



Resource for Years 3 - 6

Prayers, Reflections and Stories based on Mary MacKillop's value

Do Your Bit

Photographs, Prayers and Stories
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Prayers

Do Your Bit

Sacred Space



You need:

A cloth
Candle
Picture
Bible

- ✚ Choose a prayer from the list below.
- ✚ Set up the Sacred Space and invite the children to gather around it
- OR
- ✚ Provide the materials for the Sacred Space and organise the children to put them in place.
- ✚ Choose a saying from the one of the values in the theme being studied around Mary MacKillop. Print it out and place in the Sacred Space.

Box Prayer

You need a six sided box for each child or for the class.



- ✚ Choose a theme for each box-dice eg, justice, peace, someone in need etc.

- ✚ Invite children to compose a prayer for each side of the box.

- ✚ Write a prayer on each side and decorate.

- ✚ Use the box like a dice by rolling it to see what prayer comes up on top.

- ✚ Say the prayer.



- ✚ Finish by remembering that Mary MacKillop shows us how to do our bit to make life better for others. *Never see a need without doing something about it.*

Spoons



The letters in the word 'spoon' can be a guide for prayer.

S - Spread the Gospel

God, you want everyone to come to know you. Inspire our hearts as we share your life and love with others.

P - Praise God.

Praise to you God who provides for our needs. You provide nourishment that gives life and you protect us from harm. Glory and praise to you O God.

O - Others

God, give patience and love to those who suffer because they serve you. Help us to work for justice that brings peace and hope into our world.

O - Ourselves

God, we thank you for your kindness to us. Free us from the things that hold us back from serving you joyfully.

N - Needs of the community/world/families

(Name the people being prayed for.) God, accept our prayers for our brothers and sisters who are in need of support and encouragement in their troubles. In your kindness hear our prayers. We make our prayers in Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayer for People Undergoing Difficulties in Life

Have a cross and some stones or beads ready.



- ✚ Invite each child to take a bead and to think of someone who may be suffering from war, famine, injustice, homelessness etc.
- ✚ Then invite the children to place the bead near the cross and name who/what is being prayed for eg, / *pray for refugees*.
- ✚ Raise hands in blessing over the objects around the cross and pray a simple prayer of blessing for all those named as being needy.

Example: *God in your kindness bless and help these people. Lead them to trust in you and teach us to be generous. Look with love on all of us that we may live in freedom and peace. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.*



Healing Heart Prayer



✚ Prepare a large red paper heart and attach it to the wall or noticeboard.

✚ Give children a clear bandaid.

✚ Invite them to think of someone who needs healing from sickness or a country that needs healing from war or natural disasters

✚ Write the name on a bandaid.

✚ Stick it to the heart.

✚ Pray a general prayer for all the people who need God's healing touch.

✚ Raise hands in blessing and pray eg,
God, transform the lives of these people that they may live in freedom and safety, free from fear and in good health.



Praying Hands



Hold one hand in front of the body, palm down with thumb close to the body.

The thumb is the closest to the body.

Pray for all those closest to you eg, family, friends, school friends.

The next finger is the pointer.

Pray for trouble spots in the world eg, countries at war, needs of farmers, those suffering from natural disasters.....

The next finger is the tallest.

Pray for heads of state eg, government leaders in Australia, Church leaders, leaders of other countries, leaders in schools etc.

Next comes the ring finger.

This finger is the weakest of our fingers so we pray for those who have no power in their lives, eg, people with disability, refugees, people out of work, people needing a safe place to live.

Lastly our little finger

We pray for ourselves, for whatever we need.



Spirit beads



Make a set of prayer beads for each child by threading seven beads on fishing line or nylon cord.

Pray the seven fruits of the Spirit.

They are **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control.**

✚ Begin with the following prayer.

Spirit of God fills the whole earth. We pray that the Spirit will work through our lives to bring Christ into our world. There are all sorts of service to be done.

✚ On the first bead named **love** invite the children to pray that love may increase. They might like to name places or situations where love will grow.

All: *Come, Holy Spirit.*

✚ On each of the following beads name the gift of the Spirit and pray as for the first bead.

