating their residence to Klosterneuburg, Margrave Leopold III and his wife Agnes founded the monastery near their castle as a religious, social and cultural centre in 1114. In 1133, they passed the monastery on to the Canons Regular of St. Augustin.

The founding legend

A gust of wind took Agnes' bridal veil from her. The search for it remained unsuccessful for a long time and Leopold III vowed to establish a monastery at the very place it may be found. Nine years later, Leopold discovered the veil on an elder bush and fulfilled his promise. Even though this is a later legend, the veil really exists and can be viewed in the monastery's treasury that has been open for visitors since May 2011.

The collegiate church was consecrated on the 15th of November 1136 – the same year, Leopold III died. He was buried in a small crypt underneath the present Leopoldi-chapel (Leopoldikapelle), which soon became a place of pilgrimage.

In 1181, the goldsmith Nikolaus from the town of Verdun, completed the enamel panelling for a pulpit, presenting the history of salvation based on events from the Old and New Testament. Following a devastating fire in 1330, the enamelled panels were transformed into the “Verdun Altar” - one of the most important medieval artworks in Europe.

Around 1200, the Monastery of Klosterneuburg served as a residence once more for several years: Leopold VI commissioned the construction of a magnificent chapel on monastery grounds called the “Capella speciose” – the first Gothic structure in Austria. Today, there are only a few remains of both buildings left.

During the Middle Ages, the monastery became an important place for scientific and theological research – a fact of which over 1200 manuscripts bear witness in the monastery's library. The canonisation of Leopold III in 1485 demonstrates the ever-growing importance of the monastery within the Austrian ecclesiastical landscape. This significance only weakened during the Reformation, when only a few canons that often were close to the movement, resided at the monastery. The convent of canonesses, which had been established at the same time as the monastery, was dissolved.

However, with the catholic Counter Reformation, the monastery quickly regained its previous standing, and in 1616, it became the guardian of the Archducal Coronet - the “Holy Crown of Austria”. This insignia would only be removed from St. Leopold's grave for ceremonies of “hereditary homage”. The interior conversion of the monastery's Romanesque basilica into a



baroque style basilica began just a few years later, but was interrupted by the Turkish war in 1683: The Turkish army, who besieged Vienna at the time, also surrounded Klosterneuburg – its defence had been organised by only one canon and one lay brother. In September 1683, the successful defence of Klosterneuburg also resulted in the successful liberation of the besieged Vienna through imperial troops.

In 1730, Emperor Charles VI decided to build a monastic residence at Klosterneuburg – similar in style to “El Escorial” in Spain. The emperor envisioned a giant complex with nine domes and four courtyards.

However, he unexpectedly died in 1740 before his plans could even be realised. His daughter and successor Maria Theresia decided to progress the expansion of the Schönbrunn palace instead - in classic French-style according to fashion at the time. The monastery was rather relieved that it wouldn't have to bear the building costs anymore and immediately halted the construction work with only one-eighth of the plans accomplished. 100 years later only one courtyard (the Kaiserhof) was completed, meaning that by then only one-quarter of the plans had been realised.

With the reign of Emperor Joseph II, a period of upheaval began: the imperial church policies entailed an expansion of pastoral care and social responsibilities, while the revolution in 1848 resulted in the dissolution of the manorial system. Therefore, the monastery had to find new ways of funding. The end of the Habsburg monarchy in 1918 caused further changes and the economic, social and political tensions, conflicts and catastrophes presented additional challenges to the monastery.

In the 1920s of all days, the monastery at Klosterneuburg became the initiator of a move towards ecclesiastical reforms, based on the ideas of Canon Pius Parsch. His ideas had a global impact and they were affirmed in the documents of the second Vatican Council. With the return to biblical texts and new liturgical methods, like the use of national languages and public altars, the status of worshippers improved.

With Austria's annexation by the national-socialist Germany in 1938, the new authorities immediately implemented measures against the monastery as a national symbol of Austria and Christianity: premises and leasehold properties were confiscated and the monastery was eventually dissolved in 1941. All buildings and collections fell into the possession of the Museum of Fine Arts and everything else was distributed amongst several other institutions.

The re-establishment of the monastery was one of the first actions taken by the newly formed government in 1945 and Klosterneuburg subsequently became one of the most important aspects of the reconstruction of the church.

The monastery today

The canons of the monastery – currently numbering around 50 – originate from Austria, Germany, the USA, Poland, Norway, Vietnam and Romania. Their monastic life starts with the clothing ceremony, during which they are also given a monastic name, and is followed by a novitiate year. Then they take the “simple vow”, which obligates the future canon for three years and finally, by



vowing the “solemn oath” they become obligated to the monastery for life and they pledge eternal obedience and to live a humble and celibate life.

In accordance with the provisions of the Austrian Augustinian Congregation, the community is organised democratically. It has an elected provost and is headed by a deacon, who is also elected by the canons, and it is assisted by a Chapter Council, whose members are partially elected and partially appointed by the provost.

Nowadays, the monastery is regarded as one of the most important destinations for cultural tourism in Lower Austria: the world-famous “Verdun Altar” is an absolute highlight and the magnificent collections in the monastery’s museum and treasury are comprising artworks from the Middle Ages up to present times. The unique complex of buildings consist of various architectural styles - from Romanesque to baroque magnificence to historicism and the singular baroque construction site of the Sala Terrena, which has remained unchanged since its construction was halted in 1740. Varying modern art exhibitions in the “Gallery of Modern Art”, as well as the “St. Leopold Peace Prize” are rounding off this aspect of the monastery’s activities, while the orchid shows - held in the monastery gardens every two years - have developed into the largest event of its kind in Austria and constitute a genuine public attraction.

The monastery’s economic basis consists of a mixture of commercial farming and forestry, real estate, culture and tourism activities. Some of them are looking back on 900 years of history, like the wine-growing estate, which is internationally renowned for its top wines. With a wine-growing area of over 100 hectares, situated in Klosterneuburg, Vienna and the surrounding thermal region, the estate it is not only one of the largest in Austria, but it also offers the perfect locations for the different types of grapes. Through careful processing, using modern methods, the wines are ranking amongst the best in national and international competitions and wine tastings. The St. Laurent has become the monastery’s trademark. A very important aspect of wine growing at the monastery - and also contributing to quality assurance – is the individual management of the vineyards with a focus on near-natural methods.

The principles of sustainability as well as social and economic responsibility also apply as fundamental rules in the management of the monastery’s other businesses, such as forestry, organic farming and the biomass district heating plant, which was built in 2002/2003. Also in real-estate management there are special provisions to protect leaseholders and tenants with social difficulties, enabling the monastery to fulfil its religious, cultural and social responsibilities and to carry out its provision of pastoral care to 28 parishes (24 in Vienna and Lower Austria, 2 parishes in Norway and 2 in the USA). Maintaining and managing the cultural assets, like renovation costs for the monastic buildings, amount to approx. 1 million Euros per year. In addition to this there are the expenses for sustaining the monastic archive, the library and the extensive art collections. The monastery also spends a similar amount each year on national and international social work and projects.

The monastery acts internationally and its core sectors are religious, social and cultural tasks: pastoral care is provided to 3 parishes abroad and the monastery’s Provost is the presently elected Abbot Primas and he heads the order of all Canons Regular of St. Augustin worldwide and one of



the canons is the current Bishop of Oslo. The monastery supports many social projects in Romania, Moldova, India, Africa and Latin America.

