



Josephite Companions Aotearoa

FRIENDSHIP ♦ PRAYER ♦ SERVICE

Spring Newsletter 2015

Dear Companions, Sisters and Friends,

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter for 2015. This season we celebrate St. Mary of the Cross MacKillop's feast day, hear group news of prayer and social times together and we read about the Josephite Companions of Aotearoa workshop, delivered at the recent Catholic Schools' Convention, held in Wellington.

Special thanks to all our contributors for the JCA Spring Newsletter.

Feast Day News at Mary MacKillop Centre, Mission Bay.

A big group of about 75 people gathered at Mission Bay on Saturday August 8th to celebrate the feast day of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop. There were Sisters, Rest home residents, Companions, representatives from Josephite schools and a group of ten students and staff from Mary MacKillop School, in Mangere.

A group of Sisters and Companions had organised the Mass which included a karanga or calling in of the image of Mary, which was placed in front of the altar. The reading from Colossians was read reflectively and entwined with a lovely set of images from Mary's life, which made it very memorable.



Catherine & Joseph Thom

The prayers focused around six quotes showing Mary's values that were displayed by Catherine and Joseph Thom, before each prayer was read.

In the homily, Father Stuart set us talking about what first attracted us to Mary's charism. This caused a buzz in the Chapel before he summed up by talking about the fact that she was always faithful to her dreams despite the difficulties she experienced.

A wonderful lunch followed with delicious food, lots of talk and the drawing of a raffle provided by the Companions. Three

Sisters won the prizes and it raised just over \$300 dollars for the House of Bethany. The occasion was rounded off by the singing of a thank you from the students from Mary MacKillop School and their principal and deputy principal.

A big thank you to Sister Colleen Woodcock, Sisters Jill McLoughlin and Lyndal Brown and to Peta Lindstrom for the organisation of this occasion.

Written by Catherine Birt

FEAST DAY CELEBRATION for the Gisborne JCAs.

Gisborne Josephites began the day with Mass. A small table was dressed in an appropriate brown and blue cloth. A lovely picture of Mary with a group of young children was on display alongside a pot of spring flowers. The Mons. used the Mary MacKillop liturgy, which was lovely. He also gave a great homily, telling Mary's story of joy, dedication and of facing many challenges. Companions read the first reading, the prayers of intercession and were also Eucharistic Ministers. Twelve of us then went to a local cafe for coffee and fellowship. It was most enjoyable as the company was good and it was a glorious Gisborne day, with only a slight nip in the air. We hope our fellow Companions also enjoyed the Feast Day of dear St. Mary MacKillop.

Josephite Groups News

NEWS FROM TURANGANUI-A-KIWA/ GISBORNE.

We held our second meeting for the year on June 13th, which was just the day after the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, one of the Josephite patrons. Our national newsletter was available with copies for all and a short news update from The House of Bethany in Auckland.

REMEMBERING: We began our prayer time by remembering dear Malcolm Boyd, he had been a faithful member since Sr. Gertrude started the local lay association in the 1980's. May he rest in peace. We were delighted to have Malcolm's lovely framed pictures of the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart to give visual impact for our meeting.

PRAYER TIME: focused on the Sacred Heart, [love] beginning with a prayer of blessing written for the feast followed by a reading from the prophet Hosea with words expressing God's love for his people [each one of us]. One line "I drew them to me with affection and love. I picked them up and held them to my cheek" Hosea 11 v4, members found very moving and intimate. We closed this time of prayer with a short DVD, "Touching Hearts" prepared by Sr. Jill McLoughlin for the feast.

FINALLY: Sr. Meg joined for our meeting and we were very pleased to welcome her. We closed our time together with a shared afternoon tea and a good chat.

Breda Bernstein JCA

Wellington Josephite Companions of Aotearoa.

Written by Sisters Doreen and Leah

Recently we were invited by Sister Therese McConway to 'house-sit' while she was in Australia. Even though it was the middle of winter, we set off for Upper Hutt. Therese arranged with her Associate group to 'keep an eye' on us and they certainly did. The cold weather was surpassed by the wonderful generosity of Associates and the Wellington Josephites.

Most days we attended Mass with the Sisters of Mercy in Upper Hutt and enjoyed their hospitality one day. The Sisters have a village of independent- living units. There we met connections of the Josephites –Joan Jenkins (a Friel from Pleasant Point), and Rosemary Bezar formerly from Kaitangata in South Otago. Rosemary was actively involved with Sister Benedict in Balclutha.

The local Associate group are actively engaged in putting into practice Mary MacKillop's words, 'if there is a need do something about it'. Therese Anstiss (Rita Cahill's sister) invited us to a 'pot luck' lunch with other Associates, including Janice Brown, a niece of Bertrand Golder, and it was obvious from their stories that all are involved in activities helping others. Also attending that day was Noelene Casey who has been a great helper over the years.

Altogether, our stay was most enjoyable and to cap it all off we met Joy Cowley at the airport and enjoyed a cup of coffee with her. We arrived in Auckland to be met by Pat and Kathleen, who took us home to Mission Bay. Thank you, Therese for this wonderful opportunity.

