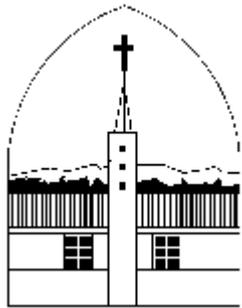


ASSOCIATES
OF
SOUTHERN STAR
ABBEY



KOPUA

*Southern Star Abbey
533 Kopua Road
RD2 Takapau
Hawke's Bay 4287*

Community: 06 8558 239
Guest House: 06 8558 249
Fax: 06 8558 259

E-mail:
abbot@kopuamonastery.org.nz

Website
www.kopuamonastery.org.nz

***The Associates of Southern Star
Abbey, Kopua***

- is a community of Christians centred on the Cistercian monastic community at Kopua.
- Its members are women, men, lay and ordained who seek to live the Cistercian charism as far as that is possible outside monastic community and enclosure.
- It finds its identity within the 'Lay Cistercian Identity' document adopted at the International Lay Cistercian Encounter at Huerta, Spain, in 2008.

Its members seek to:

- shape their lives by the principles enshrined in the Benedictine-Cistercian spiritual tradition.
- live a balanced lifestyle combining worship and prayer, study and reflection, work, and recreation.
- live out in their own circumstances the values of community, solitude, simplicity, and hospitality.
- embody the Cistercian charism as lovers of their families and local communities, and as lovers of the place in which they live, as well as of the monastery at Kopua.

***The Relationship of the Associate
Community to the Monastic Community***

is one of partnership in a bond of charity and mutual prayer.

Within that bond,

- Associates and monastics each have their own form of community life;
- the community of Associates receives its Cistercian identity through the monastic community, which has the responsibility of discerning, fostering and safeguarding the Cistercian charism;
- the Associate community is led and resourced by a Leadership Team comprising the Abbot (or a monk appointed by him); Associates elected by a triennial Associates Chapter; and a National Coordinator approved by the Abbot.

Community amongst Associates is:

- nourished by a common spiritual life.
- celebrated in friendship and the Eucharist.
- fostered by continuing formation in the charism.
- expressed in prayer for one another and for the monastic community.
- framed by monastic Hours of Prayer.
- embodied in annual Associates Retreats and regional groups.
- informed by regular newsletters.

Geographically isolated associates have their own special ministry within this community.

The Associates of Southern Star Abbey, Kopua is affiliated to the International Association of Lay Cistercian Communities, and thus linked to a much wider family of prayer, wisdom, and resource. (See the international website: www.cistercianfamily.org.)

Ecumenical

Associates recognise in Saint Benedict an ideal and model of ecclesial life whose roots predate the divisions of Western Christianity. They themselves are drawn from a number of churches and rejoice in that spiritual community they find together as Associates.

Formation

is life-long for all Associates. It includes

- an ever-deepening acquaintance with the Rule of Benedict.
- formation in Lectio Divina.
- appropriation of the discipline of the Hours of Prayer.
- cultivation of silence at the service of contemplative prayer.
- exploration of monastic spirituality.
- expected attendance at an annual Associates Retreat at Kopua when possible.

It is recommended that Associates have a spiritual director, and that he or she be someone aware of the values and disciplines of Benedictine-Cistercian spirituality.

The Leadership Team

- is responsible for shaping Associate community life and its relationship to the monastic community.
- Within the Leadership Team, there is a National Coordinator whose responsibilities include
 1. looking after inquirers.
 2. coordinating and helping to resource formation.
 3. overseeing communication amongst Associates, especially by Newsletter.

Becoming an Associate

First, please contact the National Coordinator, Mike Stone, (9 Sandstrom Grove, Feilding 4702; email stonem@xtra.co.nz mobile 021 703024

After initial discussions, there begins an intentional preliminary stage (normally up to eighteen months) to acquaint an inquirer with basic Cistercian spirituality and identity, incorporate him or her into relationships with Associates and the monastic community, and mutually discern God's leading.

Mentoring is by the National Coordinator in consultation with the Abbot, and (when appropriate and possible), within a regional group.

At the conclusion of this, and in the light of the personal Rule of Life which has been developed, the Abbot may formally recognise the inquirer as an Associate.