

# **COMPASSION** **TE PŪAROHA**

Impact Report  
2024 – 2025



Welcome to the first ever Compassion Impact Report. This report marks the beginning of a new tradition: sharing the stories, data and experiences that show how the mission of Compassion move from intention to impact. It celebrates the people whose courage and generosity shape our work, highlights the progress made, and acknowledges the challenges we are facing.

At the heart of this journey is the enduring spirit of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert, whose vision of practical compassion continues to guide and inspire us. This report stands as a testament to her legacy: a century after her passing, the values she lived so boldly continue to shape communities, uplift those in need, and remind us that compassion, when put into action, creates impact that lasts far beyond a single lifetime.

More than a document, this report is an invitation to reflect, to learn and imagine what is possible when Compassion endures and becomes a collective force for change.

04	HISTORY OF MERI HŌHEPA
06	LOOKING TO THE FUTURE
08	OUR VISION, MISSION & VALUES
11	WHO WE ARE
14	WHAT WE DO
26	ENTITY INFORMATION

Your support makes all this impact possible!  
Arohanui and thank you. Donate at [compassion.org.nz](https://compassion.org.nz)

## HISTORY OF MERI HŌHEPA:

**1835**

Marie Henriette Suzanne Aubert is born on 19 June 1835 in St-Symphorien-de-Lay near Lyon in France. In many ways, her early childhood experiences shape her later mission.



**1860**

She sailed to Aotearoa New Zealand with Bishop Pompallier and 23 missionaries, against the wishes of her parents. She lived in Auckland with three French Sisters, who were initially with the Sisters of Mercy.

**1862**

The four French sisters formed a religious congregation named The Holy Family, under the jurisdiction of Bishop Pompallier. They taught Māori girls at the Nazareth Institute. In Auckland, Suzanne became affectionately known by Māori as Meri Hōhepa.

**1868**

Bishop Pompallier left Aotearoa New Zealand permanently and returned to France.

**1871-1883:**

Meri Hōhepa moved to Hawke's Bay, where she taught, nursed, and cared for Māori and Pākehā. She spoke te reo, learned rongoā, published a Māori prayerbook in 1879, and helped build a church in Pakipaki.

**1883:**

Meri Hōhepa was sent to Hiruhārama (Jerusalem) on the Whanganui River with Father Soulas by Archbishop Redwood to revive the Catholic Mission there. They were welcomed by Ngāti Hau Māori.

**1885:**

She wrote a groundbreaking Māori-English phrasebook, *The New and Complete Manual of Māori Conversation*.

4

**1891:**

Until 1891, her work at Hiruhārama was mainly for Māori. Then she began to take in children whose parents were poor and needing help.

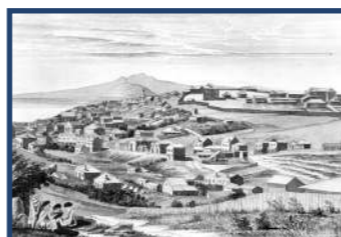
**1892:**

Archbishop Redwood approved her Order - the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion, and appointed her as Mother Superior in Hiruhārama.

**1899:**

Meri Hōhepa and two Sisters moved to Wellington, on the invitation of clergy and doctors. Here they would begin their nursing and social work.

Auckland



Hiruhama



**1901:**

Soup Kitchen established in Wellington.

**1903:**

Creche opened and children with disabilities cared for in small cottages from then on.

**1907:**

Our Lady's Home of Compassion built in Island Bay, Wellington. Children with disabilities transferred to this newly built facility.

**1909:**

Nursery for babies opened - mostly from single mothers unable to care for their babies and abandoned babies.

**1911:**

Jubilee Ward built and opened in Island Bay. First used as a Kindergarten/School, then as a Nursery from 1916-1941. The school was based in any ward unoccupied at the time.

**1913:**

Meri Hōhepa travelled to Rome to seek Papal approval for her Congregation.

**1920:**

Returned from Rome. Spent the next six years establishing the training hospital.



Pakipaki



Soup Kitchen



Home of Compassion

**1926:**

Meri Hōhepa spent her last days in Wellington and passed away at age 91.

**1933:**

Second St Vincent's Home of Compassion in Ponsonby, Auckland opened in 1933 for babies.

5

**1939:**

Care of single mothers and babies began in Herne Bay, Auckland.

**1941:**

St Anne's, Broken Hill, Australia opened for care of girls transferred from Mercy Orphanage. A Nursery was built at Island Bay, Wellington.

**1950:**

Babies with disabilities admitted to St Joseph's Home of Compassion, Silverstream.

**1958:**

Girls with disabilities transferred from Island Bay Home to St Raphael's Home in Carterton, in March, 1958.

**1975:**

New residential Home for Children built in Broken Hill, Australia.

**1981:**

New Children's Section opened at Island Bay, Wellington.

**1984:**

St Anne's Children's Home closed.

**1986:**

St. Vincent's Home of Compassion, Auckland closed.

**2025:**

Compassion Soup Kitchen served **85,333** meals, 208 housing units were occupied and 20 schools visited the Home of Compassion.

Read on to discover how the legacy of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert lives on today through the work carried out in her name, meeting hunger with hospitality, providing homes with dignity, and offering spiritual nourishment and connection to all who seek it.

## CELEBRATIONS

2026 is a milestone year of celebration, marked by two major events that honour our history and strengthen our future.

We celebrate 125 years of the Compassion Soup Kitchen, a powerful testament to enduring service and hospitality. This milestone invites us to reflect on our long history of responding to the need of the time, and to renew our commitment to those experiencing hardship, hunger, and isolation.

We also honour 100 years since the passing of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert, Whakanui Pūaroa 2026. Whose vision and courage continues to shape our mission today. Her Cause for Canonisation continues in Rome, and we ask you to join us in prayer and hope that she may one day be formally recognised as a saint.

