



Josephite Companions Aotearoa

Nga hoa pumau o Hato Hohepa ki Aotearoa

Friendship ♦ Prayer ♦ Service

SPRING NEWSLETTER - September 2014

ROAD SHOWS

DARGAVILLE:

On 24th May Jane Gunson from Whangarei and Catherine Birt from Whangaparaoa travelled to Dargaville and met with in the parish Centre with an enthusiastic group of Companions for the “Josephite Roadshow”.

We were also happy to welcome the new Principal of St Joseph’s school in Dargaville Richard Truter who spent the day with us. The DRS of the school was also able to attend for some of the time.

As usual the day began with a cup of tea and some of Bernadette Isaac’s lovely scones that she was making as we arrived. The hospitality aspect of the Companions was really in evidence!



Jane and Catherine shared information from the Companions leadership team about the Conference they had attended in Sydney last year. They also included information about the pathway options of different ways of joining the melody; the hopes of starting Junior Joeys groups in the schools and where the Companions fit into the wider Josephite movement.

A shared lunch followed and we ended the day with prayer together. We talked a lot about the sisters who had been in Dargaville in the past and how they had contributed to the community through the school. We felt the spirit of Mary Mackillop was truly there among us.

TAUMARANUI:

On 5th July, Helen Dougherty from Whanganui travelled to Taumaranui to share the Roadshow with a



group of enthusiastic Companions. The day began with lunch where Josephite hospitality was to the fore with wonderful hot soup warming us on a very cold day. We began with song and prayer then had a look at the history of the Associate/Companion Movement along with where it is headed both within New Zealand and Internationally. People were also interested in learning more about the Sisters and where they are headed since Fusion. Some of us were unaware that the ‘Brown’ and ‘Black’ Josephites had common beginnings. The new

idea of the Josephite Charism being at the centre of the ‘wheel’ rather than the Sisters seemed

inspiring and opens up many different ways of joining the melody. New ways of belonging through the Pathways were also explored. We concluded an uplifting and thought-provoking day with afternoon tea.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

WHANGANUI:

Movie Night:

On Wednesday 6th August I went to Mount St Joseph, where the Sisters of St. Joseph showed the film 'Of Gods and Men.' Different films are presented once a month and they are open to the public.

Even though it was a cold night; that did not stop many of us coming out of our warm homes to watch. It was a full house and we were not disappointed with this movie.

The film was full of food for thought and the soul. This film is in French but the subtitles were very easy to read so it was easy to follow the plot.

The film opens with a quotation from the Book of Psalms, 82:6–7: "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes."

The film showed the monks' peaceful routine of prayer, plus the medical assistance, and community interaction. The monks are divided amongst themselves on the question of whether to stay or leave Algeria because a militant Islamic group is attacking the villages and everyone that is not Islamic. Before a decision is reached, the Islamic group enters the monks' monastery on Christmas Eve and demands their doctor and his medical supplies. The monks' leader, Christian, refuses their requests and cites the Quran as proof of the monks' goodwill. The Islamic leader respects this and leaves the monastery. The Monks refuse the protection of local authorities because they are corrupt. One night the Islamic group came back at night to the monastery capture, torture and kill the monks.

The Monks showed through the whole movie that even in danger they all agreed that this was the life they were called to live, that the moral decision to honour their commitment to the ministry and the village people was more important for them than death.

This was an amazing film that was very inspiring. I totally enjoyed not only the film but the supper time with new people from different backgrounds.

Eco-Spirituality Bookclub:

We have completed our first book, "Radical Amazement" written by Judy Cannato, (2006) an American retreat facilitator and spiritual director. This was a thoughtful and challenging book revealing the connection between science and spirituality. Members of the group were asked to read and reflect on a few chapters each month, and to meet up for discussion and further reflection. The sessions were open, often lively and definitely challenging, as traditional Christian teachings, came to be seen as part of Cosmology, always expanding, always developing.

The book chosen for the second part of the year is "At Home in the Earth" by NZ priest, Neil Darragh who at the time of writing this book (2000) was a lecturer in theology and liturgical studies at Auckland University. This book also offers us challenges taking the traditional Christian images and ideas of human beings, and their relationships with God, other living things and the Earth itself, and applying its relevance in the 21st century.

So we look forward to another few months of thought provoking reading and discussion.

