



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

DECEMBER 2019

So much news this month!! No room for anything else other than to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a restful holiday season!!

ASSOCIATES AND COMPANIONS CONFERENCE 2020

From July 5th to 7th 2020 an Associates and Companions conference is planned. The venue has now been finalised for this. It is to be held at Mary MacKillop precinct in Adelaide. There is a possibility of a trip to Penola being included after the Conference. The theme is “Be courageous and full of hope” and there are a number of great speakers organised, some workshops and launch of the new branding.

If you are thinking of going for a holiday why not incorporate this as part of it. More information as it comes to hand.

GISBORNE NEWS



Josephite Companions walked with students from Gisborne - in particular, the students of Campion College - in a demonstration against lack of action by the government (especially) to reduce carbon emissions in New Zealand. The march proceeded through the city and finished at the Tairāwhiti Council building where the students made speeches for their cause.

Josephite Companion, Pamela Mathias, with our own sign waits for the march.

WHANGAREI NEWS

On Saturday 9th of November, the Whangarei Josephite Companions of New Zealand were fortunate to be the first JCANZ group to welcome IJALT team member Pauline McGuire. Pauline comes from Townsville, Queensland. She is visiting New Zealand Josephite Companion groups as part of an international ‘road trip’ to meet as many Josephites as possible.

Catherine and Doug Birt hosted Pauline when she first arrived in Auckland. Doug kindly brought Pauline to meet me halfway at Wellsford to then travel on to Whangarei. This journey is Pauline’s first time in New Zealand. So, we made the most of touring around Ruakaka, Marsden Point and One Tree Point on our way home to Whangarei.



Whangarei Josephites held a lunch for Pauline the next day. Pauline shared her slide show presentation with us. The slideshow demonstrated the history of Josephite Associates and Companions and posed questions about the future of Josephite Groups. We thoroughly enjoyed welcoming Pauline to Whangarei.

Jane Gunson

TOKOROA JOSEPHITE COMPANIONS

After some discussion and meeting with Catherine Birt and Pauline (the IJALT board member from Townsville) recently, it was decided that without a leader for the group in Tokoroa, Companions who wished to continue to meet and pray could join with Rotorua at the invitation of Miyoko Hammersley who is the group leader there.

One of the group with close ties to Te Awamutu may join with friends there.

Tokoroa had enjoyed the privilege of having a statue of our Saint Mary MacKillop given by the leadership team and as our parish school already had a statue, it was gifted to the Rotorua group at the IJALT meeting.

Thank you, Pauline and Catherine, for your time and information.

Margaret Brownsey



A VISIT TO THE CAPITAL – WELLINGTON.

I drove Pauline McGuire from Whanganui where we (The Whanganui Companions) had enjoyed meeting with Pauline and gleaning something of the work of the IJALT team in Sydney, in bringing together in a more cohesive framework, the many groups of 'Companions' across Australia and New Zealand.

Sr. Therese McConway has for some years now co-ordinated a small group of Companions in the Hutt Valley, so it was to there we headed. Unfortunately, Therese herself was unable to be present, following a nasty fall in Whanganui, which left her somewhat incapacitated. The small group of Companions who met with Pauline did her proud! Pauline showed the group a YouTube Clip of Catherine Birt's address to the Chapter Delegates at the recent Josephite Chapter held in Sydney – they were delighted to be able to put a face on Catherine, who does a great job keeping in touch with these small groups! The YouTube opened for some, a better awareness of the structure of the Congregation and further insights into the whole understanding of Charism. Pauline's own Power Point on the current work of IJALT, in the development of structures for further growth and sustainability of the movement, the group found helpful as well as interesting. Pauline also brought some clarity round the possible name change for the group from *Associates* to '*Companions*' with the understandings behind this move.



The readiness of IJALT to enable its members to visit our local and rural groups was well accepted, and contributes I believe to the members own understandings of the total movement – they belong to something much greater than this small local group.

Next day, Saturday, my sister Therese and I drove Pauline into Wellington City to meet with her friend as both were travelling South together via the Picton Ferry on Sunday morning. You need to know that *A Severe Weather forecast had been mooted for Wellington for the weekend!*

Rita Cahill.

WHANGANUI GROUP



Companions gathered at Mount St Joseph's in Whanganui as Pauline went to visit with them too on her whirlwind tour of New Zealand. They approved of the proposed new logo which is being considered and is likely to be launched at the conference next year in Adelaide.

Further news next time of Pauline's visits to the South Island groups.

ST MARY'S SCHOOL GISBORNE



It's a busy time of year and Josephite Companions in Gisborne/Tairāwhiti have been out and in the thick of it! St Mary's School, Gisborne, has achieved Gold status as an Enviro School. The whole school works hard at putting into practice what they are taught and learn to live with a light step on our Earth. They recycle ... bottle tops into artworks, rebuild ... wooden planks into palaces (for bugs), rehouse ... homeless chooks into favourite pet projects and many more valuable activities. On 19th September they performed a special welcome for the local review team and visitors who thoroughly admired their efforts. The school's status jumped from being a Bronze Enviro School to a Green Gold Enviro School.

