

JCoLT newsflash July 2023



Dear Companions,

“To forget to celebrate is to forget to imitate the God who created us and then relaxed and said, ‘That’s good.’”

These words of Joan Chittister remind us of the importance to celebrate life, and in the coming months we have two occasions to gather and celebrate the Josephite story.

Mary MacKillop’s Feast Day invites us to recall the life of this great woman whose legacy we continue to live and share today: she who has inspired so many to live life with an open and generous heart.

In September we will recognize Annie MacKillop who accompanied Mary and many of the early Sisters. That is, she ‘companioned’ them, and would have shared in many challenges and celebrations along that pathway, sharing in the charism. We hope that many of you will be able to gather online on September 2nd with Companions from many places to learn about Annie’s gift to the Josephite story and celebrate her as our inaugural Josephite Companion.

(see p2)

We also welcome two new members to our Josephite Companions Leadership Team and look forward to their contributions as we move forward. (see p3)

Happy celebrations and many blessings,

Josephite Companions Leadership Team (JCoLT):
Mary Hemmings, Helen Dougherty, Anne-Marie Wilkinson, Pauline McGuire, Helen Brown, Antoinette Mangion, Clare Conaglen rsj

International Companions Day Webinar

2 September 2023

Walking Together Honouring our History Enriching our Future

Breakout Rooms - Open Discussions
To book your free ticket - Use QR Code or go to
<https://www.trybooking.com/CJRTC>
Bookings Close 28 August 2023

Guest Speaker
Sr Judith Mary Geddes rsj
Author: A Faith Filled Family

AEST 11.30AM TO 1.30PM - SA 11.00AM TO 1.00PM - WA 9.30AM TO 11.30AM
NZ 1.30PM TO 3.30PM - TIMOR-LESTE 10.30AM TO 12.30PM
PERU 1/9/2023 8.30PM TO 10.30PM

Come and discover Annie MacKillop,
our first Josephite Companion!

Annie MacKillop

Companion & Friend to Mary MacKillop & Sisters of St Joseph

Annie MacKillop was a younger sister of Mary, now celebrated as Australia's first saint. From her teenage years Annie grew in her care of her siblings as companion, helper and confidante, especially of Mary.

Before and since the canonization of Saint Mary MacKillop, many people have become associated with her spirit, her work and her dedication to helping the poor. Over time, these followers or associates have been men and women who follow in the spirit of Mary and have now chosen to be named as Companions. They not only pray through Saint Mary of the Cross but live in the same spirit of dedicated service. As the numbers of professed Josephite Sisters lessen, these Companions are assuming a greater and more active role in following Christ as companions and friends.



Annie MacKillop has been chosen as the model for Josephite Companions. Besides being Mary's companion, and often co-worker, she also knew, as a single woman, the difficulties of earning a living, finding a home, and coping with daily problems as we do today. In later life after receiving some financial help from her uncle Peter MacKillop after his death, she wrote to her brother Father Donald: *How glad I am to have things settled and to get my £100 a year without having any bother over rates, gas, etc. besides the fear always of fire or accidents. It would be so nice to be at "peace" about money matters for the rest of my life.* (Personal Letter 8 Aug 1910)

Annie became Mary's life-long friend, support and confidante, deeply involved in Mary's mission, even though she never became a vowed Sister of St Joseph, never had her own home. After teaching in Penola with Mary, she later taught music in early schools to help with living costs. Annie can give us inspiration for our own living and service.



Text: Judith Geddes rsj
Sketch: Kate Warlord

Who are we?

Hi, my name is Antoinette Mangion. I was born in Malta and migrated to Australia in 1982. I am a widow and a mother of three young men.



I've been involved with the Josephites for 20 years. For the last 13 years I've been the leader of the Blacktown Josephite Companions and at the moment I am discerning the Covenant Josephite Pathway/Private Vows Pathway. I'm also a member of the leadership team of the NSW Companions and very recently joined JCoLT.

I worked as a Respite Care Co-ordinator with the Maltese Community. Here I organised activities for the senior Maltese community and supported clients with day-to-day tasks and outings. After this, I worked in Blacktown's Parish Office as a Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. This involved looking after ministers who give Communion to the sick, organising RCIA and baptism meetings and I was also part of the Sacramental Team.

Now retired, I'm involved in our Parish Social Justice Group where I organise a morning Tea every Wednesday morning for those experiencing social isolation. I also help in the Pantry, a grocery service offered to those doing it tough in Blacktown and beyond. I'm a Minister of the Word and a Eucharistic Minister. I love reading, travelling and going for walks in the open or sitting on a bench admiring God's gift of creation. I also love walking on the beach or just looking at the vastness of the ocean.

My name is Helen Brown and I am honoured to be representing West Australian Josephite Companions on JCoLT. I hope that I can contribute meaningfully to the future of the Josephite Companion Movement, building strong, vibrant and self-sustaining communities.



I have a deep appreciation for the important role that strong, innovative and faithful women have played in my life. One of those women is St Mary of the Cross whom I admire and try to imitate in my interactions with others, extending selfless love to all, particularly children, women, the marginalised and First Nations people. I am committed to living simply and contemplatively while trusting in the divine mercy of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

I am a mother of two grown children who bring me great joy, happiness and fulfilment. I am a teacher and have been in education for over thirty years. I hope that I have had a meaningful impact on the lives of those students whom I have had the pleasure to teach, shaping and inspiring them along their journey."

I am grateful for the contribution that the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart have made to the Australian way of life and admire their ongoing and tireless work in areas of great need today - care of the earth, reconciliation and care for the poor and marginalised in society.

Josephite Companions in Timor Leste



During the week leading to St Joseph's day the Timorese Josephite Companions had three link-ups. On Sunday March 12th they met at Mary MacKillop Today Centre and had a meeting. It had been quite a long break from the previous one. Sister Nola was able to be at the meeting, which was great as Covid and travelling had meant she could not be at one before this. At the meeting they decided on many things and prayed together and just had a great time catching up.



On Saturday 18th early in the morning they met up and climbed up the steps to Christo Rei and prayed the Stations of the Cross with beautifully harmonised singing and then had a combined breakfast at the bottom of the walk.

Then on St Joseph's day (Sunday) they all went to the 11am Mass at Balidi and after Mass had a 'bring-something' meal together. The food was amazing. Hopefully this year will see many more connections and mercy works from the Companions.



Social Media:

Companions making a difference? Share an item of interest from your local Companions' group that may inspire others. Send information and a photo to our Companions' email address so we can share it on the website. Use the **#JosephiteCompanions** on Instagram to tag your group's activities. Let's keep connected!