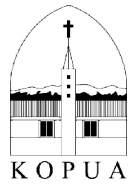


Southern Star Abbey

Kopua, New Zealand



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER - 2013

All of us know that we should give thanks to God for everything that comes our way, the ups-and downs and the ins-and-outs of life. Yes, we do! And for the following we are particularly grateful:

February

The death of John Prescott on February 5th closed a chapter in the history of Kopua which opened way back on March 16, 1948. On that day the parish priest of Dannevirke, Fr Guinane, informed Archbishop McKeefry by letter that: *Mr. Tom Prescott of Kopua, Takapau Parish called recently. He is anxious to leave his farm, 500 acres freehold with some other acreage leasehold to the Church. He wonders whether an arrangement could be made whereby after his death, his wife's interest could be sustained and in the event of her death his adopted son could have a home.* Five days later Archbishop McKeefry replied suggesting that the community of Mount Melleray, Ireland, might be approached about making a foundation. And they did, in due course!

John died at Southern Star Abbey on Tuesday, February 5, at 3.00 am. John's health had been in decline for some time. He was born to Peter and Rosalie Klimeck (nee Mahoney) in Dunedin on March 31, 1931. At the age of five John came to Kopua, having been adopted by his aunt and uncle, Rosalie and Tom Prescott. In 1954 he was part of the group which welcomed the founding community of monks from Ireland, and from that day on he was an honorary member of the community.

We did give John a home and he was very much a part of the community. We loved him and he loved us. Most of us, depending on the season, were told by John that we were, for the moment, his very best friend.

The abbot attended the annual conference of Bishops and Congregational leaders at Waikanae.

Ever conscious of our responsibilities as good stewards of God's creation we invited Alison Dewes to review our dairy farm operation in the light of sustainable dairying.

March

Fr David Tomlins, recently retired abbot of Tarrawarra, spent part of his sabbatical year with us enriching us with his company while he did preparatory work on the Gospel of Matthew prior to studies in Jerusalem.

Fr Michael Casey made a welcome return to present a program on St Bernard of Clairvaux which proved to be a rewarding experience for us all.

On Easter Sunday the bell from St Vincent's Takapau which had been hung from the renovated tower of the monastery church was blessed.

April

Fr Paul Mark of New Clairvaux Abbey, California, called in for a few days before leaving for visitations of our communities at Lantao (Hong Kong) & Shuili (Taiwan) with our abbot as his assistant.

May

Fr David Tomlins left for Israel. Graham and Sheila departed for a sixth month visit to the old country. Theresa and Rex Begley arrived to join the community as Companions. The abbot was up and away once again to attend the regional meeting of Cistercian Superiors in Japan.

June

The first of our Associates' retreats for the year got under way. Participants were given an introduction to the life and spiritual teaching of St Aelred of Rievaulx.