

# Karanga Atawhai

## How I found my Invitation.

A reflection by Luke Ryan, Te Waipuna Puawai Chair

In the work of governance and leadership, discernment is not just a skill, it is a spiritual and strategic practice. This reflection, **How I Found My Invitation**, offers a deeply personal lens through which directors might explore their own sense of call, timing, and purpose. As you read, consider these questions:

- What invitations are present in the work before me?
- Where might I be called to begin, or to release?
- Am I waiting for clarity, or is it time to step forward in trust?
- How do I recognise the wairua (spirit) of invitation in the decisions we face as a board?

This reflection by Luke Ryan, chair of Te Waipuna Puawai invites you to pause, reflect, and listen for the quiet karanga (call) that may be guiding your next step.

*“As I write this, I hand over the mantle of TWP Chair to Marcel. This moment feels deeply fitting, taking me back eight years to when Mercy first revealed to me the true essence of invitation.*

*It began with a simple yet profound encounter in a coffee shop in Glen Innes, Auckland. Sister Patricia Rowe and Judy Whiteman greeted me warmly and asked, “Would you like a coffee or a cup of tea?” I replied, “Yes.”*

*At the time, it felt like a small gesture. But as my journey with Mercy unfolded, I came to understand that it was far more than hospitality—it was an invitation. An invitation into relationship, into service, and into something greater than myself.*

### **The Energy of Invitation**

*The word “invitation” carries a wairua, an energy of openness that becomes a karanga, a call. I often imagine it as a pair of glasses: when you wear them, you see te ara pono, the right path, even when it’s steep or unclear. I’d like to share two personal examples of how this lens has guided me.*

### **Invitations That Begin and End**

*As a board, we once faced a challenging situation. A community programme we had cherished felt called to move in a new direction, independent from our organisation. Naturally, I felt sadness—a sense of loss that our shared journey with that kaupapa had ended. But when I asked, “Is there still an invitation here?” the answer was clear: not anymore.*

*The kore—the absence—was heavy. Yet Mercy taught me that endings are mahi aroha: acts of love. They involve releasing with gratitude and trusting the kaupapa to its new whenua.*

### **Seeking the Invitation**

*Invitations don’t always arrive at our doorstep. We must also seek them out. Catherine McAuley certainly did. Mercy reminds us that real mission requires stepping out, navigating the motu, seeking those in need, and actively participating in God’s work.*

*Similar to a whakatauki, in a village by the sea, a man lived alone, weaving nets. The people mocked him, “Help us hunt, not waste time with string.” He only smiled and carried on. One day, a great school of fish filled the bay. The man rose, cast his nets, and gave thanks to Tangaroa and the moana. The villagers asked, “How did you know this would come?” He replied, “I did not know, I was waiting for my invitation.”*

### **Weaving the Threads**

*Like that patient weaver, we’re called to notice the threads that run through our days, some obvious and bright, others subtle as morning mist. The art lies in recognising these invitations, responding with open hearts, and trusting the larger pattern being woven. May we develop eyes to see, courage to respond, and wisdom to know when to wait.*

*Mā te wā e whakakite ngā karanga o tōu ao.”*

**Ngā mihi nui, Luke Ryan, Ngā Puhī**

# Mercy Day: A Time to Reconnect and Reimagine.

Thinking about Mercy Day on the 24<sup>th</sup> September which commemorates the founding of the first House of Mercy on Baggot Street, Dublin, it is a time to pause and reflect on where we are as Whānau Mercy and how we are carrying forth the legacy and rich heritage of Catherine McAuley and Ngā Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa.

Catherine's original vision continues to shape our ministries, our relationships and how we respond to the world's needs. It is a day of not only celebration but a chance to reconnect to our Whānau Mercy Mission, to walk gently, act justly and love tenderly in the spirit of Mercy. It is a reminder of the values that guide our mission, Aroha, Whanaungatanga and Kaitiakitanga.

The recent WMM Care for our common home webinar with Sally Neaves explored how Mercy responds to ecological challenges through integral ecology, permaculture, and engagement with indigenous wisdom. Her reflections on "bio-regioning" and the shift from technological fixes to lifestyle changes echo Catherine's own practical spirituality: Mercy is not abstract, it is embodied, local, and relational. Where are we already seeing this in our ministries, how can we help it to grow?

