



*"The holy person is one who practices justice in giving what they have to God, to their neighbours, and to oneself."*



**compassion**  
*te pūaroaha*

## THE VOICE OF COMPASSION

*supporters and friends news*

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

Issue 46 - October 2018

### Nau Mai!

Dear Friends,

As we approach the end of the year, I have gratitude in my heart for your continued support of prayers, donations and sound advice. Your generosity is a constant surprise.

On September 16, the permanent exhibition of the Sisters of Compassion opened. I invite you to come and engage with the legacy of compassion. It is the sisters' story yet it is a story that belongs to all of us. Many of your friends and family are part of it. You may have had an aunt or sister that was an early Sister of Compassion or you may have been a co-worker in some way. The Sisters of Compassion have a story because so many people have supported them and continue to do so. The exhibition is one of hope. It shows and acknowledges the strong influence of the Māori people in the shaping of the sisters' story and tradition. It displays how the sisters have responded to the needs of the time within Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, Fiji and Tonga.

The exhibition demonstrates how we do depend on each other. Suzanne Aubert wrote, "It is impossible for [people] to live only for [themselves]. We are in society, we have then 00 relations among ourselves to which we cannot be indifferent... We are bound more or less strictly, to all [people]."

Pope Francis echo's Suzanne's words: "We can only build the future by standing together, including everyone," the Pope continued, "We all need each other..."

Suzanne encouraged her sisters and others to, "Help one another and make use of the many little occasions to lighten a little, when possible, the burden of others." The exhibition demonstrates how many people have made use of ways to help one another.



Photo: Phil Cody SM

Sisters Mina Fetu'u, Mary McKernan and Cabrini Tuipulotu celebrate their Golden Jubilees with Sister Margaret Anne

Recently we celebrated the Golden Jubilees of Sisters Mina Fetu'u, Mary McKernan and Cabrini Tuipulotu. Fifty years is a wonderful commitment. The Jubilee celebrated at Our Lady's Home of Compassion was full of joy and thanksgiving. Their stories are reflected in the exhibition space. I would also like to acknowledge Sister Helena Hart who quietly celebrated 70 years of Religious profession at St John's Health Care in Whanganui. The people of Heretaunga and Whanganui fondly remember Sister Helena.

Thank you all for your wonderful support. You are remembered daily in the Sisters of Compassion's prayers. When you have time come and visit the new Sisters of Compassion Exhibition.

**Mā te Atua koutou katoa e tiaki, e manaaki.**

**May God protect and care for you all.**

*Sister Margaret Anne Mills*

Congregational leader

*Sisters of Compassion is a registered charity.*

*Registration number CC10246*

## My Job

Nursing support is one of the things that makes Compassion Housing different. I have been working for Compassion Housing in Levin as a registered nurse for nine months and I love my job.

I have got to know many of the residents in the pensioner housing areas. One of the things I do is to help residents access other services, if needed. These include, for example, Occupational Therapy referrals so residents can be assessed for aids such as walkers and chairs for bathing, or to have ramps installed so they can get in and out their units.

I also give health advice as needed, help with taking medication and refer people to their GPs: for check-ups, or if they have urgent problems like infections or other health conditions that need professional follow up. In addition, I refer residents to opticians, podiatrists, dentists and help them with applications for Work and Income funding assistance.

It's not all about advocating for medical referrals though: I also keep residents informed of what is happening in the community - including any clubs they may like to join.

As part of my job I was asked to speak at a public meeting for Aged Concern about my role with Compassion Housing. This went very well and I got good feedback. As well as joining The Aged Concern Forum, I have also joined The Older Persons network, an advisory group which meets to discuss local concerns and topics of interest. I am able to share with my clients the information and pamphlets that I gather from these networking opportunities.

I enjoy dropping in on residents just to say hello and I'm always warmly welcomed, often receiving morning or afternoon tea. It's a very enjoyable experience for both residents and me - and I get lots of positive feedback from families and locals about the great team at Compassion Housing.

Janet Lord



Janet (right) visiting Norma and Ken Swain in their Cambridge Park flat in Levin

## Fifteen years of service

Garry Salmons, Services Manager celebrated 15 years of service with Compassion Housing on 21 July this year.



During the decade and a half he has been with Compassion Housing, a lot has changed with compliance, which is becoming a huge part of the role. In addition, the original rent roll of 93 properties in Upper Hutt has more than doubled since 115 Horowhenua properties were in November 2017.

