

# Simplicity

The intention of the Gospels is not to give us a history of characters involved or to give us a description of their social backgrounds but through the discoveries of archaeologists, social scientists, anthropologists and scripture scholars we are able to construct a picture of what life was like in the time of St Joseph, albeit with limitations. The context of life for St Joseph was the isolated village of Nazareth in a peasant world where pockets of people lived in small hamlets among rocky outcrops – peasants working their own land, tenant farmers working land belonging to others and crafts persons who served the needs of the group. Being away from the bigger cities the area was considered inconspicuous and of no importance.



A simple setting where the Word of God is enfolded and the well from which Josephite Spirituality sprang later in the lives of Fr Julian Tension Woods and St Mary MacKillop. Following in the footsteps of their founders' challenges around living more simply was raised at a Congregational Chapter leading to a reflection on what Simplicity signified for the Sisters of St Joseph, Whanganui in the new Millennium. Responses included aiming to live lightly and live well in suburban houses or flats, trying to live without guile, greed or pretensions, many nurturing plants and enjoying handcrafts; encapsulated in Te Reo Maori as *Mauritau* - living peacefully, holistically and in awareness of the earth.



- ◆ *What aspect of Simplicity is the Spirit inviting me to focus on?*
- ◆ *Do I take time for art, poetry, music, dance or other creative expressions?*
- ◆ *Is my life free enough so that I feel chronically unstressed?*

*In the simplicity of bare trees we see their true beauty of form and shape.*