

Happenings

Suzanne's Crucifix returned to Sisters

Toward the end of last year the Sisters of Compassion received a crucifix from Terry Verrall. It once belonged to Suzanne Aubert, who gave it to Sister Zita Lenihan before she died. Sister Zita was Terry's great aunt, and when she died Terry's mother was given the cross and had it by her bedside for 50 years.

Upon her death, Terry decided the Sisters of Compassion must have it. The rondel at the top of the cross suggests it was for a lanyard, as worn by French priests.



Suzanne Aubert Schools Programme

It is the dream of the Schools Programme that all students in Catholic Education will be able to visit the Suzanne Aubert Heritage Centre and other Wellington sites of significance during their time at school. There are several opportunities for schools throughout the country to participate in various programmes, including an art reflection on the Stations of the Cross and birthday activity for schools on the annual Suzanne Aubert birthday Mass on 19th June. For more information, visit: <https://compassion.org.nz/schools/> or contact Deirdre at schools@compassion.org.nz



Keep in touch

Would you like to receive regular updates and news by email? If so please give us your email address. You can do this by registering on-line or by emailing kerry@suzanneaubert.co.nz

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Please send to: Sisters of Compassion, PO Box 1474, Wellington or scan and email to: info@compassion.org.nz

For more information please visit our website: www.suzanneaubert.co.nz

Parish Notes

Sacred Heart, Ponsonby

Our raffle went down a treat: the basket contained the Aubert biography, Spiritual Tonics, Notes on the Run, the Joy Cowley books for children, notelets, a packet of kawakawa tea, two kawakawa seedlings and a bottle of kawakawa cream. It gave us the opportunity to speak to our parish two weeks in a row, and here's hoping it has encouraged a few more people to pray for Venerable Suzanne Aubert's canonisation. VM Aubert, pray for us!



More displays created

A increased number of parishes nationwide now have a Suzanne Aubert special display in their church or school. These are in addition to diocesan Places of Pilgrimage that have been created at the Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North and Dunedin.



Many parishes have created their own displays using materials available from Sister Josephine, while others have utilized one of the various display options provided on preprinted boards. These can still be ordered, along with a copy of the icon portrait, from Sr. Jo.

Email: sr.josephine.gorman@compassion.org

Great resources available

There are some terrific resources that have been produced to help in the promotion of the spirituality and good works of Suzanne. More details on the website: www.suzanneaubert.co.nz

SUZANNE AUBERT NEWS

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In God's Time

The journey to sainthood is not a quick one. Although we witness miracles everyday as a result of the wonderful work and intercession of Venerable Suzanne Aubert, we must wait for the church to recognize two official miracles before Suzanne can be canonized.

We all celebrated when Pope Francis declared that Suzanne Aubert had exercised the Christian virtues to an heroic degree. On 1 December, 2016, he officially recognised her as one of the Church's holy women. She was to be called "Venerable". It was a step her friend and protector Cardinal Gasquet, would have very much appreciated. Following her death in 1926, he wrote:

"Not only I, but many here in the eternal City, regarded her as a true Servant of God and I hope that I may be spared to see at least the initial stages of the process of her Beatification; that she will most certainly be raised to the altar, I feel confident."

Although the Cardinal's hope was not realised in his lifetime, his hope has become our hope and the waiting continues. We do not wait in vain, however, as we believe that "in death life is changed not ended".



Hundreds of testimonials confirm that Suzanne has not left us to journey alone. She continues to intercede with our loving God for those who ask for her help.

Her presence, too, is felt in the life and mission of the Sisters of Compassion and all those who share their vision of a just and compassionate society.

The Church requires the official recognition of a miracle before each of the next two steps (Beatification and Canonisation) but Suzanne's influence goes well beyond the demands of Canon Law. Official miracles may occur in God's good time, not ours. It will be great to see her canonised one day, but in the meantime we can confidently ask her to intercede on our behalf.

There are many people who have experienced a return to health or the resolving of personal problems and family issues, and others who have joined them in prayer, and they can testify that such confidence in Suzanne's help has not been in vain. Despite the technical requirements of Canon Law, people of faith know that miracles occur in many different ways. Faithful Christians, over the centuries, have always recognised the saints in their midst and asked for their help.

Please continue to pray for the intercession of Suzanne in a miracle that the church recognizes. Venerable Suzanne Aubert, holy woman of God, pray for us!

(Fr. Maurice Carmody, Postulator)

For more information please visit our website: www.suzanneaubert.co.nz

“Patience is one of the most solid foundations of sanctity”

This morning I unwittingly misread the above quote and then I laughed. Perhaps Suzanne occasionally struggled with her sanity as she waited in Rome longing to return to New Zealand. It was a long wait and it tried her in many ways.

She had received “The Decree of Praise” for the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion and was itching to return home to New Zealand. She had no other home, the French Embassy in Rome did not recognise her as a French citizen as she had been away from France for 57 years. The English Embassy offered her a passport on the strong advice that she stay in Italy until after the war.

The cardinals in Rome reinforced this unanimously. Suzanne waited and she waited patiently using the time to write to the sisters and her friends, to help others where she could especially the sick. Her life had taught her the value of patience and she shares insights of this knowledge through her writings. Today she would be smiling and saying to us as we pray earnestly for her Sainthood:

“God is marvelously patient with us, but we also have to be patient with Him, that is to say: we must know how to wait for Him...” and:

“When must we know how to wait for God? When He delays the manifestation of His Will, in regard to things which we would like to do immediately; when He seems deaf to our prayers.”

