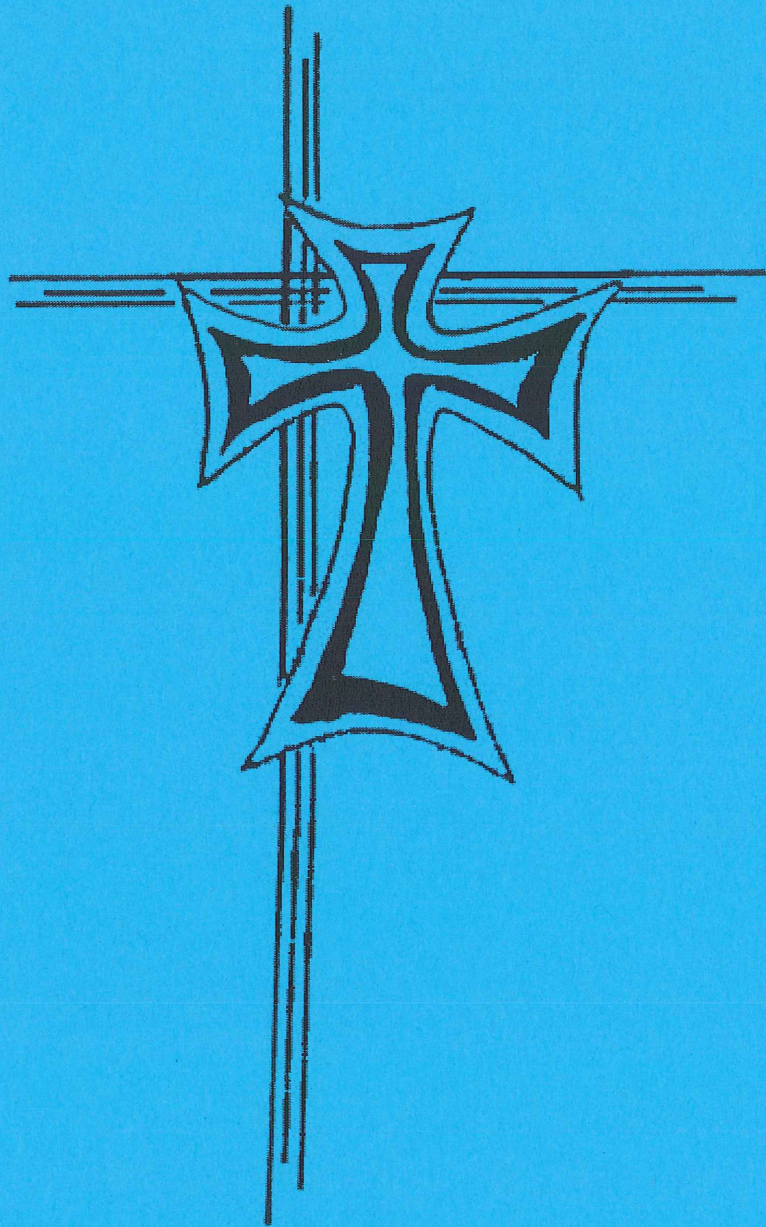


# **Sisters of Mercy Wiri**



**Annual Report 2013/2014**



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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 Margaret Martin, Ruth Spelman (Chair) and Carol Thomas

### Chairperson's Report

It is my pleasure to present the Annual Report for the year to June 2014 on behalf of the Sisters of Mercy Wiri Trust Board. During the year the Board has continued to work within the strategic plan developed earlier.

At the end of 2013 the Board received with regret the resignation of Mary McManus who took up a new role developing nursing studies in the Cook Islands. We very much appreciated Mary's contribution as a Board member and wish her well for her work in the Pacific. In February the Board invited Carol Thomas to join us as a Trustee and Carol is making a welcome contribution.

In September I accepted an invitation to attend a morning session during the Chapter of Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand. It was encouraging to see how the work of Sisters of Mercy Wiri reflects the intentions and practices of Catherine McAuley.

We have continued to give significant time to scripture based reflections at the beginning of our meetings and this practice is highly valued by all members.



The Board continues to affirm the work done by Anne and Margaret. They are frequently invited to speak in community settings where there is strong support for the work they do.

As Board Members we endeavour to protect the balance between the everyday community social work, the longer term advocacy work and the need to have enough time for reflective space to sustain the ministry.

Finally, my thanks to Carol Thomas for her strong contribution to all Board discussions and also to Anne and Margaret in their roles as Board Members.



Ruth Spelman  
Chairperson

## Ministry Report

During the past year the Sisters of Mercy Wiri have endeavoured to be faithful to the call of the Gospel by responding to the many requests for service and invitations we receive.

