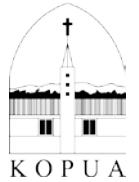


SOUTHERN STAR ABBEY KOPUA NEW ZEALAND 2010



This has been a blessed year and the seasons have unfolded and faded in due time. The proverb reminds us that every season is a good season if our hearts are in the right place. Purity of heart is at the centre of our Christian living.

January

The year was off to a vibrant start with both Community and Companions entering into a discernment process under the guidance of Sr Stephanie Kitching. *Where to from here?* was the question before us all. The three days of deliberation brought us to the following conclusions:

- We desire to renew our spirituality with reference to Cistercian values, our life in community, our care for our place and the environment, and the message we have to offer to the local Church and community.
- We desire to commence planning for the erection of a section of the monastery to house the monastic community.
- We desire to become more active in the promotion of vocations to the community.

The Guest House won an award for excellence in 2009 and it was the subject of an article in the January edition of *Home New Zealand*. Fr Maliu Tofu, who was ordained to the priesthood in St Patrick's Cathedral, Auckland in December 2009, visited and celebrated Mass for us all. Fr Maliu has been known to the community since his days as a pupil at Dannevirke High School.

February

Fr Michael Barton announced his decision to leave the community. Fr Michael entered Kopua in 1967 and made a valuable contribution to life in the monastery. His departure continues to be keenly felt by us all. Jeffrey Russell transferred from the Companions to the Community. Abbot Brian attended the annual conference of Bishops and Congregational Leaders at Waikanae. Towards the end of the month Abbot David Tomlins of Tarrawarra conducted the regular visitation.

March

The community elected Fr Brian as their abbot for another six-year term. Abbot David conducted the election and returned to Tarrawarra shortly afterwards. All of us were grateful for his encouragement and guidance. An appeal for financial assistance was launched in *The Marist Messenger* for funds to assist with the construction of the wing to house the community.

April

The celebration of Holy Week and Easter brought forth the best from us all. Abbot Brian attended the Regional Meeting of the Order in Indonesia.

May

Basulu, Venina and Jone Seniceva were farewelled by us all. Basulu was employed on the farm for the past three years and Venina cared for the Guest House. Some changes occurred as a result: Sarah Hancy took on the responsibility of caring for the Guest House and Graham and Sheila MacBride Stewart now care for the Day Centre. Fr Frank O'Loughlin was with us once again and this year presented seminars on the Sacraments of Penance and Anointing of the Sick. We have asked him to return next year. Fr John celebrated his 80th birthday. He is the oldest member of the community and continues to be an inspiration to us all.

June

Br John Pettit commenced a program at the Diocesan Centre, Palmerston North, to facilitate setting up a cell of the *Christian Meditation* network. Daniel Morrow, who was with us as a Companion in 2009, returned for another season. Two retreats were held for our Associates on the theme of 'Heart and Hearth' (the need for solitude and communion in our lives.) The Annual General Meeting of the Benedictine Union of Australia and New Zealand was held at Kopua for the first time. A Benedictine Studies Day was presented for the public on the theme of 'The Benedictine Presence in New Zealand'. Mother Philippa Mary and Mother Angela presented accounts of the founding of the Tyburn monasteries at Bombay and Ngkuru. Dr Nicholas Reid delivered a paper on *The Bishop and the Benedictines: Auckland's Benedictine Foundation from 1879 – 1900s*. Abbot Brian presented a paper on *The Founding of Our Lady of the Southern Star*.

July

Abbot Brian returned to Tarrawarra Abbey for a three-month sabbatical hoping to recharge his batteries for another six years of office. Eileen Mary Holmes, an Associate of Southern Star, died. John Prescott fell and broke his hip which necessitated a long stay in Hastings Hospital. He returned home in late September. Our thanks go to all who cared for him.

August

Fr John celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of his entrance into the community of Mt Melleray, Ireland on the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady 1950.

September

Fr John's third book, *21st Century Spirituality*, emerged from the printers. Jeffrey Russell left us. Sr Margaret Malone conducted the annual retreat - *A Journey of Discipleship with the Gospel of St Luke as our Guide*.

October

Abbot Brian returned. Anthony Williams joined the Companions of Kopua. The third and final retreat for our Associates was well attended. Abbot Brian was off again to conduct a retreat for our brothers of the monastery of Our Lady of Joy, Lantau, Hong Kong. He was asked to stay on as the official witness of their abbatial election.

November

Br Tony Brown celebrated his 70th birthday. His family joined us for the celebration. Mr Brian Walsh celebrated twenty-five years of faithful service to the community. Brian came to help Fr Basil Hayes on the farm for a period of time and, thanks be to God, never left us.

December

Graham and Sheila celebrated their 40th Wedding Anniversary. They were married at St Augustine's, All Saints, Manchester UK on the 18th of December 1970.

And so we wish you all a blessed Christmas and may the Love of the Father, the peace of Christ and the joy of the Holy Spirit strengthen you in the coming year.

The Brothers and Companions of Kopua



Fr Maliu celebrates mass at Kopua assisted by Br Bruce Cleaver.



Br Kalolo Tonga promises obedience to the newly re-elected Abbot Brian Keogh.



Dr Nicholas Reid from Auckland University and Mother Angela (below) of the newly established house of the Tyburn nuns at Ngakuru address the Benedictine Studies Day held at Kopua in conjunction with the meeting of the Benedictine Union of Australia and New Zealand.



Brian Walsh carries the cross for one of the Stations on Good Friday.





In 2010 Fr John Kelly celebrated his 80th birthday and the Diamond Jubilee of his entry into the monastic life.



John Prescott being visited by Marie Palmer during his post-operative rehabilitation in Hastings Hospital.



Sr Margaret Malone SGS led an inspiring Community retreat in September on the theme of Discipleship in the Gospel of St Luke.



Br Tony Brown celebrated his 70th birthday in November.



Southern Star Abbey church and the award winning guesthouse looking towards the Ruahine Ranges.