

CONVERSATIONS WITH MARY

THE VIRTUE OF TEMPERANCE

This virtue relates to the pursuit of enjoyment associated with food and drink and sexual activity. It also extends to self-control of anger, and behaviour and includes humility. The refusal of comfort and the bearing of pain seems to also be associated with this virtue.



Because of her role as Mother General, Mary's responsibilities led her to many hours and miles of travelling. In the early days this was by buggies, coaches and coastal steamers—all by no mean luxurious. Trains became an improved means later on. On steamers the Sisters always travelled steerage, often on the open deck, having to provide their own food. Sister Ethelburga recalled:

Mother had very little consideration for self. She would go out no matter what kind of weather it might be. One day Mother had business in Sydney and elsewhere. It was a scorching hot day. She called at St Vincent's hospital to see a patient, and from there she was told to go home and go to bed, as she was threatened with a serious illness.

The book **One Door Closes and Another Opens** by Bernadette O'Sullivan rsj describes Mary's journeys in New South Wales. Journeys of 11-14 hours in a coach; arriving by train in the evening and leaving by another in the morning, having met with the Sisters and sometimes the children at the school. Up and down the State, over the mountains, wherever her Sisters were, giving them encouragement, checking out they were being looked after, regardless of her own well-being. I found this book rather overwhelming at the extent and times of her travels.

Mary practised the poverty she wanted her Sisters to live in, a poor house, but neat and clean. In Kensington Adelaide she had no office of her own, but used the common room. For herself she had a very small room. In Sydney, when Mother General, she used a table at a landing for her office at first, and used the common dormitory. But she also wrote:

Watch most carefully over the health, comfort and happiness of those confided to you. See that poverty is observed—no waste or extravagance, but mind that the Sisters have good wholesome food and plenty of it...no Sister's health should be allowed suffer nor should it be endangered by want of proper care on the part of those who have charge of her. 12/3/1899

What can we learn from Mary MacKillop about living a Gospel way of life?

PRAYER OF ST FRANCIS

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hatred let me sow love.
Where there is injury let me sow pardon

Where there is doubt let me sow faith.
Where there is despair let me give hope,
Where there is darkness let me give light,
Where there is sadness let me give joy.

*O Divine Master, grant that I may
Not try to be comforted but to comfort,
Not try to be understood but to understand,
Not try to be loved but to love.*

Because it is in giving that we receive
It is in forgiving that we are forgiven,
For it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

INTERCESSIONS: Place your needs in the hands of Mary to present to Jesus

