

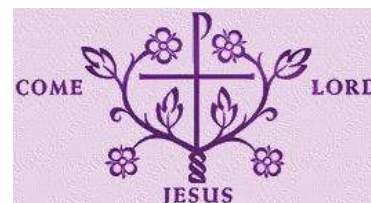


Josephite Companions Aotearoa
Nga hoa pumau o Hato Hohepa ki Aotearoa
Friendship ♦ Prayer ♦ Service

SUMMER NEWSLETTER - December 2015

As this newsletter comes to you we are conscious of the fact that we are in the season of Advent. Advent is a time for coming home:

- ❖ We come home to belonging to the Universe
- ❖ We come home to Ourselves
- ❖ We come home to the Child within us
- ❖ We come home to the Land, to Sacredness of Place
- ❖ We come home to Intimacy, Family and Nourishment
- ❖ We come home to the Communion of Life



Earth is God's home. It must be our home too. Jesus is God embodied. Incarnation is the most profound revelation of Divine Immersion in the Cosmos. 'This is My Body.'

TURANGANUI-A-KIWA/GISBORNE:

Our Spring meeting was held in the Parish Meeting Room on Saturday Sept 26th. Our prayer focus was Fr. Julian Tenison Woods, co-founder of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Oct 7th is his memorial day on the Josephite calendar. Our table featured, spring blossom, china birds, shells, feathers, stones and other reminders of nature. The prayer introduction reads; "We remember his gifts as pastor, scientist, artist and poet, his passion for mission, his reverence of Earth, his respect of the Aboriginal peoples and his love of God." The whole prayer reflection was centred on nature and ecology, so topical with Pope Francis' latest Encyclical. The question we pondered was "How am I growing in awareness that all of our universe can speak to us of God"?

We closed our time together with afternoon tea and a really good long chat!!!

Breda Bernstein JCA.

TE AWAMUTU

The Te Awamutu group of the Josephite Companions Aotearoa have, over the course of this year, met socially several times to catch up with each other. Generally we do this at a local cafe and enjoy a few hours of warm companionship, sharing concerns, as well as a fair bit of noise and a lot of laughter. Our group of around 16 or so consists mainly of elderly local folk, men and women, who have been gathering for many, many years and know each other very well.

We have been privileged this year to also have had Sr Theresa McConway visit our group on two occasions to share the Scottish history of the Mary MacKillop story which drew not only Companions but also several parishioners interested in learning more about our new saint. The photos Theresa showed of the area in the Highlands of Scotland where Mary's parents originated from, were beautiful, and gave us an insight into the terrain Mary's parents coped with on a daily basis. Stunning photography as well.

Theresa is a magnificent storyteller, and we learnt far more than we had ever imagined was known, drawing from her deep well of knowledge gained from having lived in Scotland for 6 or 7 years. A bonus was that she brought along a statue, pictured, that she had sourced and we were able to purchase. In all, 6 were purchased by our members, including one to gift to our local Josephite founded school, St Patrick's, Te Awamutu. **Patty Dudson**

WHANGANUI: Eco-Spirituality Group:

The wide-reading undertaken by the group last year strengthened the group's understanding of the interconnectedness of ecology and spirituality. This year, the consensus was that members were particularly interested in exploring what is happening in New Zealand and in particular in our local community of Whanganui, and what role we can take in understanding and caring for our common home.

This year has seen varied approaches in exploring the topic. Our broad focus has moved to issues related to sustainability, waste disposal, recycling and consumption. We have had a wide source to inform us, such as magazine articles, DVDs, YouTube, speakers and our own research.

This vibrant group will continue in 2016, following on topics and ideas that have arisen from the current year's activities.

Footnote: Anyone in Whanganui who is interested in joining the group for 2016 can contact Pam Hopper at Mount St Joseph's on 3445047.

International Josephite Associates' Planning Meeting

In mid-October I spent a wonderful weekend in Sydney catching up with Associates from every state in Australia. The purpose was to begin planning for the next international gathering scheduled for April 2017. We shared what we have been doing over the last two years and acknowledged that all groups had moved on since then. Three key priorities for the future were identified. They were to develop a 3-5 year plan based on common principles and core values, to develop leaders who are competent and confident and to develop communication links at all levels. It was decided that the 2017 conference would be for leaders to help enable their formation. (Helen Dougherty)

Waiuku, Papakura and Drury

The three wonderful Associates (Companions) from Waiuku, Papakura and Drury have decided they can no longer meet as a group due to their increasing age, family illness and the distance they live apart. Our love and blessing goes out to them. You will always be Josephites at heart. Thanks to Leonie Power for letting us know.



