



*"Let us carefully cultivate hope, that small flower which we should always bring to those who suffer."*



**compassion**  
*te pūaroaha*

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

# THE VOICE OF COMPASSION

*supporters and friends news*

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## Nau Mai

Dear Friends

Over the last couple of months I have received many cards from our supporters and friends. It is a joy to hear from you, thank you.

Between Christmas and New Year I had a break at Hiruhārama, Whanganui River, with Sister Christina and Linda Swain. Some of our friends were visiting at the same time. Chatting with them in the atmosphere of the founding place of the Sisters of Compassion was very special.

I have been inspired by the feast of the Epiphany, on Sunday 7th January, which celebrates the Three Kings, also known as Magi, following the star to Bethlehem to visit the baby Jesus. The message behind the Bible story, the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles as represented by the Magi, I know well. Yet this year, it impressed me more deeply.

Epiphany 2018 awakened me to be mindful of the outsider, to include them even if it feels awkward. Pope Francis is continually reminding us to go to the edges of society to be with the excluded and with the stranger. For me, the reminder is as strong as it was when in 1889, on the feast of Epiphany, Suzanne Aubert and her sisters were welcomed at the church of St Joseph's in Buckle St, which now forms part of the parish of Wellington South. The parishioners, like many Christians before them, received a group of outsiders. It is a feast that the Sisters of Compassion remember in a special way each year, as we recall being accepted by the Church of Wellington.

Today, many people from all around New Zealand continue to accept and support the Sisters in the services we offer. Your generosity enables these services to continue.



PHOTO: Sr Margaret Anne enjoying a coffee in the refreshment space at Our Lady's Home of Compassion

It is a long tradition and is a daily miracle how our mission continues. Like the Magi you offer a variety of gifts; time, goods, finance, expertise, friendship. They are all required. Thank you for being so generous with your many gifts.

In this issue, there are inspirational stories of pilgrimages taken by Sister Sue and Linda Swain. It may not always be possible to travel to make your own pilgrimage. However, I would like to encourage you to come to Our Lady's Home of Compassion, Island Bay, to rest or retreat and make a pilgrimage of your own for even a few hours. There are lovely spaces in the courtyard, refreshment space and Chapel. Recently, Fathers Aidan Mulholland and Yvan Sergy, took the opportunity and graced us with many blessings.

***Kia tau ngā manaakitanga o te Ariki ki runga ki a koutou.***

***May the Lord's blessings be given to you.***

*Sister Margaret Anne Mills*

CONGREGATIONAL LEADER

*Sisters of Compassion is a registered charity.  
Registration no. CC10246*



Photo by Paul Ramsay

## 125th Anniversary Celebrations

On Saturday 14 October 2017, Our Lady's Home of Compassion in Island Bay saw whānau and friends gather with the Sisters for a day of celebration. The commemorations marked the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of Compassion by Suzanne Aubert. Beginning 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 the new sacred space.

A rededication of Our Lady's Home of Compassion included blessing visitor and pilgrim facilities. Formalities concluded with a Miha (Māori Mass) 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. After the vowhe stained glass Resurrection window, by internationally renowned artist John Drawbridge, was blessed.



Photo by Paul Ramsay

## School Visits

In Term 4 of 2017, we welcomed Sacred Heart (Petone), St Anne's School (Newtown), St Francis de Sales School (Island Bay), St Benedict's School (Khandallah) and Ss Peter & Paul School (Lower Hutt) to Our Lady's Home of Compassion.

Students took part in tailored Compassion Retreat and Suzanne Aubert days with themes such as leadership, change, kindness and gratitude. Reflective experiences included Liturgy, ringing the Angelus, mindfulness in the gardens, and a time of quiet in Suzanne Aubert's Resting Place.

More active experiences saw students exploring the Suzanne Aubert Exhibition, working through an outdoor scavenger hunt, learning about issues of homelessness and food insecurity from the Soup Kitchen Manager, and a walk in the hills to the historic reservoir. We have more planned for schools next year including a pilgrimage experience linking the Soup Kitchen and the Home of Compassion.

*If your school is interested in this programme, contact Deirdre Hanlon, Visitor Experience Manager at [schools@compassion.org.nz](mailto:schools@compassion.org.nz).*



## A Year at Compassion for Guest Services Manager

One year has ticked over since I began here at Our Lady's Home of Compassion in Island Bay and what an interesting year it was!

