



# Josephite Companions Aotearoa

## Nga hoa pumau o Hato Hohepa ki Aotearoa

### Friendship # Prayer # Service

September 2020

Greetings everyone from 2.5 lockdown here in Auckland.

There is a wonderful lot of news this time from right around the country. Of particular interest is a write up about the Heretaunga group who have told us of their activities in helping those in need in their area. We congratulate you for all your hard work.

An IJALT newsletter is enclosed with the postal copies of this. It contains some important news. I have emailed it as well to all those on our usual email list. You may have already received it direct from Sydney, but better to have two copies than none!!

Catherine

## GISBORNE JULY NEWS

It was a wet winter's day when our Tairāwhiti/Gisborne Companions met again after Lockdown. There was certainly a lot to discuss about how we went through the previous months since our last meeting. Where did autumn go? Many interesting tales and experiences were shared. We agreed that the random acts of kindness were wonderful and they demonstrated that Kiwis can be caring and mindful of each other when the going gets tough. We reflected on how important it is to continue this course into the days and months ahead when we, as a nation, map our way through many facets of hardship. We also remarked on the effects of fewer vehicles, worldwide, polluting the atmosphere, making visible landmarks previously hidden behind smog. Phyllis McGann shared an inspiring song she wrote - "We are the Mirror" - how we act reflects God. We finished with prayers for those still going through the worst of Covid-19 and those people in particularly troubled times throughout the world.

## GISBORNE AUGUST NEWS

Although St Mary of the Cross's feast day was on Saturday 8th, Campion College, here in Gisborne, had a celebratory Mass on Tuesday 11th to coincide with Bishop Steve's visit. The whole college assembled for Mass which would not have been possible a week later due to Level 2 restrictions. Timing is everything! As has become our practice, Sr Meg and Companions enjoyed a lively and prayerful Mass led by the students.

September will be a busy month - Season of Creation, Caritas, Companions get together, elections (most likely). That will do for starters!!

Chris Crowe



Bishop Steve receives the gifts at the offertory



A colourful altar set up in honour of St Mary of the Cross.

## HERETAUNGA

On July 24 the Heretaunga group welcomed Sister Moya, Regional Leader of the Sisters and Regional team members Sisters Yvonne and Christina to our meeting. Only one of members was absent as she had a death in her family that week.

The meeting agenda was a time of reflection, a shared lunch and then a talk by two of our members on the work they are doing in their parish.

Judy Dixon spoke about the Upper Hutt Housing Trust that she and another parishioner co-founded. It has been going for 3 years and now leases 25 houses and most nights have over 70 otherwise homeless people living in them. Some people have been living in cars for months or else sleeping in a garage or on a friend's lounge floor. People are referred to the Trust by Probation, Prison Officers, Women's refuge, churches, Women's Centre, W & I or by word of mouth. Many have mental health issues such as extreme anxiety, PTSD, or addictions. The majority are on a benefit. Sister Therese McConway drives tenants to doctor's appointments and supermarkets and as a retired Clinical Supervisor gives this support to Judy.

Viviana Fon spoke about a venture she had just started by placing an old fridge beside the church door. It has no motor in it so it is a pantry where anybody with spare fruit or vegetables can place them there and anybody needed food can help themselves. It has been going for a month now and everyday the food given all goes to some needy person. Our church is in the centre of town on the main street so it is highly visible to the public and open 24/7.

Viviana was also one of the people in our parish who started providing a community dinner for anybody who wanted it. It has been going for about 5-6 years now and parishioners donate money for food and others will drop in food or come to help with serving or dishes. The dinner is held on the third Tuesday of each month. The group decided to do it every week for one Lent and also hired a shower for those who might need to use one. At the end of the Lenten season it came to an end and all the people who came asked if we could continue in some way. It was agreed that we would continue the meal once a month and 30-40 people regularly come to it.

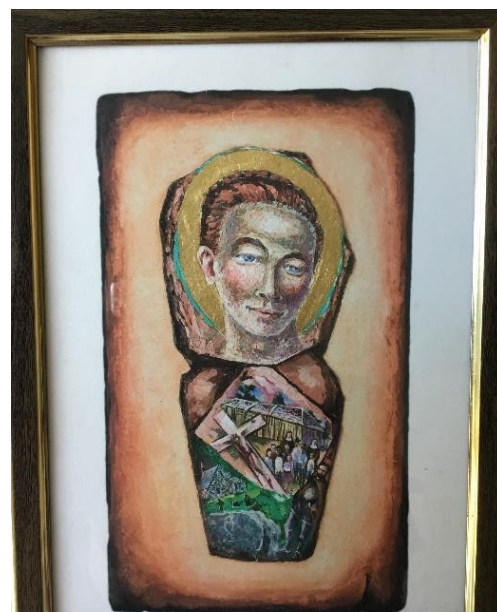
8 August St Mary of the Cross Feast Day five of our group met at one member's home for afternoon tea.

Sr Therese gave each of us a printed precis of St Mary's life and an icon designed and printed in Scotland depicting her early life. We had an interesting discussion on Mary McKillop.

