



# Sisters of Saint Joseph

*of the Sacred Heart*

Recently I was reading Mary MacKillop's letter to the Sisters on 19 March, 1891. In this letter Mary reflects, twenty-five years ago St Joseph's day was celebrated for the first time as the special feast of the proposed Institute. It was on this day that the work of the Sisters of St Joseph was placed under St Joseph's care. Mary MacKillop always wrote to the Sisters for St Joseph's feast each year. It became a tradition for the Sisters to participate in a novena dedicated to St Joseph for the nine days prior to, the feast day. In this our Sesquicentenary year we invite you to join the Sisters of St Joseph in praying this novena as we the Sisters look forward to celebrating our 150 years. In one of her later letters she encouraged the Sisters to let no obstacle prevent us from proceeding with courage as Joseph had done. May this novena enable you to act with courage as you live into the challenge that the Year of Mercy and our Sesquicentenary holds for each one.

May you have a wonderful day of celebration as we give thanks for the faithfulness of our good God over these 150 years.

*Monica Cavanagh*

Sr Monica Cavanagh  
Congregational Leader.

Joseph's first and primary call came at birth when he responded to life and thus became a word of God in his person.

This word continued to be "spoken" throughout his life, as, at each stage of his development, he became more deeply who he was made to be.

Through the words of scripture and its interpretation by community leaders, he would have remained in tune with the word of God, allowing it to influence life decisions and to give shape to the truth of God within him.

*In The Spirit of Joseph. Mary Cresp rsj*

It was through listening to God in his dreams that Joseph learnt his vocation.

This word continued to be "spoken" throughout his life, as, at each stage of his development, he became more deeply who he was made to be.

Through attending to the dream, Joseph learnt that he, along with Mary, was to play an active part in the coming of the Messiah. In bringing the gift of himself and allowing the Holy Spirit to work through him, Joseph enabled God's story to take shape.

*In The Spirit of Joseph. Mary Cresp rsj*

*Following in the footsteps of Joseph we are called to be attentive to the promptings of the Spirit in our hearts and continue to carry out the mission of God in our world.*

*In the coming days let us, with grateful hearts, walk with Joseph, our Patron.*



## ABOUT THIS NOVENA

“Nine Days of Thanksgiving” invites us to reflect on various qualities of St Joseph and to give thanks for all those who walk the Josephite way, supporting the Josephite vision.



This Novena may be prayed individually or in a group.

The format allows for the Novena to be prayed in a variety of ways.

You might pray each day of the Novena in its entirety or you might reflect on the image and the words from Scripture, St Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods.

You may choose to pray the concluding prayer only.

Usually the final day of a Novena would be the Feast Day, in this case the Solemnity of St Joseph on 19th March. This Novena may also be prayed at any time throughout the year.

As there will be many other prayerful celebrations taking place around the world we are inviting you to commence this Novena on Thursday 10th March and conclude on Friday 18th March.

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# NINE DAYS OF THANKSGIVING

## Day One

### Focus

Today we give thanks for those in partnership with the Sisters of St Joseph.

We are mindful of St Joseph the Faithful One who opened his heart to the unfolding mystery of God's mission in the world.



*'Te Haputanga o Mere Takakau' by Joseph Huatahi Barber.*

*Forever O God your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.  
Your faithfulness endures to all generations.*

*Psalm 119:89-90*

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

*Mary MacKillop 1891*

## Reflection

As you ponder the words from the Psalm and Mary MacKillop, what touches your heart?

(Your name) God's faithful love endures to all generations.

How is the mystery of God's mission in the world unfolding in your life?

*(take as much time as you can to reflect on this)*

To what does this call me today?



*United with those who are in partnership with the Sisters of St Joseph we pray:*

*We give thanks for God's generosity  
in calling the Sisters of St Joseph into being.*

*For Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods  
the first sisters, the children in schools  
the families around them  
the friends supporting them.*

*For the vision, energy and legacy they left.*

*We give thanks for the Josephite spirit in God's mission  
for the women who heeded the call  
the people who supported the mission  
the families who welcomed the sisters.  
For the love and healing in our parishes.*

*Join with us, all who have gone before  
walking the Josephite way  
supporting the Josephite vision  
drawn into Josephite communion.*

*Join us in praising God's abounding kindness.*

*Amen.*

# NINE DAYS OF THANKSGIVING

## Day Two

### Focus

Today we give thanks for all who are attentive to the needs of our world and answer the call to respond.

We are mindful of St Joseph who listened attentively to God.



