

## A Woman of Courage

*May God give you patience and courage in your sufferings. MM 1904*

Mary MacKillop had to face many difficult situations and choices in her life. As the eldest child in the family she carried the responsibility for taking care of her brothers and sisters. Her father was not able to keep a job so often the family had to rely on relatives for somewhere to live and find food. When Mary was sixteen she went to work as a clerk in Melbourne so that the family would have money to live on. She said her childhood when she had one was 'full of sorrows'. This taught Mary how to face life's challenges with hope. She remained steadfast as she embraced the Cross in her life.

Mary also had a lot of sorrow in her life. Her brother John died after falling from a horse, her grandfather drowned in a flood; her mother was drowned in a shipwreck when she was coming to see Mary in Sydney.

Mary also suffered from poor health. She often wrote that she was too sick to get out of bed. This did not stop her from doing God's work.

She suffered at the hands of some of the Bishops who did not like the way she lived as a Sister of St Joseph or in some cases the way she taught in her schools. She was excommunicated in 1871 and she was investigated in 1883.



*Painting by MM Brady OP - used with permission*

***Whoever does not take up the Cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Matthew 10:37***