Together, these anniversaries serve as an invitation to reflect on the remarkable legacy of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert. We honor a visionary woman of her time, deeply committed to social justice, who dedicated her life to caring for vulnerable people: those experiencing homelessness, the sick, abandoned children and marginalised communities.

That's why in 2026, we celebrate not just a story and our history, but a mission that remains alive through Compassion Housing, the Compassion Soup Kitchen and the work at Our Lady's Home of Compassion. A century on, the legacy of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert is even more relevant than ever.

Whakanui Pūaroa 2026



## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As we look to the future, we remain guided by the enduring legacy of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert and the growing and evolving needs of our communities.

The Compassion Soup Kitchen work remains as critical as ever, providing not just food but hope, support and a sense of dignity and belonging to those in need.

Compassion Housing is preparing to expand, with plans to increase the number of homes available to older adults with limited means. As housing insecurity continues to rise, we remain committed to providing safe, affordable, and supportive living environments.

At Our Lady's Home of Compassion we look forward to hosting more retreats, pilgrimages, and educational visits, deepening engagement with our story and values.

Renovations will continue at Hiruhārama Jerusalem, to preserve and enhance St Joseph's Chapel and Old Convent, ensuring these sacred spaces remain places of rest, prayer, and cultural heritage for future generations.

We will continue to work alongside the Daughters of our Lady of Compassion – the Sisters. We are committed to ensuring their mission continues. The Sisters presence, wisdom, and spiritual leadership remain central to our kaupapa, and we honour their legacy by continuing to serve with faith, humility, and love.

Together, we look ahead with hope and determination, carrying forward a living legacy of compassion that continues to transform lives and communities across Aotearoa New Zealand.

## OUR VISION, MISSION & ENDURING VALUES

**Our vision** is a people following the karanga/call of Christ, in the spirit of Suzanne Aubert. **Our mission** is to bring the wairua/spirit of love, care and compassion to all.



### Simplicity

He Ngāwaritanga

We work in an open and simple manner.



### Divine Providence

He Manaakitanga  
Atua Tapu

Let us do our part and let God do his.



### Justice

He Tika O Ngā Tāngata  
Ki Ngā Tāngata

We recognise the rights and intrinsic good of all people.



### Partnership

Te Kotahitanga

We will develop and nurture partnerships and model a commitment to partnership under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.



### Action With The Poor

Ngā Āwhina Ki Ngā  
Rawakore

Our primary concern is to support the most disadvantaged.



## OUR SUSTAINABILITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Sisters of Compassion Group reports against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) because these goals provide a shared global framework for building a more just, inclusive, and sustainable world. Aligning our work with the SDGs helps us demonstrate how our local actions contribute to wider systemic change, ensuring that our efforts are not only compassionate in intent but measurable in impact.

To strengthen this connection, we have identified and listed the specific goals that align with each of our key areas of work, making clear how we contribute to global priorities. This approach enhances our accountability, highlights the real difference our services make for people and communities, and reinforces our commitment to longterm social, environmental, and economic wellbeing.



### 1. No Poverty

**Target 1.2:** Reduce poverty in all its dimensions.  
**Target 1.5:** Build resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations.

### 2. Zero Hunger

**Target 2.1:** Ensure access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food for all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

### 3. Good Health & Wellbeing

**Target 3.4:** Promote mental health and wellbeing.  
**Target 3.8:** Achieve universal health coverage and access to essential healthcare services.

### 10. Reduced Inequalities

**Target 10.2:** Promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, regardless of status.

### 11. Sustainable Cities & Communities

**Target 11.1:** Ensure access to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services.  
**Target 11.4:** Protect and safeguard cultural and natural heritage.

### 12. Responsible Consumption & Production

**Target 12.3:** Halve global food waste and reduce food losses along supply chains.

### 17. Partnerships For The Goals

**Target 17.17:** Promote effective partnerships across public, private, and civil society sectors.

## ENTITIES

<p><b>Sisters of Compassion Congregation</b></p>	<p>Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion, known as the Sisters of Compassion, established by Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert in 1892. Overseen by a Congregational Leadership Team and Congregational Leader. Pontifical – reporting directly to Rome.</p>
<p><b>Mother Aubert Home of Compassion Trust Board</b></p>	<p>A charitable trust established in 1917 by Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert, responsible for stewarding property and managed funds, and serving as kaitiaki of the Compassion charism. Its purpose is to ensure the missions of the Sisters of Compassion are sustainably resourced in perpetuity, with governance that includes both Sisters and laity.</p>
<p><b>Sisters of Compassion Group</b></p>	<p>A registered charity serving as the Management / Parent Company for all Compassion entities, providing management, fundraising, communication and education services to ensure the ongoing mission and ministries can be delivered. Funds are topped up and disseminated to support these services by the Mother Aubert Home of Compassion Trust Board.</p>
<p><b>Suzanne Aubert Compassion Centre</b></p>	<p>Also known as the Compassion Soup Kitchen. A subsidiary company and registered charity within the Sisters of Compassion Group, established in 1901 and continuing its founding mission by providing warm, nourishing meals to Wellington’s vulnerable community.</p>
<p><b>Our Lady's Home of Compassion</b></p>	<p>Located in Island Bay, a subsidiary company and registered charity within the Sisters of Compassion Group, serving as the central office for Congregational Leadership and Group staff. It is also home to the heritage listed Chapel of Our Lady’s Home of Compassion and the final resting place of Suzanne Aubert.</p>
<p><b>Compassion Housing Limited</b></p>	<p>A property manager with Community Housing Provider status providing rental housing and assistance to elderly with limited means. Capital investment in the social housing managed by Compassion Housing Limited is delivered through the Mother Aubert Home of Compassion Trust Board and the Compassion Horowhenua Limited Partnership</p>
<p><b>Compassion Horowhenua GP Limited</b></p>	<p>A limited partnership between the Mother Aubert Home of Compassion Trust Board and Willis Bond investors, serving as the property owner for the Compassion Housing Horowhenua portfolio. It is also the vehicle for the partnership’s engagement in the Cambridge Place development with Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.</p>

## A WORD FROM OUR BOARDS

**Kia ako tāua ki te noho whakamuri, kia whai wā mō te aroha ki tētehi atu.**

**Let us know how to forget ourselves for the good of others.**

The life and legacy of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert inspires the Sisters of Compassion Group in all we do. Her faith and commitment to prayerful, practical service remains the heartbeat of our mission.