Josephites & Companions:

Back left: Meg Hills, rsj; Helen (Perky) McGuigan, Principal, St Mary's & Josephite Companion

Front left: Jill McLoughlin, rsj; Chris Crowe, Josephite Companion



OTHER VOICES AT THE SISTERS' CHAPTER



L to R: Front Row - Garry McLean, John Watkins, Jacqui Remond, Chris Caldwell, and Clyde Rigney

2nd Row - Petra Milaudi, Jessica Lembryk, Lana Turvey-Collins and Catherine Birt

Back Row - Joanna Najdzion and Tracy Wild

One of the most inspiring days at the Chapter was presentations from eleven lay people who are associated with the Sisters in some way. This day was most impressive as we heard from those associated with many groups and from many areas of Josephite mission and ministry. We were certain that the charism was alive and well in the hearts of many as we heard from representatives of the following:

An Aboriginal community leader from South Australia; community support worker with the aged in New South Wales; The Global Catholic Climate Movement; Principal of Penola College in Melbourne; Josephite Action Group JAG for young adults; Mary MacKillop Today Board of Directors; Catholic Professional Standards Board; Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre Melbourne; Covenant Josephites from Queensland and of course our very own Catherine Birt from the Josephite Companions in Aotearoa who did splendidly and challenged the Sisters to trust others with the charism? She spoke of the work done by the Josephite Companions and witnessed to the prayer and mission carried out by them, not only in New Zealand but elsewhere as well.

There was a strong challenge to be audacious in carrying out the Mission and appreciation of the spirit of the charism in their lives.

Marie Skidmore

REFLECTIONS ON CHAPTER 2019

The theme of our six yearly Chapter was **Raising the Powers of love. go and do the same!**

This is a quote from Teilhard de Chardin the Jesuit Priest who believed that humankind were at a point in our evolution when we need to live out of a new consciousness... an awareness that we are connected with all of Creation and its creatures and to live so as to develop the insight and the compassion with which we are gifted.

In order to make the Chapter as participative as possible, the Sisters, in their community groups, had studied the parable of the Good Samaritan over the past year and sent the results of their contemplative dialogue to the Chapter planning committee. There was also the opportunity for those who were not among the 63 Chapter delegates to gather for two days with the Chapter facilitator, who was for the first time, a laywoman, Judith King from Ireland. About 180 Sisters took part in these weekends and sent their input to the Chapter delegates.

Sisters were also invited to send in art or poetry which they had composed when meditating on the theme.

Therefore, it was with a sense of the inspirational thoughts of many of the Sisters that the delegates gathered on the 29th September in Baulkham Hills, out of Sydney for the two-and-a-half-week meeting. The delegates were representatives of all the regions of the Congregation, but were, of course tasked with considering the affairs of the whole community, rather than regional ones.

Chapter is a time to reflect on the past, elect the central leadership team and dreaming of the future write a statement of direction for the next six years. Therefore, reports were personally presented by our leader, Sr Monica Cavanagh, re the whole Congregation of 715 Sisters – with an average age of 78 now. Also, from the regional leaders, of New South Wales; Centre West (Western Australia and South Australia); Transpacifico (Queensland, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Peru and Brazil); Ireland; Vic-Tas (Victoria and Tasmania). Numerous other reports were emailed to the delegates and to the Sisters at home for further reading. Amongst these was the report of the International Josephite Associate Leadership team presented by Mary Hemmings, a Josephite companion from South Australia. This report stressed, among other directions, the importance of finding ways to be relevant to a new generation of people.

Before the election of the Central Leadership Team the delegates spent some days discussing current issues and future directions. The elections resulted in the election of Sr Monica Cavanagh for a further six-year term and her team of four Sisters. The statement which will hopefully inspire us for ministry over the next six years will be published in the near future.

You will be glad to know that the delegates enjoyed two days off... one a visit to a rhododendron garden and the other a free day, which I used to have a ride on the new driverless train on the Sydney Metro! We were also well supported by a wonderful team of Sisters who took Minutes, provided us with water at frequent intervals, fed us too well and provided opportunities for interesting relaxation activities.

Marie Skidmore



RIP

Our deepest sympathy and continuing prayers to the families of the following

Faye Hudner Kohimarama

Trudy Boersen Tauranga

Dot Palmer Whangarei

Gus Lindstrom, Te Awamutu, husband of Pat and father of Peta.

OBITUARY

One of Tokoroa's stalwarts, LEONIA AIONO, sadly died in May this year and her passing has left a huge gap in the parish. Her legacy is legend. She was widowed in 1986 at a very young age and from then devoted her life to her three children, the parish and the priests.

Along with Sr Tina Kapeli she ran a parish youth group for many years; She instructed the children for Confirmation & Communion until about 2015; She had a flair for flowers which adorned the church and a skill she passed on to others; She was a housekeeper and presbytery custodian for longer than is remembered;

Her housekeeping duties saw her often working in Wellington for weeks at a time, travelling by bus to Wellington and sourcing the best artificial flowers there. As singing leader for the Tokoroa Catholic Samoan Society, her voice resounded through the pews Leonia's presence was powerful.

Rest in Peace, dear friend.