Excerpt from the Chronicles

- 1114** Foundation of the monastery by Margrave Leopold III as secular canonical monastery
- 1133** Appointment of the Canons Regular of St. Augustin to Neuburg
- 1136** Consecration of the monastery church in honour of the Holy Virgin Mary
- 1136** Leopold III dies and shortly after pilgrimage to his grave starts
- 1181** Completion of the Verdun Altar
- 1485** Founder of the monastery canonized by Pope Innocence VIII
- 1492** Conclusion of the 3.5 meter high Babenberg Genealogy after 3 years of building work
- 1616** Archduke Maximilian III donates the Austrian Archducal Coronet, the “Holy Crown of Austria”, making the monastery its permanent guardian
- 1642** Completion of the largest preserved monumental baroque organs worldwide for the monastery’s basilica with the original musical mechanism by Johann Freundt
- 1663** On the 19th of October, Emperor Leopold I declares St. Leopold the patron saint of Austria
- 1730-40** Extension and baroque conversion of the monastery under Emperor Charles VI, carried out by the architect Donato Felice d’Allio. The emperor plans the reconstruction of the monastery as residence and monastery. However, the expensive building work of the “Austrian El Escorial” is stopped immediately after his death.
- 1774** Foundation of the monastery museum by Provost Ambros Lorenz
- 1814** First documented reference of “Fasslrutschen” (“Cask sliding”) at the Binderstadl
- 1834-42** The Monastery receives its present appearance by the architect Joseph Kornhäusel
- 1860** Foundation of the world’s first winery school in Klosterneuburg
- 1908** The monastery offers the still unknown Egon Schiele the opportunity to present his work to the public for the first time
- 1922** Foundation of the “popular liturgy movement” by Canon Pius Parsch
- 1941-45** Closure of the monastery by the national socialist regime
- 1963** Proclamation of the constitution on the liturgy „Sacrosanctum Concilium“, incorporating Canon Pius Parsch’s liturgical ideas
- 1995** Election of the current Provost, Bernhard Backovsky



- 1997** Beginning of more extensive renovation work on the monastery and the basilica

- 2000** The monastery prepares a social statute to carry out aid work for people in need all over the world, with the project: “A Home for Street Children”

- 2002** Provost Bernhard Backovsky is elected Abbot General of the Austrian Congregation of Canons Regular

- 2003** The ecologically friendly biomass heating plant is put into operation

- 2004** First exhibitions within the scope of the STIFTetKUNST initiative

- 2006** Inaugural opening of the Sala Terrena to visitors

- 2007** The Monastery receives the European cultural heritage prize, “Europa Nostra“

- 2008** Conclusion of renovation of the collegiate church

- 2010** Provost Bernhard Backovsky is elected Abbot Primate of the worldwide Confederation of Canons Regular of St. Augustin

- 2011** Opening of the new treasury for visitors

- 2012** Revitalization and creation of the “Century gardens”

- 2013** Opening of the “Gallery of Modern Art”

- 2014** **900th anniversary of the monastery’s foundation (1114-2014)**

- 2016** 400th anniversary of the Archducal Hat, the “Crown of Austria”

Margrave Leopold III – Saint & Patron Saint of Austria

In 1095, Leopold III (born around 1075) succeeded his father as the Margrave of the Bavarian March of Ostarrichi that was established to protect the eastern border against Hungary. A policy of peace and the strengthening of his territory characterized his reign.

When in 1105, the dispute between Emperor Henry IV (famous for his Walk to Canossa) and the papal party threatened to escalate into a civil war in Germany, his withdrawal from the imperial army ended this threat. In recognition of this act, Emperor Henry V promised him his sister Agnes’ hand in marriage. Leopold invested her large dowry in the development of his land: he moved his residence to Klosterneuburg and in 1114, he founded a monastery as a religious, social and cultural centre for the Mark. Due to his wealth and his wife’s generous endowment, the monastery’s economic survival had been secured and in 1133, he handed it over to the Canons Regular of St. Augustin.

By 1125, he had had become so popular and appreciated that the German princes wanted him to stand for election as king. However, Leopold refused because he didn’t “wish to be drawn into the



political turmoil of the empire”.

Leopold died due to a hunting accident on November 15th 1136. Soon after his death, his grave at the monastery of Klosterneuburg became a place of pilgrimage as people grieved for their “benevolent” prince. Even the pope sent a letter of condolence.

Leopold was canonised in 1485 to set an example for Catholics with his peaceful politics, his social work, his exemplary family life and the promotion of the church through the foundation of the monasteries Klosterneuburg, Heiligenkreuz and Kleinmariazell. He was named patron saint of Lower and Upper Austria in the 17th century and in the 1950s he became the patron saint of Austria.

With the exception of the period since 1945, Leopold’s reign was the longest period of peace in the history of Austria and it laid the foundation for Austrian independence. Through his wife Agnes he was able to establish sovereignty and to ensure its continuation for his sons. When Agnes married Leopold, she previously had become the widow of the Duke of Swabia. One of her sons from this first marriage became the first Hohenstaufen Emperor of Germany and needed his half-brother’s help against the Welfen dynasty in Bavaria. When the disputing parties reconciled, Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa rewarded the Babenberg dynasty with the “Privilegium minus”, which made Henry, son of Leopold and Agnes, the first Duke of Austria.

Faith

Living according to the Monastic Rules of St. Augustin

The Monastery of Klosterneuburg was passed on to the Augustinian Canons in 1133 and to this day, the monastery’s life and work is governed by the monastic rule of St. Augustin.

St. Augustin

Following an eventful life, which he described in his “Confessions”, the philosopher and theologian Aurelius Augustinus, born in the Roman province of Numidia, converted to Christianity in 387. From 395 until his death in 430, he was Bishop of Hippo Regius in North Africa.

His writings regarding the trinity and original sin and his theologically oriented system of world history (“De Civitate Dei”) were of fundamental significance to theology throughout the Middle Ages and he consequently became known as a “Teacher of the Church”.

The Augustinian Canons

With the priests of his church, Bishop Augustin founded a community of priests based on the monastic model. At the time, monks had no ecclesiastical ordinances and withdrew as far as possible from the world into monastic life. Some of the monasteries became autonomous through their work, whereas the priests of the Augustinian community focused on pastoral care. At the Lateran Council in 1059, Pope Gregory VII requested clerics to adapt a similar lifestyle to St. Augustin and to give their property to the community. This led to a separation of the secular canons (canonici saeculares) and the regular canons (canonici regulares), who started to take vows (poverty, celibacy and obedience) and became more similar to monks, building their lives on the monastic rules of St. Augustin. Strict monastic life, celebrating mass, exemplary pastoral care and



scientific work, earned the canons recognition from church leaders and Christian communities. In the 12th century, the Augustinians reached their peak and they spread throughout Europe. Nevertheless, troubles within the church, the political turmoil caused by the Hussite Wars, the Reformation, the French Revolution, Josephinism in Austria and the secularisation of Germany, resulted in the dissolution of the majority of Augustinian monasteries.

The remaining Augustinian monasteries joined forces and formed the canons' congregations. The Austrian congregation (since 1907) includes the six monasteries of St. Florian, Herzogenburg, Klosterneuburg, Neustift bei Brixen, Reichersberg and Vornau. The General Abbot, who is elected for a period of five years, heads the congregation. However, the individual monasteries remain autonomous within the congregation regarding the organisation of their daily life, internal structures and fulfilment of specific community tasks.

The Augustinian Canons today

When joining the monastery, future canons are given the monastic habit - a black soutane with a narrow white border (Sarrocium = remainder of the white surplice), as well as a monastic name. Then the one-year novitiate period commences, followed by the "simple vows" obligating the new canon to the monastery for a period of three years. This is followed by the "solemn oath", which applies for the canon's entire life. The canons' main task is to provide pastoral care within the monastery's own parishes, providing spiritual and material support. Some of the monks also engage in scientific work.

