

Aotearoa-New Zealand and Samoa

Who we are

Nineteenth century developments

Our founder

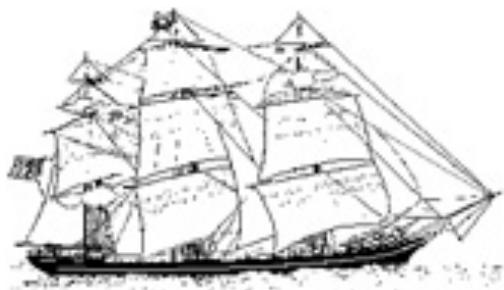
On Christmas Day, 1861, French woman Euphrasie Barbier (1829-1893) founded a religious congregation, *Religieuses de Notre Dame des Missions (RNDM)*. Euphrasie, a courageous and determined French woman from Normandy, was from a young age, attracted to the foreign missions. She first joined a newly established missionary congregation, the Sisters of Calvary in Cuves, France, but political, historical and religious events in that country meant the Sisters went to London to work with the Fathers of the Oratory. However, Euphrasie was concerned that the Sisters of Calvary were becoming too involved in supporting the Oratorians' rapidly expanding ministry and were forgetting about the foreign missions. She also believed that their busy apostolic lives meant little time left for prayer and contemplation.

When Euphrasie learnt that the French Marist Bishop Philippe Viard, (1809-1872), of Wellington was looking for religious sisters to teach in his diocese, she responded positively to this opportunity. She and a young English novice companion left London and arrived in Lyon on 15 August 1861 where the Marist priests encouraged her to begin a religious formation programme for French women who wanted to join the Marist mission in the Pacific. Euphrasie enthusiastically began this work, hoping to found a congregation of women deeply committed to prayer and contemplation, to apostolic work with women and children, and to community life. A great love for contemplation, community and mission were to become defining features of the newly-founded congregation.

Her dream began to be realized when Euphrasie and her companion began their novitiate in Lyon on 25 December 1861. The new congregation was registered with the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda in Rome in 1862, Euphrasie made her perpetual vows on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, 3 June 1864, and on 18 August 1864, just three days after their first profession, the first four RNDM sisters left France via England, for their mission in New Zealand. It is apparent that the Institute de Notre Dame des Missions was committed to foreign missions from its beginnings, and within a short time young women were attracted to the new congregation.



Euphrasie Barbier, (Mère Marie du Sacré Cœur de Jésus), born in Caen, Normandy, France in 1829, and died in Sturry, England, 1893



SS Walter Hood, the wooden clipper on which four French sisters travelled from England on 2 October 1864, arriving in Napier on 25 February 1865.

http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/MaritimeHeritage/researchcentre/wrec_kwalterhood.htm

Soon after their arrival in Napier, the Sisters involved themselves in teaching the European children of the rapidly growing settler population and Maori girls, the latter at the school which was first known as the Providence and renamed St Joseph's Maori Girls' College, when it was relocated to Greenmeadows after the 1931 Napier earthquake.



L-R Sisters Marie des Anges



Marie Ste Anne



Marie St Jean



Marie St Madeleine

Founders of Napier in 1865

Before the end of the nineteenth century, convents had been established in Christchurch, Nelson, New Plymouth, Ashburton, Hamilton, Pukekohe, Opotiki, Leeston, Stratford and Rangiora. RNDMs were soon teaching in parish primary schools and in congregation-owned secondary schools. More often than not, they also cared for orphans.



Early days in Opotiki

Christchurch 1882, demolished in 2012 after the 2011 earthquake



RNDMs in Oceania in the nineteenth century

In 1871 RNDMs from France joined the Society of Mary priests and brothers and lay women known as Tertiaries who worked with Marist Fathers in the islands of Oceania. Soon the RNDMs along with Tertiaries, some of whom joined the young Congregation, were involved in various works in Tonga, Samoa and Wallis Islands.