This year, the Mother Aubert Home of Compassion Trust Board and the Sisters of Compassion Group have continued to support the Home of Compassion through direct funding, grants, and stewardship of assets. Together, we uphold the kaupapa of practical service, spiritual care, and hospitality.

Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert’s deep connection with Māori remains central to our mission, and we remain committed to stewarding our spiritual heritage through opportunities for partnership

Across our services:

The Compassion Soup Kitchen responded to rising demand with warmth and dignity, providing a record number of meals and connection to those facing hardship.

Compassion Housing provided safe, healthy, affordable homes for older adults with limited means, supported by wraparound care.

At Our Lady’s Home of Compassion, we welcomed schools, community groups and pilgrims for reflection, spiritual nourishment and engagement with our story.

We continue to care for Hāto Hōhepa St Joseph’s Church and the Old Convent in Hiruhārama Jerusalem, preserving these sacred spaces for all.

We want to extend our special thanks to our benefactors who, by including a gift in their will, have a direct impact on our work with the elderly, the vulnerable, and the disadvantaged. We are very grateful for such bequests, as they enable us to continue caring for those in need for generations to come.

We are deeply grateful to our Sisters, staff, volunteers, donors, funders and partners. Your generosity and dedication make this mission possible. Together, we carry forward a living legacy of compassion that continues to transform lives.

Ngā manaakitanga



**Michael Curtis**

Chairperson 2024/25  
Sisters of Compassion Group Board



**Paul Ramsey**

Chairperson 2024/25  
Mother Aubert Home of Compassion Trust Board

## SISTERS OF COMPASSION

The Sisters of Compassion are Aotearoa New Zealand's first homegrown religious order with Papal recognition, founded in 1892 by Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert. Since then, the Sisters have played a pioneering role in social services across Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, and the Pacific, establishing hospitals, eldercare and hospice services, orphanages, crèches, and the longstanding Compassion Soup Kitchen. Their work continues to be shaped by the spirit of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert and her commitment to Māori, her dedication to those most marginalised, and her belief in the inherent dignity and worth of all people.

As at 31 December 2025, the Congregation comprises 36 Sisters serving in Aotearoa New Zealand, Wagga Wagga, and Suva, guided by an elected four person Leadership Team. Their mission is to bring dignity, love, and compassion to those who are aged, powerless or poor, living out a lifelong commitment to community and service -Te Rauhi i Runga i te Pūaroa.

The Congregation's vision and mission centres on embodying the wairua of compassion in all they do: respecting the dignity of every person, caring for those they serve and those who serve alongside them, honouring cultural values, and recognising that their work is carried forward through every coworker. Grounded in the belief that every person is unique, loved, and deserving of honour, the Sisters uphold accountability, stewardship of resources, and the legacy of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert's advocacy for the vulnerable.

### Celebrating Sister Jubilees

The Sisters of Compassion recently gathered to celebrate three significant Jubilees, marking decades of loving service and commitment by our Sisters.

On Sunday 11 May 2025, Sister Rachel Moreno celebrated her Golden Jubilee, honouring 50 years of religious life, with a Mass of Thanksgiving at St Francis de Sales Parish Church in Island Bay. This was the same place where she was baptised, received her first communion, and was confirmed.

Surrounded by family, friends, and fellow Sisters of Compassion, Sister Rachel gave heartfelt thanks to God for her vocation and for the love and support she has received throughout her journey. After decades of service in places such as Auckland, Wairoa, and Broken Hill in Australia, she continues her mission today by providing pastoral care in the local parish.

Earlier in the year, on 29 March 2025, the Sisters of Compassion also came together to honour Sister Magdalen Sheahan and Sister Emaleti Konokono, who celebrated 60 and 50 years of religious life, respectively. Their Jubilee Mass was celebrated by Cardinal John Dew in the presence of their families, many of whom travelled from around the world for the occasion, along with friends and fellow Sisters of Compassion. A hākari, or celebration dinner, followed the ceremony, during which family members of both Sisters performed the graceful Tau'olunga dance.

After many years of serving in Auckland, Northland, and Hokianga, Sister Magdalen now resides in Wellington, where she continues supporting vulnerable people. Sister Emaleti has served in Whanganui, Carterton, Wellington and Auckland. She now resides in the Hutt Valley providing pastoral care.

**These Jubilee celebrations were a special way to recognise the Sisters' lifelong dedication to compassion, humility, and care for others.**

### Remembering Sister Cabrini

The Sisters of Compassion recently gathered to remember Sister Cabrini Tu'ipulotu, who served as a Sister of Compassion for 51 years.

On 9 November 2024 we farewellled Sister Cabrini Tu'ipulotu, who served as a Sister of Compassion for 51 years. Sister Cabrini was raised and educated in a devout Catholic family in Tonga, with her parents playing a significant role in shaping her religious vocation.

Inspired by the mission of the Sisters of Compassion, she joined the congregation in 1965. She dedicated her life to caring for the elderly in Timaru and Whanganui, and for children with disabilities in Carterton and Island Bay. She found great joy in working with children, especially those who were grieving or missing their families.