The provost is elected by a secret ballot and heads the community. Prelate Bernhard Backovsky, who was also elected General Abbot of the Austrian Congregation in 2002 and re-elected in 2007, has held this position since 1995. From 2010 to 2016, he was also General Abbot (Abbas Primas) for all Augustinian Canons worldwide.

Pastoral Care in 27 parishes

Margrave Leopold founded the monastery as an ecclesiastical centre. Pastoral care became one of its most important missions when it was passed on to the Canons Regular of St. Augustin in 1133.

Today, the canons at the Monastery of Klosterneuburg are responsible for 28 parishes (24 in Vienna and Lower Austria, 2 in Norway and 2 in the USA). The parishes of the collegiate church and Klosterneuburg St. Martin always belonged to the monastery, whereas others were added when the land was acquired over the years. Additional tasks resulted from the reforms that were introduced by Emperor Joseph II, who emphasised religious care for the faithful and therefore established new parishes. At the end of the 19th century, when the population of the surrounding areas of Vienna tremendously expanded, it became necessary to create new centres of pastoral care.

Two further additions were the Augustinian Canons of Norway and the USA: at the moment, Canon Markus, a Canon Regular from Klosterneuburg, serves as Bishop of Oslo and Canon Albert was appointed Bishop Markus apostolic administrator and vicar-general of the Prelature of Trondheim. The Monastery of Klosterneuburg provides pastoral care to the parish of Bergen. In June 2011, three of the canons in the USA established the Glen Cove branch in New York, where they are



responsible for pastoral care in two parishes and in consequence took the institution of the Canons of St. Augustin to the USA.

Responsibility for parishes does not only include provision of pastoral carers, but also requires financial contributions for the maintenance of churches and other buildings: the order's contribution for the preservation of churches alone amounts to approx. one million euros per year.

The monastery's parishes

Klosterneuburg: Monastery parish, Kierling, St. Leopold, St. Martin, Kritzendorf, Weidling, Höflein

Lower Austria: Haselbach, Korneuburg, Langenzersdorf, Reinprechtspölla, Stoitzendorf, Tattendorf

Vienna 12th district: Maria Lourdes, Meidling

Vienna 13th district: Maria Hietzing

Vienna 19th district: Grinzing, Heiligenstadt, Kahlenbergerdorf, Neustift am Walde, Nußdorf, Sievering

Vienna 21st district: Donaufeld, Floridsdorf

Norway: Bergen

USA: St. Patrick and St. Rocco in the Rockville Centre diocese, Long Island in New York State

The monastery also has "real patronage" over the parish churches of Hauskirchen, St. Bernhard, Neukirchen a. d. Wild (all Lower Austria), Großjedlersdorf (Vienna 21st district) and the branch church of Maria Bründl (Poysdorf parish). It contributes to maintenance work, while the bishop appoints the parish priests.

A World-wide Social Commitment

The monastery's social statutes guarantee at least 10% of the earnings to be used for social purposes. Nevertheless, the total sum needed within Austria and in the rest of the world is actually much higher.

At a press conference, Provost Bernhard Backovsky said: "... in order for Christianity to display credibility, concrete actions of neighbourly love are needed..."

In the year 2000, the monastery of Klosterneuburg prepared its own social statute and began providing financial support to a "Kinderdorf" project, organised by Father Georg Sporschill in Ploiesti/ Romania, which secures 175,000 Euros per year. This amount has now increased to 250,000 Euros per year (282,000 euros in 2011): the funds finance the lives of almost 100 children in Romania and the Republic of Moldova. Additionally 200 solitary senior citizens are provided a hot meal every day in the Moldovan towns of Tudora, Antonesti and Carahasani. As these Concordia Projects are carried out in conjunction with orthodox organisations and a Baptist parish, they also demonstrate genuine ecumenism.

These major commitments are accompanied by a variety of additional activities supported by the monastery: a "Kinderdorf" in India, a child-protection centre in Honduras, an eye clinic in south



Sudan and a women's support project in Afghanistan - to name only a few.

The monastery provided aid to the victims of the flood disasters in Austria and there is social support for the monastery's leaseholders and tenants, in case they are experiencing financial difficulties. The funds allocated to social work total approx. one million Euros per year.

This dedication to social work follows a long-standing tradition at the monastery: even the founder Leopold III was highly regarded for his charitable deeds and the construction of the pilgrim's hospital that still exists today. In 1776, the monastery helped the victims of the flood disaster in Vienna, and assisted in the reconstruction of their village, which was subsequently named "Floridsdorf" – after the provost at the time (Floridus Leeb) and as a gesture of gratitude. Today, Floridsdorf is the third-largest district in Vienna. For over 100 years, the monastery has actively participated in the construction of social housing and to this day it rents out plots of land for the construction of inexpensive family homes and apartments for first-time occupants on a cooperative basis.

In 2012, the monastery added two additional projects to its social programme: The "Querubines" children's home for sexually abused girls, established in Honduras by the "Kindernothilfe" ("Children in Need"). The monastery donated EUR 75,000 to the Kindernothilfe, who has been a partner for many years. The Kindernothilfe most recently supported projects helping street children in Honduras and Pakistan.

Preda, the organisation established by Father Shay Cullen, also received a donation of EUR 25,000 to support the construction of group residential accommodation and a therapy and training centre for sexually abused girls in the Philippines.

Effectiveness Report

Since 2014 the monastery publishes a report of effectiveness about its social activities in order to not only present facts and figures, but also all the remarkable facts about the people behind those projects – all of whom are vigorously and tirelessly making this world a better place.

The Monastery of Klosterneuburg as an Economic Factor

The Monastery of Klosterneuburg not only undertakes a variety of religious, social and cultural tasks, but it also plays an important role for the economy of the Lower Austria region. The various business enterprises generate a turnover of around 30 million Euros per year, with at least 10% of the profits allocated for social projects. Among other things, the monastery has the largest wine-growing estate in Austria and with its underground biomass heating plant it supplies power to municipal facilities in Klosterneuburg.

"The businesses constitute the required base for our religious, social and cultural work. Without their success, we would not be able to fulfil our mission as a monastery," explained Provost Bernhard Backovsky when pointing out the significance of the business enterprises for the Monastery of Klosterneuburg. The around 50 Augustinian canons of the monastery are working as



pastoral carers, scientists and teachers and they are actively involved in the monastery itself. The business enterprises offer the economic base for their work as well as for running and maintaining the monastery.

Sustainable business

The monastery operates business enterprises in four different sectors: agriculture & forestry, real-estate management, culture & tourism, and operations & preservation. They all play an important role for economy of Lower Austria, because they provide work for around 200 employees and generate an annual turnover of approx. 30 million Euros per year. "All the businesses are professionally managed contemporary commercial and cultural companies. We have to operate economically, but always in line with the monastery's social mission," explained Business Director, Mag. Andreas Gahleitner.

Commitment to social causes

Most of the revenue goes into construction work and restoration of the monastery and its 27 parishes. At least 10% of the earnings are designated for national and international projects: for example, the "Homes for Street Children" project organised by Father Georg Sporschill in Romania. Like other monasteries and abbeys, the Monastery of Klosterneuburg must be self-sufficient. It is not subsidised by church taxes and must fulfil the same requirements as any other organisation applying for subsidies from the state, federal governments or the EU. The clerical treasurer appointed by the provost, Dr Walter Simek, is head of the commercial enterprises. Business Director, Mag. Andreas Gahleitner, who reports to him, manages the commercial operations.

