

Hospitality

Joseph, known to be 'just', we can assert, observed the religious obligation of the Jew to home hospitality. This would have applied not only to close friends and family members, but also to the stranger, the poor and the needy. The notion was deeply embedded in Jewish culture; extending hospitality added to a family's honour. Early Christians were urged to adhere to this model of hospitality as noted in Hebrews 13:2 and 1 Peter 4:9-10. An Italian custom developed over time where tables of special foods were set out in homes and town squares in honour of Joseph including a braided loaf symbolising the staff of Joseph.

For St Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods, hospitality was not only an integral part of their ministry but they were also recipients of some very gracious hospitality from others. Fr Julian once said that it gave him the inner space to build love of neighbour upon a real regard for others.

Mount St Joseph is the 'hearthplace' of the Sisters of Joseph, Whanganui. It is a place of belonging and welcome. The focal point for important gatherings, get togethers, Hui, Jubilees and tangi. The Maori word *Manaaki*, meaning to care for, to show respect, to bestow hospitality expresses a value and practice so much part of Josephite spirit that the Mount St Joseph property now bears this name. Along with Nazareth Rest Home the facilities include the Josephite Retreat Centre Te Punanga o Hohepa where hospitality is a central ingredient to creating an atmosphere that nurtures body mind and spirit. The newly completed Archives conserve the story of the Congregation showing respect and manaaki for the past. Development of the wetland, Te Punanga Ripo, extends Josephite hospitality to the many native birds and ducks around the area. Sharing with others the natural beauty of the lovingly tended grounds that surround Mount St Joseph means that all can enjoy and share the spirituality and peace of this special place.



- ◆ How do you experience hospitality in your community of people and creation?
- ◆ In what ways do you share your hospitable heart with others?

The hospitality of even the poorest shepherd impressed me deeply.

Fr Julian Tenison Woods