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# ST. BARNABAS ROSENEATH BULLETIN

NOVEMBER 2019

## STORIES OF FAITHFUL MINISTRY

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*Greetings St Barnabas family,*

I am enjoying meeting with you, hearing your stories, and noticing God's faithfulness in your lives. I am encouraged by the faithfulness of this community, the faithfulness to God, the faithfulness in prayer and worship, and the faithfulness to each other. I love the way our stories intersect and how our lives are connected.

At ministry leaders' family camp, we heard stories of the missionaries and the establishment of the Anglican Church in this land. At the beginning of November, All Saints Day is celebrated, and we hear stories of the saints, those who have gone before us who led lives of faith and who continue to inspire us in our faith. At the end of November, we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King, a reminder that Christ is King, that God's faithfulness endures until the end of time, when the Kingdom of God comes in all its fullness.

For November, let us pray together, giving thanks for God's faithfulness and trusting God to lead us into the future. Let us give thanks for the ministry of Rev Annette, Fr David, Fr John and all who have led the parish during the interregnum. Let us pray for the next generation of the faithful who will worship here at St Barnabas. In particular, please pray as we plan for children's ministry in 2020. Our precious children will be the revelation of God's faithfulness for future generations.

I have been reminded of Joy Cowley this week, and I will share her psalm 'Roads' from 'Aotearoa Psalms - Prayers of a New People'.



*The Reverend Cath Growcott*

### **Roads**

*I enjoy looking at other people's roads.  
They are different from mine  
and yet basically the same.  
They all facilitate journey from here  
to there,  
self to other,  
and they are all inter-connected.*

*The fact that I love my own road  
with its comfortable landmarks  
and familiar faces,  
doesn't restrict my appreciation  
of someone else's neighbourhood.*

*And if I go into another area  
and walk a mile or two with someone  
else,  
I return as a larger being.  
The love of my own road is deepened,  
the appreciation of other roads is  
widened  
and I am blessed in the knowledge  
that all roads lead to God.*

Thank you for sharing your stories with me,

With love and blessings,  
Rev Cath

# SUZANNE AUBERT

Pippa Christmas

*As a young woman, Suzanne Aubert chose to leave her native France and travel on a whaling boat to New Zealand so that she could answer the call of Christ. She devoted 66 years of her life to missionary work vigorously supporting the establishment of churches and serving those most in need in urban and rural, European and Maori communities.*

*She was called to be the first Mother Superior of the Order of the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion and led the setting up of New Zealand's first soup kitchen (the Tory Street Soup Kitchen) that still serves almost 40,000 meals a year and a crèche for children of working parents.*

*She established orphanages including in 1907 the Home of Compassion in Island Bay initially for the care of children and babies but also for caring for the handicapped, the sick and the dying. Under her determined advocacy and leadership in early 1920 a surgical section was added to the Home and Sisters trained there in general nursing.*

*On the day of her funeral in October 1926, the largest one held for a woman in New Zealand to that time, the Evening Post noted that she "may rightly be described as one of the greatest women in public effort and loving self-sacrifice New Zealand has known", In December 2016 Pope Francis declared Suzanne Aubert 'venerable', part of the process to sainthood.*

"As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd..." [Mark 6: 34-44]

Mark's words would have resonated with Suzanne Aubert. She was such a people person. Someone who was continually reaching out; pushing

boundaries in a life lived for others. It was a vocation which she grasped without hesitation, using all her gifts to spread the gospel.

So who was she? To Maori she was known as Meri - a very holy lady. To others she was many names - from Sr Mary Joseph to Mother Aubert. Sometimes she was simply Sister. A settler in Hawke's Bay for example, writing in her diary records her child's illness: "sister came . . ." and next day when the child's fever was worse ... "we sent for sister."

But what was she like? Maori recalling her time at Hiruharama would say that she was a great worker and communicator. She didn't push her gospel down people's throats; she lived her gospel. In fact she was a pretty smart lady!

