



Te Reo o te Pūaroha

The Voice of Compassion

Supporters and Friends news
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 compassion te pūaroha

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Some of our recent happenings! - The Compassion Soup Kitchen during lockdown, Fleur Beale's book signing, St Anne's School visit, and the premiere of *Against All Odds*

Tēnā koutou katoa,

We are coming to the last quarter of the year and much has happened in our world. COVID-19 has brought with it many expected and unexpected lockdowns, which has disrupted school and other normal activities. The stress for many has taken a toll on people's wellbeing. Thank you for your generous support for those in need. The guests at the Compassion Soup Kitchen were able to receive a meal and a cheerful greeting. Thank you to our staff at St Joseph's Home of Compassion who took extra care to keep the frail elderly well. We thank the staff for the care and love they gave to Sister Loyola Galvin. She expressed her gratitude constantly during her time at St Joseph's Home. Thank you to the many volunteers and friends who kept in touch by phone with the people in our Compassion Housing units.

I have enjoyed reflecting on the articles in this edition. It has been a busy few months across all areas of Compassion.

Congratulations to Sisters Barbara, Sheila, Sia, Hulita, Rae, Colette, Duchesne, Sue, Angelo, Mata and Sosefina, who have reached their Jubilee of Religious Profession. The film shown in the Winter Film series *Sisters of the River* screened some of our Jubilarians. It was a snapshot reflecting how

things were 30 years ago much like Fleur Beale's book, *The Calling*, recalls a way of life more than 100 years ago.

At the Heritage Centre at Our Lady's Home of Compassion, Island Bay, we have once again enjoyed hearing the voices of students, as the school groups have been able to have reflection and fun with their activities and to absorb some of the spirit of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert and her legacy for all of New Zealand. Legacy highlights are in the articles *School Visits* and *Red Shed Celebration*.

In addition to what has been written about the documentary film *Against all Odds*, it has at its heart, hope. It reminds us that no matter what adversities we experience in life we can emerge with gratitude and constant hope. Good can come from challenges and disasters. Sister Lusiana Raratini reflects on the Westport floods.

The Sisters of Compassion appreciate your generosity, your prayers and support in many different ways.

Me mōhio mai koutou ka noho koutou i roto i ā mātou inoinga.

Know that you are in our prayers.


Sister Margaret Anne Mills
Congregational Leader



Life in Lockdown

Recounts from Compassion Housing and the Compassion Soup Kitchen during lockdown

Nursing Advocates kept up with Compassion Housing residents

Janet Ford and Frances Knoef - Compassion Housing Advocate Nurses

We saw that our residents were more aware of what was required of them and they had put in place good support systems with family or friends doing their shopping, or getting online shopping and medication delivered.



A few tenants had family staying with them for support and some went to stay with their family out of town. Some preferred to go to the supermarket and found it was a change of scenery and helped to relieve the boredom or stress of home. In Levin, the Sisters took around vegetables and fruit to some tenants and Church and ethnic organisations provided food parcels for their members while in Upper Hutt the local Marae provided food parcels for those that required them.

Compassion Soup Kitchen served takeaway meals everyday

Scott Tynan - Compassion Soup Kitchen Volunteer Coordinator

As an essential service, the Compassion Soup Kitchen provided takeaway meals every day during level 3 and 4 lockdown for any and all Wellingtonians in need of some kai. Guided by the philosophy of foundress Suzanne Aubert Meri Hōhepa "for all creeds and none", we served 230 meals a day, 7 days a week.



It was an incredibly busy time for us with demand for our meals higher than in Lockdown 2020 when we served an average of 150 meals a day.

Along with the hot meal, our food packages contained bread, dessert, fruit, snacks, and a facemask – a necessity that many haven't been able to afford. We tried to pack as much compassion and kindness into each bag as we could. We weren't just providing kai, our service providing a sense of normalcy and much-needed human connection in an isolating time. Every person who received a meal expressed their gratitude and it was an honour to be a part of the team working during lockdown.

