



Chapel in Mercy Spirituality Centre enriched by beautiful Stations of the Cross

The Centre's beautiful garden is a place which enhances the experience of a visit or retreat time and for many years special attention has been given to developing the native plantings. At the beginning of 2015 it became clear that the big old pohutukawa tree in the garden of Te Ngakau Waiora Mercy Spirituality Centre had to go. It had become a hazard and had to be cut down.

The Centre Manager, Beate Matthies contacted the Auckland based woodcraft artist Jiries Giacaman and asked if he was interested in using some of the wood.

Jiries, who learned his carving skills in his home, the Holy Land, didn't hesitate.

He was so grateful that he offered to make some carvings for the Centre. A visit to the Centre chapel gave birth to the idea for a set of the Stations of the Cross.

Each Station is depicted on a tablet of about 20 cm². The sculptured figures in the reddish wood of the pohutukawa stand out against the light coloured walls of the chapel, while the Roman numeral for each station is carved from kauri. This kauri came from timber saved from the roof of the 100 years old St Benedicts Church Newton when it was being renovated some years ago.

Jiries is a master-carver who loves to work with wood. "All the prayers went through this wood to our Heavenly Father", he said, and he has made many beautiful objects with it. It was an honour for everybody at the Centre when Bishop Patrick Dunn accepted the invitation to bless the Stations of the Cross and offer Eucharist. Jiries Giacaman and his wife Marcelle were present to celebrate with the management, staff and the resident Sisters of Mercy.

With these Stations of the Cross the pohutukawa tree will remain present at Mercy Spirituality Centre.

Jiries also presented Bishop Pat with a little nativity scene carved in the same pohutukawa and this piece of art of is now in the Bishop's Chapel at Pompallier Centre.

If you would like to see the Stations of the Cross, you are welcome to visit the Mercy Spirituality Centre during working hours from Mondays to Fridays (9am-5pm) or to come for Christian Meditation on Mondays at 7.30pm and Wednesdays at 11am.

Beate Matthies
Manager, Mercy Spirituality Centre



Priscilla Kohlase rsm, Fr Matthew Clerkin OFMCap, Bishop Patrick Dunn, Marcelle & Jiries Giacaman, Cathryn Wiles-Pickard rsm, Beate Matthies, Linda McQuade, Fr Robert O'Brien