But there were problems ahead. Euphrasie's insistence on the need for a cloistered life style for her community and the difficulty other missionaries working in Oceania had with that position meant that the RNDMs left the Islands in 1878, and would not return until almost a century later.

Twentieth Century Developments

Aotearoa-New Zealand

1900-1965 The congregation expanded rapidly in the twentieth century in the years prior to Vatican II (1962-65), with RNDMs staffing more than fifty parish primary schools, and teaching in their own secondary schools which usually had boarding schools attached. Vocations to religious life were plentiful.



Final Profession, Hamilton, 1956, Sisters M. Genevieve Punch, M. Lawrence O'Toole, M. Philippa Reed, M. Catherine Curry, M. Cornelius Crowley, M. Rose Malone, M. Beatrice Hammersley, M. Phoebe Hassan, M. Chanel O'Donnell

1966-2000 Vatican II meant extraordinary changes for the Catholics all over the world. Catholic Sisters everywhere were among the first to respond enthusiastically to the Council's call for renewal. This was most apparent to other Catholics when Sisters began changing their habits or dress!! But other changes were afoot too.

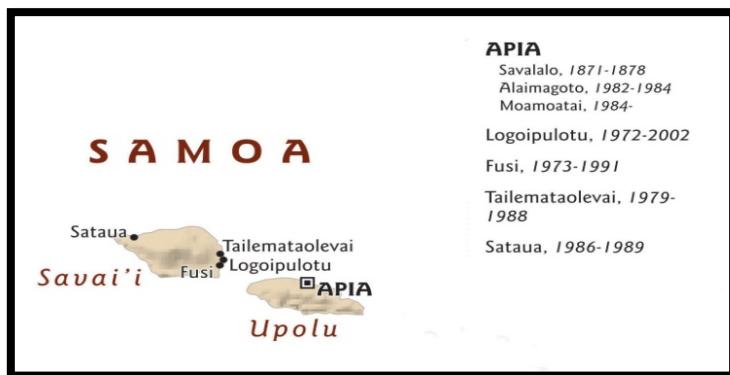


Changing Habits, 1974. M. Bénédicte Ollivier, M. Aloysius McCormick, M. Henry Hudd

The call to change and renewal saw more RNDMs being sent on mission outside of Aotearoa-New Zealand, and embracing new ministries at home. This period of change also coincided with a decline in the number of young women seeking admission to religious life. Ministries undertaken by the Sisters in the decades after Vatican II included chaplaincy work in hospitals, prisons, educational institutions, ethnic, youth and refugee communities. Other RNDMs were involved in adult and tertiary level education, spiritual direction and counselling, and parish ministry.

Samoa

In 1970, the RNDMs returned to Samoa, to the island of Savai'i to teach in the primary school at Fusi, and in 1971 began to build a co-educational secondary school at Logoipulotu, where they taught until 1996. Between 1970 and today, more than 38 Mission Sisters have worked in Samoa in a variety of ministries that included education, the establishment of an agricultural project that would provide young Samoan men with practical skills for working on the land, pastoral ministry and working with young women interested in joining the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions.



Early days in Samoa 1972
L-R Sarah Greenlees, Joan Robertson (lay missionary), Bishop Pio Taofinu'u, Patricia Barrett, Cynthia Kearney, Pusa Fonoti, Mary Jerome



Losa Tofilau working with St Vincent de Paul volunteers in Apia, Samoa

An Important Twenty-first Century Development

RNDMs from Vietnam, Bangladesh, Myanmar and India arrive to study in Aotearoa-New Zealand

One of the more significant developments in the twenty-first century was the arrival of younger RNDMs sisters from Myanmar, Vietnam, and Bangladesh to study English in Aotearoa-New Zealand and if possible gain professional qualifications that would be useful in their different ministries when they returned home or to overseas ministry. Not only did the different Sisters appreciate their time in New Zealand, so too did older RNDMs enjoy having student sisters sharing their community life.



