

Class Activities Year 7 - 10

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.

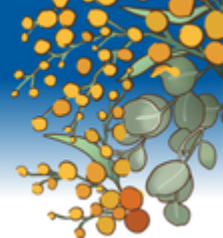
Who is Saint Mary MacKillop?

Mary Helen MacKillop was born in 1842 in Victoria to Scottish immigrant parents and grew up with seven brothers and sisters. At the age of 24, she dedicated her life to God and took on the name Mary of the Cross. Mary was an ordinary woman with an extraordinary dream and a generous heart. Her dream was to give the poorest families and most neglected children access to education and safe shelter — and she turned that dream into action by opening schools.

With what little they had, Mary and Father Julian Tenison Woods turned an old stable into a school in Penola, South Australia. In 1866, Mary and Father Julian worked together to establish the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart — the first religious order to be founded by an Australian. As a passionate educator, Mary broke through the prejudice of 19th-century Australia to teach everyone — regardless of gender, race, faith, or wealth — while serving people experiencing vulnerability with compassion. She and the Sisters of Saint Joseph went wherever the need was greatest, giving up everything to live and teach alongside the people they served.

All saints have dedicated Feast Days when they are remembered with special mention and prayers. Mary MacKillop's Feast Day falls on 8 August — the day she died. It is a wonderful time to reflect on the qualities and actions that set her apart, and how her legacy continues to be relevant today. Mary fiercely believed in the power of education to lift communities out of poverty. Education in Australia is what it is today thanks in large part to the dedication and determination of Mary and the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

One of the most inspiring things about saints is that they are people who lived in the world just like us. As Mary's life shows us, saints dedicated every day to honouring God and sharing his love by serving others. Canonisation is when the Pope declares that a person, who has died, practised heroic virtue and devotion to God during their life.



Class Activities Year 7 - 10

Who is Saint Mary MacKillop? - Cont'd

The act proclaims that the person is now with God in heaven, intercedes for us before the Lord, and is to be publicly recognised by the whole Church. On 4 August 1909, Cardinal Moran visited Mary MacKillop as she prepared for death. He gave her his blessing and, as he left, said: "I consider I have this day assisted at the deathbed of a Saint." Mary died a few days later on 8 August 1909. At her funeral Mass, people rushed to touch her body with rosaries — a practice very unusual in Australia at the time. When she was laid to rest at Gore Hill, many took samples of earth from her grave as a precious reminder. Her remains are now in the Mary MacKillop Memorial Chapel at North Sydney. Saint Mary MacKillop was canonised on 17 October 2010 at Saint Peter's Basilica, Rome.

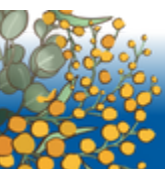
Who is Mary MacKillop Today?

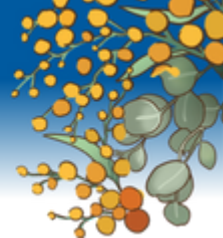
Read:

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.

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. 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.





Class Activities Year 7 - 10

Who is Mary MacKillop Today - cont'd



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.

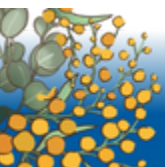
"I cannot see, but I can learn just like my other friends." — Maria, nine

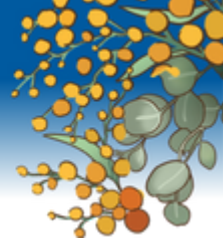
Children like Maria are at the heart of the Mary MacKillop Today Inclusive Early Education Program. The program works with teachers and communities to create welcoming classrooms where every child can participate, learn and belong. It equips teachers with training and creative tools — including books, 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.

Classroom Activities

SEE

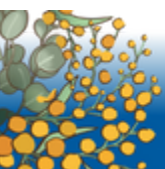
1. Share the [Feast Day PowerPoint Presentation – Timor Leste](#) with students. Giving them an overall perspective of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, The Sisters of St Joseph and Mary MacKillop Today.
2. Watch:
 - a. [Mary MacKillop Today - Empowering remote communities through Inclusive Early Education project \(youtube.com\)](#).
 - b. [Meet Maria, a determined girl with the courage to learn \(youtube.com\)](#).
3. In groups of 3 students record their responses to the following questions:
 - a. What did Mary MacKillop see?
 - b. What did Mary MacKillop do?
 - c. How did Mary MacKillop act?
4. Each student in the group will be required to report back to the whole class on one of the questions, to ensure full participation.





Class Activities Year 7 - 10

OPTIONAL PHOTOS FOR SHARING





Classroom Activities - cont'd

JUDGE

1. Pose the following question to students: What if St Mary MacKillop and Fr Tenison Woods never began the first school in Penola? Individually students record as many responses as they can think of in a given time limit.
2. Students pair up with another student, share their responses, adding to their own list any that they didn't have. Give an additional five minutes to come up with any new ideas and record them.
3. Using the Visible Thinking Strategy – What makes you say that? Pairs join to create a group of four and work through discussing their responses using the strategy to deepen their thinking and justifying their responses.

