

✧ Suzanne Aubert ✧ ✧ Meri Hōhepa ✧

Pilgrimage Hikoi in Suzanne Aubert's Wellington

School and parish groups have been making the hikoi to significant and sacred sites in Wellington since the invitation to go on pilgrimage was extended during the Day of Prayer and Promotion last October. Following in the footsteps of Suzanne Aubert is a unique and moving way to encounter Suzanne's story while also taking time to reflect on your own life's journey. Thirty-two significant places have been mapped in Wellington with many clustered around Buckle Street, where Suzanne Aubert first began her work, and at the Home of Compassion in Island Bay, which she founded in 1907. In town, a guided hikoi for groups includes the recently restored historic crèche at the Basin Reserve, the Compassion Soup Kitchen where the response to hunger and isolation has been constant for over 116 years, and St Mary of the Angels church where Suzanne Aubert's funeral was held in 1926.

At the Home of Compassion a range of experiences are available to explore more deeply the story of Suzanne Aubert with a visit to her Resting Place the highlight of your pilgrimage.

Everyone is invited to go on pilgrimage to one of the 24 places on the Footsteps through Aotearoa trail, accessible online. If you would like to organise a school or group pilgrimage in Wellington, please contact Deirdre Hanlon, visitorexperiencemanager@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

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

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- ☐ Please keep me informed of progress
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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

SUZANNE AUBERT NEWS

May 2019

Issue 8

Diocesan Inquiry Convened

A formal diocesan inquiry into the cure of a New Zealander through the alleged intercession of Venerable Suzanne Aubert has been held in Christchurch.

While the details of the inquiry together with the name of the person who has been cured are confidential and cannot be disclosed until such time as Rome advises, we can tell you that the exhaustive inquiry was held over three days last month.

The findings of the inquiry together with all witness statements and supporting medical evidence have now been sent to the Congregation for the Cause of Saints in Rome for further investigation and consideration. "While not wanting to raise hopes, we are truly grateful



that the circumstances of this particular case allowed for the inquiry to be undertaken and the comprehensive file to be referred to Rome for the consideration as a possible miracle through Venerable Suzanne Aubert's intercession" said Sister Margaret Anne, the Congregational leader of the Sisters of Compassion. "It was a humbling experience to hear of how a community united in prayer and trusting in God's divine mercy, has been impacted through the journey that this particular family has been on".

Sister Margaret Anne will be meeting with Cardinal Giovanni Becciu, the Prefect for the Causes of Saints during her visit to Rome in May.

What is a Diocesan Inquiry?

A diocesan inquiry could be compared to a day in court where evidence of a cure is examined, witnesses interviewed and procedures verified. It is necessary under the Norms of the Catholic Church to investigate and test all evidence associated with an alleged miracle received through the intercession of a candidate for Sainthood.

The Bishop of the Diocese where the person who has received a cure lives, calls to the inquiry the experts who conducted the medical investigations into the

patient, and examines through the appointment of a Promoter of Justice, the documents and reports associated with the medical condition of that person. The findings of the inquiry are then forwarded to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome. If these findings accepted by the Pope at that stage, then the Servant of God can be referred to as Blessed and only requires the acknowledgement of one more miracle through their intercession to be declared a Saint.

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

A Faith-filled Experience

“When I am undergoing trials and difficulties, let my prayer be ‘Thy will be done oh Lord’. Then I will not be anxious or torment myself would worry, but leave everything to you my Lord and my God” SA

Listening to the stories shared as part of the process of the witnesses at the Diocesan inquiry held in Christchurch for the healing of a person was awe-inspiring. What I witnessed was the depth of the faith of all the people who gave testimony.

As the praying community those who gathered at Christ the King Church for 9 evenings, praying the novena for healing through the intercession of Suzanne Aubert was an experience of faith.

The community had found a very real way to pray. They knew that Suzanne Aubert was a holy woman who had walked the streets and breathed the air of Christchurch.

In 1889 Suzanne asked Bishop Grimes for permission to fund raise for a new church in Hiruharama/Jerusalem. She was real; she knew how to ask God for help. The community had total confidence in Suzanne Aubert’s faith and did not doubt that healing would take place.

Healing has taken place on many levels for the person concerned in for the praying community. I witnessed the depth of people’s faith in and turn my faith is stronger.

To see and know that the people of Aotearoa/New Zealand have a way to pray, by asking a woman of our land, Suzanne Aubert, to intercede, is remarkable.



Sister Margaret Anne Mills

What happens in Rome is important and it is exciting, yet the faith of the people who contributed to the inquiry was my highlight. The inquiry concluded while we were in shutdown because of the massacre at the two mosques.

