



Karanga Atawhai

A newsletter for Sisters of Mercy and partners in mission

No 8. April 2020

Earth Day marks 50 years of caring for our planet

April 22 marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, celebrated in more than 190 countries around the world, with a focus this year on climate action. Events may be restricted by the Covid-19 pandemic. But Pope Francis encourages us in his letter *Laudato Si'* (par 211) not to underestimate the value of 'little daily actions' that signal real changes in our lifestyle. How about planting a tree on Earth Day, or starting a worm farm? Why not share with those in your bubble the prayer in Inoi Taketake (p. 32), 'Mercy for our Earth'?

New name and vision announced for Mercy's future PJP

By DENNIS HORTON

This edition of *Karanga Atawhai* is focused on launching the new name and statement of purpose of our ministerial PJP. The launch replaces a ceremony which the Leadership of Ngā Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand had hoped to hold for a wide group of sisters and partners in ministry until the Covid-19 lockdown made such a gathering impossible.

So Congregation Leader Sue France has asked that the new name and statement of purpose be launched in this issue of *Karanga Atawhai*, timed to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Earth Day which is being held on April 22 with events planned in more than 190 countries around the world. Climate action is the theme for Earth Day this year.

Our ministerial PJP will be known as Whānau Mercy Ministries. More than 30 names were submitted to the Sponsorship Committee in a broad-based consultation in February, but the final choice became clear to the committee with very little discussion or debate. "Mercy was a given," Sue France told *Karanga Atawhai*, "and many had whānau in their choice of name. There was a strong sense that Mercy is what we do, and that everyone engaged in our ministries is doing mercy."

The choice of name builds on a growing sense of



Graphic © Ngā Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa 2020.

whānau, Sue France added. "There is a sense of being family together, with a place for everyone within this family. It's a spirit of inclusion."

The statement of purpose is a simple declaration of why our ministries exist and of what they seek to achieve. Published in full overleaf, the statement makes clear that Mercy's ministries are committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ and to the tradition of Catherine McAuley and that they function in the name of the Catholic Church. Our ministries are also committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to "the sacredness of all creation."

The statement opens with a short invocation adapted from a whakataukī or proverb in te reo Māori and closes with its English translation, hoping that mercy be felt throughout the land, that mercy be widespread, living in the heart of our world today.

Those involved in our ministries are called "out of God's mercy" to respond willingly and walk compassionately with all who seek healing and wholeness, relief from suffering, restoration of human dignity, knowledge and understanding and care of our common home. The last item recalls the decision by Pope Francis to list care of the environment among the traditional works of mercy. This listing of the works of mercy is based on one developed by Janice McDrury, former mission director of Mercy Hospital Dunedin, at the time of the hospital's 75th anniversary.

New name a milestone on Mercy's journey into future



Sue France rsm

Congregation Leader of Ngā Whāea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand, Sue France rsm, has expressed thanks to sisters and partners in ministry for feedback to a consultation process on the name and the statement of purpose for the new ministerial Public Juridic Person (PJP). Her comments came in a letter to sisters on April 20 which she shared with *Karanga Atawhai*.

Considered by the Sponsorship Committee at its meeting in March, the feedback provided direction and clarity to the committee and helped it to reach a consensus very easily about the name and the statement of purpose, Sue France said.

"There was a true sense of the Holy Spirit at work in the room as we met. The recommendations they made have been approved by the Leadership Team, and we wish to share this milestone in our Congregation's history with you."

She advised that the new ministerial PJP will be known as Whānau Mercy Ministries. The new statement of purpose is published in full on this page.

In her letter, Sue France noted that earlier this month, April 9 marked 170 years since the arrival of the first Sisters of Mercy to New Zealand. "We can look back and be proud of the contributions sisters have made to society over this time."

She described the choice of name and a statement of purpose as a significant step forward in the journey to form a ministerial PJP "as we prepare our application to go to Rome later this year.

"We don't know what the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will be on those plans, but we do look to the future with great hope and confidence in God, as we work as part of Whānau Mercy towards this new creation for mission.

"When we come to celebrate 175 years of the presence of the Sisters of Mercy in Aotearoa New Zealand, the world will be different. What we are preparing for now is for Mercy mission to continue with sisters and members of Whānau Mercy Ministries co-creating that future.

"Let us give thanks for all that is good and lifegiving in these difficult days that we live through," she wrote.

Feedback welcome

If you have any questions or comments on this newsletter, you are invited to send these directly to either Astrid Lambert (ALambert@somauck.org.nz) or to Richard Kerr-Bell (rkerrbell@somauck.org.nz). The next issue of *Karanga Atawhai* is expected to be published at the end of May.

Whānau Mercy Ministries - Statement of Purpose

*Atawhai ki uta, atawhai ki tai, kia horahorahia - i te rito o te ao marama**

We are committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the tradition of Catherine McAuley, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the sacredness of all creation.

Out of God's mercy we respond willingly and walk compassionately with those who are seeking:

- Healing and wholeness
- Relief from suffering
- Restoration of human dignity
- Knowledge, understanding and wisdom
- Care for our common home.

We do this through our education, healthcare and community ministries in the name of the Catholic Church.

* *May mercy be felt inland, may mercy be felt on the shore, may mercy be widespread, living in the heart of our world today.*