Petone Community 2008 Back Row L-R M.Paul Hodgson, Thị Minh Trang Nguyễn, M.Philomene Walsh, Theresa Galvin, Thị Bích Thu Pham, **Front Row** Than Htay, M. Epiphania (Benedictine Sister from South Korea), Suchitra Rozario



Than Htay, RNDM, Manila



L-R Dung Tran and Minh Trang Nguyen with migrants
in a Taiwanese detention centre



Carmel Cole and Emily Soe Soe Lin RNDM, Myanmar

Province of Aotearoa-New Zealand and Samoa today

<p>Napier</p> <p>Convent Rd, 1865- Greenmeadows, 1930- Maraenui, 1978-1997 Tamatea, 2006- Onekawa, 2006-</p> <p>Christchurch</p> <p>Ferry Rd, 1868-1990 Addington, 1920- Sumner, 1937-1975 Cashmere, 1946-1987 New Brighton, 1962-1993 Spreydon, 1989- Bromley, 1995-2006 Opawa, 2001- Linwood, 2006- Woolston, 2013-</p> <p>New Plymouth</p> <p>New Plymouth, 1883- Brooklands, 1882-1984, 1989- Powderham St, 1991-</p> <p>Hamilton</p> <p>Hamilton East, 1884- Fairfield, 1952-1981 Hillcrest, 1988-</p> <p>Auckland</p> <p>Panmure, 1904-2008 Howick, 1904-1905 Ellerslie, 1912- Papakura, 1954-1979 Remuera, 1964-1989 Pakuranga, 1979-1982, 1991- East Tamaki, 1984-1999 Avondale, 1988-1997 Panmure (Stewart Ave), 1989-2009 Manurewa, 1996-2008</p> <p>WELLINGTON</p> <p>Petone, 1909- Lower Hutt, 1912- Titahi Bay, 1983-2002 Newtown, 1984-2003 Moera, 1993-2009 Avalon, 1994-2012 Fairfield, 2009-</p> <p>Nelson, 1871- Ashburton, 1884-1986 Pukekohe, 1885- Opotiki, 1890- Leeston, 1895-1974 Stratford, 1897-2008 Rangiora, 1898-1995 Kaiapoi, 1900-2004, 2015- Kaikoura, 1900-2004</p>	<p>Opunake, 1901- Cambridge, 1904- Inglewood, 1906-1973 Dannevirke, 1910- Hunly, 1914-1979, 1984- 2008 Waitara, 1914-1968, 1981-2013 Eltham, 1915-1968, 1989- 1998 Kaponga, 1921-1985 Ngaruawahia, 1928-1984 Morrinsville, 1930- Sunnybank, 1940-1975 Takaka, 1946-1970 Motueka, 1983-1992 Waikanae, 1984-1989, 1993- Tinwald, 1987-1996 Mt Maunganui, 1987-2005 Ruatoria, 1988-1991 Turangi, 1989-2015 Waverley, 1992- Whangarei, 1996- Picton, 1998-2011 Kiwitahi, 2003-</p>
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Provincial Leadership Team
Aotearoa New Zealand/Samoa 2015
Front Row Barbara Henley, Colleen
 Edgecombe, Carmel Cole (Leader)
Back Row Susan Smith, Christina Cathro



Pentecost, Ellerslie

Back Row Alei Leilua, Geraldine Donovan
Front Two Moyra Foster, Rose Malone
Elizabeth Beeler



*Moana Kingi and Susan Smith RNDM,
Te Hotu Manawa o Rangitaane o
Manawatu Marae for NZ Budgeting
Conference*



Pentecost Ellerslie

Elizabeth Beeler, Christina Cathro,
Leone Markham, Geraldine Donovan
Elizabeth Beeler



*Mary Maitland RNDM with parishioners Bee Danks
and Cathy Torvik, McLeod Bay, Whangarei Heads*