Through our ministry over the year we have been able, in a small way, to identify with the words of Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation 'Evangelii Gaudium – The Joy of the Gospel'.

***'Moved by his example, we want to enter fully into the fabric of society, sharing the lives of all, listening to their concerns, helping them materially and spiritually in their needs, rejoicing with those who rejoice, weeping with those who weep; arm in arm with others, we are committed to building a new world.'***

(para 269)

One aspect of '**sharing the lives of all**' is our ministry with the women at the Auckland Regional Women's Correction Facility in Wiri which has continued on many different levels. We have maintained our weekly visits and a monthly Service of the Word to the women in the high security wings of the prison. We also provided the nine week Seasons for Growth small group programme 'Exploring the Seasons of Grief' three times. Because of our regular involvement in the prison and as a member of the Community Impact Forum we were asked this year by Corydon Associates Ltd to undertake the annual prisoner survey for the Social Impact Monitoring Programme. The information, along with other information collected from prison employees and service providers is used to monitor the impacts of the two local prisons on the communities of Manurewa and Manukau Central in terms of housing, schools and preschools.

Our commitment to '**building a new world**' has involved accepting invitations to speak, write or give workshop's on the church's teaching on social justice.

In October 2013, Sisters of Mercy Wiri presented a workshop entitled, "What social action can I do in my community?" at the Ripples of Justice Conference organized by the Justice and Peace Commission of the Diocese of Auckland.

We also presented a workshop in January 2014 to the staff at St Anne's Catholic School staff. The school had identified that Catholic social justice was an area that needed development within the school. We were invited to help out, and spent a very worthwhile morning with the staff.



An article entitled, "Let us work together", written by Anne, was printed in Tui Motu in August 2013. It arose as a follow up to the series on the Common Good that had been presented the previous Lent. Anne also wrote a chapter for the book, "But is it Fair?", which was published in May 2014. The chapter, entitled, "My people will live in secure dwellings", traces the practical involvement of the Sisters of Mercy Wiri, and the development and effects of housing policy over the previous 25 years in the light of the Gospel.

Our ongoing work in the community ***'of listening to their concerns, helping them materially and spiritually in their need'*** continues. We have responded to the immediate needs identified by families and work with them towards sustainable outcomes as far as possible. Housing and tenancy issues continue to be of concern. The housing crisis in Auckland and the changes in housing policy signalled and being implemented by the Government ensure that housing for many in our area is insecure. We have too many requests for assistance with housing, usually by women with children, who have nowhere to go. Sadly, there is little we can do except to advocate for families on various levels, which we do.

Because of an increase in anti-social behavior and bullying involving children and young people after school we were approached by Wiri Central School for help to improve the situation. Some residents also expressed concerns. We addressed the issue over a period of months by regularly being present at trouble spots, engaging with the children and working with the families of the children and young people causing problems.

We were tested in September and October with two unexpected events which impacted on our day to day functioning quite significantly. Firstly, we had a major computer system failure which left us without any computer capabilities including email and internet access for over a week. This necessitated a complete upgrade of our IT system. Because of the extent of the malfunction it was several months before the transition to the new system was operating without any glitches and we could access all files and programmes.



In October, as a result of an accident, our accountant Denise Gregory was out of action for 6 months. Denise has made a remarkable recovery and we are very pleased to once again have her capable service. Our thanks to Monika Mazur and to Terry and Corina Broderick for their assistance during Denise's absence

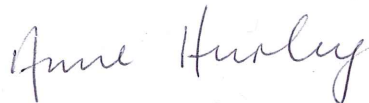
Working '**arm in arm with others**' we have continued to belong to various networks in the areas of housing, welfare, child poverty, community safety and prison ministry. Anne this year was reappointed for a further three years as one of the Bishop's representatives on the Board of Trustees of McAuley High School. Margaret, nominated by the Congregation Leaders Conference of Aotearoa New Zealand is one of two Catholic representatives on the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services and in this role represents the Catholic Church as its denominational representative.

We are blessed with very generous and supportive trustees. The gift of their time and expertise to the governance of Sisters of Mercy Wiri is highly valued and appreciated.

In conclusion, we give thanks with a grateful heart for the privilege it is '**rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep**'.



Sister Margaret Martin  
**Community Social Worker**



Sister Anne Hurley  
**Community Social Worker**

## **Acknowledgements**

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

Countdown Manukau  
Denise Gregory  
Jon Maplesden  
Mercia Turner  
Mercury Printz

Oem Computers  
Pak'n Save Manukau  
Religious of the Sacred Heart  
Sr Alice Sinnott  
Sr Mary Neven