It was the most uneasy feeling to be working with the material when it was very clear what was happening in the streets very close to Washington Ave, Christchurch. My thoughts were for all the affected people and their families on Friday 15 March.

At the same time I asked Suzanne

Aubert what is this all about. I received a strong message “Margaret this is my time”. Wow!

It was like ‘wake up’ because Suzanne was a woman who accepted ‘all creeds and none’

She did not turn anyone away as she recognised the dignity of all people. This was her way of being and she stuck to it despite tempting opportunities.

For example, she turned down a generous financial donation from a wealthy benefactor as he stipulated that the money was only to assist Catholics.

Suzanne has given us the way to pray and away to be with all people.

Resident Priest moves in to Island Bay

Father James Lyons recently retired from full time parish work at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Wellington. He has been appointed chaplain at Island Bay where he is available for spiritual guidance and reflection. Father James is keen to spend more time writing and to this end, he has recently written a series of reflections on the Stations of the Cross. Watch out for more wonderful writings from him in the future.



Suzanne’s birthday June 19th

Suzanne Aubert was born on 19th June 1835. Each year the Sisters of Compassion celebrate the occasion with a Birthday Mass at Island Bay and they pray especially for all the Friends of Suzanne.

Follow in Suzanne Aubert’s Footsteps and join the 19th June Birthday Celebrations around the country with this year’s activity designed for schools, churches and other community groups. Learn about this inspirational woman while you create something special.

Here are some examples of what was done last year:



The Inquiry Process

In 2016 Suzanne Aubert’s heroic virtues were recognised by Pope Francis and she was proclaimed Venerable. The next, and second to last step on the way to Sainthood, is her beatification which follows a miracle being declared through the intercession of Suzanne Aubert before God.

The good news is we do have a remarkable cure of a young mother, and that is why we have just undertaken a formal diocesan inquiry.

This process began when the Sisters of Compassion were informed that a person had been cured of a serious illness, through, they believe, the intercession of the Venerable Suzanne Aubert.

The cured person and those who could attest to the restorative process were formally invited by the Diocesan Bishop to attend the inquiry. Their involvement in the process was crucial.

The bishop appointed a committee comprising a priest to represent him (Episcopal delegate), an expert in Canon Law (Promoter of Justice), a principal Secretary (Notary), a doctor to assist with understanding the medical information provided (Medical adviser) and two independent doctors to examine the current health status of the person concerned and provide a report to the inquiry.

A recent inquiry took three days. During that time, the Episcopal Delegate and the Promoter of Justice interviewed the medical experts and a number of witnesses who gave evidence concerning a remarkable



Postulator Father Maurice Carmody and archivist Sister Josephine Gorman preparing documents for the inquiry.

recovery from a serious illness and testified to the way in which family, friends and parishioners had prayed for Suzanne Aubert’s intercession to God on behalf of the person concerned. All the witnesses’ statements, both written and oral, were recorded and transcribed into the official minutes of the inquiry. These statements, along with all related documentation, were then placed in a closed and sealed box which was sent to the Congregation of the Causes of Saints in Rome.

Once officials of the Congregation have opened the parcel and confirmed that all has been done in accordance with the appropriate norms, the material will be bound and returned to the Postulator who will then use it to present a written case for the recognition of a miracle, first to the Congregation and then to Pope Francis. If all goes well, the way will be open for Pope Francis to authorise the Beatification of the Venerable Suzanne Aubert.

Meditations on the Way of the Cross through the Life of Suzanne Aubert

Sitting in the Chapel of Our Lady of Compassion, in Island Bay, Bridget Taumoepeau took up her pen and began writing a series of meditations, inspired by renowned artist John Drawbridge’s Stations of the Cross and the life of Suzanne Aubert. The Stations of the Cross are of particular significance for the Sisters of Compassion, based on the example of Mary, the woman of compassion who stood at the foot of the cross.

The meditations have grown in popularity and use each year. This year, a reflection on the Resurrection, the 15th Station of the Cross in some traditions, has been added to the meditations. This reflection is a response to the Resurrection window which overlooks Suzanne Aubert’s grave and completes the stations in the main chapel.



You can download a copy for your own personal use or for use in your community from: <https://compassion.org.nz/spiritual-programmes/meditations-on-the-way-of-the-cross/>.

The meditations are also available as an art reflection which is suitable for use in the classroom or by individuals at: <https://compassion.org.nz/schools/way-of-the-cross/>

Bridget Taumoepeau is a parish promoter and has had a long association with the Sisters of Compassion