

The House of Bethany

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GREETINGS AND BLESSINGS

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At times when enjoying the beach at Mission Bay with families staying at House of Bethany, the peacefulness of the environment speaks - the beautiful sky and cloud formations; the sea in its changing moods; the seagulls soaring and swooping; the little children chasing the gulls when they land, other children splashing in and out of the wavelets, or building sandcastles. Joy and happiness in the air! It is great to be able to be part of families enjoying such experiences together, and watching all relax as the peacefulness seeps into their consciousness, allowing stress and anxiety to take a back seat!

We thank God for the glorious Summer and Autumn we have enjoyed this year. The long summer days have enabled children and parents to make full use of the trampoline, swings, sandpit, bikes, trikes, scooters, pool-table and beach. For some of the parents the time to go off alone to rest or sleep is a blessing which they are seldom able to enjoy.

We pray that the Paschal Season, culminating in the Resurrection of Christ continues to fill your lives with hope and peace. We are grateful to all our Associates, Benefactors, Josephite Communities throughout the country, and our Funders, for their continuing generosity which enables the hospitality of the House of Bethany to be a reality.

Since our November 2008 News Sheet one hundred and forty guests have shared hospitality, and we have received approximately \$4,000 in donations from benefactors etc. This money allows us to continue our Out-Reach Holiday programme for the school holidays.

During the April holidays this year we have two boys attending Youthtown Panmure each day from 8.30am to 4pm and two boys participating in a two day programme provided by the St Heliers Church-Community Centre. Also tickets for visits to the usual attractions are being supplied.

Again the two additions to our programme are only possible with the help of Halamehi Anea, our invaluable volunteer, who picks up all the loose ends and ensures that the children arrive and depart from their 'pick-up, drop off' places at the appointed times.

At the present moment we are closing the House for a fortnight to allow maintenance painting of ceilings, window frames and sills upstairs to be carried out. This will be the final major maintenance outlay for the present financial year which ends 30 June 2009. All grants applied for, for this financial year have been received.

Again we thank all our wonderful friends and supporters. Without your prayers and monetary donations we would be unable to offer this service of hospitality.

I offer this excerpt from Joy Cowley's "Psalms Down-Under"

*GOD OF WASHING, GOD OF UNMADE BEDS
GOD OF DENTED SAUCEPANS AND WORN-OUT BROOMS
YOUR PRESENCE IN THE MOST ORDINARY THINGS
OFTEN TAKES ME BY SURPRISE.....*

*GOD OF WASHING
GOD OF VACUUM CLEANER BAGS
GOD OF SPARROWS, LILIES AND MUSTARD SEEDS
MY HOUSE IS YOUR TABERNACLE.*

God is in every situation with us – isn't that consoling?

Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart



Posing on the trampoline

This family is from Kiribati – Anthony, Take and Vanton



Michelle with Vincent her son