

As we come together on the feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, in the time of COVID-19, when life can appear bleak and somber, we give thanks for our many blessings. We give thanks for our faith which sustains us in these difficult times. We give thanks for the many people who have gone before us who made enormous sacrifices to pass on their faith. Today, we give thanks for St Mary MacKillop.



I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:10

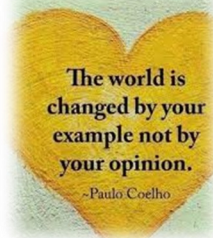
Mary MacKillop wanted all to enjoy God's promise to have 'life to the full'. Mary knew that to enjoy 'life to the full', to reach the fullness of our humanity, you need to know God and be educated. Mary spent her life working to give all children, especially the poor, this opportunity.

Mary MacKillop worked to ensure all children experienced the liberating and empowering nature of a faith education.

ALL: We thank God for the gift of our faith education and we ask that we never take for granted the many privileges that we enjoy.



Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph went out to the people. They travelled to remote areas of Australia and New Zealand to educate children in the faith. Mary loved others not just 'In word or speech' but in 'truth and action'.



ALL: We ask God to help us to be strong and to show we are followers of Jesus not only by word but by our actions.

Mary MacKillop experienced the presence and power of Christ in her life. She experienced the power of prayer. Christ inspired her work and sustained her when she needed help. Mary understood the importance of keeping God near.

when life gives you more than you can stand... kneel.

ALL: We too have enjoyed the privilege of knowing Christ. Help us to understand the importance of keeping God near.

Mary MacKillop recognized 'the divine equality of all'. Everyone she encountered was treated with respect—the illiterate, the sick, the poor, the ignored, the homeless. Mary writes: *reject no one, you never know what grace can do*'. Mary understood the transformative power of being valued and included.

ALL: We ask God for the alertness to all of those amongst us who do not feel included or valued. We ask God for the compassion to understand their plight and the courage to extend a hand of welcome.

ALL: Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop pray for us