Alei Leilua RNDM , Catholic Chaplain, Auckland Public Hospital

- In Waikato there are seventeen sisters living in different towns— Cambridge, Hamilton, Kiwitahi, Morrinsville, Opotiki. Five sisters live at the Atawhai Assisi Home and Hospital



Raewyn Hogan RNDM and Elizabeth Woodhouse at Mary Katarina's tangi



After 15 years in Peru, Barbara Cameron RNDM returned to New Zealand where she dedicated herself, her little home, and garden to peace and contemplation for the individual, the community and the world. Barbara writes: "The Peace Sanctuary offers a way of making tangible the contemplative dimension of our lifestyle. Called to be contemplatives at the heart of the world, we are challenged to make tangible the contemplative dimension of our lifestyles." The flock of white doves, universal symbols of peace, which live at the Sanctuary are a constant and beautiful reminder of our desire for and commitment to peace."

- In **Taranaki** eight RNDMs live in New Plymouth, five of them in the Mission Rest Home. Two sisters live at Opunake, while another lives at Waverley



Pentecost in Taranaki

*Mary Lidwina Van Beers, Mary Wyss, Patricia
Mary Ford, June Walsh, Patricia Barrett,
Margaret Monaghan, Veronica Keaveney,
Margaret Mullin*



*Oriana Driver, resident at Mission Rest Home,
and Margaret Monaghan RNDM*



In Hawkes Bay there is one sister living in Dannevirke, one in Gisborne, and one in Palmerston North. There are seven RNDMs in Napier.

RNDMs celebrating with Ellen Mahoney RNDM

Back Row Maureen Duncan, Muriel Kivell, Rosalene Hoban, Mary Peter Chanel Hoban, Carmel Cassin, Jeanette McRae, Margaret Mary Hunter

Front Row Carmel Cole, Mary John Bosco, Ellen Mahoney, Sarah Greenlees, Colleen Edgecombe



RNDMs relaxing at Ahuriri, Napier
Jeanette McRae, Carmel Cole, Maureen Duncan

Wellington The two full-time members of the Provincial Leadership Team live in Lower Hutt, another sister lives in Waikanae, while two live in Petone which also houses the Province Archives and the Province Office. Another six sisters live in Lower Hutt, and both Petone and Nelson often have young Asian student sisters living in community while they study at Weltec or the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology.



RNDMs in the Wellington Region

Back row Theresa Galvin, Valerie Lawson, Pauline Leonard, Colleen Edgecombe, Merle Hiscock, Moira Ross, Mary Paul Hodgson, Connie Hurley

Front row Thi Bich Van Dang Vietnam, Nguyen Vu Kieu Van Vietnam, Emily Soe Soe Lin Myanmar, Annette Young, Carmel Cole



Nelson community

Back Row Josephine Moses, Mari Josef Park,
Rosalene Hoban,
Front Row Helen New Ni Oo, Rosy Win



*Spiritual Directors Karen Moynagh, Ilene
Allen meet with Maria Josef Park RNDM
to plan retreat days*

In Christchurch the majority of the sisters live in different parts of the city, while Gael Henry lives in Kaiapoi and is a parish worker in the Waimakariri Pastoral Area



*Barbara Henley at Waikanae Beach
where she walks regularly, swims in
summer, collects pipi for the pasta or
driftwood for art*

*Clare Murphy RNDM and Margaret Purdie
RNDM with "Rosary Group" parishioners from
the Ferrymead Pastoral Area*





Kathleen Prendergast RNDM with pupils at St Anne's School, Woolston



*Gael Henry RNDM, parish worker,
St Peter Chanel Parish, Kaiapoi,
Waimakariri, Pastoral Area*



*Anna-Maria Persico RNDM,
teaching music, Christchurch*

RNDMs from Aotearoa New Zealand/Samoa working overseas

Euphrasie Barbier's dream for her Sisters was that they were missionary everywhere – in their own countries and in the 'foreign missions'. Contemporary RNDMs are found working in Aotearoa New Zealand with other Pakeha and with people of different cultures. Two Samoan RNDMs, Losa Tofilau and Monika Vaipuna both work in Apia, Samoa, Losa at the Theological College where she teaches, and Monika at the Victim Support School.