Conservation projects for the future

The general restoration of the monastery, which commenced in 1977, is the largest conservation project in Lower Austria. The extensive renovation work of the monastery's buildings is necessary to preserve the historic building substance. More than 60% of the 1.1 million Euro annual revenue is generated by the business enterprises, the remaining costs are met by the federal state of Lower Austria (25%) and the federal government, the archdiocese of Vienna and the municipality of Klosterneuburg. An additional three million Euros are required each year for the ongoing renovation work in the 27 parishes. The monastery, the corresponding parish and the archdiocese of Vienna, each finance one third of the costs.

Major refurbishment as investment boost for the region

A survey carried out by two consulting companies produced a 20-page report on the economic effects of the monastery's major refurbishments. The number of benefits it has created even surprised the authors of the report. For instance, the investment of 9.6 million Euros generated a turnover volume of 12.5 million Euros created around 160 jobs throughout the year generated an income of around 5 million Euros produced taxes totalling 1.1 million Euros for the national government and 700,000 Euros for the federal states and municipalities.

Lower Austria, whose support totalled more than 2.4 million Euros, generated a turnover of up to 12.5 million Euros, with a benefit of 4.3 million Euros for companies from Vienna.



Austria's largest wine-growing estate, agriculture and forestry

The Monastery of Klosterneuburg operates the oldest wine-growing estate in Austria. The estate has been making wine since the monastery was founded in 1114 and it cultivates 100 hectares of vineyards, which are located in Klosterneuburg, Vienna and the surrounding thermal regions. The monastery also runs a forestry business with ten districts and organic farms in Tuttenhof/Langenzersdorf and Prinzensdorf.



Environmentally-friendly and sustainable economic activities

Forward-thinking actions and sustainable economic activities are the fundamental operating principles of the monastery's businesses. Examples include the organic and sustainable management of woodlands and farmland, the climate-neutral certification of the monastery's winery, the conservation of biodiversity in the monastery gardens and the generation of energy from biomass in order to reduce CO2 emissions. The underground biomass heating plant finished in 2003 and constructed within just twelve months, not only supplies heating to the monastery but also provides power from renewable biomass to the hospital, the town hall and a leisure centre in Klosterneuburg via the power supply company EVN.

Real-estate management with a social mission

Real-estate management has always been an important part of the monastery's business. The Monastery of Klosterneuburg is subletting around 700 apartments, offices and commercial properties within over 70 protected buildings in Vienna and Lower Austria. The monastery is also responsible for managing around 4,000 real-estate tenancy contracts in the Vienna region as well as in Klosterneuburg, Korneuburg, Bisamberg, Langenzersdorf and Tattendorf.

Affordable rent and social regulations for tenants are combining the commercial and social aspects. Many public facilities were built on the monastery's properties, e.g. the wells used to supply water to the town of Klosterneuburg.

Culture, Art Treasures and Tourism

With its cultural and tourist attractions, the monastery is a popular destination for excursions and trips. Around 100,000 visitors each year are attracted by the monastery. In addition, the gardens and orangery appeal to visitors from all over the world. Two main events take place interchangeably every two years: the largest orchid show in Austria with around 30,000 visitors and the Health and Garden Days. The monastery's library, which is open to researchers, is the largest privately owned science library in Austria and the monastery's archive is home to a wide range of historic materials. The business also includes renting out rooms for events and operating a publishing company.

Facts - the Monastery's Business Enterprises

The businesses

The business of the Monastery of Klosterneuburg constitute the required basis for its religious, social and cultural work. The four main business enterprises are: farming and forestry, real-estate management, culture and tourism as well as operations and preservation. The businesses employ around 200 people and are organised in several commercial operations. Their total turnover is around 30 million Euros.

The management

The clerical treasurer appointed by the provost manages the businesses. The business director



reports to him and is responsible for all commercial operations.

Provost of the monastery: Bernhard Backovsky, Abbot Primate and General Abbot

Treasurer of the businesses: Dr Walter Simek Can. Reg.

Business Director: Mag. Andreas Gahleitner

The Business Sectors:

Agriculture and forestry

- Oldest and largest wine-growing estate in Austria with more than 100 hectares of land in Klosterneuburg, Vienna, Tattendorf and Gumpoldskirchen.
- Forestry with 8,000 hectares of land and ten districts (three districts in the vicinity of Klosterneuburg, one district each in Korneuburg, Rohr, Pax, Schöttl, Matzen, St. Bernhard and Rohrwald)
- Organic farming across 230 hectares of land (Tuttenhof/Langenzersdorf and Prinzensdorf estates)
- Underground biomass heating plant for the monastery and municipal facilities
- Real-estate management
- Offer for rent around 700 apartments, offices and commercial properties with a total area of 87,000 m² in 73 buildings in Vienna and Lower Austria
- Around 4,000 tenancy contracts for properties in the Vienna region as well as in Klosterneuburg, Korneuburg, Bisamberg, Langenzersdorf and Tattendorf

Culture and tourism

- Around 100,000 visitors per year
- Monastery museum, art collections, cultural treasures, monastery library, monastery archive
- Renting out rooms for events
- Management of approx. 5 hectares of outdoor areas with gardens and orangery; ongoing events; alternating every two years: orchid show with around 30,000 visitors and the Health and Garden Days
- Publishing company with around 120 available titles

Operations and preservation

- Construction department with six workshops
- General restoration of the monastery since 1977; costs: 1.1 million euros/year (60%



monastery, 25% the federal state of Lower Austria; remainder: federal government, the archdiocese of Vienna, the municipality of Klosterneuburg)

- Ongoing renovation work at 27 parishes in Vienna, Lower Austria, Norway and the USA: three million euros/year (one-third funded by the monastery, one-third by the respective parish and one-third by the archdiocese of Vienna)
- Social responsibility

At least 10% of the revenue is spent on social work. Including additional payments to staff and retired employees along with discounts for socially disadvantaged leaseholders and tenants, the social expenditure exceeds 1 million Euros per year.

Social- and Economic Responsibility

Forward-thinking actions and sustainable commercial activities are the basic principles all of the monastery's operations are based on. The organic and sustainable management of woodland and farmland is just as much part of its work, as is the generation of energy from biomass to reduce CO2 emissions. In 2009, the monastery's wine-growing estate became the first winery in Austria to be certified as climate-neutral. At the beginning of March 2010, the monastery was awarded a prize for protecting biodiversity by BIOSA.

“For us, ethical, social and ecological criteria are of equal importance as commercial objectives,” says Director Mag. Andreas Gahleitner - describing the operations of the monastery's businesses. The duty of conserving valuable things for future generations also includes the responsible use of natural resources. Therefore, we practise sustainable farming and a biomass heating plant supplies the monastery with alternative power.

Implementing family oriented working conditions

In 2011, the monastery's businesses started the “audit berufundfamilie” (job and family audit): through an auditing process organised by the Ministry of Economic and Family Affairs improvement potentials were surveyed by a working group and action plans were developed. The staff and the ministry itself currently observe the implementation of these measures. The process is concerned with operational flexibility regarding working hours, improvements to information and communication policies, personnel development, maternity/paternity leave and with returning to work. Like this, the monastery wants to meet the needs of its employees and enable them to achieve a better work-life-balance.

Environmentally friendly heating

The underground biomass district heating plant built in 2003 has helped reduce CO2 emissions by more than 3,000 metric tons a year, as compared to the productivity of previous heating systems. The fact that the required wood chips for operating the plant are mainly obtained from the monastery's own surrounding woodland means that no long transport routes are necessary. The



plant provides environmentally friendly heating for the monastery, its secondary buildings and municipal facilities in Klosterneuburg, like the hospital or the town hall.

