



**Resource for Years 3 - 6**

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

***Make Room in your Hearts  
for All***

**Photographs, Prayers and Stories  
by Diane Phillips rsj**

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# Prayers

Make Room in your Hearts  
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### 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.

### Prayer Map

Attach a large map of the world to the wall or place it on the floor in the Sacred Space.



Stick prayers to

- ✚ The countries that may be in the news or
- ✚ Places refugees come from or
- ✚ Countries affected by war or natural disasters

*Generous God, we open our hearts to pray for these people that we hear are in trouble. Protect them from harm and bring them safely to their homes.*

### Prayer Walk

Walk around the block or a park or the local neighbourhood.

- ✚ Ask God's blessing on the families in each house you pass.
- ✚ Pray for the newcomers to town.
- ✚ Ask for healing and peace on those in hospitals or aged care facilities. Bless those who work from the places passed by or who play in the parks and sporting places.





### Alphabet Prayer

This is a prayer for others.



✚ Sit children in a circle around the sacred space. Give each child a letter of the alphabet.

✚ Invite the children to think of some country, people, event or need that may start with that letter.

✚ Name a letter of the alphabet and invite the child with that letter to pray aloud.



✚ At the end of each prayer the group can say:  
*Lord hear our prayer.*



### Prayer Plaits



Prepare different coloured pieces of wool to about 20cms in length. Give each child three pieces.



Invite the children to choose a colour for each of the following:

- that represents themselves.
- that represents God.
- that represents someone they want to pray for.



Knot the three pieces of wool together.



As the wool is plaited think about the relationship with God and with the chosen person.



Knot the finished plait. As this is done, invite the child to say a prayer commending himself or herself, and the chosen person to God's love and care.



### Gifts of the Spirit



- ✚ Label some plastic cups with the names of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They are:  
**Wisdom, Understanding, Right Judgement, Courage, Knowledge, Reverence, Wonder** and **Awe** in God's presence.
- ✚ Fill each cup with some cordial.
- ✚ Invite children to take a cup and pray that God will give them that Gift of the Spirit.
- ✚ Invite them to raise their cups and say, *Come Holy Spirit.*
- ✚ Drink the cordial.



### Blessing Prayer



✚ Invite each child to pray a blessing prayer.  
It could be blessings such as the following.

*God bless elderly people who live on their own.*

*God bless all those who work on ships.*

*The blessing of God be upon our school or club.*



### Hands Up, Hands Down

✚ Sit quietly and breathe in and out deeply three times.

✚ Invite the children to imagine they hold people in need in their hands. It could be family, or a child at school, or someone they had a fight with.



✚ Sit quietly thinking of them.

✚ Invite the children to place these people in God's hands.

✚ Do this symbolically by turning hands over and imagine the people are in God's hands.



✚ Invite the children to say this blessing over the people.  
*God, bless these people with love and joy.*

✚ Open hands to blow a breath blessing across their hands.



✚ Cup hands together. Tell children that God wishes to give them something in return. Give children time to reflect in silence about their gift.

✚ Say together:

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.*



# Scripture

Make Room in your Hearts  
for All

Scripture quotations from NRSV:  
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### *Relating to Others - Matthew 7:12*



In everything do to others as you would have them do to you.

**Bear with one another, help one another**

Mary MacKillop 1873



### *Jesus Reaches Out to Those in Need - Matthew 14:34-35*



After the people of (Gennesaret) recognized him, they sent word throughout the region and brought all who were sick to him, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

**Find happiness in making others happy.**

Mary MacKillop 1899



### *Jesus Helps a Foreigner - Matthew 15:21-28*



(Jesus) went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman (a foreigner) from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

**Be kind to the poor foreigners. Remember, I was a foreigner once, and as such was never laughed at nor unkindly treated.**

Mary MacKillop 1875

### *Make Room for the Children - Matthew 19:13-15*



Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.

**Let St Joseph's true children remember their mission to seek first the poorest, most neglected parts of God's vineyard.**

Mary MacKillop 1900

### *Open your Hearts to All - Luke 6: 27-28; 30-31*



I say to you that listen. Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse, pray for those who abuse you. Give to everyone who begs from you. Do to others as you would have them do to you

**Help one another and bear with one another as God does  
with each of us.**

Mary MacKillop 1899



### *What you give you will receive - Luke 6: 37-38*



Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.