A lover of music, she was known for her joyful spirit and deep empathy and above all for making her life and work a testament to her profound connection with the suffering of Jesus Christ. Sister Cabrini leaves behind a legacy of love and service that lives on in the hearts of all who knew her.

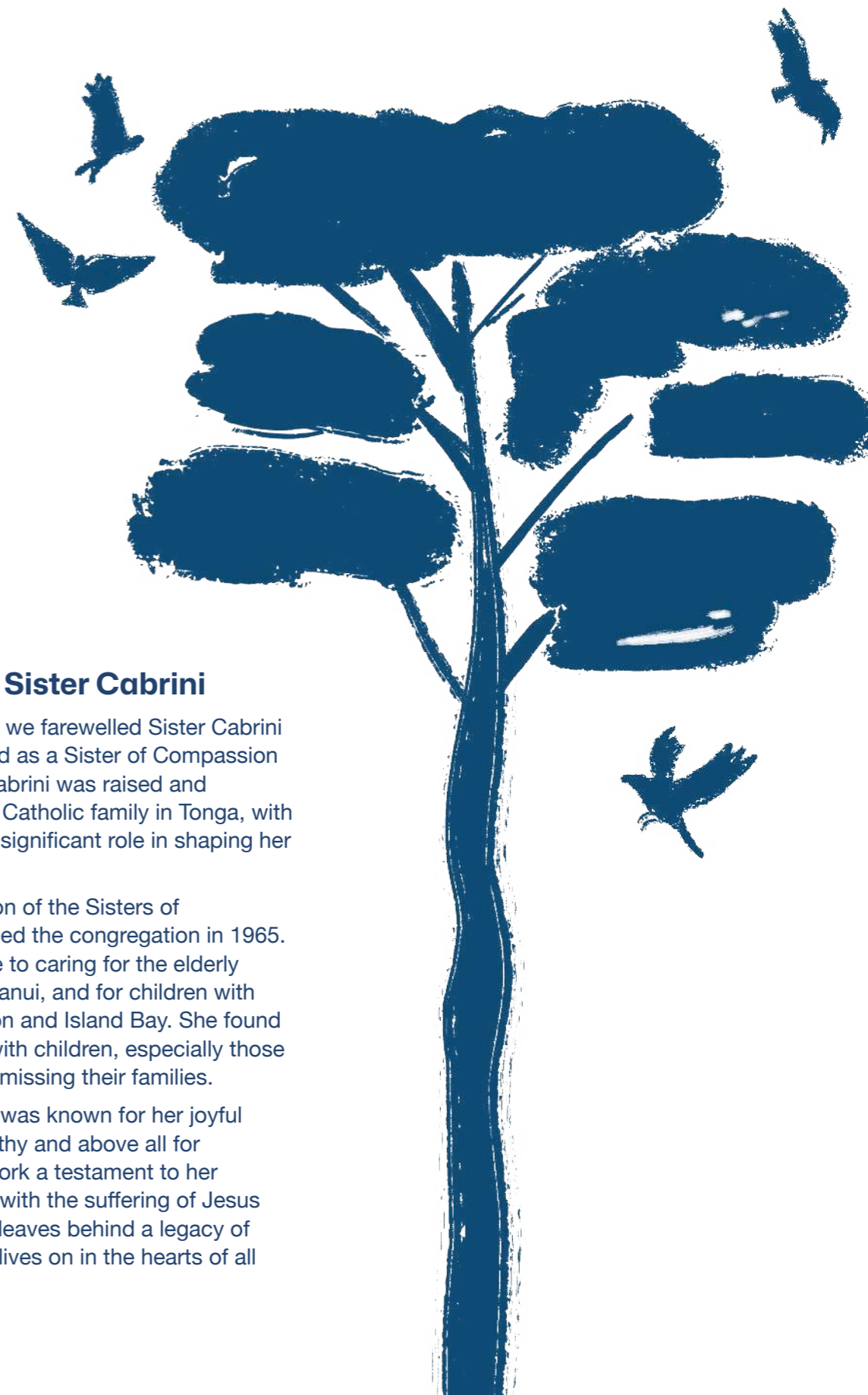
On 9 November 2024 we farewellled Sister Cabrini Tu'ipulotu, who served as a Sister of Compassion for 51 years. Sister Cabrini was raised and educated in a devout Catholic family in Tonga, with her parents playing a significant role in shaping her religious vocation.

### Remembering Sister Cabrini

On 9 November 2024 we farewellled Sister Cabrini Tu'ipulotu, who served as a Sister of Compassion for 51 years. Sister Cabrini was raised and educated in a devout Catholic family in Tonga, with her parents playing a significant role in shaping her religious vocation.

Inspired by the mission of the Sisters of Compassion, she joined the congregation in 1965. She dedicated her life to caring for the elderly in Timaru and Whanganui, and for children with disabilities in Carterton and Island Bay. She found great joy in working with children, especially those who were grieving or missing their families.

A lover of music, she was known for her joyful spirit and deep empathy and above all for making her life and work a testament to her profound connection with the suffering of Jesus Christ. Sister Cabrini leaves behind a legacy of love and service that lives on in the hearts of all who knew her.



WHAT WE DO:

# COMPASSION SOUP KITCHEN

In the past year, the Compassion Soup Kitchen continued to provide essential support to individuals experiencing food insecurity, homelessness, and social isolation. We served nutritious meals daily, offered a welcoming and safe environment, and connected guests with additional social services where possible.

We served a total of **85,333** meals from July 2024 though to June 2025, serving an average of 282 meals per day to those in need. This is a 15% increase from last year. This could not have been achieved without the help of our incredible volunteers who donated 8,602 hours to our mission along with our staff and the ongoing support of the Sisters who continue to offer their compassion and guidance even after 124 years of operation.