A habitat for people, animals and plants

In autumn 2001, the Monastery of Klosterneuburg converted to organic farming on all of its 230 hectares of farmland and since then it has not used any mineral fertilisers, insecticides or herbicides. Thus, it guarantees the production of quality foods in the long term. With the thoughtful management of around 8,000 hectares of forestland and extensive reforestation work, the monastery is protecting its woods as a recreation area for people and a habitat for many animals and plants. The rejuvenation of the ancient woods increase the biodiversity of flora and fauna and strengthen the vitality of the ecological system. Particularly sensitive areas were specially protected and they became living spaces to flourish for indigenous orchids and green lizards.

Conservation of the colony with new-borns in the attic

Around 100 “greater mouse-eared bats” and their offspring return each year to spend the summer in the monastery’s attic. Therefore, it was important to pay attention to these animals during the roof refurbishment work of the baroque wing. The work was postponed until winter 2012 when the animals had left their summer residence. Only then, the old rafters were fastened to the new roof frame so that the animals would be able to find their familiar roosts when returning in the summer of 2013. The entrance and exit hole under one of the roof’s intersections was left unsealed, so that the returning bats were able to locate it again. The “greater mouse-eared bat” (*Myotis myotis* in Latin) is one of the largest indigenous species. It has become extinct in southern Germany and thus it is specially protected in Austria, and the reason why the Monastery has made such an effort to protect the local colony.

Century gardens

The revitalisation programme of the monastery’s gardens is also very ambitious. The monastery is an important partner of the Lower Austria’s “Nature in the Garden” programme and fulfils the strict planning and execution provisions. For example, it does not use any peat dust, it replaced moor soil where possible and paths are built by hand. A medieval cloister garden was reconstructed in the centre of the historic cloister. The monastery garden impresses with many indigenous and rare exotic plants, including the Biedermeier peony and the yellow chestnut. This dedication to preserving biodiversity was recognized award from “Natur im Garten” in 2010.

Wine-growing estate: eco-friendly quality

In March 2009, the monastery’s winery wine-growing estate was the first winery in Austria that was certified as climate-neutral. In cooperation with consultants at ClimatePartner, numerous measures were implemented in order to cut emissions and reduce energy consumption during the production of fruit juices and wines. These measures included the minimization of travel, the natural cooling of buildings and heat-recovery systems for wine tanks. The remaining CO2 emissions are compensated



with the purchase of climate certificates. As a result, the monastery's winery was able to save 1.75 kg of CO₂ per bottle and was the only Austrian business to reach the top 15 nominees for the ENERGY GLOBE Award in 2011.



The Winery - shaping the History of Austrian Wine Growing

The oldest wine-growing estate in the country

When Margrave Leopold III founded the monastery in 1114, he also established a wine-growing estate. It was successful from the beginning and at the consecration of the basilica in 1136, wine from the monastery's own grapes was served. Wine growing remained of significant importance throughout the monastery's history,

With almost 900 years of tradition, the monastery's wine-growing estate is the oldest winery in Austria. Wine is currently grown on over 100 hectares of vineyards, whereby the area is divided into three wine-growing regions: the Donauland (Danube region) with its vineyards around Klosterneuburg, the Vienna region with vineyards on the Nußberg and Kahlenberg slopes and the thermal region - with its extensive vineyards in Gumpoldskirchen and Tattendorf.

Ecological soil management and cultivation methods to protect useful organisms and organic fertilisation are the guiding principles used in all of the monastery's vineyards for better environmental protection.

Wine from the best terroir

The different soils and micro-climatic conditions in the vineyards enable the winery to cultivate a broad range of grape varieties. Riesling, Grüner Veltliner, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc for example grow best on the slopes of Klosterneuburg, on the weathered sandstone and loess soils. The vineyards around Kahlenbergerdorf are characteristically muddy with clay soils, on which White Burgundy, Chardonnay, Gewürztraminer and Pinot Noir are grown. The Gumpoldskirchen vineyards are known for their chalky brown-earth soils and are the ideal place for growing the native Zierfandler and Rotgipfler grapes. The warm gravelly soils near Tattendorf are best for the St. Laurent, Pinot Noir, Blaufränkisch and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes, used to make the monastery's exquisite red wines.

Modern technology in historic cellars

Large cellars, built during the baroque period, are used for winemaking at the monastery. The vaults reach down four floors, to a depth of 36 meters underneath the monastery courtyard. Over the last few decades, these cellars were turned into a place of pioneering winemaking. The press house was completely modernised and the entire production optimised to make it CO₂-neutral.

All possible types of modern technology for pressing high-quality wines are available. The must is carefully produced, using electronically controlled presses, with the pressure not exceeding two bars. Red wines ferment in rotating tanks, where the skin of the grapes is mixed with the remaining mash several times per day in order to achieve optimum aromas, tannins and colouring. The white wines are matured with the help of electronic temperature controls.



Depending on the type and vintage characteristics, the wines are matured in different types of containers, including large wooden barrels with volumes ranging between 5,000 and 11,000 litres, smaller oak barrels (barriques) for maturing the particularly valuable vintage wines over long periods, and steel tanks for making particularly fruity wines.

The cradle of Austrian viniculture

At the monastery's winery best quality is combined with innovativeness and rich tradition. Therefore a lot of trend-setting impulses are originating from the winery at the monastery, like the foundation of the first vinicultural school worldwide and the development of the Wine-scale or the selection and use of the grape variety St. Laurent. As the first climate neutral wine estate in Austria, the winery is a pioneer with regards to sustainability and climate protection

The "wine experience" at the monastery

The monastery's vinotheque is very popular with wine-lovers and it combines the historical 13th century structure of the building with a modern interior design and offers a unique location to enjoy good wine.

The broad range of wine and also sparkling wines, but also the fine spirits and fruit juices are offered there. Gift sets and various delicacies round off the tasteful range of products.

Another highlight is the cellar, where the grapes are pressed and stored until they have matured. The guided tour offers a close-up experience of the place's vivid history, linking tradition and modern cellar techniques within this impressive setting, dating back to the Middle Ages and the baroque era.

Overview of the current wines ratings:

A LA CARTE - WINEGUIDE 2018

93 points - Chorus, 2015

93 points - St. Laurent Reserve, 2015

93 points - Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc) Reserve, 2016

92 points - Grüner Veltliner Reserve, 2016

92 points - Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc) Jungherrn, 2016

90 points - Riesling Franzhauser, 2016

Falstaff Wine Guide 2017/18

93 points – Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc) Reserve 2016

93 points – Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc)

TBA 2015

92 points – Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc) Jungherrn 2016

92 points – Grüner Veltliner Reserve 2016

91 points – Cabernet Sauvignon 2013

90 points – MATHÄI brut 2013

90 points – Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc) 2016

90 points – Grüner Veltliner Hengsberg 2016

90 points – Riesling Franzhauser 2016

90 points – Welschriesling Eiswein 2015



Lower Austrian wine rating 2017

St. Laurent Reserve 2015 – **winner**

Wiener Landesweinbewertung 2017

Gold medal – Pinot Noir Res. 2014, **winner**

Gold medal – Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc) Reserve 2016

Gold medal – Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc) Jungherrn 2016

Gold medal – Wiener Gemischter Satz DAC 2016

Gold medal – MATHÄI brut 2013

Gold medal – MATHÄI brut 2014

Gold medal – Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc) 2016

SALON 2017

Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc) TBA 2015 - SALON- winner

St. Laurent Reserve 2015

Pinot Noir Reserve 2014

AUSTRIAN WINE CHALLENGE 2018

Gold medal – St. Laurent Reserve, 2015

Gold medal – Chorus, 2015

Gold medal – Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc) Jungherrn, 2016

WINE ENTHUSIAST 2017/18

93 points - St. Laurent 2015

92 points - Zierfandler-Rotgipfler 2016

91 points - Blaufränkisch 2015

Fruit cultivation at the monastery Klosterneuburg

Fruit growing at the monastery has been a long-standing tradition. Since 1402, predominantly apples are grown in the monastery's own orchards, situated on the opposite bank of the Danube. The loose and nutrient-rich soil of the Danube's alluvial soil offer the ideal growth conditions for apple trees. The sunny Pannonian climate with its distinctive temperature changes between day and night – regulated by the Danube – supports the characteristic aroma and typicality of the individual varieties.