All: *Come, Holy Spirit.*

✚ At the end pray: *Come O Holy Spirit. Fill our hearts. Help us to do our bit to make God's kingdom grow.*





Scripture

Do Your Bit

Scripture quotations from NRSV:
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Feeding of a Large Crowd - John 6: 1-1



When (Jesus) looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." So

they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets.



Try always to be generous with God

Mary MacKillop 1882

Ten Bridesmaids - Matthew 25: 1-10



Jesus told this story. "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! There will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers

and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut."



Do your best and God will bless your efforts.

Mary MacKillop 1899

Healing of a Blind Man - Mark 8: 22-26



They came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to (Jesus) and begged him to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village; and when he had put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Can you see anything?" And the man looked up and said, "I can see people, but they look like trees, walking." The Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he looked intently and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.

**Be patient and work generously
in the service of our Divine Lord.**

Mary MacKillop 1898

Loving God with all your Heart - Luke 10: 25-28



...A lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

We must teach more by example than by word.

Mary MacKillop 1867

Come Blessed of the God - Matthew 25: 31-3



(Jesus said} "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats and he will put the sheep at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing. I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave

you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'



Never be ashamed of work done for God and God's poor.

Mary MacKillop 1874

Choosing to Help - Matthew 8: 1-3



When Jesus had come down from the mountain, great crowds followed him; and there was a leper who came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean." He stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I do choose. Be made clean!" Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

**Let us try to do our work well in God's sight who alone is
to be considered in our thoughts.**

Mary MacKillop 1880

Peter and John help a Lame Man - Acts 3: 1-10



One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. All the

people saw him walking and praising God, and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.



Find happiness in making others happy.

Mary MacKillop 1899

Tabitha - Acts 9: 36-42



Now, in Jappa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. Since Lydda was near Jappa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and

said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. This became known throughout Jappa, and many believed in the Lord.



**God wants us by every means in our power
to lead others to life.**

Mary MacKillop 1899

Wedding Celebration - John 2: 1-1



On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward

tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him



**Do what you can with the means at your disposal and
leave all the rest calmly to God.**

Mary MacKillop 1888

Showing Love for Jesus - John 21: 15-17



When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep.

Let the motive of our actions be to please God alone.

Mary MacKillop 1873



Stories

Do Your Bit

Mary Gave her Lunch Away

In 1925 the Sisters of St Joseph who knew Mary MacKillop were invited to write down what they remembered of her. Sister Borgia was one these Sisters. She wrote of a time when Mary MacKillop visited the town where she lived. This is her story.

It was after lunch one day during the week. The Sisters who taught in school had been home for lunch and had started the afternoon lessons when I heard someone at the front door. I hurried to see who it was. What a wonderful surprise. There was Mary MacKillop. She looked tired and I urged her to come in and sit down.

"Thank you, dear," she said. "I can't stay long because the train leaves at 3 o'clock. Could you give me some lunch please? I had a cup of tea at 6 o'clock this morning before catching the train this far. I feel quite hungry."

I hurriedly put the kettle on to boil and found a piece of steak to cook for her.

"While you are preparing some lunch I'll just go across to the school and see the Sisters and the children there," Mary said, and away she went.

I was pleased I could do something to help Mary. She worked very hard and travelled day and night to visit the Sisters. I wondered when she ever stayed at home to have a rest.

Mary came back and I served up her lunch. She sat down and was about to start eating it when there was another knock at the door. When I went out to answer it I found an old man standing there. His clothes were nearly worn out.

"Have you a bite of food to eat please? I can't get work in this town and I'm very hungry." I looked at him in dismay. I had just given Mary MacKillop the last piece of meat and vegetables that we had.

Behind me I heard Mary coming up the hallway. She said, "Sister, give him my lunch. I'll be happy to have some bread and butter with a cup of tea."

I felt a bit annoyed that the old man was getting her nice lunch.

"Give it to him, dear. You don't know whose father he might be. If he wants to work then he has to be strong."

So I gave the man Mary's lunch. He thought it was wonderful. He ate it quickly, thanked me and went on his way. Meanwhile Mary ate the bread and butter I gave her. She was running out of time to catch the train.