**Let us show this love in our acts, bearing with one another, forgiving and forgetting.**

Mary MacKillop 1890

### *Zacchaeus - Luke 19: 1-9*



He entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to pass that place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner." Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will

give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much." Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.



**Reject no one. You never know what grace can do.**

Mary MacKillop 1867

### *Jesus Answers a Request - Matthew 8: 5-10*



When (Jesus) entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him and saying, "Lord my servant is lying at home paralysed, in terrible distress." And (Jesus) said to him, "I will come and cure him." The centurion answered, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this," and the slave does it. When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who

followed him, "Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith.

And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you according to your faith." And the servant was healed in that hour.



**Always remember to love one another.**

Mary MacKillop 1888



### *Pray for Everyone - 1 Timothy 2: 1-3*



First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

**Help one another and bear with one another as God does  
with each of us.**

**Mary MacKillop 1899**

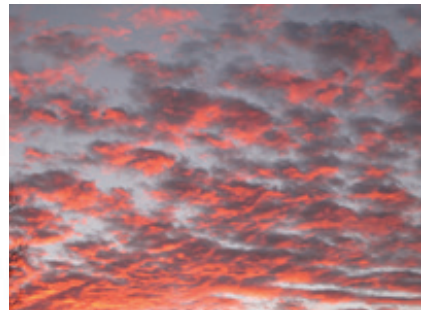
### *Coming of the Spirit of God - Acts 1:2: 1-8; 11-12*



When the day of Pentecost had come they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and

astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?"

In our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power. All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"



**God loves us all.**

Mary MacKillop 1906



*Do it to others and you do it to me - Matthew 25:40*



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.

**Forgive from your heart anyone who has pained you.**

Mary MacKillop 1890

### *Love the Good and the Bad - Matthew 5: 44-47*



...I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

**Make allowances for those who do not see as you do.**

Mary MacKillop 1867



# Stories

Make Room in your Hearts  
for All

### Nancy

(Based on the story from "The Black Dress: Mary MacKillop's Early Years" by Pamela Freeman)

Mary MacKillop lived for a while on her Uncle Sandy Cameron's property in Penola, South Australia. She was the governess to her three cousins Ellen, John and Sarah. That meant she taught school during the day. In the afternoons, in her own time she taught the children of workers on the property. As well as teaching all the children their school work, Mary gave them Religious Instructions so they could prepare to make their First Reconciliation and celebrate Confirmation and First Communion when Father Woods visited the nearby town of Penola.

One afternoon in the middle of summer, Mary noticed something strange. She was on the veranda of the homestead when she noticed that the children weren't paying attention. As she looked to see what caused it, she noticed a little dark face peer around the corner of the house. It was a little aboriginal girl! Mary looked at the little girl. The child had covered her arms and legs in animal fat to keep the mosquitoes off and she wore a man's old shirt for a dress.

One of the little boys in the class said to Mary, "Her name's Nancy and she just wants food, Miss Mary."

Mary answered, "I'm sure Nancy does want food. John, get some bread and cheese, and some fruit, if there is some, from the kitchen."

"Don't give her fruit," said Sarah. "Why give her good fruit?"

Nancy made as if to run away. "Don't go, Nancy," said Mary. Then she turned to Sarah. "'Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Who said that?"

"Jesus," answered Sarah looking ashamed.

"Do you think Jesus would say that Nancy shouldn't have some fruit?"

"No," whispered Sarah.

"Why don't you go with John and get the best piece of fruit in the kitchen for Nancy."

The two children ran into the kitchen. Mary gave Nancy a bath and combed her hair, and then she gave Nancy one of her old dresses to wear after altering it to fit her. From then on Nancy came to do her lessons with the children from the property. Later, she learnt how to do housework in the Cameron's home and eventually found a job in Melbourne.

Mary was happy because she felt that she had learnt something about Aboriginal people because she had opened her heart to Nancy.

Mary always remembered Nancy and hoped that one day she could help other children like her.



### A Letter from Monkland

Monkland  
September 1874

Dear Grandma,

We have been living in Monkland for three months now. Monkland is the name of the gold mine near Gympie. Dad is working in the mine and Mum takes in washing. I go to St Joseph's school with Billy because Gympie is about five kilometres away and Mum says, "Why walk that far when we have the Sisters of St Joseph right here?"