To all, this message from St Mary MacKillop:

May God bless you all. With all the love in my heart I pray that God may do this.

25.7.1899

TOKOROA WELCOMES NEW COMPANIONS

A recent visit by Sr Therese was the opportunity for the existing Companions from over a decade ago, to welcome six new Companions into a parish group. The original group have not been meeting regularly but keeping in touch with the Josephite family through the newsletters and prayer sheets

The new Companions are: Roger Brownsey, Joe & Judy Edgar, Bev Gibson, Patsy Hill and Kaye Walls.

All have been regular attendees at the Oasis of Prayer established by Marie Williams rsj that have met on Mondays for several years now to study Pope Francis' writings and pray for the needs of families and the community. This group included three companions and eventually a desire came from the new ones to join them in their Josephite journey.

Those original Associates formed a group over a decade ago and have continued to take the Josephite charism of Mary MacKillop into their parish and out into community work.

It was a great occasion for the whole group who will continue to be an Oasis of Prayer, which was a wish of Bishop Browne in the Diocese's Proud to be Catholic statement.



JCA's Tokoroa enjoying being back in the classroom



Prayers for our Josephite Companions.

Please pray for Trish Murphy, sister in law of Frances Carter, and Gayle Dodunski of New Plymouth. Gayle is on the Josephite Companions of Aotearoa Leadership Team. Both ladies are very ill. They and their supportive families need our prayers.

The Catholic Schools' Convention 2015

In our last newsletter, we shared how members of the Josephite Companions Leadership Team were preparing a workshop session to present at the triennial New Zealand Catholic Education Convention that was held in Wellington. We are very pleased to be able to report that although the numbers were small at the actual presentation, there was a very genuine desire by Josephite Schools to be actively involved in the establishment of a New Zealand Josephite Schools Network.

The schools represented at the session were very keen to hear about the Junior Joeys programme being trialled at St Francis Xavier School in Whangarei. This programme teaches children about the life and values of St. Mary MacKillop, alongside providing opportunities for community service. Jane Gunson was able to share some excellent examples of how they have begun to implement this primary school programme of justice and service within the school and parish community. The Josephite charism underpinned much of the students' actions as they undertook and enacted a variety of practical activities in the spirit of Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods. Since the Convention presentation, St. Ignatius School at St. Heliers has begun a Junior Joeys programme. We look forward to more schools taking up the Junior Joeys service programme.

Helen Dougherty ably spoke of the involvement of secondary school students and how they explored Mary MacKillop ministries in Australia and the positive impact on staff and students who were able to attend the Josephite Colloquiums held at Mary MacKillop Place in Sydney. Peta Lindstrom shared about the history of Josephite Schools and Companions and our desire for a NZ Josephite School Network where school communities inclusive of children, staff, parents and parishioners continued to know and live out the Josephite story through their words, deeds and actions.

Sister Jill McLoughlin spoke about the preparations that were underway for the 2016 150 years celebration of the founding of the Josephite Congregation and the possibilities for school and parish involvement. What a wonderful opportunity for us to once again highlight and give praise and thanks for all those who live the spirit of Mary and Julian!

The group were very keen for a Josephite Facebook page to be established where Josephite Schools could share happenings, events, news and resources - a great idea. There was also a

suggestion for a Virtual Learning Network forum where school could ask for support or to share concerns or queries in an on line forum. These suggestions were very popular and so a small team has been tasked with progressing these ideas to the next stage!

We were left feeling very uplifted by the interest shown from our schools and secure in the knowledge that our communities resonated with the spirit of Mary and Julian and that the Josephite charism was alive and well in our schools today! .

Written by Peta Lindstrom.

BLANKETS FOR NEPAL

Room 18 at St. Francis Xavier Catholic School Whangarei has knitted two wonderful 'peggy squares' blankets for people in Nepal. Their teacher, Mrs. Lynn Douglas, has ably led them. Parents, grandparents and friends of Room 18 also helped by donating wool, teaching knitting and sewing up the blankets. The children knitted some of the squares during their Junior Joeys lunchtime service. Mrs. Douglas' sister-in-law will take the blankets to Nepal, when she travels there in November. Source – St. Francis Xavier School Newsletter, 20.8.15.



Rest in Peace: We remember them with love and send our prayers and sympathy to their families.

May they rest in peace.

Mary Fitzgerald, a loyal Josephite Companion from Temuka, died 11 December 2014. Mary supported the Sisters and others in her friendship, prayer and service. As someone once said, the devil would never find her with idle hands as she was always busy with knitting, sewing and baking for others. She was a great reader and travelled extensively so was able to communicate with people of any age. She loved to talk and was always ready to listen with a kind, sympathetic ear. Mary is survived by her brother Jim and his wife Leonie, and her sister Patricia. Last month, her other sister Monica (Sr Denise) passed away. May Mary and Monica rest in peace.

Our thanks to Liz Hickey rsj for preparation of our September prayer/reflection sheet ... and to Jane Gunson and Catherine Birt for preparation of the newsletter

