



Josephite Companions Aotearoa

Nga hoa pumau o Hato Hohepa ki Aotearoa

Friendship # Prayer # Service

SUMMER NEWSLETTER –December 2017

Greetings to you all from the Leadership Team.

We send greetings too from Sister Marie Skidmore who with Sister Colleen Woodcock is at present in An Tairseach in the Dominican Ecology Centre Wicklow Ireland doing a course on Ecology and spirituality.

This newsletter is full of happenings all around the country from the far North to the deep South!!

Summer blessings to each of you as we move into this season of Christmas, rejuvenation and holiday.



Josephite Colloquium

The word 'Colloquium' comes from the Latin word meaning 'Conversation' or 'Conference'. The Josephite Colloquium provides an opportunity for people working in Josephite schools and other ministries to come together, hear the stories and discover what it means to be part of the Josephite family. In September 20 participants met to experience Josephite hospitality and to share the Josephite charism.

As part of the Colloquium held at Mission Bay we welcomed students and teachers from St Ignatius

School in St Heliers who told us about being Josephite in their school setting. We were impressed with how they were able to articulate what they did – the green team and the rubbish team who kept the school beautifully tidy; the way they regularly collect food for the Glen Innes foodbank; how they follow the example of Mary MacKillop and try to serve others. The children who came had nominated themselves as being able to speak to the group and names were drawn from a hat so that everyone had a chance to be included. Mary MacKillop awards are given out at the school to students for the way they have upheld and modelled the school values of respect, responsibility, generosity and happiness. We were very impressed.

Many thanks to Carol Sullivan and Jane Penney who brought the children over to meet us. The way the charism is reflected in the school is due in no small part to the adults own depth of commitment to it.





THE WOMAN WITH THE UMBRELLA

Reprinted from The Far East August 2017. Abridged.

Used with permission.

By Fr Gary Walker

Mary MacKillop imbued the women who joined the 'Joeys' with a new spirit and a way of connecting with secular Australian and New Zealand people who knew nothing about religious sisters.

This leads me to a story by a diocesan priest who was giving a talk at Pius X11 seminary Banyo, Queensland, probably 40 years ago.

He described a Friday afternoon in Western Queensland, where he saw ringers and rural workers coming into town for the weekend to have a few beers and look forward to as weekend off.

As they passed the convent school they could see a cricket match in progress with the boys from the local school. Their eye was drawn to the umpire. 'Sister' with hat and an umbrella, in her voluminous robes, was umpiring the game in 100 degree heat.

This image appealed to the secular instincts of the workers; this was what was good about the nuns. They were out with the children, they were involved in the life of the school, of the families, they were down to earth; it was something that the ringers could understand. The sisters were 'true blue'.

The ringers may not have entered a church, they might have even been afraid of, or contemptuous of it, but Mary knew that credibility came when 'Sister' umpired a cricket match on Friday afternoon on the 'sizzling heat' this was something that ringers could appreciate and understand. The Sisters never demanded respect but they earned it by the lives they led and still do.

NEWS FROM DUNEDIN



On Saturday 28th October ten Companions assembled at the home of Patricia Clark for a luncheon.

Present were Fr Merv McGettigan, Sr Ann Gilroy, Myrtle Mier, Denise Mitchell, Audrey Fogarty, Trevor Pullar, Charlie, Campbell, Lorraine Lynch and Pauline White. Also in attendance were Patricia Clark and Madeline Lawn. All were educated at Holy Name School apart from Sr Ann and Madeline.

The gathering was brought into focus with Fr Merv saying grace and blessing the group and their families. Led by Sr Ann we studied and commented on the Christmas chapter in the book " Act Love Walk". Listening to people's comments we experienced different perceptions of the birth of Jesus.

We had a raffle and raised \$42 for the House of Bethany. The meeting closed at 3.30pm. We all felt refreshed spiritually and prepared for Christmas. We had caught upon each other's news and all left for home looking forward to another meeting in the future.

Apologies from Rosalie Toomey and Patricia Burdon who has had an operation and we wish her a speedy recovery.



THANK YOU FROM THE HOUSE OF BETHANY

An extract from a recent newsletter

It's been a busy time here with the house being occupied nearly every weekend. So far this year we have had 32 weekends occupied with families, couples and individuals enjoying a break from their stressful and hectic lives. This has meant 52 adults and 75 children have had the chance to have a weekend enjoying the house the food and the surrounding environment. And this blessing continues with every weekend through to Christmas being booked.

Every weekend I get to see this ministry bless families. I see the effect rest and rejuvenation in this quiet and relaxing place has on stressed parents and children. I wish you could all witness the joy and gratefulness that is expressed. Your ongoing support through donations and prayer is what makes this ministry available to so many. You are part of each families journey to the House of Bethany. Thank you for your faithfulness.

Catherine Polman



ECO CORNER

All created things give us ideas and glimpses of the beauty of the infinitely beautiful creator.

Julian Tenison Woods 1881

WHANGANUI NEWS

The Whanganui Companions group gathered for its Spring meeting at the end of September. Fr Julian Tenison Woods was the focus of the meeting. Companions had the opportunity to read quotes from Julian Tenison Woods in order to get a better sense of who he was. Group members were struck by how far ahead of his time he seemed in being aware of the interconnectedness and sacredness of all things. We reflected on how this might become more apparent in our own lives. Companions also spent some time considering the next steps in planning for our final meeting for this year and moving ahead to next year. An action we will take is to bring a food item for Christmas to our December meeting so that a basket can be distributed to needy families in our community.



Helen Dougherty

Spring Reflection Day in Whangarei

The Whangarei Josephites gathered for our Spring Reflection Day on Saturday, 30th September 2017. Six of our Josephites attended. Unfortunately there were three apologies due to illness.

We began with a shared lunch, which is always delicious. This is a great time for a catch-up. Then after lunch we listened to a



presentation by two of the teachers from our Catholic Primary School St. Francis Xavier, Teresa Webber and Karwyn Werder. They had both just returned from attending the Josephite Colloquium in Auckland. Teresa and Karwyn were enthused about being



Josephite from the time they had spent at the Colloquium.

Individually the teachers shared their impressions of what they had learned about the Josephite Charism through the stories of St. Mary MacKillop and Fr. Julian Tenison-Woods and through learning about the current work of Josephite people in New Zealand and the Pacific Region. Karwyn and Teresa also shared about their own Josephite journeys.

After their presentation, Karwyn and Teresa stayed with us for our short prayer liturgy. We have challenging concerns to pray about. This year two of our Josephites have died; Mary Robinson and Margaret Emmett. Both these women have had a long association with the Sisters of St. Joseph in the Whangarei District. They have also contributed much to the life of the Whangarei Parish and its schools. We have been blessed to know them.

Jane Gunson
Coordinator. Whangarei Josephite Companions

RIP



We were sad to hear of the death of Margaret Emmett who had been a Whangarei Josephite Companion for many years. Margaret worked as the school secretary at St Joseph's school so had many Josephite connections. We send our sympathy to all her family and friends.

Sympathy also to the family of Mary Robinson from Whangarei who died recently.

Thanks to Trish Daws for the Advent prayer sheet and to Pam Wood for the sketch of the cricket umpiring Sister!