



**Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa
Sisters of Mercy New Zealand**

Reflecting on the Qualities of Catherine McAuley

Catherine McAuley was a generous woman

She wanted to share her inheritance with people who had huge difficulties in their lives. With the money she was left by Mr Callaghan, she build an enormous house. Women and children who were struggling came and lived with her. It was a safe place for them and they were able to learn skills to help them get jobs. The children also had reading, writing and mathematics classes.

There continue to be many generous people in the world today.

- Can you think of people you know who are generous?
- How do they show their generosity?
- Do they have other people helping them?
- How do you show generosity?
- Who receives your generosity?

Catherine McAuley was innouative, a ground-breaker

She did things because there was a need, regardless if it was acceptable for women to do such things. She organised the building of the House of Mercy. It was unheard of in Catherine's time for a woman to do this. Catherine McAuley was a courageous woman.

She was unafraid to try new ways of living and serving.

The Sisters of Mercy went out in the streets to visit the sick and poor where they lived. This was very different from the other groups of Sisters in Catherine's time. Because the Sisters were seen out and about, they were fondly called the 'walking Sisters' or the 'walking nuns'.

We hear about innouative and courageous people in today's world.

- Do you know anyone who is courageous?
- Do you know of anyone who has started something new, something innouative?
- Are they able to do this by themselves?
- When are you courageous or innouative?

Catherine McAuley was collaborative, encouraging people to work alongside each other

She invited and inspired others to work with her. People saw what she was doing and were drawn to offer their help. Catherine welcomed all helpers and found ways to use their individual skills in meaningful ways. She knew that team work was a good way to go.

- Who are the people in your school who have the gift of including everyone?
- Are there people in your wider community who work like this?
- Why do you think people are happy to work alongside them?