

Class Activities Year 3 - 6

The activities below have been developed in line with the Australian Curriculum and focus on Mary MacKillop and the work of Mary MacKillop Today in Timor-Leste. The activities are designed using the 'See Judge Act' model with the addition of Pray. You may wish to use all or some of these activities to deepen students' understanding of Mary MacKillop's Feast Day. The suggestion is that you use at least one from each of the sections.

Who is Saint Mary MacKillop?

Teacher Background

Read about Mary MacKillop:

Mary of the Cross MacKillop is Australia's first saint. A saint is person who the Church recognises as someone who is especially close to God and devoted their lives to serving God. Mary MacKillop was born over 180 years ago in 1842 in Victoria. She grew up with seven brothers and sisters. When she was twenty-four, she devoted her life to God and took on the name "Mary of the Cross."

Mary was an ordinary woman with an extraordinary dream. Her dream was to give families and children who lived in poverty an education and safe shelter by opening schools. With what little they had, Mary and her friend Father Tenison Woods turned an old stable into a school in Penola, South Australia.

In 1866 Mary and Father Tenison worked together to set up the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart (also known as the Josephites). This was the first religious order to be founded by an Australian.

Mary taught everyone, regardless of gender, race, faith, or wealth, while serving with love and compassion. She and the Sisters of St Joseph went wherever the need was greatest. They gave up everything to live and teach amongst the people they served.

Listen to:

Podcast: [ABC's Fierce Girls: Mary MacKillop - the girl who became a saint](#)

A Cross of Stars by Andrew Chinn

Who is Mary MacKillop Today?

Read about Mary MacKillop Today:

In the spirit of Saint Mary MacKillop, Mary MacKillop Today works to transform lives with dignity and opportunity for self-determination. Mary MacKillop fiercely believed in the power of education to lift communities out of poverty. She chose to teach everyone, regardless of gender, race, faith or wealth — while serving with love and compassion. Mary MacKillop's work is still unfinished. Many people are still unable to break the cycle of poverty because they cannot access education. Mary MacKillop Today proudly continues her extraordinary 160-year-old legacy, so that all people have the opportunity to thrive.

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Who is Mary MacKillop Today? (Cont'd)

Mary MacKillop Today works to ensure fair access to education, giving people the tools to realise their full potential. This means partnering with communities in Australia, Timor-Leste, Fiji and Peru — teaching practical skills to women, men and children to create lasting change. Since 1866, the Sisters of Saint Joseph have worked 'for the flourishing of our earth and all its people'. Mary MacKillop Today continues that work to help people experiencing vulnerability to thrive.

Timor-Leste is a beautiful country and one of Australia's closest neighbours. Sadly, 42% of the population live in poverty and access to education is very limited, particularly in rural and remote areas. Schools have few resources, and around 35% of young people in rural areas cannot read or write. Only 20% of children are enrolled in pre-school. Many teachers have had access to limited education themselves, making it difficult to provide a full education to the next generation. In some cases, they work as volunteer teachers. Rural communities are often hard to reach due to poor road conditions, making them even more overlooked. Families frequently cannot afford to send their children to school — and even if they could, it means a long walk on dirt roads under the hot sun or torrential rain. The Sisters of Saint Joseph have been working with communities in Timor-Leste for over 30 years, and Mary MacKillop Today continues that work today.



Maria knows that journey well. Nine years old and living with a visual disability, she makes the long walk to school every day — guided by others along narrow paths and across rivers — because she loves to learn and refuses to be left behind. Her father Silveiro, who is also her teacher, says she comes home from school and asks whether she should eat first or study first. Maria is now in Grade 3, grasping ideas quickly and meeting every challenge with determination.

"I cannot see, but I can learn just like my other friends." — Maria, nine

Children like Maria are at the heart of the Mary MacKillop Today Inclusive Early Education Project. The project works with teachers and communities to create welcoming classrooms where every child can participate, learn and belong. It equips teachers with training and creative tools — including books, puppets, arts and crafts, and musical instruments — to help them teach in more inclusive and interactive ways. Local educators also work with families to build the confidence and skills to support children's learning at home. Your support can help fund learning resources and teacher training to reach children in even the most remote areas of Timor-Leste.