When she was ready to leave, Mary gave me one of her wonderful smiles. Her lovely eyes twinkled as she kissed me goodbye. Then she was gone.

I looked at the dishes that I had to wash up. I thought about Mary saying that the man could be someone's father. He could have been my father. He was the right age. So I said a little prayer that he would soon find work. Trust Mary to think of someone else, even when she was hungry herself. She often said to us, "When you see a need, do something about it." She had given me an example of how to do my bit to make life better for others.

Mary Helps a Woman to get to the Chemist

It was the Christmas holidays and some of the Sisters of St Joseph were gathered at the convent in Mount St, North Sydney. A group of Sisters sat around the kitchen table preparing the vegetables for the next meal. As they cut up the carrots and peeled the potatoes, they shared some of the things that had happened to them during the year. Some told about their schools, some shared stories about the towns where they lived. Sister Helena lived at the Sydney convent all year round and decided to tell them a story about something that happened to her when Mary MacKillop asked her to go into the town with her. This is her story.

Recently, Mary MacKillop asked me to go with her into town. We went across the road near the post office to wait for the tram. I felt honoured to be asked to help her. We were a little early for the tram and were waiting quietly at the tram stop. A lot of people passed by on their way to work and I watched them with interest. Mostly, there were men of all ages hurrying along so as not to be late but there were a few women too. I saw a couple of ladies who had children at St Joseph's School. They must have been out to get some groceries.

Then I saw a young woman staggering up the street towards us. I thought she was drunk and tried to move away from her. I didn't want her coming close to us. But she did come close and she rested with her back up against the stone wall of the post office. She stood there with her eyes closed, breathing heavily.

I was surprised when Mary said to me, "Come along, dear, and see what is wrong with this poor woman." Mary's quick eye had detected something was seriously wrong. I could see compassion on her face.

When we reached the woman we found that she was sick. Mary asked, "Is there anything we can do, dear? Can we help?"

"I'm trying to get to the chemist shop," she said. "I know what medicine I need. If I can get some, I will be better."

With that, Mary and I took her by the arms and walked with her. Together, the three of us walked to the chemist shop just down the road. Sure enough, they had the medicine. The chemist gave the young woman some of it and we sat with her while he did up some more for her to take home. Then we waited a few more minutes until she felt better.

"Thank you, Sisters," the young woman said. She left us to walk slowly home.

It was just as well we were early for the tram or goodness knows what might have happened to that poor woman. We never did learn her name. It didn't seem important at the time. I'm glad Mary was there or I might not have helped her. Mary acted quickly when she saw that woman was in need. Next time I will pay more attention so I will know if there is a problem, just like Mary MacKillop showed me that morning.

The Sisters were interested in Sister Helena's story. They too had experienced Mary's way of doing things. They continued to share their stories as they peeled more potatoes. They were content in knowing that each of them had done their own share to help others.

Photo in a shop Window

Sister Stanislaus had many reasons to remember Mary MacKillop. She could tell a lot of stories about her experiences with Mary. Here is one of her stories concerning Mary after she died in 1909.

One day after Mary MacKillop died, I was in town with another Sister. I was thinking about Mary as I crossed the busy streets. I was remembering how I had been here with her on a few occasions. Mary saw God in everything. She said that the flowers in the garden showed the wonders and the beauty of God. Her actions were a constant reminder to us and to the children in the schools, of how to live like Jesus. I thought that Mary MacKillop's kindness knew no bounds.

I was walking along thinking these things when I received a big surprise. There, in a shop window, was a picture of Mary MacKillop! I had just been thinking about her and here was her photo. I thought I would go in and buy it. I would love to have a picture of Mary. I asked the Sister with me if she would like to come into the shop with me and so in we went.

The shopkeeper looked at us in surprise. "You are Sisters of St Joseph," he said. We said that we were.

"I knew Mary MacKillop," he said.

I pointed to the picture in the shop window. I said to him, "I saw the picture in your window and wondered if it was for sale and if so, how much it would cost."

"That photo is not for sale. I could never part with it."

I was very surprised and asked him why. He told me his story.