You may have attended the 125th Anniversary in October and seen the amazing work done to beautify and modernise Our Lady's Home of Compassion to and make it fit for the new and final resting place of Suzanne Aubert.

You may have experienced a spirituality event hosted by one of the Sisters' at Our Lady's Home of Compassion or enjoyed our accommodation.

You may have enjoyed a flat white in our new café after looking through the Heritage Centre and gift shop.

If you have done any of the above, as the Sisters put it, you have become part of the story.

Over the past year, I've seen many people come and enjoy their time at the Home of Compassion. Some are here for the first time. Others have a story that reaches back many years. While my role concerns itself with the details of bookings, health and safety, cleaning and maintenance, it also serves a larger purpose. That purpose is about enabling this container of hospitality, at the Home of Compassion, to continue and flourish into the future.

We hope whoever arrives here will find a warm welcome and what they are looking for.



Entrance to Our Lady's Home of Compassion.  
Photo by Linda Swayn

**David Cross**

## Diary Dates

MARCH - OCTOBER

### Taizé Prayer

First Friday of the month in the Chapel – 7pm to 8pm

### Christian Meditation

Each Monday evening in the Chapel – from 7pm

### 19 & 20 May

'Out of Silence came Word'- A two-day retreat facilitated by Pip Nicholls

### 16 June

The 2018 Matariki lecture: "Speaking of Hope".  
Guest speakers, activities, Liturgy.

### 19 June

Suzanne Aubert's birthday celebration and Mass

### 21 June

Mass of Remembrance: 'Remembering the shortest lives on the shortest day'

## Our Lady's Home of Compassion - Opening Hours

The Heritage Centre	10 am - 3 pm Monday to Saturday 12 pm - 3 pm Sunday
Refreshment Space	10 am - 3 pm Wednesday to Saturday 12 pm - 3 pm Sunday
Reception	9 am - 4 pm Monday to Friday 9 am - 3 pm Saturday & Sunday

*Vision Statement: Following the mission of Jesus and in the spirit of Suzanne Aubert, we share faith and compassion with people*

# COMPASSION HOUSING

Compassion Housing Limited is now a registered Community Housing Provider Class One Social Landlord, managing 208 properties (in Upper Hutt and Horowhenua). The primary focus for Compassion Housing, is pensioner housing.

As a social landlord, Compassion Housing largely performs the same basic activities as a private landlord, but with an additional focus on achieving the best outcomes for their tenants. Social landlords help tenants feel settled in their home and more connected with their community, providing stable housing for the duration of need.

The Services Managers are assisted by the visiting nurse, in each location, in some of these focus areas. The Management team ensures the day-to-day operation of Compassion Housing Limited.

The Management Team with the new signage which will be in place shortly in both the Upper Hutt and Horowhenua



Left to right: Janet Lord (Nurse, Horowhenua), Frances Knoef, (Nurse, Upper Hutt), Garry Salmons (Services Manager) & Mary Poulson (Assistant Services Manager).



The Compassion Housing Governance team is appointed by the Sisters of Compassion. Left to right: Trudy Flynn, Jules Maher, Sr Lusi, Francis Fanning (Chairperson), David McGuinness, Alan Woods, Sr Alisi

## Focus and Mission

We are dedicated to respecting the dignity of older people by:

- Offering quality housing that is comfortable and affordable;
- Respecting people's right to independence;
- Offering friendship, encouragement and helping them live active lives;
- Offering advocacy for access to healthcare, social and government assistance; and
- Encouraging those with ill health to seek and obtain appropriate care.

We are also committed to:

- Ensuring our housing portfolio is maintained to a high standard for our residents.
- Charging affordable rents.
- Providing a visiting Nurse who assists residents to experience a quality of life that includes with respect and dignity. Nurses facilitate access to Social and Medical services in the community for those who request it.

Contact the Services Managers Team on

Phone: 04 528 0203

Email: [housing@compassion.org.nz](mailto:housing@compassion.org.nz)

# TE PŪAROHA SOUP KITCHEN

The spirit of kotahitanga, collective solidarity, was evident on 30 November 2017 at Te Pūaroa Soup Kitchen. The Sisters of Compassion, mana whenua (Taranaki Whānui) and tangata whenua gathered for the blessing of a section of bare land which will transform into an urban garden. The ceremony marked the Sisters of Compassion officially handing over the land to the guests of Te Pūaroa Soup Kitchen to use.

