

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

MARY
MACKILLOP
today

Liturgy of the Word - Secondary

Prayer Space

Suggestions: Set up a space that is visible for all students. Drape the space with prayer cloths. Place a candle (real or battery operated), a cross, a bible or lectionary with the place marked with today's reading and an image of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop in the prayer space. You may also like to add some items that help students to remember what St Mary did and how the Sisters of St Joseph and Mary MacKillop Today continue her work. This could include a small blackboard and chalk, a small stack of books, a set of rosary beads, and a picture of the Mobile Learning Centre bus. Alternatively, these items could be processed in and placed into the sacred space one by one, whilst the opening song is sung.



Feast of Saint Mary MacKillop - 8 August

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Acknowledgement of Country

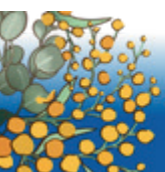
Introduction

Today is St Mary of the Cross MacKillop's Feast Day. It is a day to come together to celebrate the life and work of Australia's first Saint. From a young age, St Mary worked tirelessly for others, especially for families who couldn't afford to send their children to school. In Penola in 1866, she with the help of a priest, Fr Tenison Woods and two of her sisters, she opened her first school. As a passionate educator, Mary broke through the prejudice of the early 19th century to educate all—regardless of gender, race, faith, or wealth—while ministering to the vulnerable with compassion.

1866 was also the year St Mary and Fr Tenison Woods began the Sisters of St Joseph, a religious congregation, which is still active today. She and the Sisters went wherever the need was greatest. They gave up everything to live and teach amongst the people they served. Throughout Australia, New Zealand and in places like Timor Leste the work of Mary MacKillop carries on today through an organisation called Mary MacKillop Today.

Mary MacKillop Today is continuing the vision of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph. That vision is to work with communities to create change by teaching practical skills to women, men and children in Australia and beyond. If Mary MacKillop were living in our world today she would not only be out on the streets serving those in need she would be advocating against injustices that litter the world. Mary MacKillop Today continues to look at the world through the lens that Mary did. Currently in Timor Leste they have a Mobile Learning Centre. The Mobile Learning Centre is a bus that travels to communities throughout Timor Leste providing children with an education they would otherwise not have. They also provide teachers the opportunity to develop their teaching practice. Be Fierce For Fair is the theme Mary MacKillop Today has for St Mary of the Cross' Feast Day this year. In today's liturgy let us reflect on ways we can Be Fierce For Fair.

Let us pause as we become aware of God's presence.



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Opening song

Suggestions: St Mary MacKillop – Gary Pinto, Let it Start with Me – No Other Name

Opening Prayer

Leader: In the name of the Father...

Bountiful God,

You filled the heart of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop with hospitable love especially for those at the margins of society. Deepen that love within us that we may be fierce for fair in a world wherever there is an edge of need. We ask this in your name.

All: Amen

Leader: Let us listen to God's Word.

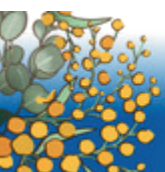
(You may choose to read both the Reading and the Gospel, however it is likely, that you will choose to have only one. The Reading or Gospel could be read as below or told using Liquid Pictures or Echo Mime)

Reading

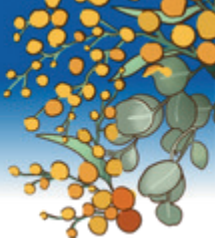
Reading Colossians 3:12-17

Reader: A reading from St Paul's letter to the Colossians:

God has chosen you and made you his holy people. He loves you. So always do these things: Show mercy to others; be kind, humble, gentle, and patient. Do not be angry with each other, but forgive each other. If someone does wrong to you, then forgive him. Forgive each other because the Lord forgave you. Do all these things; but most important, love each other. Love is what holds you all together in perfect unity. Let the peace that Christ gives control your thinking.



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Reading - cont'd

You were all called together in one body to have peace. Always be thankful. Let the teaching of Christ live in you richly. Use all wisdom to teach and strengthen each other. Sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Everything you say and everything you do should all be done for Jesus your Lord. And in all you do, give thanks to God the Father through Jesus.

The word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

And/or...

Gospel

Matthew 6:25-34

Reader:

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew:

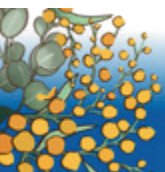
Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?”

For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

‘So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ





Reflection Ideas

Reflect on the life of Mary MacKillop. Below are a list of ways this could be done:

Reflect using key words from St Paul's letter to the Colossians. This could be done using repetition as suggested below. Each repetition could be done by a different speaker and if you have capacity for audio visual, could be accompanied by images that reflect the words:

- Show mercy. Be kind, humble, gentle and patient (Repeat slowly 3 times)
- Forgive, love, have peace (Repeat slowly 3 times)
- Be thankful! Sing! (Repeat slowly 3 times)
- Give thanks to God!

Reflect using a series of questions that lead on from Matthew's gospel for example:

- In what ways did Mary MacKillop look beyond food and clothing? How can I?
- What might be some challenges I face? How can I overcome them?
- What did Mary value? What do I value?
- How did Mary put her values into action? How can I put my values into action?
- When Mary faced an obstacle, what did she do? What can I do?
- Mary was fierce for fairness. How can I be fierce for fair?