"That kind lady saved my wife and me from starvation. I had no work. We had no money for food or clothing. We were lucky to have a place to live in but I didn't know how long we could stay there without money. I didn't know what to do. My wife tried to get work as a washerwoman but no one wanted her services.

To this day, I don't know how Mary MacKillop heard about us but one day she came to our house with some food and clothing. That wasn't all. She found me a job in a warehouse. I was so grateful. From that day on, things began to get better for us. Now I own this shop and have my own business. My wife and I would be lost except for Mary MacKillop's help. So you see I can't sell that photo. It is there to remind me of that very kind lady. It also reminds me that if I see someone in need then I can try to help them, the same way Mary MacKillop helped me."

He went on to say, "My wife and I aren't even Catholics. Mary MacKillop never worried about people going to different churches. She just helped anyone in whatever way she could. I want to be like that."

I thanked the man for sharing his story with us and we went on into town. I found out when I arrived home later that day that the man from the shop often gave a donation to the orphanage that Mary MacKillop started some years ago.

Like Jesus, Mary MacKillop was kind to anyone regardless of their religion or what country they came from. Now the man she had helped was also making a difference in children's lives. I said a little prayer for him and his wife that night before I went to bed. Mary MacKillop was an inspiration to a lot of people, including myself.

Lollies for a Sick Lady

Mary MacKillop was gentle and kind to everyone she met. She had a special love for children and for old people. Mary went out of her way to see that they were happy and comfortable. It didn't matter what the problems might be, Mary would find a way to help. Mary showed that even small things done with love could make others happy, so when she saw a chance to do good for someone she made the most of it.

One time when Mary MacKillop was in New Zealand, she went to visit a sick lady with Sister Philip. They started out from home and were half way there when Mary remembered that she had intended to take a gift to the old lady. She had thought it would cheer up the lady.

"Oh Sister," she said, "I forgot to bring the little gift I had ready for Mrs Brown. I wonder what I can do." She thought for a moment and then put her hand in her pocket. She found a coin hiding right at the bottom.

"Sister Philip, what can I buy for such a small amount?" Neither of them could think of a thing.

Just then they came to a shop that sold lollies. Mary's face lit up. "I know," she said. "I'll see how many lollies I can buy for this coin." The two Sisters went into the shop and looked around. There were all sorts of lollies.

"Wouldn't the children love to come in here," laughed Mary. She showed her coin to the lady behind the counter and asked for as many lollies as she could get for that amount. The lady soon filled up a little white paper bag.

Happily Sister Philip and Mary MacKillop walked on to Mrs Brown's house.

The old lady was pleased to see Mary and Sister Philip. "We've brought you something, dear," said Mary and gave Mrs Brown the bag of lollies.

Mrs Brown was delighted. "I haven't had a lolly in ages," she said. "Thank you so much. These are delightful."

Mary and Sister Philip made the old lady a cup of tea and sat with her as she drank it. "It is so good to see you," Mrs Brown said. "I don't have many visitors these days." Mary smiled and patted her hand.

"How is your son getting on in his job?" she asked. Mrs Brown told her all about him and his children.

"I love it when the children visit," she said. "They are so full of life, but they can't come often as they live too far away to come alone. It gets a bit lonely here all day by myself so I really appreciate your calling on me. You must be so busy with all the schools to look after. Thank you for coming today and thank you very much for the lollies."

Mary smiled and Sister Philip took the tea things out to the kitchen to wash them. When she came back, she could see that Mrs Brown was looking much happier than when they arrived. Soon, the two Sisters left for home.

Mrs Brown made those lollies last as long as she could. She had one a day for a week. Each time she took one she remembered her kind friend Mary MacKillop. The next time her son visited with the grandchildren she told him how Mary MacKillop cheered her up.

"She's always doing something to help people who have problems or are lonely. It makes me wonder what I can do to help others too," she told him. "It was only a small thing to give me some lollies but it helped me when I was feeling lonely. If we each did our bit to make life better for others, the world would be a wonderful place."

Mary Asks for Advice

Mary MacKillop lived in New Zealand for a while. One of her favourite places was Arrowtown in the South Island. It was a small, isolated town surrounded by beautiful mountains. It could be very cold in winter and it was a long way from where the other Sisters of St Joseph lived. When the first Sisters went to live there, Mary went along as well, just to make sure they were all right.