MARY MACKILLOP'S FEAST DAY

MISSION BAY:

August 8th saw a group of Companions join with the Sisters at Mission Bay to celebrate Mary's feast day. The Sisters living around Auckland also came to celebrate and visitors joining us were Sister Jan Barnett from Sydney and Sister Lyn Stabler a member of the Sisters Regional Leadership team. As well some children and grandchildren of the Companions were also there.



The liturgy was held in the Chapel where we gathered in a circle to listen, pray and sing together. Sister Colleen Woodcock who is now the community leader of Mary Mackillop Centre at Mission Bay welcomed all present.

Afterwards a delicious supper was served and raffle tickets were sold to raise funds for the House of Bethany. \$360 was raised. The prize winners were delighted with their prizes. Catherine Thom (daughter of Josephite companion Clare McGivern) won a beautiful cyclamen. Catherine Birt's grandchildren Caitlin and Nicole were pleased with a basket of goodies and Sister Eugenia won the big hamper.

WHANGANUI:



The entire Whanganui community were united in celebrating Mary's Feast Day. Mass was celebrated at midday, led by Pa Steve Hancy, assisted by retired Bishop Owen Dolan and Fr Brian Carmine. The Sisters, Parishioners, Companions, those involved in Josephite ministries and students from the local primary and secondary schools attended. Sr Margaret Rowley, from Queensland and Sr Rita Cahill, most recently from Gisborne, but previously Taumaranui, were acknowledged and welcomed into the Whanganui community. Sr Anne Burke gave the homily where she spoke of the icon that had been presented to the Sisters by a former student, Michael Pervan.

She explained the many meanings of icons in a way that all present could easily understand and relate to. Representatives from the schools read the prayers of the faithful. After Mass everyone joined together for a shared lunch.

Students from Cullinane College wore mufti for the day. The cost for the privilege of wearing mufti was to bring an item of clothing or a blanket that will be given to those in need.



GISBORNE/TURANGANUI-A-KIWA

On Friday August 8th, the feast day of St. Mary MacKillop, we arranged a focal feature in front of the lectern. On a small table we placed a beautiful cloth heavily patterned in the Josephite colours of brown, beige and blue, on it was the lovely framed photo of St Mary, so familiar to us all and a pretty potted Cyclamen! Father acknowledged St Mary's life and legacy in his Homily.

The following day the Companions met for their winter gathering at The Convent. It was a cool, wet and windy day so attendance was small. We were however delighted to welcome two new parishioners, they turned out to be the highlight as one, named Mary, had the maiden name McKillop!!! [no relation,

different spelling] so had felt she had lived her life very close to St Mary MacKillop. The other, Chris, shared with us that Mary MacKillop had visited with her ancestors on her travels around the South Island so many years ago!!! We locals felt we had two very special people in our midst!

Our main news was that Sr. Rita Cahill, who has only been in Gisborne since March has been moved to Wanganui so, at present we have no Josephite sisters in town. Sr. Annette visited last weekend to talk with Sister Rita and meet some locals. The convent will be used for sisters on retreat or holiday until next year when a sister will take up residence. We look forward to that.

Our prayer time was centred on St. Mary and the reflection sheet “ We are but travellers here”, we used some of Mary’s writings as our meditation and closed with the Blessing from the St. Mary MacKillop Mass which we had been given.

We closed our time together with afternoon tea and getting to know one another better.

Greetings to all our fellow Josephite Companions around NZ.

Breda Bernstein JCA

PRAYERS:

Please remember Gus Lindstrom (Father of Peta) in your prayers. He has had major surgery and is very unwell.

REST IN PEACE

We pray for the repose of the souls of:



Mrs Kathleen Dudson, mother of Tom Dudson and mother in law of Patty Dudson of Te Awamutu.

Lillian Naughton of the Waimate associates who died on 6th May 2014.

Lillian was the mother of Kathleen Carpenter of Twizel

THANK YOU

Our prayer sheet was prepared by Eileen Fleming and Marie Skidmore rsj

**On behalf of the Josephite
Companions Aotearoa
Leadership Team**



JOSEPHITE COMPANIONS AOTEAROA

As we walk in the footsteps of Julian and Mary, we Josephite Companions Aotearoa respond to the Gospel by reverencing the Sacred in ourselves, others and our environment.

We do this in the ordinariness of our everyday lives by:

- Living simply and prayerfully
- Acting justly with integrity
- Responding to the needs of our time
- Being thankful for God's love
- Providing inclusive hospitality and down-to-earth practicality in the spirit of Aroha.