Westport Flood Memoirs

Sr. Lusiana shared her diary entries from New Zealand's worst flood in decades

Thursday 15 July: It rained all night.

Friday 16 July: There was so much rain it exposed a few leaks in the church. I threw towels and put buckets around to catch the leaks. The Westport mayor declared a local state of emergency due to the rising river levels by the afternoon. My neighbour thought we would be alright but we exchanged phone numbers in case anything happened. By 12.00 my neighbour rang to tell me we needed to move – I ran over next door to help her move and much effort was spent trying to get her dog into her car. I made sure to switch off all the power. Already the army were knocking on people's doors asking them to move.

Friday 16 July, evening: Left home and the streets were now a river. Texted Father David to let him know I was comfortable in my car. He came and picked me up and kindly offered the spare room in his home. Rain water was now ankle deep. After having a hot drink I tried to settle for the night but my mind was wide awake.



Red Shed Celebration

Sr Alisi and Sr Mata celebrated Fourvière Day with a community blessing

Sr. Mata and I were excited when we travelled from Wellington to Christchurch to the Beatitude Community blessing of their Suzanne Aubert's Red Shed on Fourvière Day, July 23.

We experienced a very moving celebration with so many blessings and the presence of Suzanne Aubert's spirit.

It was wonderful to meet so many people who were invited because of their close French connection and interest in Suzanne's story and mission. There were SMSM Sisters, Marist Sisters, Marist Brothers, families, and even small children.

The day before the blessing, Sr Theresa found an old bible and when she opened it, she was surprised to see a cutting from a newspaper with the photo of Suzanne Aubert right on the front page of the bible! What a coincidence for a bible with Suzanne Aubert's photo to complete what was needed in the Red Shed for its blessing.



Sr Alisi and Sr Monika at The Red Shed

The coincidental newspaper cutting in the bible



Sold Out Screenings

Sisters of The River and *Against All Odds* drew in crowds

Each year, we select one or more films for our winter screenings at Our Lady's Home of Compassion. This year, there was keen interest in *Sisters of the River* with the Ryan Room full for it's first screening and encore session.

We have also screened *Against All Odds* on the anniversary of the birth of Suzanne Aubert Meri Hōhepa. *Against All Odds* tells the remarkable story of Linda Swain who was one of the many children cared for by the Sisters of Compassion over the years.

Copies of *Sisters of the River* will be available on DVD shortly for \$15 (plus shipping). *Against All Odds* is also available for purchase. To preorder *Sisters of The River* or order *Against All Odds*, email: events@compassion.org.nz or phone: (04) 383 7769.

If you are in Wellington we can also arrange screenings on request. To go on our mailing list or enquire about a film screening, email: events@compassion.org.nz.



How to donate

Banks have phased out cheques, so here are other ways you can support us
Website - Visit compassion.org.nz/support-us/donate. There you can make a secure one-off donation, or set up an ongoing gift using your credit card.

Phone - Call us on (04) 383 7769 to make a secure donation over the phone.

Donation Slip - Fill in your debit or credit card details on the donation slip attached to the order form that came with this newsletter and post it back to us.

Internet Banking - In your internet banking payee box, type 'Sisters of Compassion' (official name - The Mother Aubert Home of Compassion Trust Board) and our account details will appear. You can also make a donation using our bank account number: **BNZ 02-0500-0017474-00**. Please enter your name and supporter number (if known) in the reference fields.

Automatic Payment - You can set up an automatic payment through internet banking or at your local branch.

At your Bank - Your bank can help you with different donation options. Visit your local branch or check their website.



School Visits

Sr Rachel and Sr Ema taught Christian meditation in Papamoa and Rotorua



Sr Ema teaching at St Mary's Catholic School



Sr Rachel and Sr Ema at Suzanne Aubert Catholic School

Towards the end of May, Sr Ema and I journeyed to Papamoa to visit the new Suzanne Aubert School, opened at the beginning of this year. Sr Ema and I were very well received and made to feel welcome and at home. We were with the children for one week and saw the Spirit and values of Suzanne Aubert are very much alive at Suzanne Aubert School.