Currently twelve RNDMs are working overseas although not as many are involved in mission outside of one's culture and country as was formerly the case. Nevertheless it is possible for RNDMs with the necessary aptitudes, qualifications and skills to work outside of Aotearoa-New Zealand if required.

Australia	Frances Wilson, Maureen Dwan, Colleen King-Turner
France	Patricia Boyd, Mary-Rose Holderness, Maureen McBride
Ireland	Helen O'Sullivan
Italy	Josephine Kane, Congregational Leader
Kenya	Elizabeth Molloy, Salota Aimalefoa
South Sudan	Margaret Scott, Dorothy Dickson

RNDMs around the world



Margaret Scott reports from South Sudan

In 2007, RNDMs became part of the UISG (International Union of Major Superiors) initiative, *Solidarity with South Sudan* an NGO set up to work with the world's newest nation South Sudan, struggling to recover from years of civil war and famine. Today, two RNDMs from New Zealand, Margaret Scott and Dorothy Dickson work in the areas of education and health in South Sudan along with RNDMs, other religious and lay people from many parts of the world.

Margaret Scott, a past pupil of Sacred Heart College, Napier, is Principal of Solidarity Teacher Training College in Yambio, Western Equatoria, South Sudan. The College provides a two year programme for training primary school teachers. Students come from all over South Sudan, including the Nuba Mountains and Abyei. The staff come from USA, Ecuador, Ireland, Australia, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, South Sudan, and New Zealand. Margaret writes that the Teacher College "is a wonderful initiative and we are pleased to be still running it even though the country is at war. The war continues though the news does not impact much on the rest of the world. Millions are starving, thousands have been killed and the South Sudanese political classes are fighting among themselves. We pray for peace".

Margaret Scott RNDM, with Henry Scott their Solidarity baby. He was born while his mother from the Nuba Mountains was studying at the Teacher College



Helen O'Sullivan, RNDM, who is studying in Ireland preparing for her ministry in the RNDM International Mission development Office

Susan Smith RNDM, Manila 2014, with students following the Duquesne University Masters in Leadership programme



**Back row Adrienne Dunlop RNDM, Patricia Boyd RNDM,
Front row Regina Tripura RNDM, Mary Rose Holderness RNDM**

Patricia Boyd and Mary Rose Holderness, two RNDMs from Aotearoa-New Zealand, live at Charenton, Paris, where Patricia is involved in school ministry and province leadership while Mary Rose is involved in translation work for the congregation. Both of them are also involved in offering loving hospitality to the many visitors who come to Paris.



Maureen Dwan RNDM of Christchurch, currently working in International Mission Development Office, Melbourne



Colleen King-Turner RNDM, Centre of Ecology, Victoria, Australia



Salota Aimalefoa RNDM, Samoa, working with Widows' Group in Machakos, Kenya

The Spirituality of RNDMs

Spirituality is the inner strength or source that allows disciples of Jesus to fulfil the great commandments of love of God and love of neighbour. One of the fruits of Euphrasie's great love of God and neighbour, a love that motivated her to send her sisters to the ends of the world, was that she believed that all mission had its source in the mystery of the Trinity. What did Euphrasie mean when she told her sisters time and time again that their mission had its source in the mystery of the Trinity? For Euphrasie belief in the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit meant that she understood that creation was the work of the Father who then sent the Son, the Logos or Word into the world which God so loved. After the death and resurrection of Jesus, Father and Son sent the Spirit into the world. The idea of sending was inseparable from mission for Euphrasie. Euphrasie's sisters were to grow in their love of this mystery at work in their lives through contemplative prayer.