The journey to Sainthood is not a quick one. Along the way wonderful experiences of faith and healing are happening for many people. They are awe-inspiring stories of faith and well worth sharing with each other.

I am frequently asked, “When is Suzanne Aubert going to be made a Saint?” I respond, “When we are ready, when all the people of New Zealand are ready.” I encourage you to keep on praying to for Suzanne Aubert’s Canonization and making her known throughout the country and beyond. The journey towards sainthood is one of faith of growing deeper in faith as we are inspired by Suzanne Aubert’s life and faith. It is one of patience as we take the steps towards the process of Suzanne Aubert’s Beatification unfold in a meaningful way for all those who are and come to be inspired by a life.

I note that Pope Francis was reflecting on this very issue today as I wrote this column. He said during his morning Mass “Patience is often produced when our faith is tested. It is neither defeat nor resignation. We must embrace it like Jesus did, rather than complain”.

Sr. Margaret Anne Mills



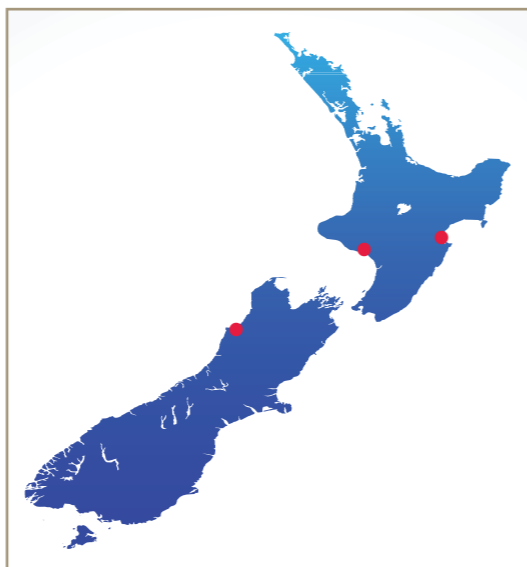
Suzanne’s footsteps through Aotearoa

Venerable Suzanne Aubert journeyed the length of New Zealand (‘My poor life will be spent chiefly on the Main Trunk Line’), and at each place she stopped, whether briefly or for long periods of time, her visit was significant.

To assist in promoting the spirituality and good works of Suzanne Aubert, and to help New Zealanders (and visitors) to learn more about her and her good and lasting works, the National Digital Pilgrimage map is being prepared which will enable people to retrace Suzanne’s footsteps and visit these places of significance. Once there, pilgrims will be able to access electronic material via their smartphone to learn why the place being visited is significant.

“This is a really exciting development in our journey together as we reflect and are inspired by the work of this truly remarkable woman” said archivist Sister Josephine Gorman who is helping to develop the project. “It will provide immediate and up-to-date digital and print material for all to become better informed and more inspired”

Watch out for progress reports on the development of the digital map, and the big launch on Celebration Day.



Why Suzanne Aubert is an inspiration to me

Not long after Suzanne Aubert’s arrival in New Zealand she became a very close life-long friend of the Outhwaite family. Thomas Outhwaite was the first Register General. Mrs. Outhwaite was French and was like Suzanne’s New Zealand mother. In Suzanne’s letters to Mrs Outhwaite she addressed her “Dearest Madame & Mama”. The family provided on-going financial and practical support to Suzanne.

In Sept 2009 I went to Island Bay to pray for a special intention & I have prayed to Suzanne every day since. I became interested in the Outhwaite family after reading Jesse Munro’s biography. When I found the family grave broken and forgotten, I knew I had to do something. An inner voice would always encourage me and never let me give up. I resigned to this and just let things happen.



I believe that as the Outhwaites helped Suzanne Aubert in life, she has helped them in death. They were influential and significant in Auckland society in 1860 but since they died, they had been forgotten. After the restoration and unveiling of their grave, St Peter’s College in Auckland has named a new 12 classroom block the ‘Outhwaite Building’. I believe all this has come about because of Suzanne Aubert. She has repaid them. They are finally recognised in Auckland today and their name is once again mentioned.

As Suzanne Aubert said in one of her letters... ‘Whose work is it? Surely not mine.’

It is very exciting to know Rome is once again concerned with Mother Aubert.

Jenny Doherty

Suzanne Aubert Heritage Centre now open

A must-see when visiting Wellington is the refurbished Suzanne Aubert Heritage Centre and the newly opened Resting Place of Suzanne Aubert.

Nestled in the hills of Island Bay, the Home of Compassion affords a rewarding half-day or day outing. Suzanne Aubert’s inspiring story is presented in an eloquent and accessible way in the Exhibition room. Unique artefacts and audio visual recordings bring the story to life.

A refreshment space and cloistered garden provide an opportunity to rest and relax. Barista-made coffee and simple homemade fare is available. The highlight of a visit is spending time in the light-filled Chapel of Compassion with its beautiful stained glass art and outlook to nature. To the side of the main Chapel the beautiful



and tranquil Resting Place of Suzanne Aubert is fast becoming a place of prayer and pilgrimage for visitors. If time allows, there is more to experience with a walk to Our Lady of Lourdes’ Grotto, or longer walks take you up into the hills beyond the Home where the historic reservoir is located.

Accommodation is also available in the Retreat House for visitors seeking a quiet place of refreshment for their stay.

For more information and opening hours visit: <https://compassion.org.nz/our-places/suzanne-aubert-heritage-centre/>

