

## **Southern Star Abbey - 2014**

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:

### **January**

A month of comings and goings! The abbot travelled to the Philippines for a Visitation of our sisters' community at Matutum, Mindanao. Adverse weather added a good deal of excitement to the journey. Graham and Sheila McBride-Stewart, the founding members of the Companions of Kopua, returned to Auckland after five fruitful years with us. Rex and Theresa Begley officially took up residence as Companions of Kopua.

### **March**

Fr Michael Casey of Tarrawarra Abbey returned once more for a week of lectures generously sharing his knowledge of Cistercian monastic life with us.

### **April**

Fr Max celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### **May**

Br Bruce set off for Rome to attend a monastic renewal course at the University of Saint' Anselmo. Br Hausia of Tarrawarra Abbey was his companion and after the program was completed both of them visited some of our communities in Ireland so as to soak up something of the tradition. Malcolm and Lisa Dine, our share milkers for many years, retired from dairying and a dinner was held in their honour to mark the occasion. We are very grateful to them for their years of service to the community's mission to the Church. The first of three retreats for our Associates was well attended and participants were introduced to Beatrice of Nazareth (1200 – 1268). Beatrice, one of our monastic sisters, was an influential writer on the spiritual life in her native Belgium.

### **June**

We celebrated the diamond jubilee of the foundation of Kopua with a celebration amongst ourselves. We welcomed our new share milkers, Jason and Nikki Halford and their staff, on that occasion. Fr John Kelly's translation of the 'Diverse Sermons' of Bernard Clairvaux was prepared for publication by Graham McBride-Stewart to mark the occasion in a more formal manner. This translation was published in Tjurunga, the journal of the Benedictine Union of Australia and New Zealand. The abbot attended the annual general meeting of the Benedictine Union at Tarrawarra Abbey and returned home via Mackay to visit his aged mother.

### **July**

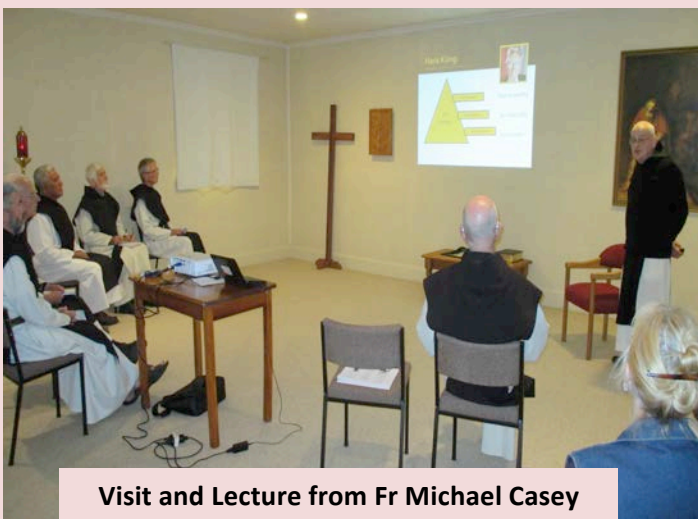
We commenced viewing a stimulating series of lectures on the Book of Revelation presented by Professor Craig Koester of Luther Seminary, USA, which took us to the final week of September. Br John's father, Frank, died in Christchurch aged 96.



**New Year's Day BBQ**



**Graham & Sheila's Farewell – 26 January 2014**



**Visit and Lecture from Fr Michael Casey**



**Dine Family Farewell**



**New Portico to the Church**



**Father Max**

**80<sup>th</sup>  
Birthday**

**25 April 2014**



**Br Hausia Vaiangina  
(Tarrawarra) and  
Br Bruce Cleaver at  
Monti Cassino, Italy.**



**The arrival of the new house for  
married Companions**



**Bishop Charles Drennan, Archbishop  
Martin Krebs & Abbot Brian Keogh**



**Father Niko,  
celebrating his  
40<sup>th</sup> year of  
Ordination.**

Br John spent quality time with his father in the week leading up to his death. Fr Niko celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood with a Mass at the Cathedral in Palmerston North. Earlier that day the Apostolic Nuncio for New Zealand, Archbishop Martin Krebs together with our ordinary, Bishop Charles Drennan, visited and lunched with us.

### **September**

The abbot set off for Rome to attend a meeting of the Oriens' Region of the Order, the communities of Asia and the Pacific. Then he was off to Assisi to attend the General Chapter, three weeks of almost unremitting toil. Helen Carver and her sisters travelled to Japan to attend the unveiling of a plaque to commemorate the members of allied forces who were imprisoned in a slave labour camp during World War II. Harry Carver now aged 98 was one of those incarcerated and was not strong enough to attend. The second retreat for our Associates was led by the Rev Jenny Dawson. Br John travelled to Sydney to join twenty seven members of the Benedictine family in Australia for a three-week study program on the Rule of St Benedict, conducted by German monastic scholar, Sister Manuela Scheiba OSB.

### **October**

Fr Steele Hartmann of Tarrawarra called in for a few days on his return journey from the General Chapter. Br Anthony Francis completed his novitiate and chose to return to the Companions. Br Tony attended a reunion of his extended family in Te Mata and returned home beaming.

### **November**

Tarrawarra Abbey celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of its foundation. Rex Begley celebrated his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday with a gathering of family and friends at Oruawharo Homestead. Sr. Margaret Malone SGS returned to conduct another retreat for the community. Br John was ordained to the Diaconate by Bishop Peter Cullinane.

### ***A Christmas Message from Bernard of Clairvaux and all of us at Kopua say, "Amen!"***

*It is to the shepherds watching and keeping the night watches over their flocks that the joy of the new light is announced, and for them the Saviour is said to be born. Upon the poor and the toiling, ... the day of sanctification has dawned upon the watches of the night, so that the night is illuminated as the day, or is rather changed into day, since the angel says, not this night, but this day is born to you a Saviour. For the night is passed and the day is at hand, the true Day of true Day, the salvation of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is over all things and is himself true God, blessed for evermore. Amen.*