Sister Bonaventure is the principal. She teaches the older children so she is my class teacher. Sister Bonaventure makes our lessons very interesting. That's why I started this letter at school. Sister said I could finish it at home.

Sister Helena teaches Billy. She is very nice too. Both of these Sisters walk everywhere visiting people on the weekends and after school. Sometimes they go out at night to people who are sick. I saw them going to Mrs O'Neil's place on Sunday afternoon. Mrs O'Neil has five boys and has been sick. The boys haven't been to school so I suppose the Sisters were concerned about them all.

I'm getting excited because Bishop Quinn is coming for Confirmation in two weeks time. We had Fr Woods here on Friday. Fr Woods and Mary MacKillop started the Sisters of St Joseph a few years ago in South Australia. Fr Woods visited our classrooms and told us that the trees, birds and even butterflies show us what God is like. Billy has started a rock collection because Father told his class that stones tell us something about how the earth began and what minerals are under the ground. Maybe Billy will be a miner like Dad or a geologist like Fr Woods.

Mary MacKillop has visited our school too. She is so nice. She has lovely eyes and speaks with a slight Scottish accent. You can tell that she loves to be around children. Billy turned up to school without shoes when she visited. Mary came over to speak to Mum and before long Billy had shoes. Isn't that a wonderful thing for her to do?

There is a Chinese family here in Monkland. The girl in the family is my age. I didn't play with her at first because I couldn't understand her. Mary MacKillop said that we need to make room in our hearts for everyone, especially people who are different from ourselves so I'm learning how to say her name

properly. It is Aahan, which means 'dawn' or 'morning'. Isn't it a lovely name? Some of the others have given her an English name and call her Anne. I think that if I was Aahan, I'd like to be called by my own name. Aahan likes it when I try to pronounce it properly.

Some people here keep goats for their **milk**. A funny thing happened at school last week. About six goats came into the school yard and climbed up on the Sisters' verandah and wouldn't come down for Sister Bonaventure. Sister asked the boys to help get them down and out of the yard. Aahan and I helped too. We had a good laugh afterwards. Sister wasn't very pleased about the goats.

I hope we can visit you in Brisbane at Christmas time. Sister Helena said that the Sisters of St Joseph have three schools there. You might meet the Sisters when you go to Mass at St Stephen's Cathedral. You might even see Mary MacKillop.

I have to go now, Grandma, as the mail goes out on the next coach which will leave Gympie in an hour. Please tell Auntie Bess that I'm glad to have her old hat to wear in the hot sun. I must go. Mum's calling me. We have to get our letters up to Gympie to catch the post.

Lots of love,  
from Nellie.

### **Picnics**

Mary MacKillop went to Brisbane at the end of 1869. With the help of other Sisters of St Joseph she opened three schools there.

One day Mary said to the Sisters, "Let's have a picnic for the children in all our schools."

Mary contacted the parents of the children who attended each of the schools in Brisbane that the Sisters of St Joseph ran. She told the parents about a picnic she planned to hold at St Mary's School in South Brisbane for all the children. She asked the parents to send along any cakes, fruit, sandwiches or lollies they could give. She needed a lot as there would be about three hundred children at the picnic.

The picnic day came at last. The children were really excited. Some had never been on a picnic before. The first thing Mary did was to divide the children into three groups. Sisters Augustine and Collette took half of the older children. Sisters Clare and Francis took the other half. Sisters Gertrude and Josephine took care of the little ones. Mary and Sister Teresa looked after the food to make sure that everyone had plenty of nice things to eat.

Mary said to the children, "I want you to sit in circles in the shade at the end of the church."

So the Sisters helped the children organise themselves into circles on the grass and then handed them sandwiches, cakes, fruit and lollies to eat. The older children remembered to say 'Please' and 'Thank you' as they received the nice food and the little ones copied them. The only one who didn't seem happy was Janie. She bossed the children in her group so much that one of the girls began to cry. Then the children put her out of the circle and went to Mary MacKillop to tell her that they didn't want Janie in their group.

"What is the problem?" asked Mary.

"Janie is bossy," they said. "She won't leave us alone."

Mary looked at their distressed and angry faces. "Children, I will speak to Janie. You are to go back to your circle." With that, the children hurried back to their places.

Mary called Janie over to her. She looked at the tall girl who looked miserably back at her. "What is the matter, Janie? Is your mother very sick?"

