

Mary Mackillop - 1842-1909

Mary Helen MacKillop was born in Fitzroy, Victoria, Australia on 15 January 1842 the eldest of 8 children of Flora MacDonald and Alexander MacKillop, immigrants from Scotland. When Mary was young financial difficulties caused the family to lose their home and to become dependent on relatives. Although destitution was traumatic, through her mother's influence Mary learned to depend on the providence of God. When she was 14 she went to work to contribute to her family's financial support. She became a teacher which stood her in good stead throughout her life.

In 1866, when Mary was 24, she founded with Father Julian Tenison Woods, a group of Sisters in Penola, South Australia. The group grew into the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart. The founders' vision was for groups of two or three Sisters to go into the outback and to provide bush schools and education in faith for the children. Many women joined Mary and soon the Sisters were teaching as well as caring for orphans and homeless people. Mary's name as a Sister was, Mary of the Cross.

Mary was an inspirational woman both in

the Church and in society. She was forthright, practical, loving, simple and faithful. At times when she experienced rejection, libel, excommunication and removal from leadership of the congregation, she responded with goodness. The quality of her dependence on the providence of God shone through and she manifested an heroic ability to forgive deeply. She and her Sisters focussed on their ministry for the poor and on God's love of them and Mary never let what people thought about her stop her. She sought help for her work from like-minded people and counted as her supporters Catholic, Jewish as well as Protestant friends.

After suffering the effects of a stroke Mary died in Alma Cottage in Mary MacKillop Place, North Sydney on 8th August 1909. Her tomb is in the Memorial Chapel at Mary MacKillop Place. Special Masses are celebrated there for pilgrims on the 8th of each month and on Mary's feast day, 8th August each year.

Mary was beatified by Pope John Paul II in Sydney in 1995 and canonised by Pope Benedict XVI in Rome on 17th October 2010.

Visit the websites

Mary MacKillop website
www.marymackillop.org.au

Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart website - www.sosj.org.au

... from the writings of
Mary of The Cross MacKillop

*When storms rage, when persecutions
or dangers threaten, I quietly creep into the
Sacred Heart's deep abyss; and securely
sheltered there, my soul is in peace,
though my body is tossed upon the
stormy waves of a cold and selfish world. (1907)*

*May our loved patron and father, St Joseph
watch over us and obtain for us the spirit
he wishes to see in his children. He has wonderfully
watched over us up to the present.
Let us be humble and grateful. (1898).*

*Pray that a great unity may prevail, that charity
may shine and a holy unworldly wisdom influence
every word and act. Whoever we are or wherever
we may be let self be forgotten and let God's glory,
his will and the general good alone absorb
our thoughts, deliberations and actions. (1898)*

Mary MacKillop Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for the blessed life of Mary
MacKillop.

May we face our struggles with the
same tenacity and courage as Mary,
never giving up in the face of adversity
and never showing animosity towards
those challenging us. May we continue
to persevere even when our difficulties
seem insurmountable.

May we help those in need and exhibit
compassion to them. May we remain
loyal to our mission and support those
working with us. At all times we need to
keep faith in God.

Amen.

St Mary of the Cross
Canonisation date
17th October 2010.

**Mary MacKillop
Prayer**

Compassionate and
Loving God,
We praise you for all you do
in the lives of saints!
You inspired
Saint Mary MacKillop
To listen to your whisperings
within her heart,
To trust in your Providence,
To reach out
to the most needy,
To forgive
even when it was difficult.

As we journey through life
We trust that your Spirit will
guide our hearts
making us more like Saint
Mary MacKillop
in thought, word and action.

We ask Saint Mary MacKillop
to pray with us
for the special need we
confidently place before you

N:.....

We make our prayer
through Jesus
Who showed compassion
to all in need.
Amen.

www.marymackillop.org.au
www.sosj.org.au

Prayer

Ever generous God,
You inspired Saint Mary MacKillop
to live your mission of
bringing hope and encouragement
to those marginalised, disheartened,
lonely, sick and needy.

With confidence in your generous providence
and praying with Saint Mary MacKillop
we place our needs before you:

N

We trust in your loving care for us.
We ask that our faith and hope be fired anew
by your Holy Spirit
so that, like Mary MacKillop,
we may act more justly, love more tenderly
and walk humbly with You.

We ask this through Jesus Christ. Amen.

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