Matt Petrie, Kaiārahi for He Rākau Koikoi, said of the project "If we can build connections for people, we offer them purpose and hope for the future". This sentiment was strongly present as whānau moved into the dining room, where the regular breakfast service intertwined with those there for the blessing. The feeling in the room was one of community and excitement for the future.

Going forward, He Rākau Koikoi, a programme of related activities will offer the opportunity for whānau to learn new skills, practice old skills, have fun and enjoy being with other people. Through art and cultural sessions, outdoor activities, healthy living sessions, volunteering, training and education, whānau will improve their wellbeing and be able to look with hope to the future.

Building and planting of the garden took place over the summer months of 2017-18 in preparation for the official opening .

PHOTOS : (top four).The Sisters of Compassion gather for a morning blessing of the land gifted to the Soup Kitchen (bottom).



## O B I T U A R Y

### Sister Mary Rosanne Gallagher (August 1931 – January 2018 )



Sister Mary was instrumental in founding L'Arche Kapiti and was a dear friend to the community. She enjoyed singing "You are my sunshine".

She passed away at St Joseph's Home of Compassion on Sunday 28th January 2018.

A full obituary will appear in the next issue of Voice of Compassion.

## A Pilgrimage to El Salvador by Sr Sue Cosgrove

Thoughts of a Pilgrimage in the footsteps of Archbishop Oscar Romero filled me with degree of apprehension. However, thanks to everyone on the journey, the 11 days were a huge blessing and the company of the Pilgrims, who journeyed with me, was deeply valuable.

It was a demanding and rich time, trying to integrate what we were seeing and hearing and working out, within myself, how it all connected to my own personal life and direction.

The Pilgrimage was a welcome impetus for me not to retire from spreading the Joy of The Gospel with all its demands.

It is 100 years since Oscar Romero was born in a small village in the mountainous east of El Salvador. As Archbishop of San Salvador, and after the murder of one of his priests (Rutilio Grande), Father Romero became a source of strength and hope for the poor and for the oppressed of his country, working with and for them, taking their struggles as his own. Romero wrote and spoke passionately and publicly of the need for us to work for justice. He frequently faced threats and danger from those who opposed his ideas.

*"Archbishop Romero was a gospel . . .  
a piece of good news from God to  
the poor of the world."  
Fr Jon Sobrino sj*

On March 24, 1980, while celebrating the Eucharist, Archbishop Romero was shot and killed at the altar by a death squad assassin, paying the ultimate price for the commitment about which he spoke so often and so eloquently. Because of his courageous stand for justice, he became a martyr not only for poor Salvadorans but also for all who struggle to overcome oppression and poverty. Today, his sermons are read as powerful reminders of our obligation to be committed to a just society.

Shortly before he was murdered, Romero said: "It is my hope that my blood will be the seed of freedom and the sign that hope will soon be reality." The example of Romero's courageous life, and ultimately death, continue to inspire many of us who struggle for human dignity and justice.

During the Pilgrimage, we engaged in many utterly compelling conversations with local people including family members of those who had lost loved ones. Moreover, we witnessed the incredible passion and love of those committed to the ongoing struggle for freedom for the people of El Salvador. The vitality of these people will be with me for a long time as I pause, remembering the sense of knowing that the Sacred continues to be uncovered in the struggles of everyday life, wherever we might be.

Suzanne Aubert was my constant companion in El Salvador. So often her words were ringing in my heart...

**"When all human endeavours fail,  
That is the moment of God."**

Oscar Romero's words became my inspiration for the New Year...

**"This is what we are about:  
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.  
We water seeds already planted,  
knowing that they hold future promise."**



Photo: Sr Sue with Sr Maria Julia, Principal Nurse of the Hospital Of Divine Providence

## Thoughts on a Personal Pilgrimage by Linda Swayn

"Let us never lose courage on our journey." Suzanne Aubert.