The Sisters taught in the school while Mary stayed home and did the cooking and the housework. She took great delight in having a nice lunch ready for the Sisters when they came in from teaching. One day a friend gave her some Flounder, a tasty fish, to cook for the Sisters.

As lunchtime approached, Mary prepared the vegetables and began to cook a piece of fish. Unfortunately the fish fell to pieces. There was something she wasn't doing properly. This fish needed to be cooked in a special way and she didn't know how to do it. She wanted the Sisters to enjoy their lunch and was upset that she couldn't cook that fish. Quickly she went next door to their neighbour.

Mary said, "I'm having trouble cooking the Flounder. I cooked a piece and it fell apart. Can you help me, please?"

Seeing how upset Mary was, the lady went home to the convent with her. Quickly she gave Mary a lesson on how to fry the Flounder.

"Thank you so much," said Mary. "Now that I know what to do, I can cook the rest of the fish. I like to provide the Sisters with a good lunch."

When the Sisters came home from school they found a beautiful meal waiting for them. "This fish is so good. It could be served up to a queen," one of them said.

Mary laughed heartily and told them what had happened. They all joined in the laughter.

Mary was delighted that she had cooked something that the Sisters enjoyed. She wasn't afraid to try new things if that was being helpful.

Mary Helps With the Housework

Sister Margaret Mary had lots of memories of Mary MacKillop. She wrote some of her memories down so others could read them. She remembered that Mary gave a helping hand to the Sisters when they were busy teaching school. Here are some of her memories of Mary MacKillop.

Mary travelled a lot and, when she could she loved to spend a few days with the Sisters in their convents in the country. She lent a hand to do anything that needed to be done while she was there. Mary was very particular with the washing and ironing. In those days, there was no electricity so washing had to be done in a tub of water while using a cake of soap to rub on the clothes. Stoves were used to cook on but they needed wood to burn in the special fire box that was built into them. As there was no electricity, irons were made so that they could be heated on a stove. Doing the washing and ironing was a long and tedious job that could take all day or even two days if there was a lot to do. Mary never hesitated to help out.

One time Mary came to stay with two of us. We were a bit shy at first having her with us, but her loving manner soon set our minds at rest. Our main task was teaching in the school so there wasn't much time for the other things that had to be done at home on weekends. Mary could see this and, to save us from extra work while she was there, she arose early each day to do some washing for us. She found a bucket and a cake of soap and scrubbed away until all the clothes were clean. Then she hung them on the clothes line which was strung up between two posts in the yard. We were surprised and delighted by all her help.

After breakfast, Sister Bernadette and I went school leaving Mary MacKillop at home. While the clothes dried on the line, Mary got busy with the sweeping, dusting and even did some gardening. Finally the clothes were dry and she brought them in and folded them carefully, making a pile for each Sister. When the Sisters came home for lunch they were delighted to find their things all ready to be put in their cupboards.

"Thank you for helping us," we said. Mary smiled as she served us some lunch. Mary MacKillop was quick to see where our needs lay and she did lots of little things to make life easier for us while she was there. In between times, she wrote many letters to Sisters in Australia and to bishops and priests in Australia and New Zealand. She was a good letter-writer. It was the only way she had

of contacting everyone in those days. Now we can use email and phones of all sorts, but it was pen and ink on paper for Mary.

After the washing came the ironing. This meant that Mary had to get the fire really hot in the stove to heat up the iron so it could smooth out the wrinkles in the clothes. This was very hot work and took quite a while to do but Mary did it cheerfully. When we came home from school in the afternoon we found all the ironing had been done expertly. Mary was amazing the way she stopped her own work to help us.

We insisted that Mary sit down with us to have a cup of tea in the afternoons. We were really grateful for what Mary had done for us because we could relax for a while. Mary was glad of the rest too and listened intently to the stories we shared about our day at school. She was good at creating a bright, cheerful atmosphere in our isolated home.

When Mary was ready to leave us, she promised to write often. She kept her promise until she became too ill to write anymore. We eagerly looked forward to her letters as they were always full of encouragement.

