



*Josephite Companions Aotearoa*

*Nga hoa puman o Hato Hohepa ki Aotearoa*

*Friendship # Prayer # Service*

**WINTER NEWSLETTER –JULY 2018**

Winter greetings to you all especially those of you in the deep South who are no doubt managing low temperatures in your usual stalwart way.

This edition is full of news of what Companion groups have been doing around the country. Thanks to Sr Marie Skidmore and Trish Daws for their work in assembling it.

The Leadership team has been busy producing some new resources as well as visiting groups and studying all of which are reported on this time.

## **PRAYER AND REFLECTION SHEETS**

You will notice this time that the usual prayer sheet has changed considerably. The Josephite Companions Aotearoa Leadership team has spent time writing some in depth resources for groups and individuals to use that will replace the prayer sheets we were sending each quarter.

The overarching theme of these this year is “Living into Mystery. At the heart of life God draws us into a new communion.” This comes from the Sister’s chapter document and is very applicable for us as Companions too.

These reflections sheets centre around the feast of Mary MacKillop (8th August) and the anniversary of Julian Tenison Woods (7th October) the feast of St Joseph (19th March) and there will be a Christmas prayer sheet also. They will be posted to all Companions on the postal list and emailed to those of you who receive them that way. They can be used by individuals or groups. We would appreciate any feedback you might have about them so that when we produce the next lot we can do even better!!

## **SLEEVES ROLLED UP IN GISBORNE**

Although our number was small our February group had an interesting time sharing our thoughts on the theme - Resisting Evil.

Our numbers fluctuate because of illness and other commitments but we feel that we benefit in many different ways when we gather to share our prayers, hospitality and time.

As a response to the Pope’s encyclical ‘Laudato Si’ some of our Gisborne/Turanganui a Kiwa Companions helped out by weeding and clearing up a local riverbank. We also encouraged the parish to become more aware of the sorry state of our God given home by facilitating an Earth Day Mass April 22 and inviting them to pledge to live more simply, pray with and for creation and advocate for creation.

Getting stuck in with the clean-up are from left: Sister Meg Hills rsj, Phillipa Huberts, Phyllis McGann, Pamela Mathias and Chris Crowe.



**Chris Crowe**



## TWO JOSEPHITE COMPANION GRADUATES

**Helen Dougherty** (L) graduated **Master of Educational Leadership** from the Australian Catholic University in October last year. She attended her graduation in Sydney earlier this year.

### Helen McGuigan

graduated with a Master of Education endorsed in administration and leadership through Massey University. The photo to the right shows the beautiful korowai that the students of Bishop Edward Gaines Catholic School presented to her.



## OFF TO PANGURU

Jane and Mike Gunson and I stood waiting for the ferry in Rawene as the sun rose over the beautiful Hokianga harbour. Mike had kindly taken a day off work to drive Jane and I from Whangarei up to Panguru where we were to do a teacher only day for the teachers at Panguru Area school. We had left at 5.30 am and now at 7.30 we were hoping a café would be open but no, Rawene doesn't open up that early!!

The Principal of the school Mina Pomare-Peita had asked us to tell the staff about the history of the Sisters who had lived and worked in Panguru and also about the Josephite Companions. Naturally we also included a section about Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods.

I had spent quite a bit of time researching both on the internet and in the books and from the "living historian" Sister Louise, so I knew a few things about the development of the settlement and the coming of the Josephites 100 years before. The photos I had found caused much excitement with the staff recognising their relatives as well as some of the Sisters who had taught them. Together we unpacked the information we collectively held and they bought out the canvas – pictured here- that the Sisters had given them when they had left. The names of all the Sisters who had worked in Panguru were written on it. This resonated especially with me as the name Cuthbert Hickey, my great aunt, featured prominently.

We had a great day – a moving welcome, food shared, ideas talked about in a Catholic atmosphere in a State school where the teachers are Catholic, and almost all related to each other.

Julian's ideas on the presence of God in creation and ourselves being a part of that creation spoke deeply to this group of people for whom the land is especially precious.

In that beautiful place with such a sense of history the Josephite connection felt very strong.

We detoured on the way home to go to St Mary's church where Bishop Pompallier's bones lie. And after getting off the ferry in Rawene we found that this time the café was open!!