Garry says he enjoys the time he has spent with his tenants and support team and notes the noticeably increased wraparound support services of the Sisters and Nurses.

He has a firm but fair approach, along with a serving of humour during his daily interactions with Compassion Housing Residents. He always has the Compassion mission statement at the heart of his daily activities.

## Looking forward - smoke free goal

Compassion Housing is working towards becoming a Smoke Free environment in line with the Government's target of a Smokefree Aotearoa by 2025.



## Other news - independent living

Compassion Housing units are for independently living residents. It is important to note that while Compassion Housing offer a nurse in both Upper Hutt and the Horowhenua, their role is one of advocate, connecting our residents with services available to them in the community.

Any resident who would like further information on the services available, if they require more assistance for everyday living, can talk to their nurse when she visits.

## Compassion Soup Kitchen wins awards

At the 2018 Wellington City Community Awards, the Compassion Soup Kitchen was honoured as the Supreme Winner for their continued commitment to supporting vulnerable people within our community. The Soup Kitchen was also awarded the winner of the Health and Well-being category.

The annual Community Awards celebrate volunteering and the contribution made by hundreds of people every year in and around Wellington - recognising those who are making a difference in our communities in the arts, heritage, and environment.

Wellington International Airport, Wellington Community Trust and the five local councils come together for the awards every year. Nominations are submitted by the public online for the categories. Judging panels select the council award winners who go on to be eligible for the regional awards.

Mayor Justin Lester, who presented the award, says Compassion Soup Kitchen and its volunteers are the lifeblood of our city. "For more than 100 years Compassion Soup Kitchen has been supporting people to live with dignity in the community. This amazing group of people engage with some of our most vulnerable residents, give them a warm meal, a safe place to be and somewhere to belong."

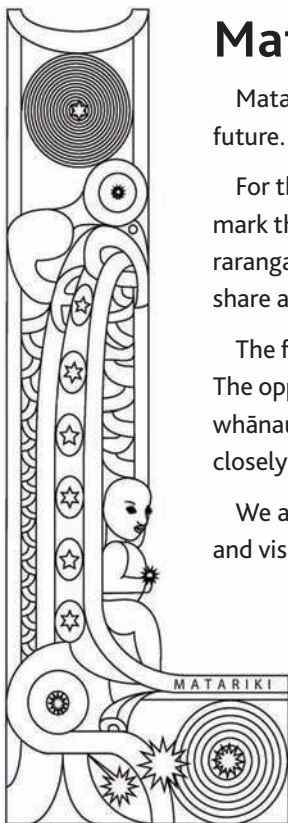
"They embody the best of the volunteer ethos and I am pleased we can recognise and shine a light on their efforts. Without volunteers, Wellington and New Zealand would be much poorer places."

The Compassion Soup Kitchen will represent Wellington City at the regional awards later this year. The winner will go onto the national Trustpower Awards in early 2019.



Mayor Justin Lester, Francis Fanning, Karen Holland, Liz Kelly and Jo Maxwell (from left to right)

Photo: Mike Tantrum



## Matariki celebrations

Matariki signals the arrival of the Māori Year. It is a time for reflecting on the past and making plans for the future. It is marked by whānau gathering together, creating together and sharing together.

For three weeks in June and July, the Soup Kitchen and Kahungunu Whānau Services jointly held a festival to mark the period of Matariki. Events included taonga puoro/traditional Māori music, rongoā/herbal medicine, raranga/weaving, and toi Māori/Māori art. The festival ended with a hāngī that over 100 people were able to share at the Soup Kitchen, with more food being distributed to whānau across the city.

The festival was a great success, with whānau enjoying the events and wanting these to continue in the future. The opportunity to work with Kahungunu Whānau Services was also a great learning experience for staff and whānau at the Soup Kitchen. One of our key aims is to develop strong community connections and to work closely with other organisations. The Matariki festival enabled us to do just that!

We are already planning for next year. We are going to grow rongoā in our garden and continue with activities and visits based on what we have learned. Keep your eyes peeled for Matariki 2019!



Artwork by Mokena Hokianga-Tumaufre  
Ngāti Ira, Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, Rongowhakaata, Ngāti Pahauwera

The Matariki hāngī being prepared

## **Sister Christina Williams March 1943 - June 2018**

Sister Christina Williams was born in Samoa and while in her teens she immigrated to New Zealand. After her Religious Profession in 1968, Sister nursed the residents and children in our different Homes of Compassion. She also shared her skills and compassion with the guests at the Soup Kitchen in Wellington.