In Austria's first climate-neutral fruit yard special attention is paid to a gentle and careful cultivation of the fruit. Harvest takes place in several rounds – like in the vineyards – and solely by hand. Subsequently the apples are pressed to naturally cloudy apple juice of the highest quality.

A wide range of varieties

In addition to the traditional varieties like **Golden Delicious** and **Granny Smith**, also high quality types like **Idared**, **Jonagold** and **Topaz** are cultivated. The latest addition from England is the **Cox Orange** – a very old variety known as “the best variety” amongst apple lovers. It has complemented the monastery's range with its premium apple juice.

Different juice combinations made from apple mixed with pairs or carrots offer a delicious variation. The red juice of the popular St. Laurent grapes originates from vineyards located around Tattendorf.

The winery of the monastery Klosterneuburg doesn't only impress with its award-winning wines but also with its delicious fruit juices, which were awarded the popular “Golden Pair” prize - one of



the most prestigious prizes in Europe- especially the single-origin, naturally cloudy apple juices and the St. Laurent grape juice convinced the jury of experts. The following juices were state winner:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| • Jonagold apple juice | 19 points | state winner Lower Austria / Gold |
| • Golden Delicious apple juice | 19 points | state winner Lower Austria / Gold |
| • Apple-pear mixed juice | 18 points | state winner Lower Austria / Gold |
| • St. Laurent grape juice | 18 points | state winner Lower Austria / Gold |
| • Cox Orange apple juice | 18 points | state winner Lower Austria / Gold |
| • Peach nectar | 18 points | state winner Lower Austria / Gold |

Arts and Culture

The Monastery's Impact on Science

Since its foundation by margrave Leopold III, the monastery has always been a place for scientific studies and education. A defining moment in the 1120s was the delegation of his son Otto, the later bishop of Freising, to cathedral school in Paris. Thereby he combined his palatinate in Klosterneuburg with the excellent international research. Ever since then this has remained an unbroken tradition and numerous samples from different periods bear witness to the supra-regional importance of the monastery, like for example:

- **1140** – The oldest book of Lower Austria (CCI 848, written around 806), dating back to the period of Charlemagne: It is a Latin dictionary of synonyms for biblical research, but also for the roman poet Vergil, and it was brought to the monastery by provost Hartmann from Salzburg.
- **Otto from Freising** was born and raised in Klosterneuburg and he is one of the most significant historian of the European middle ages. His connections to France, especially to theological authors, are visible in many of the manuscripts in the monastery library.
- **1421** Provost Georg Müstinger, who was the first member of the Viennese's astronomical school, commissions the first Central European map drawn according to the newest scientific findings and not on a theological basis. On this map the prime meridian is still passing through Klosterneuburg.
- **1774** – The monastery museum was the first public museum in Austria and it was founded by Provost Ambros Lorenz.
- **1860** Foundation of the first fruit farming- and viticulture school worldwide by Provost Adam II. Schreck, in cooperation with the Viennese k.k. agricultural society.
- Since **1909** - „Yearbook of the monastery of Klosterneuburg“ is established as a well-recognized scientific publication series amongst experts, addressing various topics concerning the monastery (certificates and documents, Mount Leopold, the canonization



process of Saint Leopold, DNA analysis of Leopold and Agnes, architectural and construction history..)

- **2012** - DNA analysis of Leopold III., his wife Agnes and his sons to determine the degree of kinship
- Since **2013** – the library has over 1,250 medieval manuscripts and documents. In order to make them available worldwide, they are digitalized and due to the cooperation with the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW) they are readily accessible on www.manuscripta.at
- **2015** – Opening of the new music archive in order to secure the existing musical portfolio
- **2016** – The monastery library Klosterneuburg is digitalizing the library's collection of the monasteries of Admont and Neustift/Brixen (IT).
- **2016** – The monastery library becomes the official partner of the Erasmus+ Project DEMM (Digital Editing of Medieval Manuscripts), allowing students from the universities of Prague, London, Lyon and Siena to work with original medieval sources in Klosterneuburg and to explore the methods of digital editing for the internet (www.digitalmanuscripts.eu).
- **2016** – Edith Kapeller receives the Recognition Award for Science – presented by the Lower Austrian federal state government – for her master thesis on "Codex 1253 of the monastery's library and Codex 365 (red) of the monastery library in Göttweig".
- **2017** - ÖAW Doc-Team „Performance of brightness by the example of Leopold III.“
- **2017** - FTI Project „Monastery's musical collections“, in cooperation with DUK (Danube University Krems) and the monasteries of Melk and Göttweig.

Collections of European Significance

The oldest books and earliest works of art in the monastery's library are almost as old as the monastery itself: A collection dating back 900 years most definitely has something exciting to offer for everyone in Europe.

“CCI 1” is the monastery's traditional library number for a manuscript from St. Nikola in Passau that Margrave Leopold III procured for the occasion of the consecration of the collegiate church and which he donated at its founding. At the same time – or shortly before – Margravine Agnes also presented a very valuable item to the collegiate church: the giant seven-armed bronze candelabra from Verona.

The monastery museum:

Provost Ambros Lorenz established the monastery museum in 1774 – which makes it one of the oldest museums in the world. It even predates the Louvre by almost 20 years. At the same time, he purchased a major piece of art for the museum: the Albrechtmeister Altar Panels. The altar had fallen victim to the modernisation of the courtyard's church, with large sections already burnt and only a few panels intact, which in the meantime have found their home in the Sebastiani-chappel. They represent the oldest depictions of St. Stephan's Cathedral in Vienna whose high tower was completed shortly before the altar was created.

However, Provost Ambros didn't really need to go out looking for items for the museum: the



monastery already possessed the so-called “St. Leopold’s Writing Implements” – part of a valuable collection of ivory – and a series of images by Rueland Frueauf, depicting the founding of the monastery. Furthermore, it possessed the Babenberg Genealogy - a giant three-sectioned painting created in 1492 and designed to bring the family of the region’s new patron saint closer to the population. These are just a few examples for the large collection.

From the very beginning, the monastery’s museum was able to draw on the valuable inventory, which subsequently only needed to be expanded. Of course, representations of St. Leopold and the monastery itself were items of particular interest, including four images by Egon Schiele. Just recently, a collection of illustrations by modern artists was acquired to extend the collection: the “Sammer Collection” was exhibited at the monastery museum in 2010 and has been prolonged.

The treasury since May 2011:

The highlight of the treasury is the Archducal Coronet, donated in 1616 as the “Holy Crown of Austria”, which was only removed from Klosterneuburg for ceremonies of attornment held to recognise the archdukes of Austria. The oldest pieces date back to the founding period of the monastery, such as the enamel relic shrine from Limoges and an ivory crosier (around 1200 and 1300, respectively). The splendid veil monstrance by Matthias Steinl and Johann Baptist Känischbauer from 1714. The magnificent art-nouveau vestments by Anton Hofer from the class of Kolo Moser are around 200 years younger. The so-called “St. Leopold’s Portable Altar” houses a veil behind glass that – as recent analyses have shown – may actually have been the veil of Margravine Agnes, and is therefore connected to the monastery’s founding legend. The treasury was relocated, extended and opened to the public in 2011.

