

Maori Events at MSC

A visit to Otara Marae “Whaiora” ended the 2015 series of events around Maori Culture organised by Te Ngakau Waiora Mercy Spirituality Centre.

The overall theme for the Mercy Spirituality Centre programme 2015 is “Roots” and within this theme participants of a number of events had the opportunity to explore some of the customs of the Tangata Whenua, the first people in Aotearoa New Zealand: Flax Weaving with Marama Piripi; an introduction to Maori Cultural Practices with Pani Chamberlin; legends around Matariki with Beate Matthies and Akuhata Rangi; “The True Vine – The Picture of the Catholic Church first preached to the Maori” with Fr Merv Duffy; “Toku Pepeha – I belong” and finally the Marae Visit facilitated by Manuel Beazley, the Pastoral Assistant of St Joseph the Evangelist Parish Otara.

Roots are important for life. If they are cut, lifetime is limited. We are fortunate to live in a country where – for Maori the acknowledgement of Whakapapa and ancestors is a constant reminder of who we are and where we come from. The events at Mercy Spirituality Centre have been looking at origins and their significance in one’s own life and for a better understanding of one another.

For the Sisters of Mercy the acknowledgement of Maori roots in this land has always been important. It was on request of Maori women that the first Religious Sisters, 9 Sisters of Mercy, left their homes and headed towards Aotearoa New Zealand. During their 9-months long trip from Ireland to the other end of the world, these Sisters of Mercy were taught Maori by Bishop Pompallier and were able to communicate in Maori when they arrived in Auckland in 1850.

The New Zealand Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy is called “Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa” and is particularly shaped by Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the cry of Papatuanuku Earth.



Flax Weaving