ACT

1. Thinking about their responses from the previous activity, students individually respond using the Triangle, Square, Circle reflection strategy. What are three important points they have learnt? What squares with their thinking, or what do they agree with? What is still circling, or what questions do they still have?
2. Given what the students know of Mary MacKillop, the Sisters of St Joseph, Mary MacKillop Today and the world at large, discuss who they think is responsible for bridging the education gap. Who should be ensuring education is for all?
3. Then discuss how it might be done. Students come together in small groups or on their own to come up with a proposal for a simple action that could be done within their lesson, class or school bringing it one step closer to reality. (Advocating, educating others, volunteering, fundraising, praying are some possibilities)

PRAY

1. Mary of the Cross MacKillop never did anything without prayer. As a class write a short prayer to be used in homerooms, PCs or on Assembly throughout the week or month of August.

References:

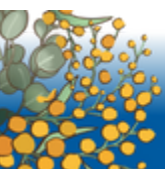
Mary MacKillop Today

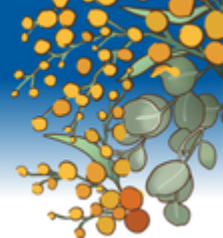
- [Feast Day PowerPoint Presentation –Timor Leste](#)
- [Empowering remote communities through Inclusive Early Education project \(youtube.com\)](#)
- [Meet Maria, a determined girl with the courage to learn \(youtube.com\)](#)

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

[Triangle-Square-Circle - The Teacher Toolkit](#)

-





Curriculum Links

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

General capabilities key ideas

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.

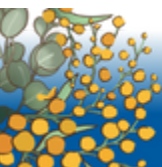
The Personal and Social capability supports students to build their ability to regulate their thoughts, emotions and behaviours. This ability assists students to effectively engage with new ways of thinking, knowing and doing in an increasingly demanding and diverse global society.

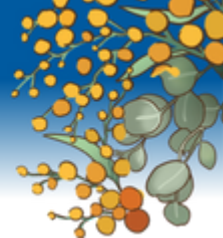
The Personal and Social capability learning continuum Level 1a supports students with disability to access age-equivalent content and participate in learning on the same basis as their peers.

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 7-10 AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONTENT DESCRIPTIONS

GEOGRAPHY

Knowledge and Understanding: Place and liveability

Year 7

The location and distribution of services and facilities, and implications for liveability of places
(AC9HG7K06)

Skills: Concluding and decision making

Year 7

Identify a strategy for action in relation to environmental, economic, social or other factors, and explain potential impacts
(AC9HG7S05)

Year 8

Identify a strategy for action in relation to environmental, economic, social or other factors, and explain potential impacts
(AC9HG8S05)

Year 9

Develop and evaluate strategies using environmental, economic or social criteria; recommend a strategy and explain the predicted impacts
(AC9HG9S05)

Year 10

Develop and evaluate strategies using environmental, economic or social criteria; recommend a strategy and explain the predicted impacts
(AC9HG10S05)

CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP

Knowledge and Understanding: Citizenship, diversity and understanding

Year 7

How values based on freedom, respect, fairness and equality of opportunity can support social cohesion and democracy within Australian society
(AC9HC7K05)

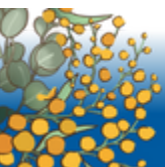
Year 9

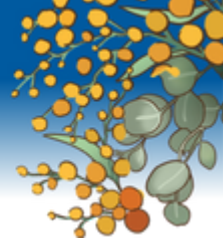
How and why individuals and groups, including community, religious and cultural groups, participate in and contribute to civic life in Australia and to global citizenship
(AC9HC9K05)

Skills: Communicating

Year 7

Create descriptions, explanations and arguments using civics and citizenship knowledge, concepts and terms that reference evidence
(AC9HC7S05)





Curriculum Links - cont'd

YEAR 7-10 AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONTENT DESCRIPTIONS

skills: Communicating - Cont'd

Year 8

Create descriptions, explanations and arguments using civics and citizenship knowledge, concepts and terms that reference evidence
(AC9HC8S05)

ENGLISH

Literacy: Interacting with others

Year 7

Use interaction skills when discussing and presenting ideas and information including evaluations of the features of spoken texts
(AC9E7LY02)

Year 8

Use interaction skills for identified purposes and situations, including when supporting or challenging the stated or implied meanings of spoken texts in presentations or discussion
(AC9E8LY02)

Year 9

Listen to spoken texts that have different purposes and audiences, analysing how language features position listeners to respond in particular ways, and use interacting skills to present and discuss opinions regarding these texts
(AC9E9LY02)

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

