

CONVERSATIONS WITH MARY

THE VIRTUE OF CHARITY

IF YOU WERE ASKED TO EXPLAIN THE WORD CHARITY HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?



One Sister described Mary MacKillop as:

Charity unbounded, unlimited, in word, thought and action was Mother Mary's characteristic action.

St Thomas Aquinas wrote: For both faith and hope are formed by charity, and receive from charity their perfection as virtues. For thus charity is the mother and root of all the virtues...".

Jesus gave us two Commandments: Love God and love others. But Mary MacKillop loved people as an extension of her love for God, not for what she could see, but recognising their dignity as children of God. She loved people in God, their common Father, and served God by serving them.

This embraced great and small things, spiritual and temporal:

- Teaching children and adults their faith and preparing them for the Sacraments.
- Relieving the hunger through soup kitchens and even giving away her own meal.
- Obtaining for Sisters at Matata, NZ six ducks, seven fowls and wire netting to make an enclosed yard to help Sisters have enough food.
- Setting up refuges for homeless women, orphanages for children, homes for the aged and making sure the old Sisters were properly cared for.
- Familiar with household chores such as cooking, cleaning, dusting, washing.

CAN YOU SHARE ANY OTHER EXAMPLES OF HOW MARY LIVED THIS LOVE OF GOD AND THOSE SHE SERVED?

The most careful scrutiny of her writings and evidence of witnesses, failed to turn up a single suggestion that she harboured uncharitable feelings towards anyone who had shown themselves as her enemies and did their best to harm her. *Who were the ones you might think she would be justified in speaking against, and why?*

PRAYER: IN AS MUCH (Australian Prayers) - Bruce Prewer

Lord most merciful, you meet us in unexpected places and people,

Help us to be alert to meet you, that you may heal our wounds,

And make us ready to serve you in the needs of our neighbours.

Where you are hungry and homeless help us to be your loving people

Giving food and shelter. *Help us to be alert to meet you.*

Where you are imprisoned and oppressed, help us to be your liberated people,

Giving comfort and help. *Help us to be alert to meet you.*

Where you are anxious and despairing, Help us to be your concerned people sharing hope. *Help us to be alert to meet you. - (Used with permission, Lutheran Church Australia)*

INTERCESSIONS

R. Like Mary MacKillop may we always provide love and forgiveness

1. When we feel rejected, unloved and uncared for. **R**
2. When we are hurt by someone we love and care for. **R**
3. When we see someone excluded from friendship. **R**
4. When someone who lives alone is sick and handicapped. **R**
5. When family structures collapse and cause break-ups. **R**
6. May we look for the goodness in each other rather than the weaknesses. **R**

OUR FATHER

Resource: *The Virtues of St Mary of the Cross—Paul Gardiner sj*

SERVE ONE
ANOTHER
IN LOVE

GALATIANS 5: 13