

# Musings from New Zealand

## . Greetings from some Mercies in the Southern Hemisphere

As Mercy we are called upon to pray for Catherine's cause and to promote it. In this small report it is hoped that we can provide a thumbnail sketch of some of the things that happen here to make Catherine better known, through prayer, reflection on her life, the mission, and story. This seems to be the way to understand her spirituality, the depth of her compassion and her total dedication to God and his people. Hopefully through knowledge of her, the process of canonization will become a reality by "doing ordinary things extraordinarily well." Here in New Zealand we already have a strong movement for the canonisation process of Suzanne Aubert, a French woman who founded our only local Congregation, the Sisters of Compassion. While the general focus here is on her, we can only quietly promote Catherine's cause, but we can and do continue to promote Catherine herself in many ways

In our Spirituality Centres her story is continually told, in the medium of prayer, talks, aspects of her spirituality – and there are plenty to be found in the letters and the excellent biographies. On two occasions recently in different venues, the Suscipe centred around the richness of her own prayer, and the universality of her vision. All our Colleges (Secondary Schools) teach of her life very early in the students' curriculum, every September is dedicated as Mercy Month and the students are all involved in outreach programmes connected with works of Mercy e.g visiting the sick and elderly, womens' refuges etc. ( Many continue to keep these connections in their own time.) At all the formal ceremonies in our Facilities Catherine's story is told in as an example of a way of life. All who join us in these facilities, either as staff or volunteers undergo a time of extensive orientation into all that Mercy embodies. It is continually fascinating to see how appreciative they are of these values and how they subscribe to them in their vocations.

Another initiative has come from one of our colleges in a lower socio-economic area where young women, either recently left school or still in their last year, have formed a young group of associates, Mercy Young Adults, who were formally commissioned on Mercy Day. Their aim, mentored by Sisters and Lay Associates, is to practice the Mercy values they gained at school; prayer, a community commitment, parish involvement, care of the earth, all those elements and more which the Sisters and other Mercy Colleagues continue to do.

We have celebrated Catherine's death in many ways this month as we thank God for the woman that she was and is to us all. Some "Watched with Catherine" on the night of the anniversary of her death, some others joined in prayer in small groups around that time. All enjoyed the inevitable "cup of tea" which is in itself more a meeting of like hearts and minds. Many community houses used the prayer for Canonisation in their Evening Prayer.

Many small initiatives for Mercy take place all over our small island home. They are similar, no doubt, to many over the Mercy World.

The tapestry of prayer and action continues to be stitched in diverse and creative ways.

Greetings to Mercy women and men everywhere.