Watch:

[Mary MacKillop Today - Meet Maria, a determined girl with the courage to learn. \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

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SEE

1. Listen to the song A Cross of Stars song Andrew Chinn.
2. Students respond to the question: What does this song tell us about Mary? Use the Character Map to record responses. This could be done individually, in pairs, small groups or as a whole class. (Suggestion: Print on A3 paper for students to be able to add the information clearly)

3. Then share the above information about Mary MacKillop, now known as Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop or read a book about her.

Some suggested titles include:

- Meet Mary MacKillop by Sally Murphy,
- St Mary MacKillop Friend of Jesus by Judith M Steer RSJ,
- The Gift of Mary MacKillop by Colleen O'Sullivan RSJ

4. Students add any additional information on their Character Maps.

JUDGE

1. Watch [Mary MacKillop Today - Empowering remote communities through Inclusive Early Education project \(youtube.com\)](#).

2. Watch [Meet Maria, a determined girl with the courage to learn \(youtube.com\)](#).

3. Complete the Character Map on Mary MacKillop Today, in the same way as was done for Mary MacKillop.

4. As a whole class, using the [Visible Thinking Strategy – What makes you say that?](#) Discuss some of the responses using it to deepen student thinking and have them justify their responses.

ACT

1. Mary MacKillop Today relies on people around Australia to help them. Pose the following question to students: What can we do to help them? (It could be as simple as telling others about it, praying for their work or fundraising for them.) This could be done individually, in small groups or as a whole class. Students use a Problem/Solution Outline below to come up with some suggestions. Note: You might like to complete a Problem/Solution activity together before sending students off to complete one on their own. For example: Children not going to school. What can they do?

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ACT - CONT'D

2. Discuss and complete one of the actions from the brainstorm activity.
3. Complete 3, 2, 1 – 3 things learnt, 2 questions, 1 challenge faced. Discuss and address questions.
4. Pair students together who have had similar challenges when they have completed this

PRAY

1. In pairs write prayers for Mary MacKillop Today and the Inclusive Early Education Program. Pray these prayers throughout the month of August.

RESOURCES

Websites:

marymackilloptoday.org.au

- [Mary MacKillop Today - Empowering remote communities through Inclusive Early Education project \(youtube.com\)](#).
- [Meet Maria, a determined girl with the courage to learn \(youtube.com\)](#).

[ABC's Fierce Girls: Mary MacKillop - the girl who became a saint](#)

[Educational Resources - THINKING PATHWAYS \(weebly.com\)](#).

Books:

Ryan, Maurice, Teaching the Bible: A manual of teaching activities, commentary and blackline masters, Thomas Social Science Press, Southbank, VIC, Australia, 2005



Student Worksheet

PROBLEM/SOLUTION OUTLINE

Problem: What can we do to help Mary MacKillop Today?

Possible Solutions

Results/Consequences

Best Solution

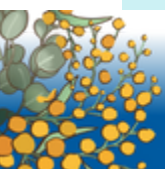
Advantages

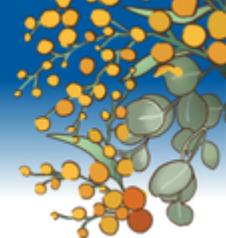
Disadvantages

Two Steps to take:

1.

2.





Stories from Mary MacKillop Today's work in Timor-Leste



Optional stories to read of Marcia and Silveiro with student worksheets.

Marcia's Story

Twelve year old Marcia lives in a village in Timor-Leste. Her school is part of our Inclusive Early Education Program. This program focuses on ensuring that education is inclusive for all.

Twelve-year-old Marcia loves going to school, and dreams of becoming a teacher. Now in Grade 4, she wakes up eager to learn every day. Her favourite subject is Portuguese literacy, but she also loves art, culture, singing, dancing, and playing with her friends.

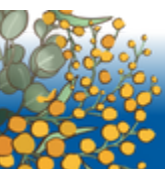
Marcia already understands that education is her best path out of poverty. She told us: "I want to go to school because when I grow up, I want to get a good job, help my parents build a better house and buy the food they need."



Silveiro's story

Meet Silveiro, a teacher and father in a remote community in Timor-Leste — and Maria's dad. As both a parent and an educator, Silveiro has seen firsthand how much a child can achieve when they are given the right support. When Maria became ill as a baby and lost her sight, Silveiro refused to let her disability define what was possible for her.

