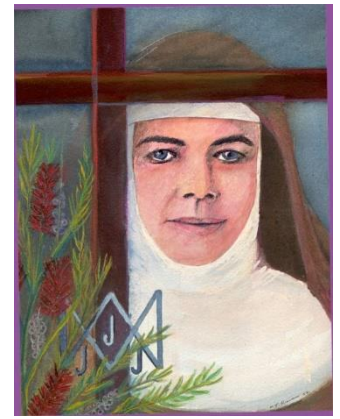


CONVERSATION WITH MARY

THE TEN VIRGINS AND THEIR LAMPS

BE PREPARED! The well-known motto of the Scouts! People spend years in education preparing themselves for teaching, medicine, research, etc... Priests spend 7-8 years before ordination.

In the story of the Ten Virgins, Matt 25:1-13 a parable told by Jesus, five were well-prepared with extra oil, knowing they may have to wait, before they were called to join the Bridal party.



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What was Mary Mackillop's preparation for her unique role in founding an Australian Congregation of Sisters, living religious life in ways never heard of, and a lifestyle that angered some Bishops of the Church, who felt they were deprived of their role as Religious Superior, thus having control.

When we look back at Mary's early life, we see that it was a preparation for her role as Foundress, Teacher, faithful Catholic, Leader of women who lived a life of poverty and simplicity.

- Mary grew up in a family who struggled to survive, often homeless, dependent on others. I guess many times she had to use her own initiative to help them survive. Frugality, simplicity, making do with few of this world's goods, clothing of the cheapest were part of her life as a child and young adult.
- A good education from her father, the books from the L'Étrange Library, all helped her to prepare her as a teacher.
- Working as a governess would have given her insights to children's needs and developed her creativity in keeping them engaged and interested
- Contact with families unable to afford a governess to educate their children in simple English and Arithmetic, gave her further insight into the need to educate which she saw as a key to living, and with families denied faith practices and children denied knowing the basics of their Catholic faith and traditions
- Meeting up with Fr Woods who had some knowledge of religious life and witnessed the simple lives and work of the Sisters of St Joseph in Le Puy, France, and his enthusiasm and encouragement to educate children inspired Mary to help him achieve his goals.
- Being part of a school staff at Portland, and organising her Academy for Young Ladies, organising their curriculum, and running the school while teaching.

TAKE SOME TIME TO REFLECT on your own past—

What has given you courage, resilience, education, your faith, joy, laughter, living skills and prepared you for the life you have lived?

Write down events or stages in your life that helped you be the person you are now.

Write down all the **good** qualities you have and use each day. Don't deny them—acknowledge them.

THANK GOD for them - **ACCEPT THEM** as Blessings that shaped you.

INTERCESSIONS

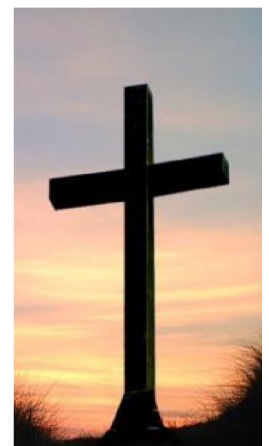
1. For all those struggling with the chaos of floods and destruction of their homes and effects of war, homelessness, and lack of the necessities of life.

RESPONSE: Lord, Give them the courage and resilience they need at this time.

2. For all students that they will take advantage of these years to prepare themselves for the future accepting obstacles with determination
3. For ourselves that we trust God is walking with us each day

PRAYER

God, Father and Mother of all, when we feel everything is too hard, and we cannot keep going, remind us that your Son walked the Way of the Cross, that St Mary MacKillop struggled in many ways and give us the courage and the means to continue bravely. Shepherd us, O Lord, through all our lives. Carry us when we begin to fail and strengthen us through the Eucharist, the Bread of life. This we ask through your Son, Jesus.



AMEN