*Hear my words and apply your heart to my teachings.  
It will do you good to hide them in your heart and have  
them ready on your lips.*

*Proverbs 22:17-18*

*Pray to be ever ready for God's will, even when it takes  
you by surprise. Mary MacKillop 1880*

*Let us do all we can to serve God.*

*Julian Tenison Woods 1875*

## Reflection

As you ponder the words from the Book of Proverbs and the writings of Mary & Julian, what touches your heart?

(Your name) be attentive to God and to God's desires for our world.

How is the mystery of God's mission unfolding in your life?  
*(take as much time as you can to reflect on this)*

To what does this call me today?



*Attentive to God's desires for our world, we pray:*

*We give thanks for God's generosity  
in calling the Sisters of St Joseph into being.*

*For Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods  
the first sisters, the children in schools  
the families around them  
the friends supporting them.*

*For the vision, energy and legacy they left.*

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supporting the Josephite vision  
drawn into Josephite communion.  
Join us in praising God's abounding kindness.  
Amen.*



# NINE DAYS OF THANKSGIVING

## Day Three

### Focus

Today we give thanks for our Founders, Fr Julian Tenison Woods & St Mary MacKillop.

We are mindful of St Joseph who responded to God's speaking in his dream. Julian & Mary, too, dared to dream and made the education of poor children a reality.



*'Joseph's Dream' by Rembrandt*

*I know the plans I have in mind for you - it is your God who speaks - plans for peace, not disaster, reserving a future full of hope for you. Then when you call to me, and come to plead with me, I will listen to you. When you seek me you shall find me, when you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me. Jeremiah 29:11-14*

*Pray that God may direct and that St Joseph's humble spirit may guide. Mary MacKillop 1898*

*..... whether we search in earth, or sky, or sea, we are everywhere met by the visions of the illimitable.*

*Julian Tenison Woods 1882*



## Reflection

As you ponder the words of the prophet Jeremiah and the writings of Mary & Julian what touches your heart?

(Your name) be open to the whisperings of God  
in your heart.

How is the mystery of God's mission unfolding  
in your life?

*(take as much time as you can to reflect on this)*

To what does this call me today?



*United with Our Founders, Mary & Julian, we pray:*

*We give thanks for God's generosity  
in calling the Sisters of St Joseph into being.*

*For Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods  
the first sisters, the children in schools  
the families around them  
the friends supporting them.*

*For the vision, energy and legacy they left.*

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For the love and healing in our parishes.*

*Join with us, all who have gone before  
walking the Josephite way  
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drawn into Josephite communion.*

*Join us in praising God's abounding kindness.*

*Amen.*

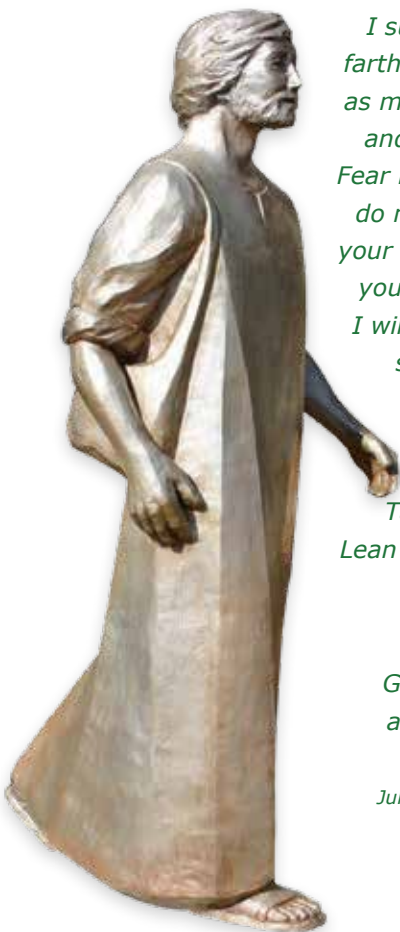
# NINE DAYS OF THANKSGIVING

## Day Four

### Focus

Today we give thanks for those who will carry the mission of the Sisters of St Joseph into the future.

We are mindful of St Joseph, the courageous one, who, in response to God's call stepped out into the unknown.



*I am bringing you back  
from the ends of the earth,  
I summon you from its  
farthest corners; I call you  
as my own: I choose you,  
and will not reject you:  
Fear not, for I am with you,  
do not be afraid for I am  
your God. I will strengthen  
you, I will help you, and  
I will uphold you with my  
strong right hand.*

*Isaiah 41:9-11*

*Take fresh courage.  
Lean more on God and less  
on ourselves.*

*Mary MacKillop 1877*

*God will bless you, I  
am sure, in all your  
undertakings.*

*Julian Tenison Woods 1863*

## Reflection

As you ponder the words of the prophet Isaiah and the writings of Mary & Julian what touches your heart?