And then there's her own definition of what ought to be the life of a Sister of Compassion: "... It should be a long act of faith, hope and charity; it should combine the life of Martha and Mary, walking arm in arm together, and never separate."

To fully appreciate Suzanne Aubert we have to go back to her early years in France, growing up in Lyon. The environment she grew up in played a large part in shaping her; the French Revolution for starters! The French Revolution began in 1789. Suzanne was born in 1835. Order had been restored by then, but the revolution had changed everything including people's attitude to the Church and to religion.

During the revolution religion had been pushed underground. Families in France suffered greatly and it was often the women who bore the brunt of keeping their families alive, relying on religion for their stability. Women were also active in hiding priests and nuns which was less difficult in rural areas away from the cities. Both Suzanne's grandmothers lived through the Revolution in Tarare, in the hills behind Lyon, helping nuns in mufti



continue teaching at the small country schools. Suzanne was especially close to her maternal grandmother, a strong woman of deep faith, with considerable influence on her grand daughter.

After the Revolution the church restored its welfare networks. In Suzanne's parish church of Saint-Nizier, in central Lyon, parishioners and clergy returned to setting up hospices, soup kitchens, workshops and shelter. Suzanne would have been involved with these. She would also have become aware of the growing tolerance towards different strands of theology such as the asceticism of Jean Vianney and the mysticism of Teresa of Avila.

Jean Vianney was actually the parish priest at Ars near Lyon and his asceticism and gentleness attracted many pilgrims including Suzanne. While admiring Teresa of Avila, Suzanne was less inclined to encourage mysticism in others, later directing her sisters: "Let us not try to tread any extraordinary mystical pathway. Let us go to God in a loving, simple way, leaning only on Him." She wanted an uncomplicated

faith for everyone; an accessible Gospel. Her God was non-judgemental. His love was paramount.

The Revolution had caused huge upheavals in the church. It had exposed flaws and corruption that upset many and anti-clericalism had gained a lasting foothold - more especially among men. Later, Suzanne's sister-in-law was to say about her father-in-law that: "in spite of his charitable nature, M Aubert, like most of his contemporaries at the time, while publicising the excellence of religion, did not practise it".

Suzanne was well aware of these undercurrents in families. She had a strong bond with her father Louis but she also knew that he couldn't handle his wife's religious devotion. However, when Suzanne announced she wanted to join an order she came up against the opposition of both her mother Clarice and Louis. There may have been several reasons for this. She was after all their only daughter. And she was a much loved, lively member of the family, appreciated for her intelligence and energy.

The Auberts were a secure, relatively well-educated family. Louis Aubert held a respected if minor position as a court official, and Suzanne was used to meeting all sorts of officials who flowed through his office in their home, giving her that confidence which was later to serve her so well when dealing with authority.

Her home also brought Suzanne into daily contact with a quite different range of people. It was a rambling apartment building. The upper stories contained a cross-section of families including widowed and singles, and some seasonal workers. For the people living in the attics life was all about survival.

Suzanne's early dependence on her mother may also have had some bearing on her mother's reluctance to release her to an or-

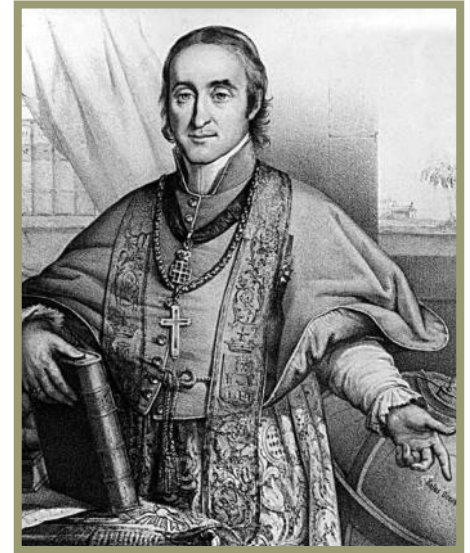
der. When she was two she and her brother had run across a frozen pond chasing a piglet. But the ice gave way and Suzanne fell in on top of rocks. She lost her sight and her legs and arms were badly damaged. After that it would have been her mother who was most closely involved with the daily needs of her daughter. Eventually Suzanne recovered but the accident sharpened her concern for disabled people. For a while she herself was even classified as disabled. The accident had left her with a cast in one eye. This was officially a "deformity" and Suzanne knew that at least one nursing order would turn her down because of it.

