

Suzanne Aubert

New Zealand's Saint in the making
NŌ AOTEAROA, HE TAONGA O TE HUNGA TAPU I RARANGAHIA

Parish Coordinators still needed

We are still looking for a number of Parish Coordinators to help promote New Zealand's first saint in the making. There are just over 200 parishes and pastoral regions in New Zealand and at the moment we are fortunate to have 130 contacts in place. But we need to find the last 70 before the beginning of 2016.

A Parish Coordinator is the key Suzanne Aubert contact in their local parish – a vital link between

the Sisters and the local parish community. They will keep the priest and parishioners informed of Cause developments and ensure material on the Cause is available in church foyers. If this is something that might appeal to you, or you know of someone in your parish who would welcome being approached to be the coordinator in their parish, please let us know. You can do it on-line by going to www.suzanneaubert.co.nz/stories or by contacting Sister Josephine.

Share your story

Do you know someone who knew Suzanne Aubert, or was nursed by her, or perhaps was raised in one of the homes that she established? Do you have a personal story about Suzanne that you would like to share?

We would love to hear from you as we are keen to build a library of stories and experiences connected to the life of Suzanne. If you want to share your story, you can choose to remain anonymous or alternatively include your name and a photo. We will contact you before the story is published to make sure you are happy with any editing that may be required.

If you have a story that you would like to share, email it (or post it) to Sister Josephine (sr.josephine.gorman@compassion.org.nz) or P O Box 1419 Wellington

Share the Journey

Welcome to the second edition of our special Suzanne Aubert newspaper, which we hope will give you a taste of the stories available on the Suzanne Aubert website. It is designed to keep you informed on the progress of the Cause for Sainthood of Suzanne and also to respond to the request of the Catholic Bishops Conference to promote the good works and spirituality of Suzanne Aubert. It is our hope that as you read various articles and wish to know more that you will access further details on-line, where you will also find many resources. We encourage you to join the Sisters and our many friends in praying for the Cause of Suzanne.

There is a dedicated website for Suzanne that you can easily access by going to: www.suzanneaubert.co.nz

We welcome your feedback and suggestions on the topics you would like covered in both this newsletter and in our on-line forums.

For more details on the Suzanne Aubert campaign, and to become a friend or a prayer supporter, visit www.suzanneaubert.co.nz



SUZANNE AUBERT

NEWS

October 2015

Issue 2



Suzanne with one of her babies at the Home of Compassion (C 1912).

Suzanne Aubert takes another step towards sainthood

We have had confirmation that the Theologians examining the cause of Suzanne have accepted the 'writings, spirituality and goodness of Suzanne Aubert'. This is wonderful news as it means they will now send their recommendation to the Bishops and Cardinals who work in the Congregation of Saints. If the Congregation of Saints approves the recommendation, a Decree of Heroic Virtues is sent to Pope Francis for his final judgment. Upon his approval of the recommendation, she will be given the title 'Venerable'. These steps could be completed by early 2016.

STEPS TO CANONISATION

In 1997 the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference agreed to support the first part of the formal process, called the 'Introduction of the Cause of Suzanne Aubert'. Then a historical consultation (*Positio*) was completed and presented for theological consultation by a panel of theologians. The



Suzanne Aubert (centre back) and children at Jerusalem in 1898.

panel of theologians in the Congregation of Saints has examined the *Positio* and judged that the case has merit.

Once Suzanne is declared 'Venerable', the next step in the process is the approval of a posthumous miracle, which would lead to Suzanne Aubert's beatification. A person who is beatified is given the title 'Blessed'.

After beatification the Church looks for a second posthumous miracle before proceeding to canonisation. The consent of the Holy Father to the decision of the Congregation results in a Decree of a Miracle. Canonisation would follow.

Sharing the Journey

I would like to know more on Suzanne and about the Cause.

- ☐ Please put me on your database to be kept informed of progress
- ☐ Please send me information on becoming a 'Friend of Suzanne'
- ☐ Please contact me regarding volunteering in my parish.

Name:

Address:

Ph: ()

Email:

Send the coupon to Sisters of Compassion, PO Box 1474, Wellington 6140

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Historic crèche occupies prime position

One of the few remaining buildings directly associated with Suzanne Aubert has been restored and occupies a prime position in Wellington's new Pukeahu National War Memorial Park.

The historic crèche building was constructed in 1914, beside the old St Patrick's College, and is one of New Zealand's first dedicated childcare buildings.

Suzanne Aubert and three of her Sisters of Compassion came to Wellington in 1899 and rented a cottage at 22 Buckle Street. In time they purchased several properties nearby. In 1900 they opened St Joseph's Home for Incurables and for elderly men suffering from chronic and degenerative conditions. In 1901 they opened a soup kitchen and then a crèche in 1903. The crèche enabled women to have their children looked after while they worked, which was vital for women without other means of support, such as widows.