One of our group told us about her grandson who has had health issues for years. After years of professionals recommending treatments one referred the child to an Occupational Therapist who diagnosed the problem immediately and set about rectifying it. He has improved markedly and can now read speak and focus.

It was decided to pray for him and for all our families. We are already praying for the Housing Trust and the tenants who are living with them.

**Therese Anstiss**



Icon from Scotland

Courtesy of Sr Therese McConway

## ARROWTOWN

Things here in Arrowtown have been very quiet. Some of the elderly have just started coming back to Mass due to covid and the winter and now we're into covid again!

On Sunday the 9th a couple of us met for lunch then we relaxed and watched the Mass to celebrate Mary McKillops feastday from Adelaide. We commented on how serene and peaceful the church looked and very focused on Mary McKillop. Archbishop Patrick O'Regan spoke very well but we couldn't help think also it was the hierachy that also excommunicated Mary and how harrowing that was for her. But in true spirit she persevered and that spirit has manifested itself through her sisters down the years. Any obstacle could be overcome in the Josephite spirit to bring the faith and education to children.

As soon as the weather is warmer and things back to normal we will get together for a meeting.

**Madeline Lawn**



Liturgy at Mt St Joseph's Whanganui

## WHANGANUI

At our regular Friday Mass at Cullinane on August 7 we celebrated the Feast of Mary MacKillop a day early. It was prepared by one of our Yr12 classes. Students from St Mary's and St Marcellin joined us along with a few parishioners. The chapel was full!

On the Saturday, the Companions were invited to join with the Sisters in celebrating. Sister Rita prepared the liturgy focused on 'There where you are you will find God.' Following the liturgy we shared a lovely afternoon tea.

**Helen Dougherty**

## WHANGAREI

On August 8<sup>th</sup> the Whangarei Josephite Companions gathered in the staffroom at St. Francis Xavier Primary School to celebrate the Feast Day of St. Mary MacKillop.

We ate a tasty lunch together while sharing our news and memorable stories of our life experiences. Then at one o'clock we were able to link with the live feed of the Feast Day Mass for St. Mary MacKillop, which was held in St. Joseph's Chapel, Adelaide. It was a special occasion knowing that we were attending Mass with other people across Australia, Peru and New Zealand. We finished the day with our own prayers for each other and our community. We are a smaller group with the recent deaths of our companions Mary, Margaret and Dot. However our companionship is strong, and sharing hospitality and prayer together supports us in our lives and service work.

**Jane Gunson**



Whangarei gathering



## TE AWAMUTU

Our group of Companions joined together to celebrate the Eucharist and the Feast Day of St Mary of the Cross, along with the Parish and School. The Mass was beautiful and the school sang Beneath a Cross of Stars with great gusto.

The Companions then went on to a local café, where we spent a couple of hours catching up with each other and getting to know better our 7 new members. Although we only meet a couple of times a year, our time together as a group is valuable as we share stories, concerns, and reminisce. It's the way we support each other.

**Patty Dudson**





**Hibiscus Coast group**

## HIBISCUS COAST

Two carloads of Companions from the Hibiscus Coast along with others from around Auckland made it to Mission Bay for a liturgy and afternoon tea on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> August.

Jill McLoughlin had prepared a spectacular liturgy on the kindness of Mary MacKillop which was enjoyed by us all including her Mum and Dad and her sister Nicky.

The Hibiscus Coast crew also had Mass in the morning in Orewa and had organised the prayers and given the homily for the celebration to make sure the locals knew what an important day it was.

**Catherine Birt**

## ROTORUA/TOKOROA

On a very early spring day a car load with four Companions from Tokoroa accepted the invitation to join with the Rotorua Companions for meeting. There was a delightful study on St Joseph led by Sr Marie Williams after all the introductions and “getting to know you” time.

We people from Tokoroa were impressed by the hospitality and ready to return when the next Prayer Sheet was issued.

Sister Marie sent an invitation for all to meet up with her for Mary MacKillop Feast----- but it got lost in the ether. This was just the first hurdle for celebrations.

Tokoroa’s parish school, Bishop Edward Gaines, had prepared a Mass for Thursday BUT... the parish laptop had disappeared; it was a freezing cold morning and despite everyone’s best efforts. it was a time of discipline rather than celebration..

Without the OHP, principal, Emalene Cull played beautifully and led the school and congregation in singing the parts of the Mass but her presentation of Mother Mary could not be shown.

Perhaps we were being asked to bear some hardships for Mother Mary’s sake. However it was a delight to find out that the school children had written letters to the essential workers in the town which somehow made up for the disappointment.

**Margaret Brownsey**



## RIP

Please pray for the response of the soul of Joyce Scannell from Pleasant Point who died in December 2019. We had missed putting her name here. She faithfully distributed the newsletters for the group for many years.

Sister Marina Norris rsj from Mission Bay who died in July

Sister Jo Gresham s.m.s.m from Whangarei who died suddenly in August

**Deepest sympathy to all their families. May they rest in peace**



**Prayer focus at Mission Bay**

The next newsletter and prayer sheet will be distributed at the beginning of December.

If you have a change of address or any copy for the next issue please contact Catherine Birt at

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