"No. She's getting better now. I just feel silly because I'm a lot older than the others and I feel out of place. Some of them can read better than I can and can do sums that I can't do. I feel envious of them and I try to boss them around to hide how I really feel."

"Oh Janie, your school work is much better than you think. Sister Teresa told me yesterday how much your work has improved. As well as that, I think you are a very good organiser. Otherwise you wouldn't be able to look after your family and come to school too. I'm going to give you a chance to help me organise a new game which we will play after lunch. Will you help me?"

Janie looked at Mary MacKillop. She could tell that Mary was telling her the truth about her school work. As well as that, Mary was telling her that she was good at organising. She wanted to please this wonderful lady who was so kind and understanding.

"Yes. I will help you," she said.

After the children had eaten, Mary organised a special game like a lucky dip and Blindman's Bluff combined which Mary called the 'Providence Bag' game.

Mary prepared the children. "Make a circle, children," she said. "Janie, will you bring the little ones into the circle, please?" Janie hurried forward to help Sisters Gertrude and Josephine.

"Now, I'm going to ask each of you to take it in turns to be blindfolded. Sister Teresa will hold the Providence Bag and the one who is blindfolded has to find the bag. When you find it you can put your hand in and draw out something from inside. So Janie, you can go first." There were murmurs from the children as Janie stepped forward to be blindfolded. Mary looked around at the children. Slowly they went quiet as she spoke to them.

"This is a new game and I need some extra help. Janie will help with the little ones after she has her turn."

At first, the children stayed quiet but soon the excitement of the game took over and they didn't mind that Janie had first turn. Janie was blindfolded and whenever she moved close to the bag the children squealed and shouted loudly. When Janie found the bag and drew out the little parcel from inside she took the blindfold off to see what she had as a prize. She was delighted to find a story book. Soon the others had a turn. Bob found a toy boat and Sally found a ribbon for her hair. There was a mixture of things in the bag and each child was delighted with what they received.

At last, the picnic day came to an end.

"When can we have another picnic?" they asked the Sisters. Mary laughingly said they would have to wait until next year. A loud groan went up from the children.

Mary said, "We had a lovely day today, thanks to our good God. God bless you all, and Janie, thank you for helping today."

"Thanks, Janie. Thanks, Sisters" chorused the children as their parents took them home.

Mary watched with pleasure. The children and Janie had made room in their hearts for each other and everyone had enjoyed a good day.

### A Letter from Copperfield

Convent of St Joseph  
Copperfield  
November 1875

My dearest Mary MacKillop,  
I thought I would write and tell you something about our home here in Copperfield. We live a long, long way from the coast. The roads are terrible and take days to travel along. We have been in drought for a long time. The copper mine here will close if we don't get rain soon as they need water for some of the processes at the mine.

Father Woods has been to visit us. He said the roads are even worse now between here and Rockhampton where they had rain. It was so good to see him. It would be wonderful if you could visit us in Queensland once more. Perhaps the railway line will be built by the time you get here and you will have no trouble at all to come out to our little place. It isn't safe for a Sister to travel alone on the coaches as travellers often have to stay out on the road over night in the bush. There are dingos and other wild things out there.

We don't have Mass very often. The priest has to travel to other towns and properties and we are lucky we see him here once a fortnight. We didn't have Mass for ten weeks, but Father is back again now. We are very fortunate because we have a chapel in our convent. I do wish you could come to visit us.

We have 87 children in the school. There is talk now of the copper mine closing but others say that another company has bought it. There will be a meeting of directors in Sydney, so the people here are saying. If it does close, I suppose we will have to leave Copperfield when the families go. If they go, then the school will have to close because all the children will be gone.

Sometimes making room in my heart for all means being patient with the circumstances in which we live. It isn't easy sometimes but the children are good students and Sister Dominic and I are good company for each other. Sometimes we both feel a little lonely but we can shake that off by being available to the people in the town. Your letter last week was most welcome. I look forward to hearing from you again soon.

Lots of love from  
Sister Francis.

### **A New Boy at the Mackay Orphanage**

My name is Bert. I live at the orphanage in Mackay. The Sisters of St Joseph look after us here. Mary MacKillop brought my sister and me here after our mother died in Bundaberg. Our Dad couldn't look after us and he took us to the convent at Bundaberg hoping that the Sisters there could help him but there was no room for us as the Sisters were looking after a lot of other children. Lucky for us Mary MacKillop was visiting the Sisters when Dad called in. She was leaving on the next boat for Mackay. She decided to take us with her.

