

Be **Fierce** for **Fair**

MARY
MACKILLOP
today

Prayer Assembly - Primary

We Gather

Gather the assembled with the ringing of an old school bell, signifying Mary's role as a teacher and the era in which she taught.

The following statements are then said by a range of different voices from different places around the assembled space. Each person should stand, deliver their line and then sit back down.

Say

I am Mary Helen MacKillop.
I am the daughter of Scottish parents.
I am the eldest of eight.
I am a teacher.
I am a Sister of St Joseph
I am a friend of the poor.
I am Australia's First Saint.
I am St Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

Sing

Suggestions (optional):

- Beneath a Cross of Stars – Andrew Chinn
- St Mary MacKillop – Gary Pinto
- Let Our Light Shine – Michael Mangan
- Never See a Need – Michael Mangan



We Listen

Option 1

Read and/or act out a picture book about Mary MacKillop.

Some suggestions include:

- Meet Mary MacKillop by Sally Murphy
- St Mary MacKillop: Beneath a Cross of Stars by Andrew Chinn and Jill McLaughlin rsj
- St Mary MacKillop Friend of Jesus by Judith M Steer rsj
- The Gift of Mary MacKillop by Colleen O'Sullivan rsj

Option 2

Gospel: Matthew 6:25-34

Read

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew:

I am telling you not to worry about your life and what you are to eat, nor about your body and what you are to wear. Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they are? And why worry about clothing? Think of the flowers growing in the fields; they never have to work or spin: yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his royal robes was clothed like one of these. Now if that is how God clothes the wild flowers growing in the field will he not much more look after you? So do not worry; do not say, "What are we to eat? What are we to drink? What are we wear? Your heavenly Father knows you need all these things. Set your hearts on his Kingdom first, and all these other things will be given you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow: tomorrow will take care of itself.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.





We Respond

Reflection Option 1

(Walk the students through this prayerful reflection. Pausing after praying with each finger to allow time for quiet personal prayer.)

Pray.

St Mary of the Cross MacKillop loved God and she prayed every day for God to help her to look after her family, for her friends like Fr Julian, the priest who helped Mary start schools, those who pointed the way, for people in authority, like priests and bishops who didn't always see things the ways she did, for the children she taught, the poor in her community, those in need and for herself. Today we are going to pray, just like Mary and we are going to use our hands to help us.

Let us begin with the Sign of the Cross. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Look at one of your hands. For each fingers thumb we are going to pray a prayer quietly in our hearts.

(Quiet music begins)

Let's begin with our thumbs.

Think about the people who are close to you, your family and your special friends. Thank God for them and ask God to protect them and to keep them safe.

Look at your pointer finger.

This represents people who point the way – people like teachers, other adults in your life, Mary MacKillop and Jesus. Think about why they point the way for you. Thank God for them and ask that God continues to help them to be a good role model for you.

Next look to your tall finger.

This for all the big people in the world that need prayer. Ask God to give wisdom to our government, and not trust in their power and strength. Pray for wise and Godly people to surround them and support them in their decision making and leadership.

Turn your attention to your ring finger.

It isn't very strong on its own. It is your weakest finger. And so we remember those who are not strong on their own, those who are sick, those who live in poverty, or who are treated badly. We pray that God gives them new strength and those who can, including us, fight for justice and support them.

Finally let's look at our pinky.

It represents us. God wants to hear your needs too. Pray for your own life, the things going on for you. We are not so small that God does not care or is not interested. God loves each of us and wants to know what matters to us, what is in our hearts – so finish with sharing those things now.

We make all these prayers through Christ Our Lord.

Amen





We Respond

Reflection Option 2

Reflect

Mary MacKillop lived a long time ago, but we remember her still today because she was a friend to everyone who needed her.

When Mary saw poor children who didn't have any education, she taught them herself and started a school for them in an old stable.

Many other young women joined with Mary MacKillop in this as Sisters of Joseph. Soon there were schools for poor children all over Australia.

However, Mary saw many other needs besides schools, and soon the Sisters were looking after orphan children and homeless girls. They also visited the sick and lonely and elderly people.

Mary's life was very hard. Her family was poor and so were the Sisters of St. Joseph. But Mary didn't worry about the future. She always believed God would take care of her, and she worked hard at what she felt God wanted her to do.

During her lifetime, many people thought of Mary MacKillop as a friend because she loved them and cared for them. Even though she lived and died a long time ago there are many people now who think of Mary MacKillop as their friend, and so can we.

Mary always cared for anyone in need, and from her home in heaven now she keeps on praying for anyone who needs help.

Just as St Mary of the Cross MacKillop prayed, let us pray the Our Father together. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Pray

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.





We Go

Pray

We'll conclude by praying all together. The response to each line in our final prayer is Amen.

May we, like Mary MacKillop always show kindness to all, in the way we think, speak, and act.
Amen

May we like Mary MacKillop, go out of our way to help those in need. Amen

May we, like Mary MacKillop, always stand up for what we believe to be right, even when it's hard. Amen

May we, like Mary MacKillop, always try to help the poor. Amen

And may we, like Mary MacKillop have faith and trust in God. Amen

We ask this blessing through Jesus our friend.

Amen.

Closing song

Suggestions:

- Beneath a Cross of Stars – Andrew Chinn
- St Mary MacKillop – Gary Pinto
- Go Make a Difference – Steve Angrisano
- Hearts of Courage – Timothy Hart
- In the Footsteps of Jesus – Andrew Chinn
- Do Something – Matthew West

Resources

Books:

- Geddes, Judith, In God's Hands, Psalms & Prayers for Children - In the Spirit of Mary MacKillop, St Joseph's Convent, St Albans, VIC, Australia, 2005.

Websites:

- Big Start Assemblies: www.bigstartassemblies.org/prayer
- Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre: www.mmhc.org.au
- Mary MacKillop Today: www.marymackilloptoday.org.au
- Sisters of St Joseph: www.sosj.org.au

