



8th August 2017
Feast of Saint Mary MacKillop

*“Let us show
love
in our acts.”*

Mary MacKillop
1890

A message from Kirsty Robertson

CEO, Mary MacKillop International

Dear Friends,

“In all her being and actions, the Church is called to promote the integral development of the human person in the light of the Gospel.” Pope Francis

These are the words of Pope Francis as he was instituting the new Dicastery for Promoting Human Development in Rome in January this year. Over 150 years ago, here in Australia, in outback towns and across our rugged landscape, one determined woman, Mary MacKillop, transformed these very words into practical action.

Saint Mary MacKillop was a woman well ahead of her times. She saw potential, where others would not dare, she lead with courage, humility and wisdom. Saint Mary came from poor beginnings and was determined to help those afflicted with poverty, providing education and a future for women and families. Today, Mary MacKillop International (MMI) humbly continues this mission, celebrating Saint Mary’s charism across the world serving in “the poorest and most neglected parts of God’s vineyard”.

More than 50 years ago, the Sisters of St Joseph (the ‘Josephites’) were invited as missionary Sisters to work in the remote township of Vanimo, Papua New Guinea. The Sisters worked with limited resources where-ever the need called them, working alongside the local people providing support in education, health and vocational training.

Today, Mary MacKillop International continues that Josephite legacy in Papua New Guinea through our partnership with Callan Services in Vanimo, working with the dedicated local people in education and disability inclusion.

This Feast Day, we share with you the stories of William Akela “Willie” who works as a Community-Based Rehabilitation Volunteer (see enclosed DVD) in Papua New Guinea. As a person with a hearing impairment, Willie knows well the struggles faced by the one million people with disability in his country... and the joys of creating an inclusive and life-giving space for all within his community.

We invite you to continue the legacy of Mary MacKillop in Papua New Guinea and throughout the world, as we together work with compassion to bring dignity and justice to all.

Your parishioners donations and prayers will help to build a world where each man, woman and child has the ability to realise their full potential – thank you for your support.



With warm regards,

K. Robertson

CEO, Mary MacKillop International

Dignity • Compassion • Justice



Mary MacKillop International (MMI) is the international aid and development agency of the Sisters of St Joseph. In the spirit of Mary MacKillop, we empower communities through education, health and livelihoods.

Homily Reflection

- 6th August – Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord
- First Reading: Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14
- Responsorial Psalm: 97:1-2, 5-6, 9
- Second Reading: Peter, 1:16-19
- Gospel: Luke 9:28-36

In this week's Gospel reading...

the Feast of the Transfiguration, we are called to fill our hearts with the love of Jesus through prayer, so that as we 'descend' we 'transfigure' this prayer into action. Like Saint Mary MacKillop, we too are called to grow in love by reaching out to the poor, sick, lonely and abandoned. And when we expand, 'transfiguring' our prayer into action so too, does the world.

8th August is Saint Mary's Feast Day – a day we celebrate the life and legacy of Australia's First Saint. At the age of 24, Mary dedicated her life to God taking on the name "Mary of the Cross". Along with Fr Julian Tenison-Woods, a young Mary opened a school in a disused stable in Penola, South Australia. Her unwavering vision was to educate the poor, underprivileged children, of which there were many.

Prayers of Intercession

For dignity - Loving God we thank you for the example of Mary MacKillop who in her living of the Gospel witnessed the human dignity of each person. She faced life's challenges with faith and courage.

We pray through her intercession for our needs. May her holiness inspire us to be people of hope, love and forgiveness. Lord Hear us...

For compassion - Gracious God – bless us with hearts that expand in generous response, minds that are willing to explore greater justice, hands that are giving to those in need, food that nourishes us body and soul.

God, through the intercession of Mary MacKillop, we pray that the fire of your compassion will ignite many hearts. We pray that the beacon of her holiness shine as a blessing for the universal Church and our world. Lord Hear us...

For justice - Gracious God, we praise and thank you for the gift of Mary MacKillop to our world. May her life inspire us to reach out to those who are suffering hardship and injustice.

God of prophetic action, hear our prayer and strengthen us as we walk with the people of Papua New Guinea and others who are suffering throughout the world. Lord hear us...



Many other women came to join her there, and Mary and Julian founded the Sisters of St Joseph.

The deep faith of the Sisters provided them the inspiration to serve the poorest, seeing the face of Jesus in each and every person. They were drawn to the remotest corners of Australia, living in tents in the harshest conditions, working alongside the local people.

This strong leadership Mary espoused created the foundations of the Catholic schooling system in Australia. Now, over 150 years later, we invite your parishioners to spread Mary's vision throughout the world, to Papua New Guinea and many other countries, leading others to a full and dignified life, through prayer and action.

Our vision is a world transformed to reflect God's Mission on earth; a world without poverty, where the rights and dignity of every person are respected and where people are free to engage fully in society

Mary MacKillop International in Papua New Guinea

The work of Mary MacKillop International follows in the footsteps of the Josephites who commenced their mission to Papua New Guinea, some 50 years ago. In February 2016, MMI's CEO, Kirsty Robertson, and International Programs Officer, Sophie Jenkins, were accompanied by Sr Kathy Jennings sj to explore the ongoing work of local NGOs working in the areas of education, health and livelihoods in the areas where the Federation Sisters once lived and worked. Sr Kathy tells of her time in Papua New Guinea as MMI continues the legacy of the Sisters:

"As I look back on my life as a Josephite sister I always come back to the years I spent in PNG. Not only did I feel that the missionary work of enabling and forming others was a privilege to be part of but I personally found it an enriching experience. I am a different person today because of the influence the people of that country had on me. When I first arrived in 1970 I am ashamed to say that I felt I had all the answers and was coming to "give to them." In truth I learnt much more than I ever taught. I was blessed in the work I was asked to do.

