

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LAY CISTERCIAN COMMUNITIES
House Report

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| 1) Name of lay community: | Lay Cistercians of Holy Cross Abbey |
| 2) Contact person: | Maureen Normann |
| 3) Date group was established: | 1997 |
| 4) Number of members: | 16 |
| 5) Monastic liaison(s): | Fr. Joseph Wittstock |
| 6) Date of adoption of the Lay Cistercian identity document: | 2008 |
| 7) Charter and Statutes - most recent copy | January 28, 2012 (see attached) |
| 8) Leadership Council - how many, how selected | |

The Lay Cistercian Council has five members. The Council and its Dean are elected annually by the Professed Lay Cistercians or Chapter Members. All of the Professed appear on the ballot. After the Council members are elected, the Professed hold a second election to choose one of the elected to serve as the Dean.

9) Formation program - topics, activities, etc. Formation is an ongoing process for Lay Cistercians. It follows the stages of the monastic life—Observer, Postulant, and Novice to Professed. At the monthly meetings Fr. Joseph teaches the Observers, Postulants, and Novices on the basic elements of the Cistercian way of life with a special emphasis on the Rule of St. Benedict. The Professed continue their formation throughout life. We draw from the Rule and the Cistercian Fathers, as well as our biblical, liturgical, and spiritual heritage.

Please describe your community's situation considering the characteristics described in the document generated in Dubuque on "Characteristics of Lay Cistercian Communities." (no need to answer number 1):

- Lay Cistercian Communities receive written recognition from the Abbot/Abbess of the monastery with which the lay community is associated.*
- Lay Cistercians communities are assisted by a liaison from the monastic community appointed by the Abbot/Abbess. Fr. Joseph Wittstock is our Monastic Spiritual Advisor appointed by Abbot Robert Barnes in 2000. Fr. Joseph provides teaching to our Lay Cistercian community at our monthly meeting. He teaches the Novices and Postulants in the morning and the Professed in the afternoon.*
- Lay Cistercian Communities recognize and adopt the Lay Cistercian Identity document approved in Huerta in 2008. The Lay Cistercians of Holy Cross Abbey adopted the identity document in 2008.*
- Lay Cistercian Communities have a Charter and Statutes, approved by its members, which outline the spiritual goals of the group as well as its functioning and the link it has with the monastery. The Constitutions and Statutes formally describe the life of a Lay Cistercian of Holy Cross Abbey. The Constitutions and Statutes are organized into three sections: The Lay Cistercian Spirit, The Lay Cistercian Way of Life, and the Relationship to Holy Cross Abbey.*
- Lay Cistercian Communities have a leadership council, comprised of lay members, that is responsible for the administration of the group.*

The Council, which meets monthly, serves the needs of the community. The Dean is the designated representative of the Lay Cistercians of Holy Cross Abbey and is the liaison with the Abbot and the Monastic Spiritual Advisor.

6. *Lay Cistercian Communities have developed a formation program comprised of a curriculum of topics and learning activities that address the values and practices of the Cistercian Charism.*

The initial formation period is approximately four years, following a 4-month Observership. A member of the Council serves as Coordinator of Inquirers to assist those seeking information about the LCHCA and Observers. One professed member serves as a formal support and guide to the Postulants and Novices. Our Monastic Spiritual Advisor helps in this formation process, which continues after profession and as long as one is a Lay Cistercian.

If your community has a Charter of Incorporation or Bylaws we ask that you send it to us. If your community has a Council, we ask that you describe its formation, membership and election system. Your answers will be posted on the website of the association and may also be consulted during the international meeting in Lourdes. See attachment for Constitutions and Statutes. See #8 and #5 for information on the Council.

House Report Submission Deadline: 31 December 2013

Please send to: thmcmahon@q.com