RNDM Spirituality before Vatican II (1962-1965)

Liturgical prayer or prayer of the church was important for all RNDMs who were usually at daily Mass in the parish church or more frequently in their convent chapels, and who prayed the Office together every day. Much of their prayer life in the decades prior to Vatican II was what has come to be called "devotional". This meant praying in community, or alone, such traditional prayers as the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, novenas to Mary or the saints. Such prayerful devotions sustained RNDMs in their demanding lives.

RNDM Spirituality after Vatican II

Since the Vatican Council, the spirituality of the RNDMs in Aotearoa New Zealand/Samoa has been enriched by a growing appreciation of God's Word in our prayer life. For example, RNDMs have been able to enhance their understanding of the mission of the Spirit in their own lives, in society and in those with whom they interact in their ministries. What does this mean?

Euphrasie's understanding of mission as being sent was deeply influenced by her prayerful meditation on John 20:21 "Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you'." They were happy to be sent to the ends of the earth to bring the good news to those who lived in darkness and the shadow of death (see Luke 1:79).

As RNDMs turned to the Bible, studied and prayed more, they gained fresh insights about the role of the Spirit, and what shape their mission should take. In Luke 4:16-18 the author reveals that the Spirit was there with Jesus in his mission to liberate the poor and oppressed: "When Jesus came to

Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. Jesus stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free'."

RNDMs were also challenged by texts such as Gal 3: 28 which taught that through the gift of the Spirit received at baptism, "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus". These and other texts helped them to see that their mission should also involve them with the poor, with those who experienced discrimination or injustice.

More recently, texts such as those found in Genesis 1, the story of creation, reveal that all that God created is good. RNDMs learnt too from Wisdom 1:7 that the "Spirit of the Lord has filled the world, and that which holds all things together knows what is said." These and similar texts served to remind RNDMs to care for God's gift of creation so seriously harmed by human exploitation.

RNDM Earth Community, We are one, we are love, at home



Susan Smith, caring for endangered grey-faced petrels on Matakohe Island, Whangarei



Elizabeth Beeler with Southern Alps in the background



Whangarei garden produce



Mary Maitland walking around Nelson Lakes

2015 News, Events, Photos

Province Yahoo group

At the beginning of the year, it was decided that the Province would benefit from having its own Yahoo group so that RNDMs living in New Zealand and overseas could more easily and informally be in touch with one another. Sisters have been appreciative of this initiative.

150th celebration of arrival of RNDMs in Napier on 25 February 1865



150th Anniversary of the Arrival of the first four RNDMs in Napier, New Zealand

On 26 February 2015, RNDMs gathered on the beach near Port Ahuriri in Napier to recall and celebrate the arrival of the first four French sisters to New Zealand in 1865. These valiant women had braved the unknown to spread the good news through their involvement in education. The RNDMs were joined by members of other congregations, friends, past pupils, principals and students of Sacred Heart College, St Joseph's Maori Girls' College, and St Patrick and Reignier parish primary schools.

After a karanga and song, the assembled people went to Sacred Heart College to continue the story of the sisters settling into the convent home on the "Holy Hill" as it was called. Prayers of thanksgiving for the work of the Sisters and all those who had supported them were said.

There were likewise gatherings to remember and to celebrate in other parts of the Province particularly those in which RNDMs had long been an important presence, such as Christchurch, Nelson, New Plymouth, Lower Hutt and Auckland.



*Anne-Marie Shine RNDM, Barbara Hurley RNDM,
Anne Gross at Christchurch 150th celebration*

Jubilees

RNDMs in Aotearoa-New Zealand/Samoa celebrated important jubilees this year. As Sisters gathered to celebrate the lives of those sisters—75th Marcella Roach, 70th Ellen Mahoney, 60th Bernadette Fletcher, 60th Veronica Keaveney, 60th Clare Turner, 60th Mary Martina Burke, 60th Mary David Richards, 50th Clare Murphy—reaching important milestones as religious women, there was indeed much to remember and for which to thank God.