Willie's Story [DVD enclosed]

Willie is 21 years of age, and is a hearing impaired Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Volunteer with Callan Services in Vanimo, remote Papua New Guinea. He provides support to Callan's CBR Officer and other volunteers through the disability outreach program and the community-based early childhood program.

Willie became involved in this work to learn new skills and help other people with disability, building on Mary MacKillop's passion to bring education to all. Willie's Uncle Jude affirms the importance of volunteers like Willie:

"It is very important to be an example, so to be, to show the others, who are losing hope, to be there as some hope, someone who can show that disabled people can have a positive life, have rights to be involved in anything in life."

Nearly one million children and adults with disability in Papua New Guinea lack access to proper support services and often face exclusion and isolation due to the stigma and negative beliefs that can exist around disability. Part of both Willie and Jude's role, along with all the volunteers, is to head out into their local community to challenge such views and educate communities in the importance of disability inclusion. They also help to identify and assess people with disability through community ear and eye screenings and make referrals to available health services, such as mobile eye clinics, all the while increasing access to schooling.

I was fortunate to return to PNG in February 2016 with staff from Mary MacKillop International. After all those years I knew that things would have changed perhaps not even exist. The return, for me, was like catching up with old friends and just so affirming of the work that so many Josephite women had done over 25 years. True, many of the buildings and structures we set up were not there but the training and enabling of the women and men to be their own leaders and messengers of the Good News was still alive and strong.

It is with great joy that I welcome the congregation, through the work of Mary MacKillop International, reconnecting with this young nation and again taking on the task of calling forth local people who will in turn enable their own people to respond to the needs of the country today. I am especially delighted that the area [Vanimo] in which the Josephite sisters began working in 1966 is again going to see a Josephite presence.

May the charism of Mary and Julian continue to grow in this isolated and poor area of the world."

Sr Kathy Jennings sj



Callan Vanimo also runs a community-based early intervention program, bringing early childhood education to children in remote communities. Together with local organisation Buk Bilong Pikinini, MMI has provided training for community educators and distributed vital early learning resources. Many of our community based volunteers, like Willie and Jude, have also been trained to ensure the inclusion of children with disability.

With your generous support, MMI can continue to empower locals, like Willie and Jude, to create opportunities for children and communities in the most remote regions of Papua New Guinea, having a positive impact on the lives of those with disability and by improving child literacy and access to education.

You'll also help MMI continue our other vital works, empowering communities worldwide.

With your ongoing support we would like to train a further 12 dedicated volunteers in the coming year affecting the lives of over 200 people living with disability in the most remote areas around Vanimo, Papua New Guinea. Thank you for your prayers and for your action.

Parish Bulletin Notice



In the spirit of Mary MacKillop, we invite you to bring life to "the poorest and most neglected parts of God's vineyard"

Your donation to Mary MacKillop International will support thousands of people in Timor-Leste, Peru and Papua New Guinea in education, health and livelihoods opportunities bringing hope to communities for generations to come.

Please consider making a small monthly donation with our Regular Giving Program and help bring Mary MacKillop's charism to life throughout the world.

www.mmi.org.au

*"Let us show love in our acts."
Mary MacKillop 1890*

How you can help!

- \$3,350 -** could provide for ten (10) volunteers to attend a week-long training in hearing and visual impairment, and starter sign language, in Vanimo, Papua New Guinea.
- \$1,053 -** could allow the CBR volunteers to design and deliver five (5) community based awareness events, providing communities with vital information and resources regarding disability inclusion, preventative health and health & education services available in their district.
- \$650 -** could allow one parent in a remote community in Timor-Leste to attend ten (10) ongoing training sessions on how to support their children in education.
- \$375 -** could allow five (5) teachers to attend a training workshop to become school peace mentors in Mary MacKillop International's School Anti-Violence Program in Peru.
- \$200 -** could help equip the Mobile Learning Centre Bus with a set of music percussion instruments to engage children from poor districts and orphanages around the capital of Dili, Timor-Leste.
- \$60 -** could support the printing of 30 locally produced early-childhood readers and help towards the distribution of 10,000 copies to schools and community libraries throughout Papua New Guinea.

Did you know?

In Papua New Guinea:

- 87% of the population live in rural, and often very remote, communities
- Almost 50% of school-aged children are not attending school
- Average formal education for adults is less than four years
- Almost one million people in Papua New Guinea are living with a disability with only 2% receiving adequate services.

Thank you for your support

Please give what you can to help support the work of Mary MacKillop International throughout the world.
All donations no matter how small are needed and gratefully accepted.



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The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) is the peak Council for Australian non-for-profit aid and development organisations. Mary MacKillop International is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct, which is a voluntary, self-regulating sector code of good practice. As a signatory we are committed and fully adhere to the ACFID Code of Conduct, conducting our work with transparency, accountability and integrity.

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