

MARY'S NEWS TODAY

MARY MACKILLOP
today

Spring 2019



Giving women a voice in Fiji

Supporting single teen mums in Peru

Dear friends and supporters of Mary MacKillop Today

Dear Friends,

Since our first ever edition of Mary's News Today, published a year ago, we have been able to make a huge difference in many people's lives thanks to wonderful supporters like you. We've had such an exciting last financial year and we are so thrilled to share it with you. Together we have achieved so much, from our partnership in Fiji that aims to empower women in decision making that directly affects themselves and their communities, to our First Nation Scholarship recipients, here in Australia realising their dreams, all thanks to your gift of education.

Here you will find a collection of heartwarming stories I hope you enjoy reading them and are inspired by how you are helping touch the lives of so many. Your gifts give us all a great deal of hope for our future and I am grateful for your prayers and your continuing commitment to Mary MacKillop's legacy.

With gratitude

K. Robertson

Kirsty Robertson
CEO



A fair income for single teen mums...



Recently ethica ran a crowdfunding campaign seeking funding to produce a new range of gorgeous fair trade bags and accessories to help single teen mums in Peru earn a fair income. ethica is our social enterprise that believes in helping women and mothers to become strong women. Teen pregnancy is closely related to poverty and exclusion, limiting opportunities for adolescent girls and perpetuating generational poverty. The campaign was successful in raising \$ 4,067. Thank you to everyone who pledged to buy and if you missed out, you're still able to support women's livelihoods in Peru by purchasing these beautiful new products, along with your ethica favourites at ethica.org.au where every purchase helps to break the cycle of poverty and has an enormous impact for generations to come.



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Mary MacKillop Today is a signatory of the Australian Council for International Development Code of Conduct reflecting Mary MacKillop Today's Compliance with industry Standards of good practice, transparency and accountability.



Mary MacKillop Today receives support from the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

Inspired by Australia's first saint, Mary MacKillop Today empowers communities in Australia and overseas to realise their dignity through education, health, financial inclusion and livelihoods. Mary MacKillop Today's approach is shaped by the principles of our organisation. These principles are Human Dignity, Common Good, Participation and Subsidiarity and Option for the Poor.

Mary MacKillop Today acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of the land, past and present, on which all our offices are located.



“My budbili tells the story of the rock engraving of my totem the humpback whale (*Wi-yanga - Mother*) and her (*Gurung – Baby*) out at La Perouse, the Aboriginal Community on the shores of Kamay, Botany Bay. Where it is surrounded by the Country (*Nura*) and Sea (*Garrigarrang*) as the whale’s swim through currents in the water as they make their journey (*nga-mura*).”

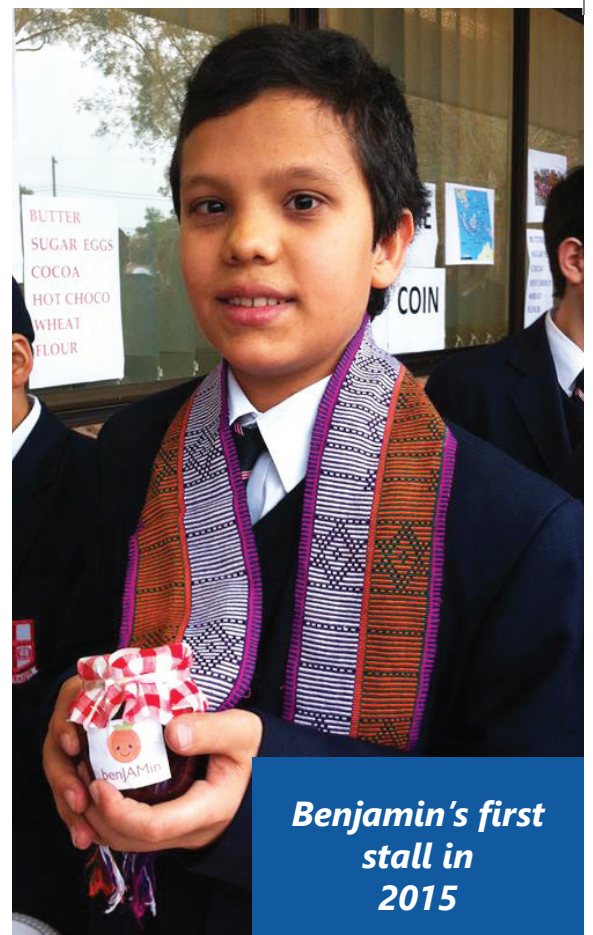
Thank you from Theresa!

Theresa is a strong Aboriginal woman from the Gweagal Clan of the Eora Nation, Sydney. She however grew up in her father’s country within the culturally vibrant Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community, on the NSW South Coast. When Theresa was only seven years old, she lost her father in an accident and tragically her mother to cancer when she was eighteen. Theresa had to grow up quickly, which was at times daunting and a struggle, but it taught her independence and resilience making her the woman she is today. Recently, Theresa, a recipient of Mary MacKillop Today’s First Nation Scholarship, graduated with her Masters in Religious Education. Theresa proudly gave the commencement speech and became the first, First Nation’s graduate to wear a traditional Budbili at her graduation. Theresa’s dream is to become a leader in Aboriginal Spirituality and now her dream is about to begin. With your kindness and support, Mary MacKillop Today was able to assist Theresa financially to help her complete her studies and realise her goal. With your ongoing support, you can help students like Theresa gain access to higher education. Theresa would like to personally thank you, in her Dharawal language, for helping her fulfil her dream.