## Hands-on Action

At the Compassion Soup Kitchen, dedicated volunteers bring the spirit of service to life every day, whether picking up food, serving breakfast, or offering a warm smile. People like Nick and Marianne from LT McGuinness are at the heart of this mission, showing that even small acts of service can have a big impact.

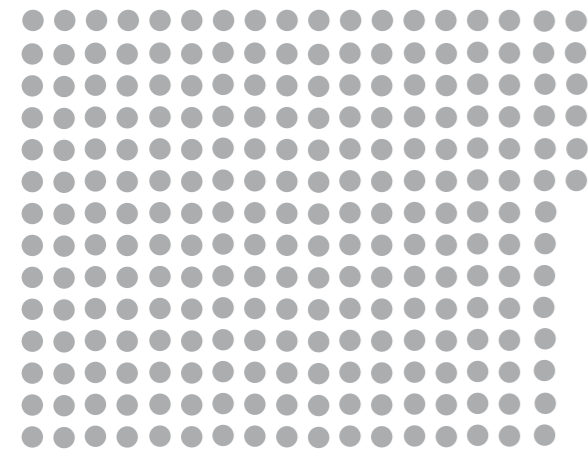
Nick, a construction professional with 40+ years of experience, has volunteered for over four years. "When I help people, I can sleep well at night," he says. Every Monday to Wednesday, Nick collects food donations from across Wellington and Lower Hutt. "I love to help. It's not easy work, but it's worth it. I am very happy with what I am doing."

Marianne, who helps with breakfast service once a week, was motivated by a desire to support those facing tough circumstances. "It's easy to take basic needs for granted," she says. Her tasks range from serving meals to washing dishes, but what she values most is the sense of connection.

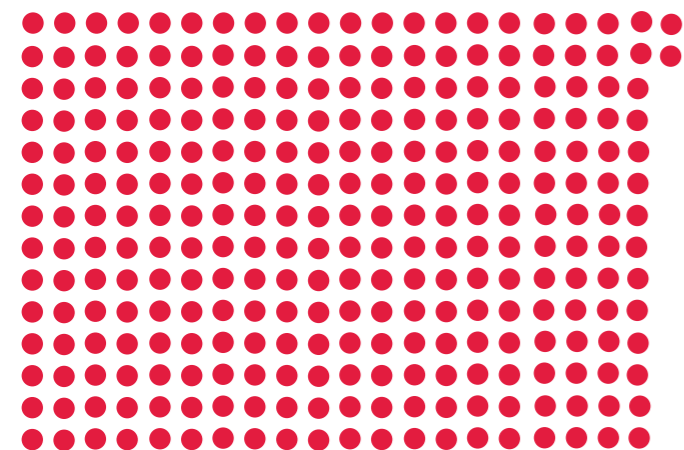
"Sometimes, just a smile or a warm coffee can mean a lot. It's not just about food, it's about showing people they matter. "Both are moved by the growing needs across our community, especially amid housing and cost-of-living crises. "It's heartbreaking to see so many people relying on the Soup Kitchen, including families with young children," Marianne reflects. Yet, she's inspired by the commitment of staff and volunteers who bring consistent care through their daily work.



Photo: Nick - LT McGuinness



**244** Average meals per day served in 2023 to 2024



**282** Average meals per day served in 2024 to 2025



Over **200** volunteers helped run the Soup Kitchen



Over **8600** hours of volunteering work



**28** sponsored meal services



**42** sewing sessions over 62 hours of sewing



**33** creative writing sessions over 33 hours



**396** hours spent volunteering in the garden



**155** Haircuts were given to whanau



Photo: Nory [Left] and Joe [Right] - Soup Kitchen

Photo: Sister Telasia at Soup Kitchen garden





“

**For over 120 years, the Compassion Soup Kitchen has been a cornerstone of kindness and generosity in our community. Their work remains as critical as ever, providing not just food but also hope, support, and a sense of dignity and belonging to those in need.**

*– Tory Whanau, Mayor of Wellington 2022 to 2025*

”

## COMPASSION SOUP KITCHEN

“ Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert espoused a very practical Christianity with her commitment to bring to ‘those disadvantaged in society the love, care and compassion of Christ’. We owe much to her determination to overcome obstacles in her efforts to provide solace and refuge to those in need. My 2022 visit to the Compassion Soup Kitchen, one of her many enduring legacies, enabled me to see for myself the manaakitanga and aroha extended to vulnerable people in our community. ”

– Dame Cindy Kiro,  
Governor General  
of New Zealand.

### How Is It Possible

Every day, the Compassion Soup Kitchen opens its doors to offer not just a hot meal, but also dignity, connection, and care to some of Wellington’s most vulnerable people.

A key part of making this happen is the committed work of our community. The structure of the Compassion Soup Kitchen, including our admin team, kitchen staff, and kaimaaki, is strengthened by the support of more than 200 dedicated volunteers, who collectively contribute over 8,600 hours of service each year.

Volunteers are at the heart of this mahi: most importantly they welcome and serve our whānau. They also help prepare meals, set tables, clean up during and after meals, tend the māra (garden), sort donations and much, much more. Their presence helps create a warm, consistent, and safe environment.

We’re also supported by generous donors and individual supporters who contribute money, kai, clothing, and other goods. In addition, the Compassion Soup Kitchen receives donations of ingredients and products from local suppliers and food rescue services like Kaibosh and Kiwi Community Assistance (KCA) - enabling us to serve more than 85,000 meals this year.

We work in partnership with groups like Catholic Social Services, Orange Sky, Te Aro Health, and DCM, among others, helping us respond to increasingly complex needs.