Sister Christina had a calling to work with young people and for some years worked with young women discerning religious life. To enhance her skills, sister studied at the Institute of Religious Formation at St Louis, USA. On her return to New Zealand she contributed to the Formation Team and was a member of the inter-religious formation group. Sister was also a valued member of the parish council at Island Bay and a spiritual guide to the Catholic Samoan Community.

Sister Christina was committed to God and certainly followed Suzanne Aubert's teaching and example. It was while she was living at Hiruhārama/Jerusalem, that she became ill. She died in the Hutt Hospital on the 8 June 2018. Her last wish was to visit Jerusalem before she died. She was able to go to the place she loved, say her goodbyes and she died about a week later.



## **Sister Mary Cooney Walsh October 1929 - June 2018**

Sister Mary Cooney Walsh was born on 30 October 1929. Her parents were Annie Marie Cooney and John Joseph Walsh. Mary was the only girl in the family of four. The family lived on their farm at Menzies Ferry.

On leaving school Mary worked for I.V. Wilson Dentistry in Wyndham. She was very good at her job and they were sorry to lose her. It was while she was on a pilgrimage to Rome that she decided to become a Sister of Compassion. Mary Cooney Walsh entered the Sisters on 15 August 1953. At her reception she was given the name of Justin, the name she wanted.

After her Religious Profession in 1956, Sister Justin cared for small disabled children at Silverstream, and then the children at Island Bay before training as a Registered Nurse in our hospital at Island Bay. During her life as a Sister of Compassion, she held many positions of leadership in many of our Homes. She was a woman of great integrity and loyalty and blessed with a good sense of enjoyment.

Sister spent the last years of her life at St Joseph's Home of Compassion at Silverstream, where she said she was waiting for God. She was a good, faithful Sister of Compassion.



## **Sister Mary Gallagher August 1931 - January 2018**

Mary Gallagher was born in Fairlie, the youngest of six children. Educated at the local school, she completed her secondary schooling with the Sisters of Mercy at Timaru. Mary entered the Sisters of Compassion in 1955 and made her Religious Profession on 19 March 1958.

Besides teaching and caring for children in many of our Homes, Sister studied English Literature by correspondence to prepare for study at Loreto Hall Teacher's College in Auckland. After completing her Teachers' Certificate, Mary taught in the schools at Island Bay and Ranana before going to Balmain Teachers' College, Sydney. There she studied teaching children with special needs. In 1966 Mary went to Suva, to teach at St Agnes Primary School. She enjoyed her nine years in Suva before going to St Raphael's School in Carterton.

In 1985 Sister Mary was a founding member of the Community in Houma, Tonga. There she taught English to future seminarians and sisters. Mary left Tonga in 1993 and worked with Sister Jean Sinclair, in Auckland, teaching children with special needs.

Mary had heard about the start of L'Arche Community at Paraparamu and joined it on 3 February 2000. Although she moved to Marion Court in 2005, she always remained interested in L'Arche. She would have celebrated her diamond jubilee about two months after her death on the 28 January 2018. Mary lived Compassion and did not seek the extraordinary, but lived life faithfully in the joy and spirit of Suzanne Aubert.



## Teaching Christian meditation to school children

In our busy modern world, children too are locked into the way of computers, ipads and cell phones. They need time to sit in silence and stillness and be one with Christ. As part of my Ministry I go to schools and introduce children and teach them Christian meditation.

Christian Meditation as a form of prayer can be traced back to the earliest days of Christian prayer. It is a form of contemplative prayer, being open to and at one with the prayer of Christ.

"Jesus went to the mountains to Pray; He spent the night in Prayer to God." (Luke 5: 12).

During Jesus's Ministry, he was always amongst people, teaching them and healing them. At times he needed to get away from the large crowds; to be alone; to be with His Father.

Benedictine Monk Fr. John Main rediscovered Christian meditation from the writings of early Desert Fathers and Mothers. Today it is widely recognised as a form of prayer suitable to the needs of our modern world that all Christians need to take into their lives.

Christian meditation is a prayer of silence, stillness, simplicity, and attention. It is often referred to as the Prayer of the heart.

In Christian meditation we sit in stillness of body and mind silently saying our prayer word, our mantra, listening to it and being one with the prayer of Christ from within our hearts.