Thanks to Mary MacKillop Today's Inclusive Early Education Project, Silveiro has received training and practical resources to help him teach children like Maria more effectively. Step by step, he and his colleagues have been guided through new approaches to inclusive teaching — and given the tools to put them into practice in the classroom. Storybooks, learning materials, and hands-on resources are now helping children at his school engage with reading, writing, and the joy of learning.





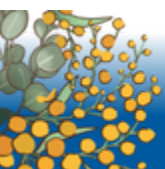
Student Worksheet - optional

Marcia's Story

1. What does the Inclusive Early Education Program bring to Marci'a school?

2. What does Marcia like about the Inclusive Early Education Program?

3. What ideas do you have to help raise funds for the Inclusive Early Education =?





Student Worksheet - optional

Silveiro's story

1. What is Silveiro doing at his school and in the community after training from Mary MacKillop Today?

2. How will Silveiro help children to learn at his school ?

3. What are the important things that Silveiro is finding new ways to teach ?

4. What does your school do to help all children learn?



Mary MacKillop Character Map

What does Mary ...

Think?

Hear?

See?

Say?

Smell?

Love?

Feel?

Do?

Go?



Where does Mary ...

MARY
MACKILLOP
today

Mary MacKillop Character Map

What does Mary MacKillop Today ...



Think?

Hear?

See?

Say?

Smell?

Love?

Feel?

Do?

Go?

MARY
MACKILLOP
today

Where does Mary
MacKillop Today...

Be *Fierce* for *Fair*

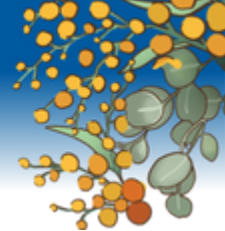
MARY
MACKILLOP
today

Class Activities Year 3 - 6

OPTIONAL PHOTOS FOR SHARING



Feast of Saint Mary MacKillop - 8 August



Curriculum Links

The learning activities are broadly linked to the Australian Curriculum in the following areas:

GENERAL CAPABILITIES

Intercultural Understanding

Intercultural understanding encompasses the behaviours and dispositions that students need to understand what happens and what to do when cultures intersect.

Through learning to value their own cultural perspectives and practices and those of others, young people are supported to become responsible local and global citizens. They are equipped for living and working in an interconnected world.

Intercultural understanding involves students developing the knowledge and skills needed to reflect on culture and cultural diversity, engage with cultural and linguistic diversity, and navigate intercultural contexts.

Ethical Understanding

Ethical understanding encompasses the knowledge and skills students require to identify ethical concepts, understand different ethical perspectives and apply ethical thinking in response to issues.

Ethical understanding involves students building a strong personal and socially oriented ethical outlook that helps them to manage context, conflict and uncertainty. They develop an awareness of the influence that their values and behaviour have on others.

Ethical understanding involves students exploring ethical issues and interactions with others, discussing ideas and learning to be accountable as members of a democratic community.

Ethical understanding is developed through the investigation of a range of questions drawn from various contexts in the curriculum.

Personal and Social Capability

The Personal and Social capability provides a foundation for students to understand themselves and others, and navigate their relationships, lives, work and learning. Students with well-developed social and emotional skills find it easier to manage themselves, relate to others, collaborate, develop empathy, set goals and resolve conflict. They feel positive about themselves and the world around them.

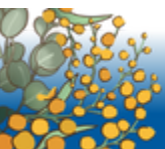
The Personal and Social capability supports students to build their ability to regulate their thoughts, emotions and behaviours. This ability assists students to effectively engage with new ways of thinking, knowing and doing in an increasingly demanding and diverse global society.

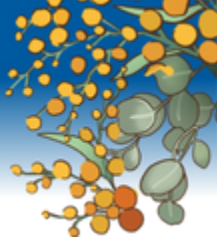
The Personal and Social capability learning continuum Level 1a supports students with disability to access age-equivalent content and participate in learning on the same basis as their peers.

CROSS CURRICULUM PRIORITY

Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia

The Asia region exerts significant influence globally and in Australia. Young people need to develop the knowledge, skills, capabilities and attitudes to effectively navigate and contribute to our regional neighbourhood.