In 1914 the original crèche buildings between 18 and 22 Buckle Street were demolished, after the Council judged they were structurally unsound. A new building – the one now restored – was constructed in brick and concrete in a Tudor-gothic design. It included a wide glassed verandah at the back for children to play in.

One hundred years later, it was moved 15 metres west to its current position in the War Memorial Park, which was opened earlier this year. The crèche building is currently designated for use as an education centre, administered by the Ministry of Culture and Heritage.



View of the beautifully restored Home of Compassion crèche building in 2015. It was constructed in 1914.

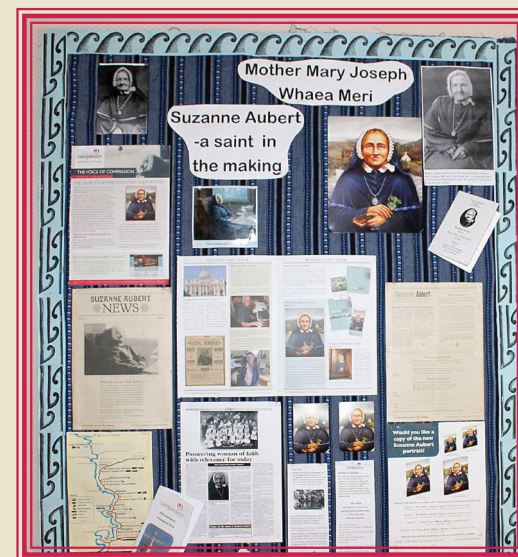
Parish Round-up

Several parishes around the country have created displays and regular messages in parish newsletters, to help promote the 'spirituality and good works' of Suzanne Aubert.

St Francis de Sales Church in Island Bay has created a Suzanne exhibit (below bottom). At **St Joseph's, Ohakune** you will see this display (below top).

Sacred Heart Parish, Ponsonby and Hearne Bay has a reflection in each week's newsletter. A recent reflection included the following: "When Suzanne and her French colleagues arrived in Auckland in 1860 they initially joined the Sisters of Mercy but because their real desire was to work with Māori they moved to the Nazareth Institute which boarded and educated Māori girls. In 1862 they formed a new congregation under the jurisdiction of Bishop Pompallier, The Holy Family, which was responsible for the teaching of Māori girls. Here, Suzanne (now Sr. Mary Joseph), became affectionately known as 'Meri.'"

We would love to see more examples of what is happening in your parish or school. If you send a photo of the display in your parish, we will put it up on the website.



Auckland Place of Pilgrimage blessed

The first place of pilgrimage outside of Island Bay, Wellington, has been officially opened in Auckland.

At a special and very moving Mass on October 4, Bishop Patrick Dunn received into the Cathedral a copy of the iconic portrait of Suzanne together with a number of special items that included a copy of the *Positio*, several bottles of Suzanne's medicines and a relic. Bishop Pat, assisted by Monsignor Bernard Kiely and Father Larry Rustia, blessed the icon and explained the significance of blessed items as opportunities to stop, pause and reflect on the person's spirituality and the example they were in following the call of Christ.

During the Mass, Sister Josephine Gorman, representing the Sisters of Compassion Leadership team, gave an overview of the causation process and pointed out that St Patrick's Cathedral



Bishop Pat Dunn blesses the portrait of Suzanne Aubert. Sisters of Compassion (from left) Josephine, Evalise, Veronica and Colette.

was the first church that Suzanne Aubert prayed in shortly after arriving in New Zealand. She said that Suzanne also spent 11 years living in Auckland and this special presentation was like "welcoming Suzanne back to Auckland".

At the conclusion of the Mass the special items were transferred to a large display area where special banners depicting the various stages of Suzanne's life had already been attached to the walls. The large display area will be open to the public and all visitors to St Patrick's Cathedral Auckland for the next 12 months.

It is hoped that there will be several similar displays at cathedrals and churches around New Zealand and material is being prepared for distribution. Our Suzanne Aubert parish coordinators will play an important role in ensuring the material is widely circulated.



Suzanne Aubert display at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Auckland.

New Suzanne Aubert Resources

There have been some wonderful new resources developed over the last few months and these are now available for those who would like to access them. One is a five-minute multimedia presentation that depicts the life of Suzanne Aubert from her moments of arrival in New Zealand through to the end of her earthly life. A version of the multimedia with Maori voice-over is currently in production and will be available by the end of November.

There has also been an outstanding book produced of Suzanne Aubert's *Spiritual Tonics* which provides a selection of her writings and is ideal for prayer and reflection. Details of how you can obtain a copy of this wonderful book are on the website.

These new resources are in addition to the 16-page booklet on Suzanne's life that was published earlier this year. It is a great summary of the life of Suzanne.

Details are on the website and copies of the booklet are available from the office if you are unable to download it. Just call Sister Jo on (04) 383-7139 and she will send you a copy. There is a small fee of \$5 to cover postage and packing.

As new material is developed during 2016, details will be published on the website including how personal copies can be obtained.

