

FAMILY CARE SISTERS: CROYDON

The Family Care Sisters offer wholistic care for all women, aged 20-70 years, who are in need of rest and renewal of body and spirit. Their home, known as "Kewn Kreestha: the Quiet of Christ" is located at 69 Alto Ave., Croydon. 3136. Tel: 03 9723 6797. Email: resthome.familycare@bigpond.com

Program:

The sisters can host up to six women in a week, with private rooms. They have recently offered a variety of programs ranging from 2-3 days for unstructured "flexi-stays" to Focus weeks, based on a theme, for 5 days. They aim to maintain relevance to today's families by offering the opportunity for input from their guests, via an evaluation at the end of their stay. An annual retreat is also offered, by invitation, to prior guests.

During the week, individual chats are available with the staff, in addition to group sessions. There is also an opportunity each evening to take part in prayer in the Chapel. All meals are provided and special dietary requirements are catered for. The house is a smoke-free environment.

Cost:

Suggested cost is \$50 per day, all inclusive, or by negotiation. A one-day, non-refundable deposit is required to secure a booking. Cancellations are requested at least two days in advance.

Booking:

By phone: contact (Mon-Fri: 9am – 5pm) for a chat with one of the staff. Srs Jill and Michele will make you welcome!

A Brief History:

The Family Care Sisters were formerly known as 'The Company of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament', fondly known for many years as "The Grey Sisters". The order was begun by Maude O'Connell, who grew up in Beaufort, Victoria, along with another young woman, May Bannon, in 1930 and was officially recognised by the Pope at the time in 1940 (Pius XII) with the support of the Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr. Mannix. The first "Kewn Kreestha" was located in Daylesford but the original building no longer exists. Other places at which the sisters ministered include Surrey Hills, Prahran, Flemington, "Mountfield" at Canterbury and Bendigo. The centre at Canterbury offers care to new parents who are seeking help. This is now managed by the Mercy sisters.

Since moving to Croydon, there have been numerous alterations and additions to maintain a comfortable and modern house. The sisters' key ministry was originally to care for mothers but this was later extended to include all women in need of care. In the 1980s they changed their name to "The Family Care Sisters" to more accurately reflect their ministry. As the sisters' numbers have gradually decreased, they have been supported by the Mercy sisters in recent years, as well as a team of lay women and men, to maintain the property and to offer a relevant service.

- Written by Maree Connell, a grateful visitor