Mary Marcella Roache who made her first profession as a Sister of Our Lady of the Missions on 6 January 1940

Eco-Walk April 2015

The 2008 RNDM General Chapter document, *RNDM Earth Community: We are One, We are Love*, asked all Sisters to acknowledge their responsibility to not only care for the poor and needy of our world but also to care for Planet Earth. There are a number of ways in which the Province has responded to this challenge and one of them was to invite RNDMs to spend time together enjoying one another's company, and just as importantly coming to appreciate more deeply God's wonderful gift of creation. Since 2009, small groups of RNDMs have spent some time together in the Kaweka Range, Hawkes Bay, at Opunake exploring Mount Taranaki and its environs, at Owhango near National Park, at Lake Waikaremoana, in Wellington, at Otaki which included a wonderful climb to the top of Kapiti Island and this year at Red Beach which meant among other things, meeting pateke, an endangered duck, and takahe at Tawharanui.

Such times of deeper engagement with all of creation are important. Barbara Henley, RNDM, summed it up when she said: "Every evening we gathered to reflect on our day and praise our Creator God for the gifts all around us, for the eyes to enjoy them and the energy to explore. We were reminded again of all the wonderful people who truly care for our creation and renewed our own commitment to preserving, restoring and caring for our Mother Earth.

'May the God who dances in creation bless us with the gift of seeing all the earth as God's temple and the rivers, lakes and oceans as holy water. Amen'



L-R Christina Cathro, Leone McIndoe, Liz Beeler, Cynthia Kearney, Geraldine Donovan, Susan Smith, Barbara Henley



In June 2015 Anne Sklenars RNDM flew to the Philippines where she facilitated the Regional chapter of the Sisters of the Cenacle. When the Chapter concluded Anne flew with two Cenacle Sisters to Macau and then further north in China to meet with religious women working in that vast country.

People making their way to the urupa above Tapeka Marae, Waihi, Tokaanu, to bury Mary Katarina



RNDMs and Schools

Euphrasie Barbier saw the education of women and children as a priority for the members of the congregation she founded. The various RNDM histories all demonstrate that within a few days of their arrival in a new country, RNDMs were busy teaching in primary schools, and establishing congregation-owned secondary schools, faithful to what Euphrasie had included in the Constitutions she had written for her sisters: "[The Sisters'] special end is to aid humbly and to the best of their ability to extend the Kingdom of God in souls by devoting themselves to the instruction and Christian education of children and women, above all in infidel and non-Catholic countries" (*Constitutions* approved by the Vatican in 1890).

In Aotearoa-New Zealand, the integration of Catholic schools from the 1980s into the government education system meant fewer sisters and more lay people were involved in teaching. However, RNDMs have continued their involvement in both the secondary and primary schools with which they have historically and contemporaneously been associated in the following ways.

- providing professional training programmes for teachers on the ethos of the Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions;
- setting up college archives;
- membership of Boards of Trustees;
- involvement in volunteer remedial literacy and maths programmes in primary and secondary schools;
- Board member for the Tafesilafai (Samoan) Community's Early Learning programme;
- ensuring the involvement of schools—teachers and students—in supporting different RNDM missions in Asia, Africa and the Pacific;
- providing mission-awareness programmes for students;
- organising meetings for the principals and DRS personnel staff working in colleges begun by RNDMs;
- responsible for starting the annual Mission Cup (Netball) tournament between the different secondary schools which the Congregation had founded. This in turn encouraged the start of the annual Te Toa hockey tournament for the different colleges while Valerie Lawson was Principal of Sacred Heart College, Lower Hutt;
- Involvement in 2006 programme in which principals and other staff members visited France where the Congregation was founded
- providing work experiences for teachers with RNDM secondary schools in India and Vietnam
- the appointment of an RNDM to visit schools on a regular basis. Hamilton-based Anne Sklenars currently is involved in this important work which involves her with both staff and students in a variety of ways. Most importantly she works with teachers and students so that they grow in their understanding of the RNDM way of life and mission. Anne can be contacted at 07.856.6583, asklenars@yahoo.com

Some photos from Schools established by the Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions



Colleen Edgecombe RNDM, Theresa Galvin RNDM, Connie Hurley RNDM, at Sacred Heart College Lower Hutt celebration of the College's patronal feast. Behind the Sisters are members of the College Polynesian Club welcomed in the Book of the Gospels with a cultural chant



Margaret Monaghan RNDM with girls from Sacred Heart Girls' College, New Plymouth Prayer Group



Muriel Kivell RNDM with maths students at Hato Hohepa



60th reunion at St Mary's, Papakura, Cathie Sorraghan, Anne Coufts, Mary Maitland RNDM, Maggie McCaughan



Veronica Keaveney, RNDM, celebrating her 80th birthday with pupils of St Joseph's parish school at Opunake



Anne Sklenars RNDM with pupils at Star of the Sea School, Sumner, at tree-planting ceremony

RNDM Past Pupils, Associates and Friends

From the arrival of the first RNDMs in Aotearoa-New Zealand in 1865, the Sisters have always relied on the support of lay people to help them in their different ministries. Rural communities in which RNDMs lived and worked generously ensured steady supplies of meat and farm produce, or wood for fires, while school committees ensured that schools were well maintained and kept spic and span in the pre-integration era. Past pupils too continued to be supportive of the schools and colleges in which they had been educated and had come to know the RNDMs.

Today friends, often enough past pupils of the schools in which the RNDMs taught continue to be part of the Sisters' life in Aotearoa-New Zealand. From the 1990s onwards RNDM Associate groups were formed which met with the Sisters in places where they had been long established—Napier, Hamilton, Lower Hutt, Nelson or Christchurch. Auckland has always had a strong past pupils' group, **Sisters of the Mission Past Pupils and Friends Association**, who see financial support of the congregation's overseas missions as important.

RNDM Associates are those lay people who believe that our way of life of living in community, our commitment to contemplative prayer and our missionary outreach are realities with which they wish be associated.

Contacts for Past Pupils

Auckland	Sisters of the Mission Past Pupils and Friends Association Helen Howley, 12 Stanaway Ave, Northcote, Auckland. ghowley@ihug.co.nz , 09. 486 5517
Napier	Convent Past Pupils' Association Jeanette Driebergs, driebergs@clear.net.nz , 06.845.1365
Greenmeadows	St Joseph's Maori Girls National Past Pupils Association Inc The Principal, Private Bag 6031, Hawkes Bay Mail Centre, Napier 4142 stjomaori@sjmgc.school.nz , 06.844.8461
Nelson	Convent Girls' Past Pupils Yolanda Persico, 58 Weka Street, Nelson 7010, y.s.persico@hotmail.com 03. 03 539 0011

Contacts for RNDM Associates

Napier	Carmel Cassin, RNDM , carmelcas@clear.net.nz , 06.843.2111 Sarah Greenlees RNDM , sarahgrndm@xtra.co.nz , 06.844.6085
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Nelson **Maria Josef Park, RNDM, mjparkmaria@gmail.com, 03.548.8578**

Christchurch **Martina Burke, RNDM, martinaburke@hotmail.com, 03.389.7445**



Christchurch Associates and Sisters, 2004,
Back row Anna-Marie Persico RNDM,
M.Martina Burke RNDM and Barbara
Hurley RNDM

Mission Rest Home

In the late 1980s, the Province Leadership Team began the process of providing a facility for the care of older RNDMs. After much discernment and many conversations the decision was made to refurbish existing accommodation at 10 Pukaka Street, New Plymouth, so that it could accommodate up to twenty-three people. In 1990 the Mission Rest Home was opened providing a welcoming milieu for RNDMs and other people in need of more sustained care.



Mission Rest Home, New Plymouth



*Jenny Todd, Mission Facility Manager,
Margaret Monaghan RNDM, Chairperson of
Board of Directors and Residents' Advocate*

Contacts and Links

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<http://www.rndm.org/> This website introduces people to the world-wide life and work of the Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions