

Karanga Atawhai

A newsletter for Sisters of Mercy and partners in mission

No 14. December 2020

Sisters of Mercy to serve as sponsor of Whānau Mercy Ministries

By DENNIS HORTON

At the October meeting of the Sponsorship Committee, the Leadership of Ngā Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand approved the canonical statutes for its Ministerial Public Juridic Person (MPJP). This opens the way for the establishment of Whānau Mercy Ministries, which will assume responsibility for the ministries to be transferred to the new Trust by the Sisters of Mercy.

These ministries include the health, education, social and community ventures established and incorporated by the Sisters of Mercy as apostolic and charitable works consistent with the mission entrusted to the Catholic Church by Jesus Christ. They are also works which are inspired by the charism of Catherine McAuley, responding in mercy and loving kindness to all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

The transfer will take place through a decree to be issued in Rome by the Vatican's Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. The decree will recognise Ngā Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa as the founding Sponsor, whose primary duty will be to ensure that the works of Whānau Mercy Ministries are in keeping with the trust's canonical statutes and with the teaching, discipline and laws of the Roman Catholic Church, and that they reflect the charism and

traditions of the Sisters of Mercy New Zealand.

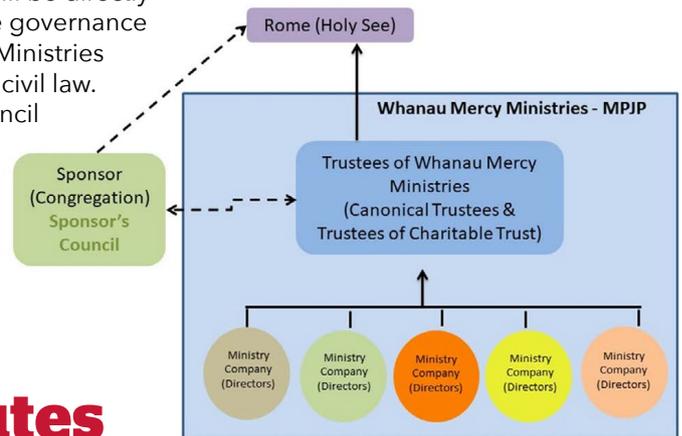
The Sponsor is the Congregation, with the Leadership Team appointing representatives who will be the Sponsor's Council. This Sponsor's Council has reserved powers to define the philosophy and mission of Whānau Mercy Ministries and to approve or amend the Trust Deed and any canonical laws relating to the trust, consistent with the statutes. The Sponsor's Council may request amendment of these statutes by the Holy See which has authorised them.

The Sponsor's Council also has the reserved powers to appoint the trustees who will be directly responsible for the governance of Whānau Mercy Ministries in both canon and civil law. The Sponsor's Council will also appoint the Chair of the trustees, and has the power to

remove any trustee, including the chair.

It falls to the Sponsor's Council to approve the formation guidelines for trustees and directors and to approve the annual report to the Holy See which the trustees will make.

The Sponsor will appoint its representatives who meet as the Sponsor's Council, which will exercise the duties and powers of the Sponsor in accordance with the by-laws. The Sponsor's Council is not part of the MPJP Whānau Mercy Ministries. It has reserved powers that enable a link between the Founding Congregation, Rome and the MPJP.



Key role of trustees outlined in MPJP statutes

On behalf of the Congregation's Leadership, the Sponsor's Council will appoint the trustees who will be directly responsible for the governance of Whānau Mercy Ministries in both canon and civil law.

There will be a minimum of five trustees, with a maximum of nine. The majority of these must be Catholics. Their key responsibilities are outlined in the Canonical Statutes and Trust Deed which have been approved by the Sponsorship Committee and

the Leadership Team and will be included in the documentation sent for approval by the Holy See in Rome.

The trustees must embody a sense of spirituality and mission that match the purposes of Whānau Mercy Ministries. They will need an adequate understanding of the teachings and laws of the Catholic Church and must satisfy other requirements specified in the trust deed,

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Key role of trustees outlined in MPJP statutes

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especially those relating to the formation required of trustees.

The trustees will act in the civil sphere as a church entity through a body corporate known as the Whānau Mercy Ministries Trust Board.

The prime duty of the trustees will be to ensure that the purposes of the new trust are fulfilled, in a way that aligns with the philosophy and mission prescribed by the Sisters of Mercy as Sponsor and outlined in the statutes and the trust deed.

The trustees must also ensure that the work of Whānau Mercy Ministries and its boards is in accord with the teachings, ethical directives and laws of the Catholic Church.

The trustees will appoint directors of the boards of Mercy ministries and will approve the content of the initial and ongoing formation for directors and executive leaders and staff.

The trustees will prepare the annual report to the Holy See, for approval by the Sponsor's Council. This report, which will include audited financial information, will show that the integrity of faith and morals is preserved within the trust, and that the use of resources and apostolic activity are in accord with its purposes.

Best wishes for the season

Warm greetings to all our readers, Sisters of Mercy and their partners in mission. This is the last issue of Karanga Atawhai for 2020. We hope you have a blessed Advent and Christmas and look forward to updating you in our next issue, following a meeting of the Sponsorship Committee on Tuesday 9 February.

Mercy's legacy of love to be assured through ministerial PJP

Virginia Noonan has been a member of the MPJP Sponsorship Committee this year, after the committee decided to broaden the representation at its table. Virginia succeeded Tony Harkins as chair of Tiaki Manatū, the trust set up by Ngā Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand to provide governance of their incorporated ministries. Virginia has been a board member of Tiaki Manatū since June 2008. For 17 years she served on the Proprietor's Board of Villa Maria College in Christchurch where she lives.



Virginia Noonan says that her 12 years as a trustee of Tiaki Manatū has provided a sound basis for her serving on the Sponsorship Committee.

"It has been a huge privilege and pleasure to be a member of Tiaki Manatū," she says. "The work of this trust means acting on behalf of the Sisters of Mercy to provide governance support to their incorporated ministries.

"While I was familiar with Mercy education through my direct involvement with Villa Maria College, I needed to learn more about each of our ministries, especially in the healthcare and community development areas - to know about their founding

stories, their core purpose, their successes and their challenges.

"The knowledge shared by members of the Sponsorship Committee on the current governance needs of each ministry has helped to shape discussion about developing a structure for the proposed PJP."

Continuity is the most positive outcome that Virginia can foresee from the process of establishing a PJP. "I am very hopeful to see the legacy, history and tradition of Mercy continuing to enrich our communities far into the future," she says.

She would like to share her sense of confidence with those currently engaged as staff or volunteers in any Mercy ministry who ask about the future of their involvement. "I believe it's business as usual for all of these ministries."

That same sense of optimism is something she would like to share with Sisters of Mercy in New Zealand who may be wondering about the long-term future of the ministries they have established. "The purpose of creating a ministerial PJP is precisely to secure the long-term future of these wonderful ventures."

Virginia is confident about Mercy's legacy in New Zealand. "Mercy continues to enrich so many lives, bringing to life the love and compassion of Jesus Christ."