I'll always be grateful that I knew Mary MacKillop. She was very close to God and by her example she showed us how to live like Jesus. She was never afraid to do her bit to make life better for anyone in need.

Mary MacKillop and the Barefoot Boy

Sister Lucy wrote a letter to her friend Sister Laurence. Sister Lucy shared a special memory she had of Mary MacKillop.

St Joseph's Convent
Tingha, NSW
March 1890

Dear Sister Laurence,

I hope you are keeping well. We have just had a visit from Mary MacKillop. Mary is amazing the way she travels around to the convents. She always wants to see us Sisters but her special love is for the children. I noticed that while she was here at Tingha. I felt sorry for her when she arrived by the Cobb & Co coach. The coach had driven some distance in a snow storm so when she arrived she was frozen to the bone.

Mary came to my classroom. I wanted her to go to the convent and get warm but her first thought was for the children in the school. Instead of having a cup of tea to warm up with first, she started visiting the classrooms.

When Mary entered my classroom her eyes fell immediately on a poor little boy dressed in tatty looking clothes. He had no shoes. His feet were frozen. Mary went straight over to him and put her arms around him. She looked at me and said, "Sister, these are the children I love."

We had no way of providing him with warm clothes but Mary saw to it that he got shoes and a warm coat to put on before she even thought about going to the convent for that cup of tea that was waiting for her.

I wish I was as brave as she is. I could have begged someone to give us warm things for that little boy, but I didn't. Thank God for Mary MacKillop. She shows us the way to do good for others. I will always remember her visit to Tingha.

God bless you Sister.
Much love from
Sister Lucy O'Neil.

Mary Helps Families with their Rent

Mary MacKillop had wonderful confidence in God. When the Sisters were low on food or someone was in need, Mary would say, "God will provide."

In a city where Mary once lived, there was a poor old man who had a daughter who went out to work to provide care for him. There came a time when the old man was too sick for his daughter to leave him. She found it very hard to pay the rent on the house where they lived because she had no money. When Mary MacKillop heard about it, she was deeply concerned. She didn't have much money herself but her confidence in God was very strong. She was sure that God would provide her with the rent money. Mary didn't have to wait long. Some generous people, who heard about the work of the Sisters of St Joseph, offered Mary some donations. Mary was delighted. She was able to pay the rent for the old man and his daughter for a long time from the donations.

The man and his daughter were very fortunate because, in those days when people didn't pay their rent, bailiffs (men employed to get the debt paid) would enter the home of the people and take everything away to sell. The bailiffs kept the money to pay the bills. This meant that the families were left out on the street with no money or belongings and had to cope the best way they could. This happened to the McCarthy family.

The McCarthy family stood helplessly outside their house as they watched all their belongings being taken away by the bailiffs in a cart. There wasn't a piece of furniture left. People passing by could see what was happening and some poked fun at them. It was very humiliating. The children clung to their mother as their father tried to rescue some of their things from being taken away. Finally, the McCarthys stood on the footpath with nothing but the clothes they were wearing. Sadly, they crept into their empty house.

A woman who was watching thought of Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph. Without saying a word, the woman went off to the convent where Mary lived. Mary was at home and the lady told her what had happened and asked if Mary could help.

Mary thought quickly. She asked another Sister to go with her into town to a place where furniture was sold. Mary ordered beds, and a table and chairs for the family and had them delivered to the McCarthy's home. They were so

surprised when the cart pulled up outside their place and two men began carrying furniture inside. The children started dancing around and getting in the way. Soon Mary arrived and spoke to Mr McCarthy. She told him that she had found some work for him and that he could have the furniture without payment.

Things slowly changed for the family. Mr McCarthy got the job and after each pay, Mrs McCarthy put some money aside. When there was enough, they paid Mary for all the furniture. The McCarthy family never forgot Mary's kindness to them.

Mary's love and compassion showed these families what God is like. They needed help and Mary provided it. Their lives were changed because Mary did her bit to make life better for them.

Tea on the Train

One day, two Sisters of St Joseph set out from the convent in North Sydney to travel by train to a country town. It was late when they left the convent. The evening meal wasn't ready when they left for the train which was leaving Sydney at 7pm. They wouldn't arrive at their destination until after 11 that night.