The sources of knowledge – the library and the archive:

With more than 250,000 volumes, the library of the monastery today is the largest non-state library in Austria. This fact is not very well known, as it is not open to the public. Researchers, on the other hand, are welcome – even if the space is limited. The library houses books particularly focussing on theology and matters related to Austria, history and art – starting from 1,200 manuscripts and early prints, up to present day works.

The same applies to the archive: It is only open to researchers for whom it represents a unique source of information, especially with regard to the history of Lower Austria and Vienna. The monastery’s archaeological collection is attached to the archive. Some of the items are exhibited in the cloister area and they demonstrate that the monastery’s premises were once the site of a Roman fort.

NEW: Gallery of Modern Art – contemporary religious art at the Monastery of Klosterneuburg

The “Gallery of Modern Art” opened at the beginning of May 2013. With this, the Monastery of Klosterneuburg added an exhibition of religious art from the 20th and 21st centuries to its museum. The exhibition ranges from expressionist works of the 1920s to creations by young Austrian artists, and they engage into an exciting dialog with the works of the Old Masters, for which the monastery’s museum has been renowned for many decades. During its 2013 opening season, the



Gallery of Modern Art presented motifs like “The Crucifixion”, “Passion”, “Memento mori”, “Incarnation” and “Creation” in dedicated rooms.

The Gallery of Modern Art rests on several pillars. The monastery has committed to honour the legacy of Prelate Dr Alfred Sammer, who dedicated much of his life to modern sacred art, by continuing his work. Convent member, Dr Gregor Robert Doxat, donated the works by Adrienne (Ada) Fistravec-Doxat (1893-1946).

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, an almost forgotten artist remarkably demonstrated that sacral art could be conveyed with impressions from Cubism and Expressionism. Other purchases made over recent years are also on display to the public in the “Gallery of Modern Art” and they are complemented by altering loan collections each year.

900 Years of Architectural History

The monastic building as known today is the result of ongoing construction activities throughout the monastery’s entire history. A tour of the monastery is also a tour of Europe’s architectural history.

Over the past years, the scaffolding required for restoring the facade and repairing the roof was positioned outside the window of the baroque imperial structure. At the same time a panel picture by Rueland Frueauf, showing the construction of the collegiate church was on display in the museum. Both illustrate the development of the construction technology over the centuries and they convey that the monastery has been a building site for 900 years. Looking around the monastery courtyard, architectural structures dating from many different centuries can be seen.

Middle Ages

Part of the monastery courtyard is dominated by the church, built from 1114 to 1136. At the time, this church was the largest in the country. The nave exterior still possesses the original features: a Romanesque basilica in the style of a domestic church, as used by the Salian royal family that Agnes was a member of. That is why the style reminds of the imperial cathedrals along the banks of the Rhine. The only other Romanesque features are visible in the brickwork on exposed window and door arches in the Leopoldihof, as they were covered by later styles. The Sacred Tour also shows a model design representing the exterior of the monastery in 1136. It draws the visitors’ attention to certain wall sections on the Leopoldi-chapel disclosing the once colourfully painted Romanesque brickwork.

The transition to the Gothic style is apparent on the remaining walls of the Duke Leopold VI’s palace, from around 1200. Only the foundations of the adjacent Capella speciose still exist. It was the first Gothic structure built in Austria. The column donated by Michel Tutz, dating back to 1381, also constitutes an example of the high Gothic style.

Another historical Gothic building is located in the Leopoldihof: the bay window on Margrave Leopold’s former castle. The giant window of the previous Thomas-chapel, on the other hand, was built during the transition to the Renaissance period. The adjacent prince’s wing was built from 1618 to 1620 and impresses with its beautiful Renaissance chimneys.



Unique baroque

The conversion of the collegiate church's interior to baroque style began in 1634 and continued throughout several phases until 1730. All features of the Romanesque style were removed when the work was complete. However, the transformation to baroque style only really started in 1730 when Emperor Charles VI commissioned his court builder, Donato Felice d'Allio, to build a monastery residence in the style of El Escorial in Spain. The idea was to build four large courtyards and nine domes, all of which should bear the Habsburg crown. The foundations were pushed far beyond the boundaries of the monastery's terrace and allowed three floors of vaulted cellars to be built underneath them. Only one-eighth of the complex was completed when Charles VI suddenly died in 1740.

His successor, Maria Theresia, was not interested in continuing the work at the monastery. Since the monastery was forced to bear all the costs, it was not really interested in the continuation of the work either. Therefore, the baroque structure remained as a shell and individual sections, like the Sala Terrena and the system of corridors behind it were abruptly deserted. The windows were finally bricked up.

The marble hall was eventually completed in 1756, and from 1834-42, Joseph Kornhäusel finalised the courtyard (today's Kaiserhof), using simplified baroque shapes. The monastery only opened the Sala Terrena to the public in 2005 and thereby lending it a purpose. It became the new visitor entrance and it offers a unique experience of baroque splendour over two floors.

Historicism to present

In 1879, the desperately required renovation work of the church began. It was carried out by the architect of Vienna's town hall, Friedrich von Schmidt. The western facade received a neo-Gothic look, as did the towers, which were both extended to a height of 82.75 metres.

The Sebastiani-chapel, consecrated in 1421 was almost entirely destroyed under Josef II as he regarded it as a "superfluous house of God", was re-erected in concrete on the old foundations in the 1960s. Conversion work that started in 2001: the basement car park and biomass heating plant designed by the renowned architect, Heinz Tesar, and the transformation of the Sala Terrena into the new visitor entrance. The project was awarded the European Cultural Heritage Conservation Prize in 2006.

Church roof awarded an international prize

The roof of the monastery's basilica is a sign of the monastery's major refurbishment work, visible from afar. In 2007, within the scope of the Klosterneuburg Monastery's major refurbishment, the roof of the basilica was completely re-tiled: The original pattern of the glazed tiles had completely disappeared due to many repairs and the originally green tiles had turned white. The roof was no longer frost- or waterproof and the church had already suffered water damage on the inside. The monastery's management therefore decided to have a completely new roof fitted. The tiles were removed from the 2200 m² roof, and a protective frame was installed. Then the roof was re-tiled in a diamond pattern using dark brown, light brown and green colours. Plain tiles made by the

Tondach Company were used and the Gerhard Hohl GmbH from Vienna carried out the tiling work. In 2001, the International Federation for the Roofing Trade awarded a prize to honour “special and outstanding work” in the sector for the first time, and the Gerhard Hohl GmbH received this desirable prize for its work on the roof of the monastery’s basilica.

The Cultural Treasure on the outskirts of Vienna

With art treasures collected over a period of 900 years, numerous items bearing testament to its rich history, and the oldest winery in Austria, ranking amongst the best in the world, the Monastery of Klosterneuburg of the Canons Regular of St. Augustin is the perfect destination for excursions. Different guided tours allow visitors to discover this treasury of European culture.

Monastery ticket – entrance € 9,-

The ticket includes all monastery’s treasures for a single price. It includes every tour on the same day: Sacred Tour, Treasury, Imperial Tour, Museum Tour, Wine Cellar Tour, Garden Tour and the Albrecht Altar.

