

Karanga Atawhai

The voice of Whānau Mercy Ministries SEPTEMBER 2024



Ko te pua a hou tēnei e tupu ake nei

This is the new blossom growing anew

Kīngi Tūheitia Pōtatau Te Wherowhero VII
(21 April 1955 – 30 August 2024)

E te Arikinui, e Kīngi Tūheitia, haere, haere,
haere atu ra. Moe mai, moe mai, moe mai ra
i te rangimarie o te Atua. Arohanui me ngā
manaakitanga ki tō whānau.

Oh noble leader, Kīngi Tūheitia, farewell, farewell,
farewell into the peaceful rest of the Divine.
Much love and blessings to your family.

Te Arikinui, Ngaa Wai hono i te po,
Potatau Te Wherowhero VIII (5 September 2024 -)

E te kuini hou, Te Arikinui, Ngaa Wai hono i te po, e
noho koe i te ahurewa tapu o ngaa maatua tupuna,
tu tonu, tu tonu, tu tonu, pai marire kia tatou

To the new queen, the highest, Ngaa wai hono i
te po, who now sits on the sacred throne of your
ancestors, stand firm, stand firm, stand firm, may
there be peace to us all...



*Kuini Nga wai hono i te po succeeds her father as the eighth
– and second-youngest ever – Māori monarch*

Mercy Day

The 24th September is a very special day on the Mercy calendar as it is the day on which we commemorate the opening of the first house of Mercy on Baggot Street, in Dublin, Ireland in 1827.



Two years previously, William Callaghan had bequeathed to Catherine his entire estate which enabled Catherine to lease the property on Baggot Street for the purpose of building a large house for various kinds of religious, educational, and social service of poor women and children.

It is doubtful that William Callaghan could have perceived the global impact that his gift of gratitude would initiate from this first House of Mercy. Not only was it a refuge for poor and distressed women but one short year later, Catherine described the activities as: *'the daily education of hundreds of poor female children and the instruction of poor women who sleep in the house'*.

The location was purposefully chosen as it ensured that the poor would be visible to the rich and that the young women would have employment opportunities in the surrounding suburbs.

Today, in the far reaches of the south Pacific, Whānau Mercy Ministries celebrates this lasting tradition of service to ease suffering and hardship that has stretched so far and achieved so much since the first Sisters arrived in Tāmaki Makaurau in 1850 at the invitation of local wahine.

We hope to carry the stories of all our Mercy Day celebrations in the October edition of Karanga Atawhai.

Carmel College Service Programme puts principles into practice

At Carmel College we support our academic, practical and social learning with the Catholic values of the Mercy tradition: **Justice, Service, Respect, Care and Courage**. This legacy of our founding Sisters of Mercy is part of our daily practice.

One way that we make it real is through our service programme. All students are expected to participate. Students choose their own action, meeting these criteria: in their own time + unpaid + of benefit to the community, or the environment, or another person outside the immediate household. Chores at home are important but do not count as Service. Some examples are:

- Volunteering at toy libraries, public libraries, op shops, food rescue, community gardens.
 - St John Youth: leadership, teaching first aid, competition training.
 - Street collections for charity and sponsored fundraising, running Round the Bays.
 - Prepping food for donated meals, food parcels, fundraisers, charitable events.
 - Supporting sports events in every imaginable code: as ball girls, boat holders, umpires, scorers, runners, setup and cleanup crew.
 - Sports coaching and Surf lifesaving.
 - Housework, dog walking, car cleaning and gardening for elders and neighbours.
- Letter-writing and card-making for the ill and elderly.
 - Animal shelters: cleaning and feeding vulnerable animals.
 - Supporting learning: tutoring, caring for school equipment and classrooms, helping at their former primary schools and preschools.
 - Rubbish cleanup, tree planting and ecological restoration at beaches and parks.



Students say:

“This year I showed the gospel value of compassion in all the activities I was involved in. Through using my time to make the spaces I was involved in (netball, a community dinner, leadership, Wairau estuary clean up) a caring and welcoming space.”