Somehow Mary MacKillop found out what had happened. She was concerned that the Sisters would get very hungry so she went into the kitchen and hurriedly made some sandwiches. She slipped them into a brown paper bag with some fruit and ran down to the station at the bottom of the hill.

She was just in time to find the Sisters in their carriage before the train departed. Out of breath she gasped, "You left without anything to eat. Here are some sandwiches and fruit."

The two Sisters were so surprised at seeing Mary that they didn't know what to say at first. Then they told her that she shouldn't have come down that steep hill just to look after them.

Mary smiled gaily and said, "I couldn't have you travelling without anything to eat until after 11pm. Now you are to eat all I have given you."

"Thank you, Mary," they said.

Mary left quickly as the train was about to pull out of the station. The Sisters marvelled at how Mary saw their need and acted so quickly to get them something to eat. They thought about how kind Mary MacKillop was.

A Lucky Cat

One time when Mary MacKillop was in New Zealand, she stayed in a convent where all the Sisters were teachers in the nearby school. Every afternoon while she was there, they would come home and enjoy a cup of tea with her. They would tell her about their day and she would tell them what she had been doing.

One afternoon the Sisters came home and couldn't get into the convent. All the doors were locked. They knocked and called out but no one answered the door. One of the Sisters looked through the windows to see if Mary was inside. Sure enough she was, but what was she doing? She seemed to be bending over something on the floor. They knocked on the window and called again. This time Mary heard them and hurried to unlock the front door.

"I'm sorry," she said. "A small cat came into the house and kept meowing and rubbing herself up against my legs. Finally I decided that she wasn't well so I've made a bed for her on the floor here so I can look after her."

The Sisters went over to look. Sure enough there was a pretty little cat all curled up on a rug on the floor. "Isn't she pretty," they said. "We'll have to keep some milk for her."

The little cat stayed with the Sisters until she was better. Then they found her a home.

"Isn't Mary kind? She even looks after cats," said Sister Joan.

"Yes," said Sister Anne. "Where there is a need she does something to fix it, even for the animals."

Sister Elizabeth, who had lived in Sydney when Mary was there, told them about the time Mary sent her to look after a dog that was tied up in the rain. "Mary asked me to get the dog out of the rain. I remember another time when I fed her little dog called Bobs and I put his food into a dirty bowl. Mary saw me and asked me to clean the bowl first before putting food in it, so I did."

Mary impressed on me then that animals are God's creatures and we need to take good care of them. Here she is reminding us again that all God has made is good.

Prayers for George's Horse

Mary MacKillop kept a motherly eye on people close to her. She was not slow in doing what she could to fix a problem, even if it meant praying for a horse!

In the early days when the Sisters of St Joseph went to live in Brisbane, the stoves needed wood to burn in them to provide heat for cooking. There was no water supply and people didn't always have rain tanks. It was necessary to buy wood for the stove and water to drink, wash and cook with.

In July 1870, Mary MacKillop wrote to Fr Woods who lived in Adelaide concerning a young German man called George Braham who lived in South Brisbane. She told how George spoke to her about many of his country people who were unable to speak English. He wondered if there were any Catholic newspapers printed in German that might help. In her usual helpful way, Mary asked if Fr Woods could get the German priests living in South Australia, to write to George.

Mary went on to say, "He almost daily sends us bread, and whenever we are running out of wood, he at once supplies us with more, and is always ready to aid us in any way. This good young man deserves encouragement, and it does not seem that he gets much here."

One day, George sadly told Mary and the Sisters he couldn't work anymore. His horse, that pulled his cart was very sick and couldn't pull the load. Poor George was out of work and his customers had no wood or water. The Sisters couldn't imagine how they would get on.

That night, Mary MacKillop asked the sisters to pray to St Joseph for George's horse to recover so George could go back to work. Mary and the Sisters laughed quietly that afternoon as they said the special prayer to St Joseph for George's horse. They usually prayed for people, not horses.

The next evening the horse was better. They were glad to see George and his horse working once again. They had no more worries about wood or water as George was able to supply both once more. Mary and the Sisters did their bit to ensure that George was able to earn a living.