I'll always remember that trip on the boat. I was frightened and I missed my mother. My sister was a little older but she couldn't help me when I began to cry. I had hardly any clothes, but it didn't matter much in the warm weather. However, Mary MacKillop wanted me to be dressed nicely. My sister tells me that Mary sewed the whole time we were on the steamer, cutting up some of her own clothes and sewing them up into garments for me to wear so I would look all right when we arrived at Mackay. Just as well she was carrying a sewing kit.

I'm very happy here. Dad comes to visit us when he can. He is very poor and has to work hard. He was lucky to find a job near Mackay. We are lucky that Mary MacKillop has a big heart for children like us. She visits the orphanage when she visits Mackay and I heard her say to one of the Sisters that we must open our hearts to anyone who is in need. I was in need of a home and she gave me one, and I'm not even a Catholic. Mary doesn't worry about things like that. Dad knew what he was doing when he asked her for help.

When I'm old enough to leave here, I'm going to look for work. I'll save my pay. Perhaps Dad and I will find a nice place for my sister to live with us. I think I would like to be able to give the Sisters some money also, to show my gratitude for what they are doing here. If Mary MacKillop is right about opening our hearts to all, then I want to do all I can to make a difference for other children who might be in trouble or without parents like my sister and I.

Thank God for Mary MacKillop.

### **The Tiaro Adventure**

Annie O'Hara lived in Maryborough. She went to St Joseph's School where three Sisters of St Joseph taught. They were Sister Bonaventure, Sister Justine and Sister de Sales. When Mary MacKillop visited the school, Annie couldn't help thinking that Mary was an amazingly big-hearted person. There seemed to be room in her heart for orphans, the poor, the sick and especially for the children. Annie discovered that Mary travelled from place to place visiting the Sisters and the schools in Queensland. Sister de Sales said that Mary MacKillop was like Jesus because she loved people so much.

Sister said, "She does what she can to help people who are in trouble of any kind. She does her bit to make a difference in people's lives".

Annie was in the choir at school. Sister Bonaventure taught the children to sing. Mary MacKillop told them that she hadn't heard children in other schools sing as well as they could. Annie felt good about the choir after that.

"We don't have musical instruments, just our voices. We must sound very good. Father O'Brien, our parish priest, is always asking us to sing," Annie told her mother one day, as they washed up the dishes after dinner.

"That must be why he asked Sister Bonaventure if the choir can go to Tiara for the opening of the new church," her mother replied. "I was talking to Sister Justine. She thought the name of the church was especially good as it is called the Sacred Heart Church. Did you know that the Sisters are called 'Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart'?"

"Mary MacKillop told us that when she was here. Mum, can I go with the choir to Tiara? Please?"

"Of course you can go," said Mrs O'Hara. "Dad and I have already organised that for you."

"Thanks Mum," said Annie excitedly.

Going to Tiara turned into quite an adventure. It was on Sunday, the 24 February, 1878 that the Sacred Heart Church was opened. It took a long time to travel to Tiara from Maryborough in coaches so it meant an early morning start.



The choir travelled in two coaches. Mr Abbs drove one coach and Mr McGuire drove the one Annie was in. The three Sisters rode in a buggy with Fr O'Brien and a visiting priest. Two horses pulled them along in what was called a 'buggy and pair'. The opening ceremony was set for 11 o'clock on Sunday morning. Mr Abbs and Mr McGuire left before everyone else to give the choir members time to settle and be organised. The weather was very hot and humid.

It was an awful trip. They were a few kilometres from Tiaro when a storm came up. There was thunder and lightning which was so bad it frightened the horses. The wind whipped Annie's hair ribbon away. She began to worry that Mr McGuire wouldn't stop the horses from galloping off. Then it began to rain. It poured down. They could hardly see where the track was. The wheels began to catch in the mud. Annie thought they would never get to Tiaro where they'd be safe. Mr Abbs pulled his coach up alongside and called to Mr McGuire that they should stop there and wait for the rain to stop.

He said, "It's one of those summer storms. It'll be over in a few minutes."

The two coaches pulled up and everyone did their best to keep their clothes dry. Fr O'Brien passed the two coaches. He called out, "We'll keep going. The buggy is easier to handle in the mud. We'll hold things up at the church until you get there."