Students lead a reflection they create using Be Fierce for Fair Statements or use the one below. Images could be added so all become active participants in the liturgy.

Be fierce for our human family.

For those living with war.

For those sleeping on the streets.

For those who go without food, clothing and shelter.

For those who live in fear.

For those who have only seen violence.

For those who have no one to turn to.

Be fierce for the cry of the earth.

For polluted skies, waterways and paddocks.

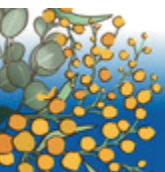
For parched soil.

For flooded crops.

For vanishing biodiversity.

For diminishing habitats.

For broken food chains.





Reflection Ideas - cont'd

Be fair for people
 In thought.
 In word.
 In deed.

Be fair for planet
 In thought.
 In word.
 In deed.

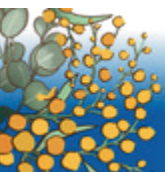
As Mary MacKillop was a great letter writer, engage a class of students prior to the liturgy to write a series of text messages or Instagram chats retelling her story in today's context and challenging their peers to Be Fierce For Fair. These could be presented as an audio visual presentation for those gathered to see.

If you are a Josephite school, share some of the school's history and how the Mary MacKillop's legacy continues to live on in the life of the school today.

Reflect through music for example: Hold Us Together by Matt Maher, Open My Eyes by Jesse Manibusan, From Little Things Big Things Grow by Paul Kelly and Kev Carmody or Be the Light by Thomas Rhett

Use this YouTube video to give a sense of who Mary MacKillop, where she came from, what she endured and the legacy she has passed on [Shaping a Nation: St Mary MacKillop](#)

Some reflections could have quiet music playing in the background. Fade the music out as the reflection concludes.





Prayers of the Faithful

Leader: Let us turn to God in prayer.

Ever generous God, You inspired Saint Mary MacKillop to live her life faithful to the Gospel and bring hope and encouragement to those on the margins. With confidence in your generosity we pray:

Reader: For Pope Leo XIV and leaders in our Church that they lead with courage, conviction and justice.

Lord, hear us.

All: Lord hear our prayer.

Reader: For the Sisters of St Joseph that they may continue to walk in St Mary's footsteps knowing that they are surrounded by God's love, guidance and care.

Lord hear us.

All: Lord hear our prayer.

Reader: For Mary MacKillop Today, may they continue to be guided by Mary MacKillop's unwavering belief in justice for all, and continue to commit to being fierce for fair.

Lord hear us

All: Lord hear our prayer.

Reader: For our school community, may we walk in St Mary of the Cross' footsteps, being fierce in the face of adversity, fair when we see injustice and spread love through our words and deeds.

Lord hear us

All: Lord hear our prayer

Reader: For all those in our community who are sick especially...., that they will receive your healing touch and strength.

Lord hear us.

All: Lord hear our prayer.

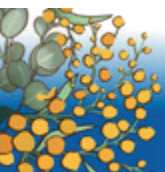
Reader: For our own intentions... (pause)

Lord hear us.

All: Lord hear our prayer.

Leader: We make these prayers and those in our hearts in Your name.

All: Amen.





Final Blessing

Leader: Let us stand for a blessing

Through the example of Saint Mary of the Cross, may we learn to recognise God's will for us and trust in God's wisdom.

All: Amen.

May we serve with deep respect for the poor and a strong will for justice.

All: Amen.

May we see with the eyes of fierce fairness, share in her courage and act with a heart of love.

All: Amen.

And may God bless us. In the name of the Father...

All: Amen.

Closing Song

Suggestions:

- Hearts of Courage – Timothy Hart
- Go Make a Difference – Steve Angrisano
- Do Something – Matthew West
- Let it Start with Me - No Other Name

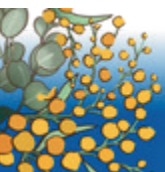
Resources

Books:

- Praying with Mary MacKillop, Trustees of the Sisters of St Joseph, North Sydney, NSW (2010)
- Wintour, Rina, Sacred Celebrations for Ordinary Time: Year A, Mount Joy Enterprises, Manly, QLD, Australia (2004)

Websites:

- Liturgy Brisbane: www.liturgybrisbane.net.au
- Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre: www.mmhc.org.au
- Mary MacKillop Today: www.marymackilloptoday.org.au
- Sisters of St Joseph: www.sosj.org.au





Liquid Pictures

Liquid Pictures is a form of drama whereby a scripture passage is taken and divided into five or six main sections each with a short phrase. Choose a simple action for each phrase. A leader reads the opening line, for example: Jesus said. Each of the phrases are then proclaimed one at a time, by different children accompanied by the action. They repeat the phrase and the action two or three times and then freeze. The process continues with each child and each line until all five or six phrases are complete. The students will then be all in a line, in a 'frozen' picture that tells the story. The leader concludes with a simple statement.

Echo Mime

Echo Mimes assist children of all ages to understand and recall a scripture passage. The passage is written in short, simple statements. An accompanying action is created. A leader or group of students voices each statement with the accompanying action and the statement and action are repeated (echoed) by the rest of the group.

Adapted from "Sacred Celebrations for Ordinary Time: Year A, A Resource for Celebrating Children's Liturgy of the Word", Rina Wintour (2004)