Suzanne's wish to enter an order was not unusual. It was a time when numerous women were entering orders which had re-formed after the Revolution. Orders were encouraged by the state to do their charity work out in the community and this would have attracted Suzanne.

She didn't give up the idea but told her parents she'd not join any order before she turned 25, using this time to do voluntary work with the Sisters of Charity in Lyon where it's assumed she acquired her nursing skills and medical knowledge. And her interest in pharmacy and chemistry - and botany. This last was especially useful in studying the plants used in Maori medicine.

So here is Suzanne in 1859 keeping herself busy volunteering in the community and just biding her time until she turns 25. But .....Enter Bishop Pompallier! What an extraordinarily complex man! Charismatic preacher, brilliant raconteur, devoted pastor - and totally inept at managing money! Bishop Pompallier was back in Lyon to look for recruits to return to Auckland with him.

Suzanne already knew something about New Zealand. Missionaries were regular speakers at Saint-Nizier and some parishioners had joined the Marist missionaries in New Zealand. For all his faults Pompallier respected Maori culture and their spiritual difference and in 1859 Suzanne was enthralled by his public



addresses. However, her decision to join him was only made after much discussion with a Father Yardin who knew her well. She knew her parents would never approve.

And so without a word, she left. It must have been the most difficult decision of her life to leave her family without saying goodbye. Or was it? Painful and gut-wrenching certainly. But Suzanne's strength of conviction could not be breached. And within a few days of sailing from France she was to have this tested again and again.

A woman like Mother Aubert might seem beyond us. Courageous and resilient, feisty and self-confident; a talented teacher, musician, linguist, embroiderer, nurse, chemist - her talents are endless. But more important than all these was her faith; her sense of vocation with its focus on others. And the generous use of her gifts to improve the lives of others. Each of us has gifts. What matters is how we use them. .

Acknowledgement:

*I am indebted to Jessie Munro's research in her prize-winning biography "The Story of Suzanne Aubert". (AUP/BWB 1996)*

Pippa Christmas

# OUR STORIES—A TREASURE OF CONNECTIONS!

Judith Doyle

Like the rest of our congregation, I felt joy at welcoming the Reverend Cath Growcott to St Barnabas as Priest in Charge. Imagine my further joy when I discovered that I had family connections with Cath.

A group of us were talking with Cath after the first service she took at St B's. We were talking about schools as she had found that her father, Michael Allen, had been to school with parishioner, Michael Gibbons. We then discovered that Patricia Morris (Cath's mother) and Sue Allen (Cath's aunt) were at the same boarding school that I had attended - in Marton, 144km north of Wellington. **Coincidence Number One.**

Cath was born and bred in La Signy Farm, Morrinsville, Waikato, just along the road from the historic Allen homestead called Annandale. I can still picture this lovely old wooden house in my mind as its owner, back in my time, was Ethne Allen (whose husband had been killed in World War II). Ethne and my parents were longtime friends. Ethne was Cath's grandmother. **Coincidence Number Two.**

Ethne's elder son John (an uncle of Cath's) was a great friend of mine throughout my childhood and teenage years. He was part of our group who enjoyed the school dances in the holidays that were so popular back then. There would be tennis parties at Annandale; swimming parties at my home in Hamilton..... When John was 17 or so, he was sent to Cambridge University, England (later Cath's father, Michael, went there too). Also studying law there in John's time was Timothy Doyle, son of a British Army family. He and John became great friends. **Coincidence Number Three.**

When John returned to New Zealand after his years at Cambridge, he worked for my father in his legal firm



*Waikato Times 14 October 2013).*

in Hamilton. We took up our friendship again - especially now John was in Hamilton.