Mercy is a global movement, with local heartbeats. Sally spoke about the impact of Mercy on the Sustainable Development Goals, and the seven goals of Laudato Si' Action Platform, and it is a chance in this Season of Creation to be asking where are we called to act? It is an exciting time to be exploring what the future looks like for Whānau Mercy as we seek to stretch and widen our tent pegs, looking for the next opportunity for the Mercy mission in Aotearoa.

## Julia B. Lynch: A Dedicated Life Artist Exhibition. Community Event: A day in the life.

The exhibition of Sister Mary Lawrence's work is currently running at the New Zealand Portrait Gallery (Wellington) until the 14<sup>th</sup> September. On Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September from 11:30am until 12:30pm there will be a talk: A day in the life. Have you ever wondered what daily life might have looked like for Sister Lawrence? (continued...)

(Julia B. Lynch)...

Or the difference between a sister and a nun? Or how the lives of women within the Sisters of Mercy have evolved from the 1900s to today? Join Sister Natalie as she shares stories and insights into the life of a sister and helps us envision what an average day may have been like for Julia B. Lynch - Sister Lawrence. See more information [here](#).

## Pope Leo XIV Sends Message to Mercy International Association.

We are delighted to share that Brenda Drumm, Head of Communications at Mercy International Association, recently wrote to Pope Leo XIV to congratulate him on his election as successor to Saint Peter. Along with her letter, she enclosed a copy of The Path of Mercy.

In a warm and personal reply, Pope Leo expressed his gratitude for the prayers of the Mercy family and shared his lifelong connection to Catherine McAuley and the Sisters of Mercy. He spoke movingly of his aunt, a Sister of Mercy in the Chicago Province, who was a significant influence in his life. The Pope also recalled his visit to the Mercy International Centre in Dublin and acknowledged the many ways Mercy and the Augustinians have worked together over the years.

Pope Leo concluded his message with encouragement and blessing: "Please give my regards to the Mercy Sisters and to all your colleagues. Thank you for your prayers, and please be assured of mine."

You can read the full letter on our website [here](#) with an image of the letter and the full text available.

## Share your stories, they connect us all.

*We would like to share the stories from your Ministry so we can help build connections and act as a bridge between all our Ministries, please share your stories with any images to: [wmm@whanaumercy.nz](mailto:wmm@whanaumercy.nz).*

### **Please forward this newsletter on:**

*Please share this newsletter with members of your school boards and those involved in our Ministries. Others can subscribe directly by scanning the QR code:*



## CALLING ON YOUR GENEROSITY

# Help Put the 'Car' into Community Care.

Every day, Mercy Hospice's community nurses travel across Auckland, from Freemans Bay to Glendowie, Avondale, and Mt Wellington, providing compassionate palliative care to people in their homes.



Their team of 16 nurses covers around 1,150 kilometres daily, navigating traffic and weather to support hundreds of patients with life-limiting illnesses.

You can help keep them on the road by donating \$45, the cost to fuel a day of home visits.

Your gift helps a Mercy Hospice nurse, doctor, or support team member reach patients and whānau where they need us most. It's more than petrol, it's a way to help someone stay in their home longer, surrounded by care and dignity. [Donate here](#)

## WESTFIELD LOCAL HERO

# Vote for Peter Buckland!

The Westfield Local Heroes finalist results have been announced and Peter Buckland, has been selected as one of three finalists at Westfield St Lukes.

Westfield Local Heroes is a community programme that recognises individuals who are making a difference to their community. Having Peter Buckland as a finalist means that Mercy Hospice is guaranteed to receive a \$5,000 grant, but for Peter to be crowned the 2025 Westfield Local Hero and receive \$20,000 for Mercy Hospice, they need your help and your vote, with voting closing on 8<sup>th</sup> September.



Westfield  
*Local Heroes*

Vote Here

VOTE FOR  
Peter Buckland

## CALLING ON YOUR GENEROSITY

# Bags for Mercy.

Last year, people's generosity helped raise an incredible \$10,000 for Mercy Hospice, and they are ready to do it again. They are calling on people to donate new or gently used handbags, purses, wallets & overnight bags for their October fundraiser at College Hill.