**Catherine Birt**



## WHANGAREI JOSEPHITE COMPANIONS

The Whangarei Josephite Companions meet for prayerful reflection and hospitality four times a year in each of the school terms. We met on Saturday 26.5.18 for our Autumn Reflection. Our reflections and friendship support each other in the work of our daily lives. Each JCANZ member serves the Whangarei community in a voluntary way. Our Spring Reflection is shared with the Dargaville Josephite group. Whangarei Josephites host morning tea after the ten o'clock Sunday Mass for the parishioners.

Whangarei Josephites also have a Junior Joeys' Service Group at St. Francis Xavier Primary School. Each lunchtime, that the children meet they learn about the ministry of St. Mary MacKillop and Fr. Julian Tenison Woods. Then they do service work for the school and the Parish Office.

**Jane Gunson Leadership Team.**



**A PRESENTATION ON ECO-SPIRITUALITY** was the main topic for our autumn meeting of the

**Whanganui Companions** held at Mount Saint Joseph on Sunday 25th of March 2018.



The opening prayer and reading were an uplifting reuniting of like-minded people, inspired by a deep faith in God. Extreme concern for the effect the closing of Nazareth rest home, both on residents and staff, was expressed by all present and God's guidance for their welfare was prayed for.

We were then privileged to receive an amazing presentation by Sr Marie Skidmore on time she spent at an eco-spirituality course. This was an extremely uplifting and hopeful revelation. To see Marie and her course companions walking in beautiful wooded countryside and hear their guide's in depth discussion relating to God's creation, and the connection of all living things, was a joy. We were reminded of Pope Francis' encyclical regarding respect for nature, and its future preservation being the key to peace and prosperity for the whole world.

**Rhonda Svendsen.**

### Prayer for Pumpkins

We give thanks for pumpkins. While we may worry about our shape, pumpkins do not. They ripen into fullness and contentment. They do not jog or go to the gym, they just lie there smiling in the Autumn sunshine as they reflect upon the lovely summer in which they grew so happily and well. God bless the beautiful pumpkins. AMEN.



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## ECO CORNER

I had to go to a small country town in New South Wales, Goonellabah, to discover a valuable product being promoted by the local Country Women's Op Shop. A bamboo toothbrush! Light, flexible and eco-friendly... **and Made in New Zealand.** In fact, **made in Gisborne.**



Go Bamboo is a New Zealand company that's serious about keeping plastic out of our coastlines, oceans and landfills.

**Mick Williams & Anna Proctor** were so shocked and disgusted at seeing how much plastic was lying on a beach that they decided to try and live their lives with as little plastic as possible.

"We started to pay more attention to what we were buying, making better choices about packaging and choosing non-plastic alternatives when available. This was going fine until we needed to replace the kids' toothbrushes. We were struck by the amount of plastic that goes into a toothbrush, plus the unnecessary packaging, and that there was no non-plastic alternative. We started to research non-plastic options, but there were none in New Zealand. So we created Go Bamboo with natural toothbrushes using bamboo as an environmentally friendly raw material." Other household items like pegs, veggie brushes and cotton buds, are also available.

Go Bamboo won the waste minimisation section of the 2012 Green Ribbon Awards, which honour outstanding contributions to protecting New Zealand's environment. Website: <https://gobamboo.co.nz/>

**Trish Daws**



### **SACRED HEART CHAPEL, WHANGANUI** was built **100 years** ago this year.

Sisters, friends and residents of Ryman's Jane Winston Retirement Village, who now



owns the building, gathered there Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May to remember and celebrate its history. A highlight was having Sister Anne Burke and her

siblings, relatives of the original builder, speak. Sisters Marie Skidmore and Marcienne Waite gave historical information and Sister Liz Hickey presented a picture of the crib, the figures of which are to be donated back to the chapel owners, having resided at Nazareth until now. Chris Gullery, a nephew of Sister Genevieve, talked about his cleaning and restoration of the Stations of the Cross.

Any reader who knows the chapel will have memories of this very alive part of Sacred Heart Convent and College: Sister Barbara Cowan playing the organ, school Masses and retreats, morning Masses, professions and jubilees of the sisters celebrated with beautifully decorated sanctuary with chairs spread out around it for all the visiting priests, and at the back of the chapel, high up, a window from which sick or bedridden sisters could look down and participate. This is but a glimpse of the past. There's a wealth of human story contained within these walls! The chapel is retained as a spiritual and cultural place by the owners.

**Trish Daws**



A special thank you to Sandra Mews and John Ferris who have kindly posted out all the copies of this newsletter to the groups and individuals who receive them for the last five years. This service has been much appreciated by us all.