Curriculum Links - cont'd

YEAR 3-6 AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONTENT DESCRIPTIONS

HASS

Knowledge and Understanding: Civics and Citizenship

Year 3

Why people participate within communities and how students can actively participate and contribute to communities
(AC9HS3K07)

Knowledge and Understanding: Geography

Year 6

The geographical diversity and location of places in the Asia region, and its location in relation to Australia
(AC9HS6K04)

Skills: Questioning and Researching

Year 3

Develop questions to guide investigations about people, events, places and issues
(AC9HS3S01)

Year 4

Develop questions to guide investigations about people, events, places and issues
(AC9HS4S01)

Year 5

Develop questions to investigate people, events, developments, places and systems
(AC9HS5S01)

Year 6

Develop questions to investigate people, events, developments, places and systems
(AC9HS6S01)

Skills: Interpreting, analysing and evaluating

Year 3

Interpret information and data displayed in different formats
(AC9HS3S03)

Analyse information and data, and identify perspectives
(AC9HS3S04)

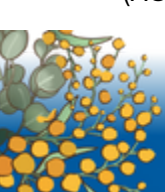
Year 4

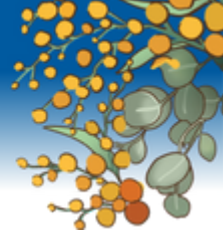
Analyse information and data, and identify perspectives
(AC9HS4S04)

Skills: Concluding and decision making

Year 3

Propose actions or responses to an issue or challenge that consider possible effects of actions
(AC9HS3S06)





Curriculum Links - cont'd

YEAR 3-6 AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONTENT DESCRIPTIONS

Skills: Concluding and decision making - cont'd

Year 4

Propose actions or responses to an issue or challenge that consider possible effects of actions
(AC9HS4S06)

Year 5

Develop evidence-based conclusions
(AC9HS5S05)

Propose actions or responses to issues or challenges and use criteria to assess the possible effects
(AC9HS5S06)

Year 6

Develop evidence-based conclusions
(AC9HS6S05)

Propose actions or responses to issues or challenges and use criteria to assess the possible effects
(AC9HS6S06)

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Personal, social and community health: Interacting with others

Year 3 & 4

Describe how valuing diversity influences wellbeing and identify actions that promote inclusion in their communities
(AC9HP4P05)

ENGLISH

Literature: Engaging with and responding to literature

Year 3

Discuss connections between personal experiences and character experiences in literary texts and share personal preferences
(AC9E3LE02)

Literacy: Interacting with others

Year 3

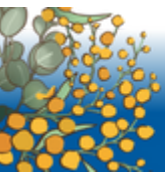
Use interaction skills to contribute to conversations and discussions to share information and ideas
(AC9E3LY02)

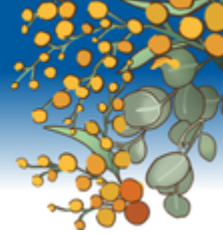
Year 4

Listen for key points and information to carry out tasks and contribute to discussions, acknowledging another opinion, linking a response to the topic, and sharing and extending ideas and information
(AC9E4LY02)

Year 5

Use appropriate interaction skills including paraphrasing and questioning to clarify meaning, make connections to own experience, and present and justify an opinion or idea
(AC9E5LY02)





Curriculum Links - cont'd

YEAR 3-6 AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONTENT DESCRIPTIONS

Literacy: Interacting with others - cont'd

Year 6

Use interaction skills and awareness of formality when paraphrasing, questioning, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, and sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions (AC9E6LY02)

Literacy: Analysing, interpreting and evaluating

Year 3

Use comprehension strategies when listening and viewing to build literal and inferred meaning, and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (AC9E3LY05)

Year 4

Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring and questioning to build literal and inferred meaning, to expand topic knowledge and ideas, and evaluate texts (AC9E4LY05)

Year 5

Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring and questioning to build literal and inferred meaning to evaluate information and ideas (AC9E5LY05)

Year 6

Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising monitoring and questioning to build literal and inferred meaning, and to connect and compare content from a variety of sources (AC9E6LY05)

Please review your individual Diocese Religious Education Curriculum for direct links, as these vary across Australia.