### Looking Forward

We are focused on stabilising staffing, implementing our long-term building plan, and enhancing both safety and volunteer support. Amidst uncertainty, what grounds us is our belief in the dignity of every person in our whānau. Thanks to the dedication of our team, volunteers, donors, and partner organisations, this mahi is possible.

### More Than A Meal

At the Compassion Soup Kitchen, Kaimanaaki/ Support Workers provide more than food. They offer connection, dignity, and trust to whānau experiencing homelessness and hardship. Through daily conversations and being present, they create a space where people feel respected and valued.

Whānau needs range from warm clothing to safety from violence or support with addiction. Kaimanaaki give immediate help such as sleeping bags and coats, and make referrals to housing, mental health, and addiction services. They have helped women find safe accommodation, supported people facing substance abuse, and ensured no one sleeps in unsafe conditions.

These relationships are genuine and meaningful. Thanks to donors, this work continues, easing trauma, addiction, and isolation so no one in our community feels forgotten.

## SOUP KITCHEN PARTNERSHIPS

This year has highlighted the power of strong partnerships in supporting our whānau. On-site support from Catholic Social Services has enabled guests to access professional help while enjoying a warm meal in a familiar, welcoming space. Orange Sky’s three weekly visits and Nau Mai Tau Mai’s regular hair-cutting sessions continue to provide dignity and care, while our collaboration

with Te Aro Health ensures access to high-quality healthcare. Creative Writing classes, led by a longstanding volunteer, are fostering connection and self-expression – they are currently developing a play and short stories. These partnerships are essential in responding to the increasingly complex needs of our community.



- Archdiocese of Wellington Tindall Allocations Committee • CH IZARD BEQUEST • EKTA • Free Store GS1NZ • Knights of the Southern Cross Wellington Charitable Trust • Mary Stephen Vella Trust • Mean Doses • Nikau Foundation Kevin & Julia O'Connor Endowment Fund • The Realm Hataitai • Room at the Inn • Sai Group • Sutherland Self Help Trust • The Jack Jeffs Charitable Trust • Vavasour Charitable Trust • Estate of John Travers Duggan • Estate of Francis Joseph Madigan • The David Daily Charitable Trust No 2 • Paratus

## COMPASSION HOUSING

Our mission is to bring life to the vision and Kaupapa of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert and the Sisters of Compassion through the provision of social housing, ensuring that those who are financially vulnerable can live their lives with dignity with in the security of a warm, dry, safe, and well-appointed home.

In alignment with this mission, we provide affordable (at least 10% under market rent), comfortable rental housing and assistance to the elderly of limited means, including maintenance assistance and wrap around support.

Capital investment in social housing managed by Compassion Housing Limited is provided through the Mother Aubert Home of Compassion Trust Board and the Compassion Horowhenua Limited Partnership who own the property resources leased and managed by Compassion Housing Limited.



### Horowhenua - 115 Units

The Horowhenua portfolio has again enjoyed a satisfactory 98%+ occupancy rate with 16 persons on the waiting list as at 30 June 2025. There have been 17 tenant movements during the year and seven major refurbishments.

### Upper Hutt – 93 Units

The Upper Hutt portfolio has also enjoyed a satisfactory 98% occupancy rate, with 13 persons on the waiting list as at 30 June 2025. There have been 14 tenant movements during the year and eight major refurbishments

## Point of Difference

The point of difference from some other social housing providers is the wraparound services we offer. In Horowhenua and Upper Hutt our Advocate Nurse/Support Workers work 10 hours a week each and spend time getting to know our residents, advising on health issues and guiding them toward treatment and support when required.

In Horowhenua, local Sisters Alisi and Fina visit our residents, offering them companionship and friendship, adding a special dimension to our work. Many of our residents live alone and look forward to visits from the Sisters and Advocate Nurses.



**1,283** visits carried out by the sisters throughout the year.



**382** Horowhenua Nurse visits.



**426** visits linking 60 residents to additional services in Upper Hutt.

## Eligibility

To be eligible for a Compassion Housing tenancy applicants must be 65 years or older, able to live independently and of limited financial means (no more than \$60,000 in assets). Tenancy selection is based on the greatest need at the time that a new tenancy becomes available. Selection is informed by Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert’s commitment to serving “all creeds and none”. All applicants are welcome to apply regardless of background, ethnicity, faith, gender or social position.

Compassion Housing Limited receives no government funding for its activities, all outgoings are covered by the rent roll, and this includes the lease payments made to both The Mother Aubert Home of Compassion Trust Board and the Compassion Horowhenua Limited Partnership, along with rates, insurance, professional fees, audit costs, maintenance, grounds, salaries, asset management and office management.

## Future Focus

Eleven new housing units will begin construction in Levin early 2026 as part of Compassion Housing’s plan to address the growing housing crisis and meet the needs of people seeking an affordable place to live.

The new units will be located at Cambridge Place, close to the current units, and will be built through a partnership between Compassion Housing Horowhenua Limited and Willis Bond. The project is co-funded by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and will be delivered by LT McGuinness, a company that has supported the Sisters of Compassion for many years.



## Giving Love & Support

Terry has been a longtime supporter of the Sisters of Compassion and has now chosen to leave a gift in his Will, also known as a bequest, to support the ongoing work of Compassion. His connection began more than 25 years ago when he volunteered at the Compassion Soup Kitchen, inspired by the Sisters who were running it at the time.

“I remember Sister Felix, who was small in stature with a powerful presence. If there was any trouble with the guests, she would stand by the table, and it would stop.” Terry also recalls her wisdom: “She told me to always remember when serving a plate of food to a guest, you are giving it to Christ.”

One small moment has stayed with him: the day he noticed a single shoe placed beside the statue of Saint Joseph. Sister Felix explained that when the Sisters were low on food or clothing, they would place a symbolic item before the statue to ask for Saint Joseph’s help. At that time, they needed shoes — and, as always, support arrived.