We had also been invited to St Mary's school in Rotorua and after our visit to Suzanne Aubert's School we continued on to the next school. We spent a further week there where we were also welcomed and very well cared for. At St Mary's School we had a session with the teachers introducing them to the Art of Christian Meditation before going into the classrooms.

Our world and pace of life has become busier, people lead such busy lives, this is why I feel that it is important to teach the children at a very young age to have some time and space for themselves and sit in stillness and silence with their God.

My hope is that as they grow into adulthood, meditation will become part of their everyday life.



A singing bowl used for Christian meditation at St Mary's School, Rotorua

Recent Jubilees

Celebrating our Sisters dedication to the Mission

Since the last issue of *The Voice of Compassion*, the Sisters of Compassion have celebrated a number of jubilees! While COVID-19 restrictions have limited in person celebrations, we want to acknowledge the mahi of our Sisters.

The Sisters have all contributed a tremendous amount to the Mission of Compassion through their respective roles in nursing, teaching, mission outreach, administration, and pastoral care work.

We are proud of them and thank God for their lives of dedication and faithful service.



Sister Barbara King
70 years professed



Sister Duchesne Mulcahy
60 years professed



Sister Sheila McGrath
60 years professed



Sister Rae Berry
50 years professed



Sister Sia 'Otuhiwa
50 years professed



Sister Sosefina Mafi
50 years professed



Sister Hulita Heffa
50 years professed



Sister Colette Tupou
50 years professed



Sister Susan Cosgrove
50 years professed



Sister Mata MahinaMalani
25 years professed

Catholic Schools Day

Our Lady's Home of Compassion was Tūrangawaewae for St Anne's School

The theme for Catholic Schools Day 2021 was Tūrangawaewae: Catholic Schools – A Place to Stand. We see Our Lady's Home of Compassion as a place for our schools, their students and staff, and it is a place where everyone is welcome to visit and rest.

To celebrate Catholic Schools Day, St Anne's Newtown brought the whole school to Our Lady's Home of Compassion on September 29 where they engaged with our spaces and experiences. Amongst other activities, students spent time with Fr James Lyons in the Resting Place of Suzanne Aubert Meri Hōhepa, and hearing from Fleur Beale about her latest novel, *The Calling*. Several other visitors noted how lovely it was to have the tamariki – they added to the wairua and ambience of the Home in a special way.

At the end of the day, junior students presented a gift of vibrant Suzanne portraits which are now on display in the school art gallery outside the Suzanne Aubert Meri Hōhepa exhibition.

If you are interested in booking a school visit to Our Lady's Home of Compassion or any of our other sites, email: schools@compassion.org.nz or phone: [\(04\) 383 7769](tel:(04)3837769).



Suzanne Aubert portraits by St Anne's School students

Remembering Sister Loyola

Recollections from a Home of Compassion Old Girl and Sr Josephine Gorman

"Her wonderful, no nonsense, give it a go and try attitude enabled me to instinctively look for other ways of doing the same thing as everyone else. The unconditional support and positive regard she had provided the platform to grow, develop and achieve all in life and I thank her for the upskilling received.

Today as I reflect on all you gave me JO MO!! I hope I can do justice and live my life to the full as you have done and share all I learned from your contribution to the three foster children I currently have in my care."

- Home of Compassion Old Girl

"What I will remember most about her was her acknowledging people's gifts and talents. I worked with her in the nursery for about 4 years caring for the tiny babies. One morning, she came into the area I was working in and hearing the babies happily gurgling and smiling away she spoke words I will never forget - she told me 'your mother would be very proud of you.' That was Loyola making you feel important and needed."

- Sr. Josephine Gorman



Sister Johanna Galvin (Loyola), 1922-2021