Treasure chamber including the Archducal hat

- Winter season - daily from 10:00 am– 16:00 pm
- Summer season – daily from 9:00 am – 18:00 pm

Annual exhibition 2018: “Roman camp Arrianis“

- Winter season - daily from 10:00 am– 16:00 pm
- Summer season – daily from 9:00 am – 18:00 pm

Guided tour of the excavation: daily at 11:00 am / 12:30 pm / 14:30 pm / 16:00 pm

Attention: A complete visit of the annual exhibition is only possible in combination with the guided tour

Monastery museum

- Winter season – Saturday, Sunday and public holidays from 14:00 pm– 16:00 pm
- Summer season – Saturday, Sunday and public holidays from 14:00 pm– 17:00 pm

Additional offers and tours

Guided tour of the monastery (approx. 60 mins.) + € 2,-

Includes the monastery’s history, the church, the cloister and the Verdun altar

- Winter season – daily at 10:30 am / 11:45 am / 15:45 pm
- Summer season- daily at 10:00 am / 11:30 am / 16:15 pm

Great tour of the monastery (approx. 90 mins.) + € 3,-

Includes the monastery's history, the church, the cloister, the Verdun altar, imperial apartments and the marble hall

- Winter season – daily at 13:00 pm
- Summer season – Monday-Friday at 13:30 pm | Saturday & Sunday at 13:30 pm / 15:00 pm

Wine cellar tour (approx. 60 mins.) + € 2,-

Includes: History of the oldest winery in Austria, the baroque cellar ensemble and a wine tasting

- Winter season – daily at 14:30 pm
- Summer season – Monday-Friday at 15:00 pm | Saturday & Sunday at 13:00 pm / 15:00 pm

Alternative: day ticket € 13,- or annual ticket € 25,-

Valid for all tours and tickets offered, including audio guides.

Exceptions: special events like the Orchid exhibition

All tickets prices include 4 hours of free parking

The Wine Cellar Tour – top wines from baroque cellars

The baroque cellars descend four floors, to a depth of 36 meters underneath the courtyard. Through the combination of ancient knowledge and state-of-the-art technology many award-winning wines are produced at the winery. Modern temperature-controlled tanks and the romantic baroque cellar with its oak barrels are the place where the internationally renowned and award-winning St. Laurent is made. It is an absolute must-see and the 1-hour tour is followed by an included wine tasting in the vinotheque.

- Winter- / summer season, daily tour at 15.00 pm. Duration approx. 60 mins.
- € 11,- per person, including 4 hours of free parking

Food and beverages:

Regional delicacies are available and served in a variety of different settings:

- Café Escorial – located next to the Sala Terrena, with a terrace and a view overlooking Vienna
- Stiftscafé in the Pfortenhof
- Stiftskeller (cellar) - in the former grain storage

Opening Hours Visitor Centre:

- Summer season: 9.00 am – 18.00 pm (May - November)
- Winter season: 10.00 am – 17.00 pm (December - April)

24th of December until 12:00 noon; closed on the 25th, 26th and 31st of December; 1st of January from 13:00 pm.

We kindly ask for your understanding that it may not always be possible to visit and view the monastery's church and the Verdun altar during mess ceremonies.

Opening Hours Vinotheque

Monday – Friday 09:00 am – 18:00 pm | Saturday 09:00 am – 17:00 pm | Sunday 12:00 noon – 17:00 pm | closed on public holidays

Facilities & Infrastructure:

- Vinotheque, Restaurant Stiftskeller, Café Escorial, Stiftscafé
- wheelchair accessible, lockers in the entrance area and in the underground car park
- Children's' playground
- Bicycle rack, E-Bike charging station and bike boxes in the underground car park

Getting there:

- By public transport: U4 to Heiligenstadt - S 40 (urban rail) to Klosterneuburg-Kierling OR buses 238/ 239 to Klosterneuburg-Stift – from there it is only a short walk to the monastery
- By car: via the B14, chargeable underground car park and parking spaces available
- Via the Danube bike trail

More information & current programmes: www.stift-klosterneuburg.at

Must-Sees at the Monastery

While art may not automatically be on “top of the charts”, the following list presents the top-ten attractions at the Monastery of Klosterneuburg, and also in Europe, they are the best in this area:

- 1. The Verdun Altar:** Completed in 1181 with fire-gilt enamel panels by Nikolaus, a goldsmith from Verdun. Originally used as panelling for the pulpit, it was converted into a winged altar after 1330. Today it constitutes one of the most significant works of art from the Middle Ages and is awarded top marks in all travel guides. It can be seen on the Sacred Tour.
- 2. The Austrian Archducal Coronet:** The “Holy Crown of Austria” was donated in 1616 and was previously only removed from the monastery for ceremonies of attornment. It is on show in the new treasury.
- 3. Sala Terrena:** The intended garden hall remained unfinished and a shell since 1740 – a baroque building site with eight giant atlases, one of kind worldwide. Today, the visitor’s reception area with the shop and ticket office is located there and probably one of the most beautiful places to work ever.
- 4. The rear of the Verdun Altar** in the Hall of Medieval Treasures: The first large panels created north of the Alps were completed with a strong Italian influence after 1330. They are part of the Sacred Tour.
- 5. The seven-branch candelabra:** A gift dating before 1136 and presented to the church by Agnes and Leopold. The giant bronze candelabra was part of the church’s standard furnishings and came from the same workshop as the bronze door in Verona by S. Zeno. Also shown on the Sacred Tour.
- 6. The Babenberg Genealogy in the monastery museum:** This giant work of art, showing all members of the Babenberg dynasty along with their wives, was commissioned with the aim of acquainting people with the family of the new saint following the canonisation of Leopold in 1485.
- 7. The veil monstrance** designed in 1710 by Matthias Steindl, it is a highlight of baroque goldsmith’s art. It can be seen in the new treasury.
- 8. The monastery museum’s collection of ivory:** Ranging from “St. Leopold’s stationary” (an early medieval box from Spain) up to extremely fine works of art from the baroque. The most important items are shown in the new treasury.
- 9. Collection of liturgical vestment:** One of the most significant collections of chasubles worldwide with some particularly valuable items from the baroque, including the multi- part Marian vestments in art-nouveau style. Parts of it are displayed in the treasury.
- 10. The church and the grand organ:** An overall work of art from different centuries with that many details it would actually require a separate guided tour. The originally Romanesque church was transformed to baroque style and a grand baroque organ was installed, which remains unchanged to this day.

The St. Leopold Peace Prize

This annual award is endowed with a sum of 12,000.00 euros. It is regarded as one of the most generous art prizes in Europe and it combines two of the monastery's missions: Supporting art and charitable commitment.

The prize was awarded for the sixth time in 2014: It commemorates Margrave Leopold, who founded the monastery and who was canonized by the Catholic Church in 1485 for his peace policies and his generosity towards the poor. The award's mission is to direct the focus of art further towards charitable issues. The monastery is willing to spend 12,000.00 euros per year for this special award since 2011. The theme for 2016 is "The power of greed".

Participation is simple: The artist or groups of artists upload a digital photo of their work of art, which they consider depicts the current theme best, onto the monastery's website. Starting from the middle of June, a jury will nominate around 30 works, which will then be exhibited from mid-September. This is not an easy task, considering that around 500 contributions are submitted each year. The high-profile jury will meet again in autumn but this time with members and employees of the monastery, representatives from the industry and the media, artists and museum directors, all coming together at the exhibition to reach a decision based on the originals.

The award winner or winners are announced shortly before the festivities celebrating Margrave Leopold in mid-November in the course of an award ceremony, held in the monastery's marble hall. The main prize totals at least 10,000.00 euros – an amount that will contribute to purchasing the winning work of art. The winners – so far four young female artists – are also awarded a bronze figurine of St. Leopold. The jury has previously used its authority to present two honorary awards endowed with 1,000 euros each. As of 2011, a separate jury is presenting a special photography award, created to increase and boost the reputation of photography.

More details under: www.stift-klosterneuburg.at/friedenspreis

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