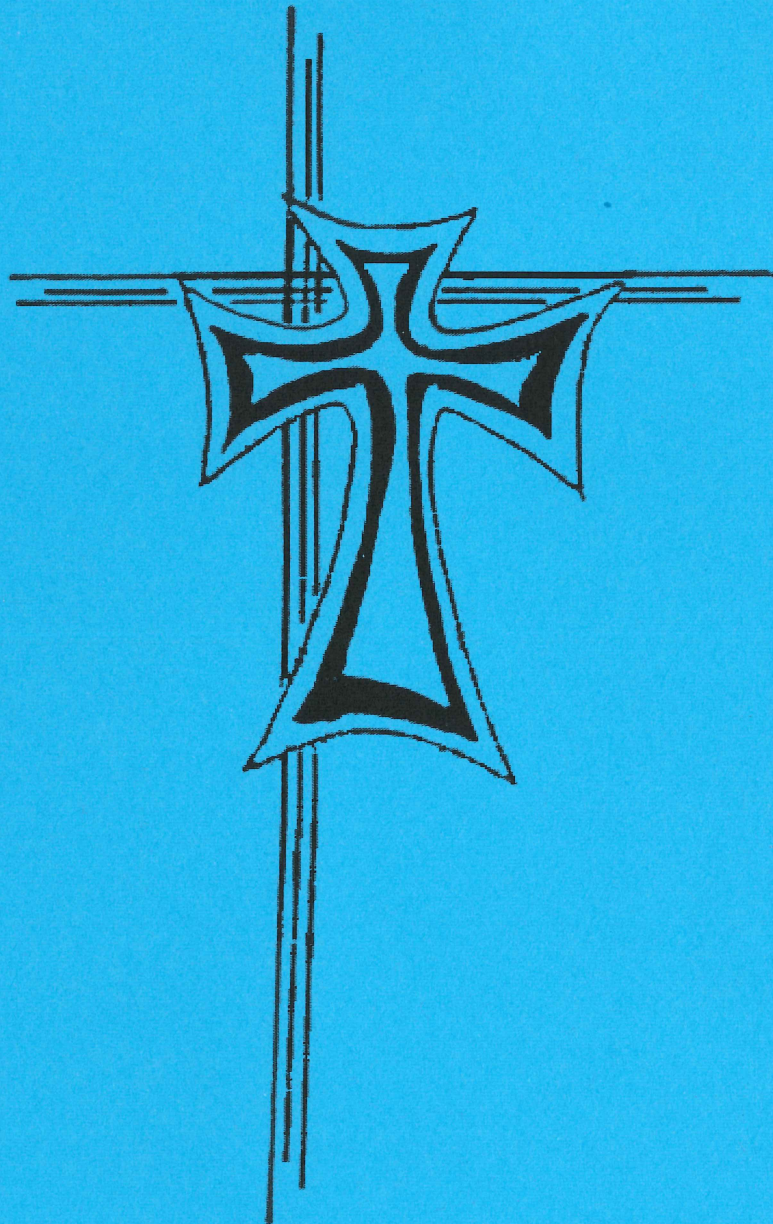


Sisters of Mercy Wiri



**Annual Report and Statement of Accounts
2011/2012**

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Brief History

In 1988 Sisters of Mercy responded to an invitation by local Maori women and came to live in Wiri. Sister Anne Hurley and Sister Margaret Martin established the community based agency Sisters of Mercy Wiri in 1990 in response to growing community needs. For ten years Anne and Margaret worked from the house which the Sisters had built themselves. The establishment of the Wiri Centre in 2000 was a joint initiative between Sisters of Mercy Wiri and Wiri Central School and in November 2000 the service relocated to the Wiri Centre.

As an active non-governmental organisation Sisters of Mercy Wiri delivered a range of services and programmes. The agency also contributed to a number of regional forums that focussed on improving social outcomes, health and wellbeing in the region.

In December 2009 Sisters of Mercy Wiri Trust relinquished all formal contracts, both funding and employment and vacated the Wiri Centre. Margaret and Anne continue to live and work in Wiri. They are now freer to be open to the unexpected and awake to new possibilities.

The ministry of Sisters of Mercy Wiri embodies the mission of the Catholic Religious Congregation of women, Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand, founded by Catherine McAuley in Dublin in 1831 to work with the poor, especially women and children.

Our Mission

*To work with the poor, especially women and children,
to build positive relationships that strengthen families and communities
and to join with others to bring about a more just and compassionate society.*

Animated by Gospel values and the social teaching of the Catholic Church we will, coworkers and Sisters respond with Christ's love to the needs and concerns of the economically poor, especially women and children.

Treaty of Waitangi

Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi is New Zealand's founding document and Sisters of Mercy Wiri is committed to honouring Te Tiriti as a principle for the way in which we work.

Guiding Principles

- Work with all people of goodwill towards the transformation of society to bring about the reign of God
- Promote the value that all persons are called to family, community and participation
- Facilitate community development by involving neighbourhood and community participation
- Embrace the multi-cultural character of Wiri and recognise and value all cultures and ethnic groups that are represented in the local community
- Participate in processes to influence those who exercise power and make decisions affecting the lives of others

Works of Mercy

To feed the hungry
To clothe the naked
To shelter the homeless
To bury the dead

To give drink to the thirsty
To visit the imprisoned
To visit the sick

"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

John 10:10

Board of Trustees



From left to right: Sr Anne Hurley, Sr Tina Vaeatangitau, Ruth Spelman (Chair)
Mary MacManus and Sr Margaret Martin

Chairperson's Report

It is my pleasure to present the Annual Report for the year to June 2012 on behalf of the Sisters of Mercy Wiri Trust Board. In July 2011 we welcomed new Board Members Mary MacManus and Sister Tina Vaeatangitau. Part of their induction included a drive around Wiri including the Women's prison and the Rata Vine neighbourhood as well as Wiri Central School and the neighbourhood around the former Centre. Both Mary and Tina have long supported Sr Anne and Sr Margaret in their ministry and both are already making a strong contribution as Board Members. A feature of Board meetings this year has been the greater time given to the scripture based reflections at the beginning of our meeting. This time of reflection is highly valued by all members.