### A Family in Christ

"Wow! The views, the Whanganui River and general surroundings... Hiruhārama is a place that has not lost sight of itself and its identity. The Sisters of Compassion's foundation is here, with Māori. I experienced warm welcomes and heard 'Haere mai!' as I met the many different international and kiwi visitors. It was like a big, wide family in Christ, welcoming and taking an interest in one another."



### So Many Stories

"Hiruhārama is a place of peace and tranquility in the mist! There are so many homely touches like photos on the walls which tell so many stories. They reflect some familiar places, people and sisters; all have a deep connection and personal link to my story."

### Strengthening Connections

"It is a beautiful experience to be back and feel a sense of familiarity with Jerusalem – Hiruhārama along the Whanganui River. I am struck by new things; the simplicity of life, laying back, relaxing, taking it all in and reflecting on the spirit of Suzanne Aubert. Simultaneously, enjoying the time to talk and laugh. The journeying of one day at a time talking, walking, driving, reflecting and praying helped me to become more conscious of my connections, my links part of my story, my history and whakapapa."



### Walking in Suzanne Aubert's Footsteps

"I will never forget the journey to here and the Pilgrimage to the places of Suzanne Aubert. Walking on her road and the footsteps she took. The farm, cherry orchard, the bridge, the bush, the River, the church, the school, convent and the whare."

### A Lesson in Peace

"A lesson from my days here has been that peace comes through what God has created for us, in nature, rivers, trees, birds, flowers and bees. At Hiruhārama I felt close to Suzanne Aubert and I let the Good Lord love my whole heart like she did."

### Whakatauki

"From the mountains to the sea flows the Whanganui River. Ko au te Awa, ko te Awa ko au. I am the River, the River is me." from Metiria Turei speech to Green Party AGM, 5 June 2016



Take time out and reflect.  
You will find your peace at Jerusalem – Hiruhārama.

Find out more at <https://compassion.org.nz/our-places/hiruharama-jerusalem>

*"Nothing is little in the service of God." - Suzanne Aubert*

# PHOTO GALLERY



*Sister Margaret Anne lays the mauri stone at the blessing of the Soup Kitchen garden.*



*The final resting place of Suzanne Aubert.  
Photo by Paul Ramsay*



*A carpet of pohutukawa blossoms greet visitors to Our Lady's Home of Compassion.  
Photo by Linda Swayn*



*Sisters Telesia and Sosefina enjoying the preparations for the Soup Kitchen Christmas meal 2017.*

## Scholarship winners

Sisters of Compassion - Ngā Whaea O Pūaroa - congratulate the following students who were awarded a 2017 Suzanne Aubert tertiary scholarship.



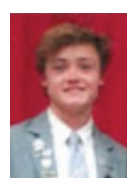
**Jessica Patterson** attended Sacred Heart College in Lower Hutt. She will be going to University of Otago to study Health Science with a view to doing Sports Medicine.



**Bridget Sullivan** was a student at St Catherine's College in Wellington. She will be going to University of Otago to do a Bachelor of Teaching (Primary).



**Leah Praat** from Waiopahu College in Levin is going to do a Bachelor of Art, majoring in Japanese and Spanish with a minor in International Relations at Victoria University.



**Harry Poland** attended St Patrick's College, Silverstream. He will be attending Ara Institute of Technology in Christchurch where he will be studying towards a Bachelor of Broadcast Journalism.



**Piper Zimmerman** attended Cullinane College in Whanganui. She will be attending Waikato University to do a Bachelor of Management Studies majoring in Human Resources and Public Relations.



**Aron Jeremiah** was a student at St Patrick's College, Wellington. He is going to be at University of Auckland, studying Engineering in 2018.

Suzanne Aubert knew the importance of tertiary education for young people. In 1992, the Centennial Year of the Sisters of Compassion, the Suzanne Aubert Tertiary Scholarship Grant was established by the congregation. Since then, many students have benefitted from the grant and have gained national recognition in their respective professional careers.

The committee was overwhelmed by the good heart and enthusiasm of all applicants who applied for the Suzanne Aubert Scholarship. Their academic work, commitment to their school environment and parishes were inspirational. Selecting who was to receive the scholarships was very difficult.

We know that these recipients will achieve their respective goals and will be a credit not only to their whānau but also to their faith commitments, respective colleges and teachers.

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*Instagram.com/sistersofcompassion*