Terry often reflects on Matthew 25:35–45, which he believes captures the heart of the Compassion whānau: “For I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger, and you welcomed me in.”

Terry is proud to have arranged to leave a gift in his Will. When asked what motivated him to leave a bequest, Terry responded, “I want to make sure the vision of Suzanne Aubert is kept alive.”



WHAT WE DO:

**OUR LADY HOME OF COMPASSION**

2025 marked a year of renewal and recognition at Our Lady's Home of Compassion. The Chapel and Resting Place received a formal heritage listing strengthening the vibrancy of our community spaces. The heritage status affirmed the Island Bay site's cultural and spiritual significance, while the extended café opening hours created more opportunities for people to gather, connect, and feel at home. Together, these milestones deepened the organisation's impact and reinforced our role as a place of welcome, care, and enduring compassion.

**Heritage Listing**

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga has recognised the Chapel of Our Lady of Compassion and the Resting Place of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert as a Category 1 Historic Place, noting "outstanding historical and spiritual significance for their direct association with the Catholic nun, nurse, and social worker Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert."

Heritage New Zealand recognised the "extraordinary" design of the Chapel, which opened in 1990, resulting from collaboration between architect Ross Brown, of the Structon Group, and acclaimed local artist John Drawbridge.

Opening in 2017, the award-winning Resting Place, designed by Hugh Tennent of Tennent Brown Architects, is a tranquil and simple space. The focus is Suzanne's tomb, framed by nature and John Drawbridge's "Resurrection" stained glass window.

The Chapel and Resting Place serve as a spiritual hub for prayer, worship, retreats, reflection, significant social and community events, as well as a place of pilgrimage.

Suzanne served "all creeds and none", and in keeping with this, the Chapel and Resting Place are open to everyone from 8:00am to 4:30pm every day (check our website for public holidays).



Approx **20** schools visted



With Approx **600** students attending.



**1,846** nights of accomodation provided.



**208** events hosted at Our Lady's Home of Compassion.



**2** groups of refugee families that was a total of **16** people.



**53** weeks hosted at Redwood House.



Each time I step into the Home of Compassion in Island Bay, I feel the quiet strength of Suzanne Aubert's presence. Her legacy isn't just remembered – it's lived, in the care offered, the welcome extended, and the dignity upheld. This place speaks to her deep love for the vulnerable and her unwavering faith in God's mercy.

- Most Rev Paul Martin SM DD, Archbishop of Wellington



Photo: Our Lady's Home of Compassion Chapel

## OUR LADY HOME OF COMPASSION

### Creative Works in 2025

A wide range of activities and exhibitions have taken place in 2025 at Our Lady's Home of Compassion, establishing it as an ideal venue for events and activities, and generating strong interest from the community. This includes a vibrant mix of school groups, community groups, and visitors attending retreats, pilgrimages, and educational experiences.

Events such as the ones organised by the Archdiocesan Commission for Ecology, Justice and Peace and the Christian Life Community Wellington highlight the need for ongoing conversation and reflection on current issues. Courses like Growing in Prayer, which offer opportunities to deepen one's prayer life, and performances such as Colours of Jazz, a musical piece inspired by Mother Aubert's piano lessons with Franz Liszt, demonstrate the versatility of this space.

Visits from students at Wellington's St Teresa School and Cardinal McKeefry School to Our Lady's Home of Compassion highlighted its ongoing role as a place of learning and connection. The children explored the life and work of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert. Much like the Junior Syndicate from Sacred Heart Cathedral School, who created a series of portraits of the congregation's foundress. Their artworks were later displayed in August in an exhibition titled 'The Birthday of a Hope-filled Pilgrim.'

We also hosted the first instalment in a series of pilgrimage-themed displays to be held to celebrate the Jubilee Year of Pilgrimage. These included A Lenten Exhibition, a unique interpretation of the Fifteen Stations of the Cross through stained-glass prototypes presented by local artist John Drawbridge, and An Eastertide Exhibition, featuring crosses crafted from driftwood gathered at Makara Beach by artist David Krsticevic.

These exhibitions and activities deepened our collective appreciation for creativity and reflection. We look forward to continuing this journey of hope, art, and community at Our Lady's Home of Compassion.

## WHAT WE DO: HIRUHĀRAMA

24

Hiruhārama also known as Jerusalem, was once the largest kainga (village) on the Whanganui River. The Catholic mission was first established in the area in 1854. Hiruhārama is a small settlement in a beautiful and peaceful setting. Its unique charm, history and allure draw pilgrims and visitors from around the globe.

In 1892, Hiruhārama became the birthplace of the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion, founded by Suzanne Aubert, later known as Mother Aubert and Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert. This was the first religious order established in Aotearoa New Zealand

Although no Sisters of Compassion now live permanently on site, they continue to maintain strong relationships with local whānau through regular visits.

