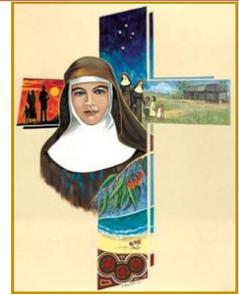


CONVERSATIONS WITH MARY

MARY OF THE CROSS (3)



Jesus's real cross was found in the living of his life, expressed in the way he spoke and acted. Jesus embraced sinners, outcasts, treated all equally. But it was the religious leaders he challenged –their power, their teaching, their alienation of the poor, and they became stumbling blocks saying only the good and the righteous were loved by God.

Mary MacKillop's life reflected the person of Jesus. She lived his teaching, his attitude to the poor. She battled for the underdog and promoted a life of charity in all, urging her sisters to be patient, loving and to treat all equally. This she demonstrated in her own life.

1. The schools and curriculum that Mary had her sisters follow, taught and accepted all and geared their teaching to encourage security and practical subjects eg darning, sewing, book-keeping
2. The sisters visited the sick, those in prison, housed the poor and orphans, shared what they had. Much criticism was directed to these sisters, walking the streets, carrying goods etc offered to them. "Tut, tut" ...they should be home in their convents saying their prayers! Their style of religious life completely contradicted what people were used to back home, overseas.
3. This was a whole new image of religious life—women living in 2's and 3's in the bush, no priest, no Mass or Sacraments. Other religious Orders needed to have a Priest available for daily Mass. As one writer wrote: Their spirituality was one of pulling themselves up by their boot straps.
4. The confrontation with some Bishops, who had been her supportive friends, must have hurt Mary deeply, as she always held them in great respect, never disobeying their directions. But her work for the Kingdom was for all Australians, not just one Diocese, and Central Government, to achieve this, was her vision as an Australian.

Mary was trying to build the Kingdom of God among the poor and neglected as she felt called to do. The women who joined her were captured by her mission and enthusiasm. This brought Mary much suffering which she endured as a cross just as Jesus did. And like Jesus she showed compassion and forgiveness.

REFLECTION: What have been crosses in your life? How did you face them?

How do you see yourself building the Kingdom of God?

SIT QUIETLY WITH MARY MAC KILLOP AND SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS WITH HER.

INTERCESSIONS: Let the following words lead you to prayer



Ukraine & Russia

NATURAL DISASTERS

**Church and World
Leaders**

ELDERLY

SICK CHILDREN

The innocent in prison

PRAYER:

Loving God I am exceedingly grateful

For you hear my cries and complaints and you respond with mercy and strength.

My life is overflowing with thanksgiving, and my mouth is filled with your praises.

May I like St Mary MacKillop see all as your loving gift and enable me to accept whatever life brings me. Bless my efforts to build your Kingdom.

This I ask through your Son, Jesus. Amen.