100% of proceeds go to providing free palliative care to people with life-limiting illnesses in Central Auckland, supporting them and their whānau with compassion and dignity.

Drop-off locations: For Mercy Op-Shops or Mercy Hospice Reception, College Hill, Ponsonby



Stay up to date with all the latest

## Whanau Mercy Ministries is online...

Check it out today by scanning the QR code, or visit: [whanaumercy.nz](http://whanaumercy.nz)



After leading Auckland hospices as General Manager and then Acting CEO of Mercy Hospice, Peter could have retired knowing he'd made an immeasurable impact. But instead of stepping back, he returned as a volunteer - bringing not only his vast experience but his heart, wisdom, and hands-on dedication.

He volunteers across fundraising, administration, and patient support - greeting families with kindness, sharing knowledge at events, shaking a bucket on the street, or personally driving patients to appointments. Having experienced the grief of leaving hospice without a loved one, he's turned that pain into an even deeper commitment.

## SAVE THE DATE

### Season of Creation, 1 September - 4 October

The Season of Creation invites us to reflect, pray, and act for our common home. This year's theme, Peace with Creation, calls us to restore justice and harmony with the Earth. From hosting outdoor prayer services to planting trees or joining a pilgrimage, there are many ways to get involved. Resources, liturgies, and ideas are available at [seasonofcreation.org](http://seasonofcreation.org) and here [Season of Creation 2025 - Whānau Mercy Ministries](#).

### Celebrate Māori Language Week 12-21 Mahuru

Māori Language Week is just around the corner, running from 14–21 Mahuru (September). It's a wonderful opportunity to celebrate te reo Māori and deepen our collective commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

[Rauemi reo | Reo resources - Te Rangaihi Reo Māori](#) has some good resources including workplace resources and phrases that can be used during hui. These resources are perfect for weaving te reo Māori into our everyday interactions and meetings. [Whai wāhi | Take part - Te Rangaihi Reo Māori](#)

Why not take up the challenge to incorporate more te reo Māori into your hui or have a themed morning tea?

## Download prayers & resources at [whanaumercy.nz/resources](http://whanaumercy.nz/resources)

We're regularly adding new karakia and will soon include downloadable formation resources for use in your hui and gatherings. Scan the QR code to access our resource section - so you'll always have a karakia on hand when you need one.



### AI Masterclass registration form is now live

Join Helen van Orton, CEO of Directorly Ltd, for a practical masterclass designed for directors, trustees, and those working closely with Boards. Across four evening sessions (20 & 27 November, 4 & 11 December, 7–8pm), we'll explore ethical integration in mission-driven organisations, decision-making tools, and future trends shaping ministry and mission. The series is valued at 5 CPD and costs \$299 per person, with Whānau Mercy Ministries subsidising the cost. A minimum of 10 participants paying \$299 is needed to proceed, register now to secure your place and help strengthen Whānau Mercy. Teams details will be shared once confirmed.

Find out more [here](#).

Registration form is [here](#).

### Upcoming webinar: e Wairua Atawhai: Living Mercy through Katorika Māori 9<sup>th</sup> September

We're thrilled to welcome Manuel Beazley, Vicar for Māori in the Diocese of Auckland, as our guest presenter for a special webinar: Te Wairua Atawhai: Living Mercy through Katorika Māori, happening on 9 September from 6:00–7:00pm via Microsoft Teams. This is a unique opportunity to deepen our journey as the first MPJP in Aotearoa, exploring how Māori spirituality, leadership, and worldview can shape Mercy on this whenua, at this time. Valued at 1 CPD, find out more [here](#) including a link to add the teams hui details to your calendar.

### Whānau Mercy Ministries Hui Whānau

Registration is now open for our first-ever Whānau Mercy Ministries Hui Whānau, taking place 13–14 October in Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington). This is an opportunity for trustees, directors, and senior leaders from our ministries to come together, hear from keynote speakers, and explore new opportunities for Mercy Mission. Cost is \$150 per person, plus any travel. Accommodation is available for those outside Wellington, just indicate this on your registration form. We look forward to welcoming representatives from all our Ministries!

Find out more information [here](#).

Registration form [here](#).