When I decided to go overseas on my O.E. (by ship in those days) John wrote to his friend Tim to say "the Boss's daughter is coming to London. Would you look her up?" **Coincidence Number Four.**

Tim and I were married in Hamilton less than a year later and John Allen was our Best Man. We then travelled by ship to England as Tim now had a job in London. When my younger sister Susan came over to England and stayed with us, she naturally went to see her old school mate Sue, (Cath's aunt, if you're still with me). Sue was now also married and living north of London. On one occasion Tim and I went with Susan to visit them. It didn't take long to discover that Sue's husband Richard Sykes (Cath's uncle) and my new husband Tim had been to school together in Godalming, Surrey, England. **Coincidence Number Five.**



## ALL SAINTS TREATS

The All Saints Day Mass was wonderfully uplifted by the glorious musical combination of Thomas (on organ) and Morgan singing the Introit, Communion Motet (How Great Thou Art) and an African-American Spiritual Recessional.



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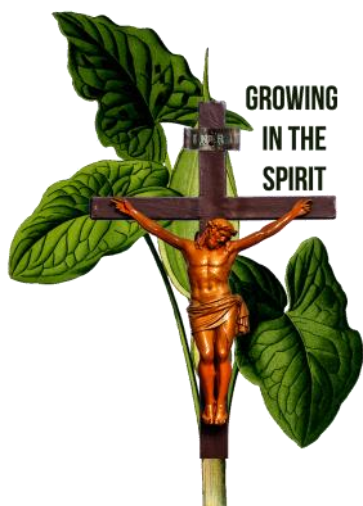
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## REMEMBER THESE DATES

### SERVICES

Sunday Masses 08:30AM and 10:00AM

### SAINTS/FEAST DAYS

01 Nov — All Saints Day (celebrated on Sunday 03 Nov)

02 Nov — All Souls Day

24 Nov — Christ the King (or The Reign of Christ) (celebrated on Sunday 24 Nov)  
 Mass of Thanksgiving for Rev Annette and Father David for the interregnum

30 Nov — St Andrew, Apostle, Martyr



Saint Andrew Icon

## WORKING BEE—SAT 09 NOV

Pull out the gardening gloves, grab the hedge trimmer. There are weeds to be attacked—frustration therapy at its best. As we approach the start of a new Church year with Advent, it's time for a concerted post-Winter and Spring growth clean-up of the Church grounds. Please come help out. As usual, there will be a good morning tea spread to provide essential refreshment for the worker bees!

**Start time 0900AM** and we should be finished by lunchtime .



## ANDREAS—ANDREW'S POEM

Interestingly, there is no St. Andrew poem in John Keeble's *The Christian Year*, this month's celebrated Saint. But there is a significant poem, about St. Andrew's life and martyrdom *Andreas*. According to the Wikipedia entry, *Andreas* is an Old English poem, translated from a Latin derivation of 4th century Greek story of the Acts of Andrew and Matthew in the City of Anthropophag.

The anonymous author depicted St. Andrew as an Old English warrior, fighting against evil forces. At 1,722 lines long, so we cannot reprint it here!!!. But it tells the story of St. Andrew, as he rescues St. Matthew from the Mermedonians,

and defies hardship, torture and captivity, which mirror the pain and suffering that Christ experienced. The work has religious significance because of the way St. Andrew is loyal to God, and his troops are loyal to him in the poem. This literary allusion helps to give the work religious symbolism, characteristic of many works of the time.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andreas\\_\(poem\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andreas_(poem))

ANDREAS  
 AN EDITION



EDITED BY RICHARD NORTH  
 AND MICHAEL BINTLEY