***“Wa nga-mura niya-yan mana-wari-yudi! Didjari-gura niya!”
I wish you all well, and safe travels! Thank you! - Theresa***

Meet Ben...

As a ten year old boy Benjamin asked his mum to make jam to support his immense love of all things fruity and sweet. He also wanted to support children in Timor-Leste who don't enjoy the same educational opportunities that he and his brothers have here in Australia. Benjamin's idea was to sell his jam at his school, and with the support of his tutorial class, that's exactly what he did, holding a Jam and Brownie stall that raised in excess of \$500 to help resource schools in some of the most vulnerable areas in Timor-Leste. But Benjamin didn't stop there, he's continued making his jam and raising money every year since. Last year he sold 147 jars of his 'Strawberry and Vanilla' Jam, washing and cutting 40kg of strawberries, using 40kg of sugar, 30 lemons and 30 vanilla beans, raising an amazing total of \$808.50c for Mary MacKillop Today. Benjamin has even moved his fundraising enterprise online!



The money raised by Benjamin helps to continue Mary MacKillop Today's vital work in Timor-Leste, helping break down the barriers that prevent children from receiving a quality education. Mary MacKillop Today's programs provide;

- a way to reach children in remote communities with our Mobile Learning Centre
- a way for parents to support their children learning at home by giving them access to basic reading and writing classes
- a way to beat preventable diseases in school with training for teachers in health literacy and
- a way for teachers, who did not receive a quality education themselves, to improve their skills with our Tetun Literacy and Teacher Training Project while gaining access to our Tetun resource books for their students.

We are both humbled and inspired to see Benjamin transforming lives with education, with his mission continuing, one jar at a time.

Looking for an easy way to support Mary MacKillop Today?

If you're working, you can donate to Mary MacKillop Today pre-tax through workplace giving, with automatic deductions making tax-time easier for you.

If you'd like to set up a Workplace Giving Program at your workplace, contact us to find out how.

You're giving a voice to women in Fiji

In partnership with local organisation Ola Fou Fiji, the Talitha Women's Leadership program aims to empower young women to be agents of change within their community. The training focuses on building skills in leadership, mentoring and financial literacy. A central element of the program is the 'Leader Within', sessions building on the confidence of young women to raise their voice in community decisions. Mary MacKillop Today recently spoke to the young women participants from the Dakuinuku community in central Viti Levu island. There are currently 13 participants of the Talitha project from this area with ages ranging from 19 - 25 years old, and encompassing 3 villages. The project has set up a Fortnightly Club, where the participants can come together in a safe space. The participants discuss the content of the training in the Clubs, and are also learning both traditional and new crafts and skills, including printed cloth and jewelry making. Ala, a young woman participating in the project



Ala - thanks to you is learning new skills in Fiji

shared that she has learnt it is best to not dwell on it when you make a mistake, but to share with family and friends as it helps lighten your load. She has also learnt about discipline, hygiene and self-awareness. Thanks to your support, Ala has also learnt how to make tie necklaces, which she said she found really hard the first time, but then it became easier. Ala's dream is to sell at the market, but she also knows that she set her sights on other jobs.

"To know who I am, where I came from, this is very important to know who you are." - Ala

Are you prepared?

Having a valid Will is important to help protect the future of your loved ones. After considering your family's needs, choosing to leave a lasting legacy to Mary MacKillop Today will allow our life-changing work in education, health, financial inclusion and livelihoods to continue for many years to come.

For more information on how you can leave a gift to Mary MacKillop Today, please contact Yvonne Hamilton, our Gifts In Wills Officer, for a confidential discussion on (02) 8912 2717 or email at yvonne.hamilton@marymackilloptoday.org.au.

Helping rural Aussies!

Your ongoing support of Mary MacKillop Today's Financial Inclusion Team means we are able to offer, in partnership with Good Shepherd Microfinance, No Interest Loans (NILS) to those in need. Successful applicants of a NILS loan receive up to \$1,500 with small fortnightly repayments over a 12 to 18 month period with no fees and no charges. Our team, while based in Bathurst, Cowra, Lithgow, Orange, and Young are able to help anyone, anywhere in Australia who meets the NILS criteria. We are also able to help clients apply for StepUP - Low Interest Loans, while most importantly, addressing any underlying issues that might be affecting their financial capability. Emma, one of our Financial Inclusion Officers based in Cowra, recently told us about the impact a new mobility scooter had for a recipient of a StepUP loan:

"... it has brought him great joy and pride to own, giving back independence to do grocery shopping whenever and wherever and it provides the opportunity to access the community and participate socially on a level that was not possible for him before." - Emma, Financial Inclusion Officer

If you'd like more information you can go to www.loansmarymackilloptoday.org



Our team in
rural New South
Wales

Photos by Mary MacKillop Today Staff, where required, names have been changed for privacy.

MARY MACKILLOP
today

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THANK YOU...

for your generous support of Mary MacKillop Today's Parish Appeal.

If you'd like to join us by becoming a Parish Ambassador, running an ethica stall or collecting stamps, call or email us today!

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