He was having a hard time trying to control his horses too, but he managed. Sisters Bonaventure, Justine and de Sales looked a little damp but they were holding a blanket over their heads to keep as dry as possible.

No one had a chance of getting to Tiaro before 11 o'clock.

However, in a short time it stopped raining just as Mr Abbs had said. Mr McGuire started the horses toward the church. They had to travel slowly because the road was cut up by the other coaches that had driven along it. They arrived half an hour late, but by the time they arrived, the clouds had rolled away and the sun was out. As Mr Abbs and Mr McGuire pulled up outside the church, all the people cheered. Some of the men ran over to help the children down off the coaches and others helped the drivers to release the

horses into the paddock next to the Church where they could graze until it was time to go home.

The choir sang so well at Mass that everyone congratulated the Sisters and the children. The people told them that they were worth waiting for. Annie and her friends thought that was nice as they could see that Sister Bonaventure was very proud of them.

There was a picnic lunch after Mass. The men made billy tea while the ladies put out the sandwiches and cakes for everyone to eat. They all had a lovely time. The storm was almost forgotten. There were more prayers and singing in the church before they left. Annie and the others were very tired and kept dozing off in the coach on their way back to Maryborough. They arrived home at 7 o'clock that night. It had been a long and adventurous day.

Next day at school, Sister Justine said, "Mary MacKillop is always reminding us to open our hearts to all. I think that includes the weather as well as people. It depends on how we think about things. We could grumble and complain that we were wet yesterday, or we could think of the weather we had as an adventure waiting to happen."

Annie laughed. She was sure that they didn't have those sorts of adventures before Mary MacKillop brought the Sisters of St Joseph to Maryborough. She was certain she would never forget the Tiaro adventure.

### Living in Townsville

Sister Vincent lived in Townsville with Sister Monica and Sister Philomena. They had a school there. They found the weather very hot and humid. In 1875 Sister Vincent wrote a letter to Mary MacKillop who was in Adelaide. She told about the terrible storms they were having.

*There have been some dreadful storms here lately. You would fancy that the house would be blown away, and the thunder is terrifying. There is no escape from these storms. They come every year about this time. I know it gets very hot in Adelaide but the heat is nothing like it is here.*

There was always a lot of news to share with Mary MacKillop. In another letter she wrote:

*An immigrant ship came into port yesterday. There were a thousand people on board. Can you imagine so many people? This morning the church was packed full before Mass at seven o'clock. We had to kneel in the porch among a number of people crowded there. I don't know what we shall do on Sunday with that much of an addition to our community. Father Connolly was delighted and welcomed them all. Fancy so many people coming to such a place as this. I wonder how many will stay here.*

A really bad 'flu broke out in Townsville one winter. Sister Monica went with Sister Vincent one Saturday night to look after a young woman who was very sick. Her name was Rita. A friend of Rita's came to the convent asking if the Sisters could come and help as Father Connolly was away and wouldn't be home for another four weeks. Rita had no family and she was home alone. The two Sisters hurried off to the house and stayed all night. They could see that Rita was dying. They called the doctor but he could do nothing to make her better. Sisters Vincent and Monica cared for her and prayed with her until she died in the early hours of Sunday morning. They wrote to her parents in Ireland and told them what had happened. Rita's parents wrote and told of their gratitude that the Sisters had been there for their daughter.

Mary MacKillop wrote often to the Sisters in Townsville and she loved to hear their news in return. Sister Monica told Mary in a letter:

*Now, I must tell you this little bit of news. Today, a lady was kind enough to send us several bottles of sauce, anchovy paste and other nice things that she made. It was so nice to have something different with our meals.*

*Did I tell you in my last letter that we are taking care of Mrs O'Reilly's piano for a while? This is what happened. Mrs O'Reilly had to leave here to go to Cooktown where she thought she would get work. Nothing went right for her and so she will return soon. Her two children are here with us until she returns. The eldest, who was at the convent school in Brisbane last year, teaches music to a few pupils out of our school. Her other daughter, Pauline will stay with us until her mother finds a place to live. I think they will leave here and go back to Brisbane.*

Mary MacKillop was pleased at how the Sisters opened their hearts to the people in Townsville and helped them in their need. She wrote to them,

*May the Holy Spirit bless you, keep you happy and give you the courage you need. Fond love to you all,*

*Mary MacKillop.*