When I introduce children to Christian meditation, I often ask: "Where do they find Jesus? They say "Jesus is in heaven, Jesus is all around us, Jesus is in our hearts." All good answers.



Sister Rachel teaching meditation to children from Wellington's St Francis de Sales School

Sister Rachel Moreno



Sister Philippine Dunn milking a cow

## Our mission

One of the many benefits of spending time with any of the Sisters of Compassion is being able to listen to their stories. They seem so easily able to connect people with places and to notice 'what else' is going on. Many stories follow a familiar theme of people turning up at just the right moment, or some simple event being the starting point of a new or greater opportunity.

The Sisters' re-telling of such stories is no idle pursuit. There is an inherent fondness for those they speak of and an implicit invitation to consider the world from another perspective. Everyone who hears a Compassion story re-tells it in another way, which is of course, the whole point.

Looking at the many photos that line the walls of the Compassion Soup Kitchen, the old convent at Hiruharama or Our Lady's Home of Compassion at Island Bay is like leafing through pages of our nation's family album.

In the early days Sisters clad in layered habit are about the business of being with people; families, children, infants, the sick or the elderly, public figures, merchants and helpers.

The story behind every photo offers a wider view. A Sister cheerfully milking a cow or a woman helping to fasten a korowai allows us think there have been simpler times. An infant

held aloft or a group of older men sitting in tired companionship however, reveal a country stretched beyond its means to look after its' most vulnerable. Photos from the 1950s and 1960s reflect a growing national confidence which nonetheless sets the scene for some of the social, educational and economic divides we see playing out today. Those who cannot move easily between differing worlds have to contend with new vulnerabilities.

Images from more recent years tell us something else about ourselves; we still, figuratively speaking, have dirt under our fingernails. We like to know how things work and we want to be involved; we are a practical people.

The fashions may have changed, but the Compassion mission has not. None of us can re-write history nor should we seek to live in a golden past. We are an immigrant nation, proud of our traditions and stories. There is much about today that Suzanne Aubert and the early Sisters might not recognise, but about this, they would be certain: our evolving sense of national identity is surely drawn from what we share, and with whom.

Suzanne O'Rourke  
Compassion Mission Animator

# Our Lady's Home of Compassion



## Tūpuna windows

There are four windows in the Resting Place of Suzanne Aubert. Known as the Tūpuna or ancestral windows, they represent Suzanne Aubert and the early Sisters of Compassion's work and legacy.

The red kowhaiwhai pattern feature on all the windows represents the ever flowing waters of the Whanganui River where it passes the cradle of the Compassion Congregation at

Hiruhārama. The yellow flower of the kowhai represents the cradle of light, sacredness.

The window (pictured) depicts Suzanne Aubert c1908 with a young bandage-swathed infant Suzanne personally nursed. This image represents one of the Sisters of Compassion's fundamental commitments - assistance to children in need. The infant in Suzanne Aubert's arms had just undergone critical surgery.

The glass is the work of The Studio of John the Baptist, Auckland NZ 2017.

**Set of four Tūpuna greeting cards is available to purchase (\$10). Please see the order form attached or visit [www.compassion.org.nz/shop](http://www.compassion.org.nz/shop)**

## Sisters of Compassion Ngā Whaea Tapu Pūaroa



### NEW PERMANENT EXHIBITION OPEN NOW

Discover the rich story of Aotearoa's home-grown order of women and their living legacy of compassion.



Opening Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 3pm  
Sunday 12pm - 3pm  
Suzanne Aubert Heritage Centre,  
Our Lady's Home of Compassion  
2 Rhine Street (off Murray St), Island Bay  
Phone: 04 282 1953



## Compassion hospitality

A personal or group retreat?

Choose to stay at Our Lady's Home of Compassion.

Accommodation, Meeting Rooms and Meals available at affordable rates.

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

Phone: 04 383 7769

## Tertiary scholarships now open

Tertiary students in the Archdiocese of Wellington and the Diocese of Palmerston North entering their third year of study are invited to apply for a Suzanne Aubert Tertiary Scholarship.

Each student selected receives \$3,000 towards their third year of tertiary study. Please see our website for more details and to download a copy of the application form on: [www.compassion.org.nz](http://www.compassion.org.nz)

**Applications close on 31 October 2018.**

**Suzanne Aubert Heritage Centre Opening Hours:**  
Tuesday to Saturday 10am–3pm / Sunday 12pm–3pm  
Cloister Café open: Wednesday to Sunday