“I helped Year 7&8 students develop a sport that was important to them. We did weekly training and games and created a positive team environment where the kids made many friends.”

“I helped children with Autism by taking them shopping, swimming, and supported them with homework. I gave them attention and tried to learn more about them as a person. This service taught me that all individuals have genuine talents even though their learning styles may differ. I enjoyed doing service and would do it again in the future, out of school.”

“My service this year has really helped me to grow as a person. Although I’ve been doing service since Year 8 when the programme was introduced, this year – being my last – has allowed me to find a deeper appreciation for the programme and its significance to our school and ourselves, allowing me to appreciate the positive impact that doing these acts of service can have for the community.”

Thanks to the parents, teachers and other community members who support our students in their service experience. If you have a community project or cause that would benefit from some student energy, please contact the Carmel College service coordinator (service@carmel.school.nz).

Sarah Cox, Service Coordinator, Carmel College



To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow

Mercy Villas, together with the Villa Joseph Convent is positioned close to the Central business district of Upper Hutt, on a site that's been home to the Sisters of Mercy in Upper Hutt since the early 1900's. Thanks to the vision of the Mercy Sisters, and their awareness to the needs of the local community, in 1975 three pensioner blocks were built, providing twelve spacious one-bedroom homes for pensioners. In the intervening years, a further twenty-nine homes have been added culminating in a total of forty-one homes spread across a large, well established, park like garden setting.

Mercy Villas' Board mission is to provide quality, affordable rental housing, independent living in a holistic, relational environment for vulnerable older whānau. As a community we are blessed to have a broad range of men and women from a variety of ethnic groups, both single people and couples all striving to live peacefully in a caring, and safe community. Residents are provided with the opportunity to connect with each other, come together each week for a friendly cuppa while they partake in knitting, various games, a Monday prayer/singing group, a colouring group and Friday movies.

In addition to these small group activities, several times per year the opportunity is given for residents come together as a community for a concert, and to share kai at a Christmas afternoon tea or for Christmas carols.

When the weather is suitable, it's heartening to see residents out tending to their garden, planting pots of flowers or vegetables, and making their house a home. Today as I sit tapping my keyboard, I observe one of our residents nurturing the community vegetable plot, an act of kindness that provides a few valuable silver beet leaves for many of her friends. Unknown to her, her green fingers rekindle in me an Audry Hepburn quote *"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow"*.



This and similar acts are what the Mercy Villas community is about. Its more than four walls, its an opportunity to make new friendships, a place to be at peace and a place where individuals can be supported when they reach out.

The ethos of the Mercy Villas board is primarily focused on providing a haukāinga (home) to either couples and/or single people on the New Zealand Superannuation, with consideration given to those renting or impacted by hardship. Being an independent living community, we do not have any medical or care staff on site, nevertheless, residents, their families and their wider support network are asked to embrace the support of each other and encouraged to use care agencies where necessary to prolong their years at Mercy Villas, which they do. Many of our whānau have been members of the hapori (community) for ten or more years. Demand for a home at Mercy Villas continues to outstrip availability, hence the board has a vision to expand the community further by establishing more dwellings suitable for our cohort.

In concluding, Mercy Villas is a place, where residents, friends, families and staff are given the opportunity to reach out and take satisfaction in playing a part in looking after the wider wellbeing of those that make Mercy Villas their haukāinga.

Damian Bengree, Manager, Mercy Villas



Te Ngākau Atawhai – Heart of Mercy: In Aotearoa, the Mercy Cross, central to Catherine McAuley's spirituality, is supported by a pair of koru. The koru represent the unfolding of new life and link our Mercy story to the spirituality of Māori and the ancient lore of this land.

Karanga Atawhai is the newsletter of Whānau Mercy Ministries, a Ministerial Public Juridic Person (MPJP) under Canon Law.

Postal Address: PO Box 6015 Wellesley Street, Auckland Central, Auckland 1141