



## MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Our Lady's Home of Compassion in Island Bay saw hundreds of whānau and friends come together for a day of celebration on Saturday 14 October. They were there to join with the Sisters of Compassion to commemorate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of Compassion by Venerable Suzanne Aubert, the inspirational woman who is on the path to becoming New Zealand's first saint.

The celebrations began at dawn with a Karakia Whakatūwheratanga to bless Suzanne Aubert's final resting place, in a side chapel to the Chapel of Our Lady of Compassion. Mana whenua, tangata whenua, and clergy came together to bless this new sacred space. The Honourable Chris Finlayson spoke at the Mihi Whakatau on behalf of the Sisters, paying tribute to the wonderful legacy of compassion that continues to this day, which is a hallmark of the community that surrounds Our Lady's Home of Compassion.

A rededication of Our Lady's Home of Compassion included blessing visitor and pilgrim facilities. The new buildings, which include a landscaped cloister, Heritage Centre and refreshment space, have been developed to welcome the increasing numbers of pilgrims and visitors, who come to this sacred place to learn more about Suzanne Aubert and the Sisters of Compassion and to take time out in peaceful surroundings.

Formalities concluded with a Miha (Māori Mass) to celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of Compassion. The Miha was presided over by Cardinal John Dew who said of Suzanne Aubert "though we are waiting for her to be formally beatified, for those gathered today she is already Blessed." During the Miha the Sisters renewed their vows and the stained glass Resurrection window, by internationally renowned artist John Drawbridge, was also blessed.

After the formalities, guests were welcome to explore and join tours of these peaceful and beautiful spaces.

Our Lady's Home of Compassion is open to the public 10am to 3pm Monday to Saturday and 12noon to 3pm Sunday.

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[www.compassion.org.nz](http://www.compassion.org.nz)

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