Deaths

Colleen Flatz - from St Heliers. Colleen passed away on 30th September after a battle with Parkinson's Disease. She was a much loved parishioner of St Ignatius Parish in St Heliers and is sorely missed.

Kathleen Sloane – a long time active member of the Whangarei Josephite Companions. Kath was 93 years of age and throughout her life shared the Josephite Spirit of hospitality which was one of her true gifts. Kath was also a much loved parishioner of St Francis Xavier Parish. Rest in peace Kath.

Website:

Remember that there is always something interesting to discover on the Sisters of St Joseph website: <http://www.sosj.org.au>

Currently there are some wonderful Advent Reflections for personal or small group use. The link is: <http://www.sosj.org.au/spirituality/index.cfm?loadref=559>

Mary MacKillop Kids' Camp 2015:

During the October school holidays another very successful Kids' camp was held at Tapeka Marae, on the shores of Lake Taupo. This was truly an example of Josephites on mission as there was a mix of Sisters and Companions, New Zealanders and Australians, young and old. The team was divided into three teams responsible for key areas. One team was responsible for all the meals, another for the children's sessions and the third for the sporting and outdoor activities. We were also blessed with the wonderful artistic talents of Jane Maisey for the posters and registration form. The overall theme for the camp was 'Joy in Living.' The four sessions were:



Joy in God's Creation: Mana Whenua

Joy in Me: Mana Tangata

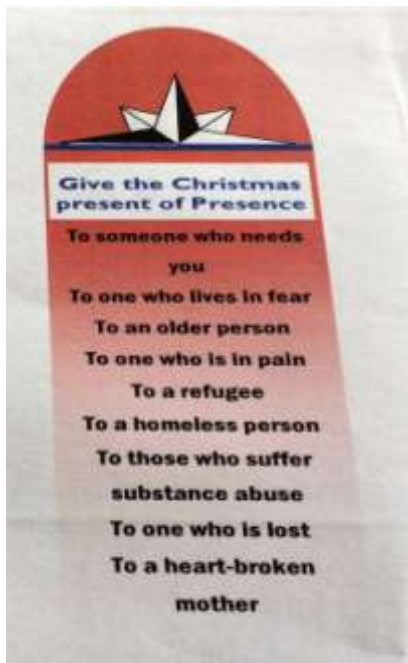
Joy in Community: Mana Whanau

Joy in Service: Manaakitanga

A key aspect to the success of the camp this year was the presence of five secondary school students who acted as tuakana, older brothers and sisters, for the children. They involved themselves fully, supporting both the children and the session leaders. Their witness was inspirational.

Year of Mercy:

Pope Francis has announced the beginning of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. In Hebrew scripture a Jubilee occurs every 50th year in which slaves and prisoners are freed, debts are forgiven and the mercies of God manifest. In our culture we don't have slaves, or do we? Who do we hold as slaves? Our children? Our partners? Our next door neighbour? Ourselves? In calling the Jubilee year Pope Francis reminds each of us of the need to forgive.



On behalf of the Josephite Companions Leadership team we wish you a joy filled and peace filled Christmas.

Sesquicentennial Josephites Celebrate 150 Years

An Invitation:



The Sisters of St Joseph

in conjunction with

The Mary Mackillop Penola Centre

and

St Joseph's Catholic Parish Penola

invite you to the Penola celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of St Joseph by St Mary MacKillop and Father Julian Tenison Woods in Penola on 19 March 1866.

Saturday 19 March 2016

10.30am – Open air Mass at Mary MacKillop Stable School Park, Bowden Street

12 noon – Light lunch in school hall

2.00pm – Opening and Blessing of Cameron Home adjacent to Mary MacKillop Interpretive Centre, Portland Street and Unveiling of Mary MacKillop sculpture.

Sunday 20 March 2016

11.30am – Opening and Blessing of the new Church porch following 10.30am Parish Mass for Palm Sunday

12 noon – Light lunch at rear of Mary MacKillop Interpretive Centre

RSVP no later than 18/12/2015 via www.trybooking.com/157404

Accommodation is limited. Early bookings essential.

