

Valuing...

MUTUAL RESPECT



May we never yield to the temptation to disregard others, especially those in greatest need, and to look the other way; instead, may we strive daily, in concrete and practical ways, to form a community composed of brothers and sisters who accept and care for one another.

- Pope Francis, World Day of Peace 2021

Mary MacKillop's reverence for all people meant that she was incapable of giving up on anyone. The Sisters' memories of Mary reflect her deep respect for the dignity of all. To her, everyone was precious. One of the Sisters who knew Mary recalled:

If anyone came to her troubled or distressed she would encourage and help them and draw the good that was in them out.

An old eccentric gentleman whose hair and beard needed brushing came to one of the Sisters in Sydney. Mary asked one of the Sisters to attend to this gentleman, but she found the task too repugnant. In the end Mary herself combed his hair and beard and took him elsewhere for further attention.

As Mary sent her Sisters out to visit jails, the hospitals and reformatory, she encouraged them to see the goodness and potential in every person and in their encounters with others, to keep an open heart to all.

At Mary's beatification, Pope St John Paul II recalled:

Her story reminds us of the need to welcome people, to reach out to the lonely, the bereft, the disadvantaged. To strive for the kingdom of God and his righteousness means to strive to see Christ in the stranger, to meet him in them and to help them to meet him in each one of us!

- Pope St John Paul II, 1995

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What is resonating with me from this reflection?
- How do I understand the value of 'Mutual Respect'?
- How does Mary and / or Julian's example inspire me to embrace this value?

PRAYER

Creator God,
You instilled in Mary and Julian a deep reverence for all life.
May we be inspired by their example so a culture of dialogue, listening and mutual respect is fostered in all our deliberations. Amen.