The new Board continues to affirm the work done by Margaret and Anne. We see that the track record of Sisters of Mercy Wiri means that submissions and other community involvements are well received and recognised as credible. Anne and Margaret are also increasingly invited by others to share their reflections on ministry. The Mercy Governance Forum in May provided an opportunity to meet again with others involved in Mercy ministries and to begin a

In February the Board decided to begin the development of a website so that information is more readily available about Sisters of Mercy Wiri. This work is proceeding and we look forward to the launch of the website. Again, this year, Sisters of Mercy Wiri acted as the fund holder for the McAuley Pasifika Adult Literacy Programme. We consider part of our role as Board members is to protect the balance between the everyday community work, the longer term advocacy work and the need to have enough time for reflective space to sustain the ministry.

Finally, my thanks to all our Board Members for their commitment to Sisters of Mercy Wiri.



Ruth Spelman
Chairperson

Ministry Report

It is in the context of the global economic crisis, now in its fourth year, coupled with outcomes of economic and social policies in Aotearoa New Zealand that we reflect on the year that has been. We are ever more conscious of the increasing levels of income inequality that have impacted significantly on the poorest members of our society.

Our community based approach to meeting human need and environmental concerns is anchored in the local neighbourhood in which we live. Living with and among the people of Wiri we see firsthand the strengths and potential of children and families. We also see signs of the immense stress and disadvantage that arises in at risk communities.

During the past year the daily struggles of local families have ranged from not having enough food, disconnection of power, domestic disputes, vehicles impounded, parenting concerns, suitable and affordable childcare, addictions and court related issues. The cost of food, power, and petrol alone has made it difficult for families to manage financially. The lack of jobs and meaningful employment coupled with the shortage of rental accommodation has contributed to the increased hardship and displacement experienced by many families.

We have responded to these situations as we have in past years. That is, by providing practical and material assistance, through advocacy work, and, in the words of Catherine McAuley, by *'the kind word, the compassionate look, and the patient hearing of sorrows'*. Regular contact with families through home visits and walking the streets of Wiri is always a blessing – indeed it is twice blessed!

The uneasy tension between charity and justice is a question we grapple with regularly. While social provision is needed it is the social justice and community action aspects of our ministry that offer the most hope.

Submissions during the year have included a response to the Government's Green Paper on Vulnerable Children. The response was endorsed by the Leadership of Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand. It was also part of a briefing paper compiled by UNICEF New Zealand as a unified response to the Government's Green Paper.



Submissions were also made on Auckland Council's Draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan and the Auckland Council's Draft Long Term Plan. In addition we responded to an invitation from the Social Services Select Committee to make a submission on the Social Security (Youth Support and Work Focus) Amendment Bill

Neighbourhood issues and concerns, too, impact on people's sense of wellbeing, connectedness and how they feel about where they live. The relationships and networks which were once familiar, in many instances have ceased to exist since the establishment of the new Auckland Council. So a particular focus this year has been establishing contacts with the appropriate people within Auckland Council and building working relationships to make known and address local concerns.

Community issues in this regard have included the dumping of inorganic rubbish, weed control maintenance, abandoned vehicles, liquor bans for parks and reserves, street lighting and the accessibility of the Wiri community hall for use by local residents.

Weekly visits to the Auckland Regional Women's Correctional Facility in Wiri have highlighted the huge need and gap in the provision of supportive accommodation and reintegration support for women released from prison. This year we explored several possibilities to establish a circle of support for women and their families post release. Regrettably, we have been unsuccessful with this initiative at the time of writing this report.

Our engagement and working with other organisations and networks is ongoing. As well as attending meetings regularly with these groups we advocate for and promote social, economic, environmental and cultural well being for the people and communities of South Auckland with them.

A forum established this year by the Department of Corrections in response to the building of a new men's prison in Wiri is the Community Impact Forum. Sisters of Mercy Wiri have representation on this forum. We are also one of a number of organisations collecting data for the Social Impact Monitoring Plan, which is designed to monitor the social effects on the community of

both the Auckland Region Women's Correctional Facility and the Men's Correctional Facility.

Our warmest thanks to all those who have supported Sisters of Mercy Wiri during the year, especially Ruth Spelman, our board chair, board members Mary and Tina and the families and community of Wiri. In our relationships with one another we continue to be enriched.



Sister Margaret Martin



Sister Anne Hurley

Acknowledgements

Each year the work of Sisters of Mercy Wiri is made possible through the generous support and assistance of a number of organisations and individuals.

We acknowledge with gratitude those who have contributed in a variety of ways over the past year.

ASB Community Trust
Denise Gregory
Countdown Manukau
Jon Maplesden
Mercury Printz
Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy NZ
Oem Computers
Pak'n Save Manukau
Sister Leiola Pelesikoti
St Anne's Widows Group
St Luke's Anglican Church
St Mary's Community Outreach, Ponsonby
TelstraClear Pacific Events Centre
Volcanic Cones Society