

CONVERSATIONS WITH MARY

ATTITUDE TO THE WILL OF GOD

Australia was founded by a hotch-potch of groups –soldiers, aristocracy, convicts, ticket-of-leave people, those escaping oppression and poverty. So a spirit of independence and self-reliance developed as they struggled to survive. The seasons were up-side-down, the weather patterns drier so their crops struggled to survive. Slab huts of wattle bark sprang up in the bush which was cleared for crops and husbandry.



So a whole new culture developed and into this the MacKillops arrived and Mary was born in 1842. As a young child she was aware of the finding of gold, the hundreds of people from all over the world who arrived, to make their fortunes.

So the nature of Australian culture and settlements was the antithesis of Europe and England. And Mary MacKillop understood this and the need for a different approach by the Church and religious. When writing to Rome to explain the new Institute, she was very much aware it was different from the Irish and European Church.



“The first care, indeed the great work of the Sisters being the education in a strictly Catholic manner of the children of the poorer classes, it becomes necessary for those interested in such a work to understand the general position of persons of this class.” To validate her position she writes: “It is an Australian who writes this, one brought up in the midst of many of the evils she tries to describe and who has over and over again heard pious priests and zealous Bishops sadly deplore the state of things which they could not remedy...”

Mary saw herself as an instrument called to do God’s will. She did not always find this easy as she wrote in a prayer to Our Lady. She says she hears much talk about the will of God, but it was all a bit of a mystery to her. She found it “a dull teasing repetition of the same thing”. For all of this she felt drawn to seek it and writes at another time “God’s will was like a dear book” she never got tired of reading So like all of us Mary found life difficult at times—there were good days and there were bad days.

Most of us find it difficult to distinguish God’s will from our own. We know God does not send evil, sickness or accidents. These will come from natural causes or someone doing the wrong thing. What we do know is that God walks with us. Yet looking back at our lives can we see situations which, when chosen in prayer, lead us to something new, rewarding and beautiful in our lives.

SPEND SOME TIME SITTING IN MARY’S PRESENCE. ASK HER TO SHOW YOU GOD’S WILL IN YOUR PAST. PRAY YOU WILL BE ABLE TO SEE GOD’S WILL IN YOUR FUTURE

COME MY WAY Based on psalm 119 More Australian Psalms—B.Prewer Used with permission Aust Lutheran Church

Your way, loving Lord is great! With all my being I try to follow.

When you speak there is light— Even a child can see it.

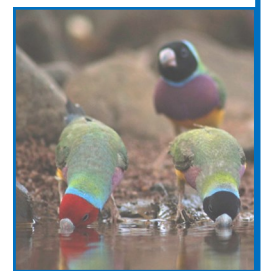
Like a bush creature panting for water I long to find and do your will.

In your compassion, come my way For you visit those who love you...

Get me out of oppressive situations, For I want to pursue your will.

I am a servant who needs your smile Personally teach me how to live.

Oh how I weep for the suffering that is caused By those who will not live your way!



PRAYER: Loving God, you have called us to be instruments of your love and to continue your mission on earth by following the teachings of your Son, Jesus.

He faithfully carried out your will for him on earth. Help us to faithfully carry out what you wish us to do in our following of him. May we, like St Mary MacKillop, find your will in the events of my life, in the past and in the years to come. May we listen in prayer and silence to your voice. This we ask through Jesus, your son. Amen