### Maintenance Work in 2024/25

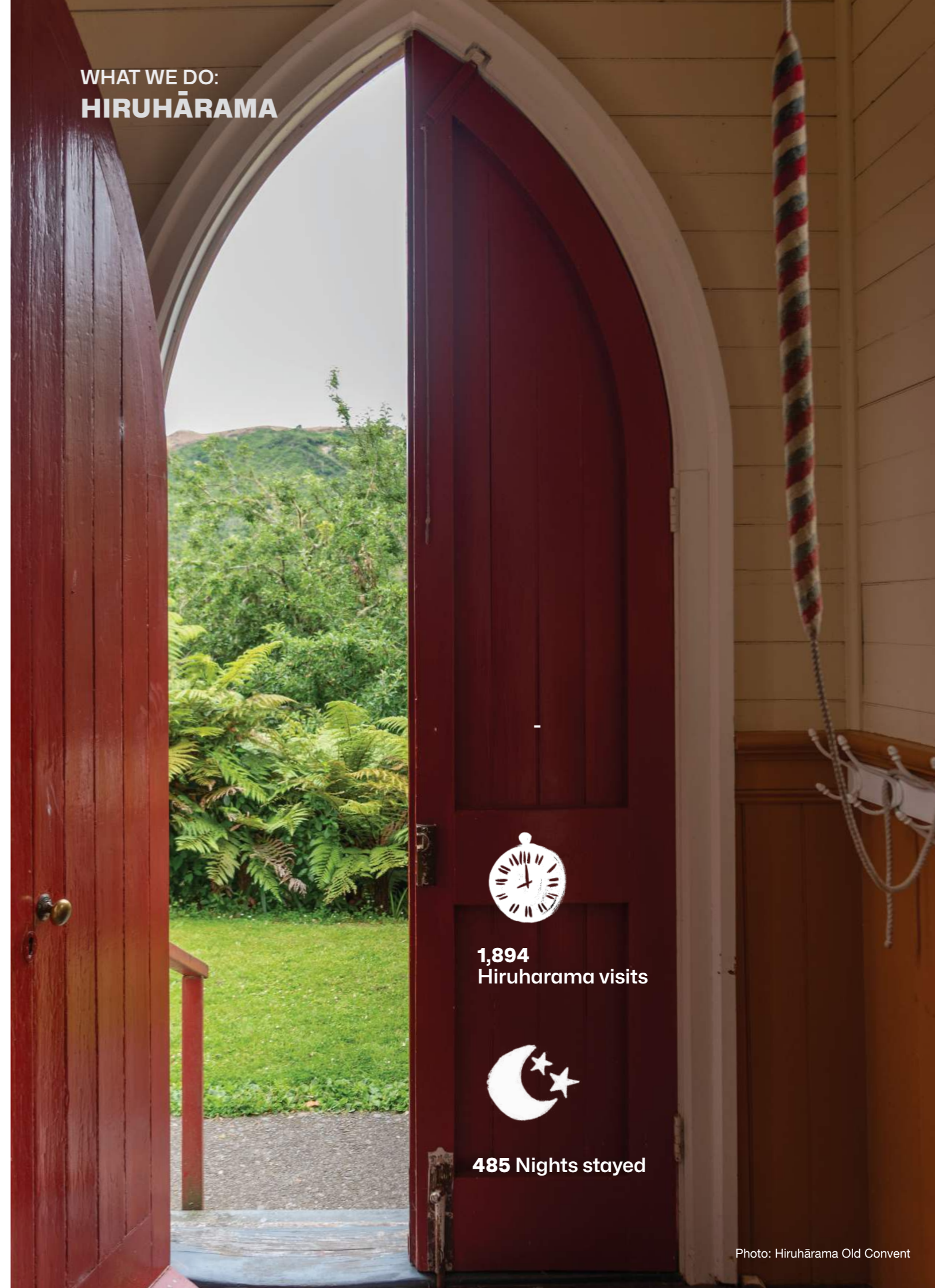
Significant renovation work is underway in Hiruhārama/Jerusalem, with the replacement of the roofs on the Heritage-listed Old Convent and St Joseph's Chapel.

Both are over 100 years old and, due to their age, pose structural risks in the event of earthquakes. One of the upgrades also includes the removal of the chimney in the Old Convent.

This work is being carried out by Whanganui Plumbers and is expected to be finished by the end of the year.

Once the work is complete, the Convent and Chapel will reopen for visitors, overnight stays and regular Mass.

## WHAT WE DO: HIRUHĀRAMA



**1,894**  
Hiruharama visits



**485** Nights stayed

### The Mother Aubert Home of Compassion Trust Board

**Legal Name:**  
The Mother Aubert Home of Compassion  
Trust Board

**CC Number:**  
CC10312

**Board Members:**

Stephen Paul Ramsay, Nicolette Kathleen  
Stephens, Margaret Anne Mills,  
Alisi Paea 'i Vaiola Tu'ipulotu, Susan Cosgrove

---

### Sisters of Compassion Group

**Legal Name:**  
Sisters of Compassion Group Limited

**CC Number:**  
CC10246

**Board Members:**

Michael Gerard Curtis, Susan Cosgrove  
Julian Michael Maher, Deirdre Nga Roimata  
O'Sullivan, Nigel Arthur Prince,  
Alisi Paea 'i Vaiola Tu'ipulotu, Gerard John Tully

---

### Compassion Soup Kitchen

**Legal Name:**  
Suzanne Aubert Compassion Centre  
Wellington Ltd

**CC Number:**  
CC10140

**Board Members:**

Nigel Arthur Prince, Susan Cosgrove, Michael  
Gerard Curtis, Julian Michael Maher, Deirdre  
Nga Roimata O'Sullivan,  
Alisi Paea 'i Vaiola Tu'ipulotu, Gerard John Tully

---

### Our Lady's Home of Compassion

**Legal Name:**  
Our Lady's Home of Compassion Island Bay  
Limited

**CC Number:**  
CC10106

**Board Members:**

Nigel Arthur Prince, Susan Cosgrove, Michael  
Gerard Curtis, Julian Michael Maher, Deirdre  
Nga Roimata O'Sullivan,  
Alisi Paea 'i Vaiola Tu'ipulotu, Gerard John Tully

### Compassion Housing

**Legal Name:**  
Compassion Housing Limited

**CC Number:**  
CC10104

**Board Members:**

Francis Fanning, Amy McGuinness, Mark  
McKinley, Kerry Maher, Julian Maher,  
Alisi Paea 'i Vaiola Tu'ipulotu

---

**Your support makes all this impact possible!  
Arohanui and thank you. Donate at [compassion.org.nz](https://compassion.org.nz)**



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

04 383 7769