(Your name) take courage, your God is with you now and always.

How is the mystery of God's mission unfolding in your life?

*(take as much time as you can to reflect on this)*

To what does this call me today?



*United with those who will carry the Josephite Charism into the future, we pray:*

*We give thanks for God's generosity in calling the Sisters of St Joseph into being.*

*For Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods the first sisters, the children in schools the families around them the friends supporting them.*

*For the vision, energy and legacy they left.*

*We give thanks for the Josephite spirit in God's mission for the women who heeded the call the people who supported the mission the families who welcomed the sisters. For the love and healing in our parishes.*

*Join with us, all who have gone before walking the Josephite way supporting the Josephite vision drawn into Josephite communion.*

*Join us in praising God's abounding kindness.*

*Amen.*

# NINE DAYS OF THANKSGIVING

## Day Five

### Focus

Today we give thanks for those who strive to protect the vulnerable - God's people, God's creation.

We are mindful of St Joseph, always watchful, who, with fatherly eyes, protected Mary & Jesus.



*'Flight to Egypt' by George Hitchcock*

*Every word of God proves true. He is a shield to all who come to him for protection.*

*Proverbs 30:5 (King James)*

*I cannot forget that there is a dear good God watching over us.*

*Mary MacKillop 1871*

*Be kind to all, be gentle to all, be very, very gentle*

*Julian Tenison Woods*

## Reflection

As you ponder the words from the Book of Proverbs and the writings of Mary & Julian what touches your heart?

(Your name) be attentive to God and to God's desires for our world.

How is the mystery of God's mission unfolding in your life?  
*(take as much time as you can to reflect on this)*

To what does this call me today?



*United with all who protect the vulnerable, we pray:*

*We give thanks for God's generosity  
in calling the Sisters of St Joseph into being.*

*For Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods  
the first sisters, the children in schools  
the families around them  
the friends supporting them.*

*For the vision, energy and legacy they left.*

*We give thanks for the Josephite spirit in God's mission  
for the women who heeded the call  
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the families who welcomed the sisters.  
For the love and healing in our parishes.*

*Join with us, all who have gone before  
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supporting the Josephite vision  
drawn into Josephite communion.  
Join us in praising God's abounding kindness.  
Amen.*

# NINE DAYS OF THANKSGIVING

## Day Six

### Focus

Today we give thanks for all those who seek refuge.

We are mindful of St Joseph who, for the safety of Mary & Jesus, sought refuge in Egypt.



*'Flight to Egypt' by Henry Ossawa Tanner*

*The Angel of God appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'get up, take the Child and his mother with you, and escape into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to search for the child and do away with him'. So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until Herod was dead.*

*Matthew 2:13-15*

*We are but travellers here.*

*Mary MacKillop 1866*

*The end of it all will be that God's protecting hand will be most visibly seen.*

*Julian Tenison Woods 1871*

## Reflection

As you ponder the words from the Gospel of Matthew and the writings of Mary & Julian what touches your heart?

(Your name) live in the present moment and be open to God.

How is the mystery of God's mission unfolding in your life?  
(take as much time as you can to reflect on this)

To what does this call me today?



*United with all those who seek refuge, we pray:*

*We give thanks for God's generosity  
in calling the Sisters of St Joseph into being.*

*For Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods  
the first sisters, the children in schools  
the families around them  
the friends supporting them.*

*For the vision, energy and legacy they left.*

*We give thanks for the Josephite spirit in God's mission  
for the women who heeded the call  
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For the love and healing in our parishes.*

*Join with us, all who have gone before  
walking the Josephite way  
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drawn into Josephite communion.  
Join us in praising God's abounding kindness.  
Amen.*



# NINE DAYS OF THANKSGIVING

## Day Seven

### Focus

Today we give thanks for those through whom the Sisters have experienced the loving Providence of God.

We are mindful of St Joseph who firmly trusted that God would provide in all things.



*He said to his disciples, "therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life and what you will eat, or about your body and what you will wear... Notice how the flowers grow. They do not toil or spin. But I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of them. If God so clothes the grass in the field that grows today and is throw into the oven tomorrow, will he not much more provide for you. Luke 12:22, 27-28*

*When I could not see my way, God kept my heart full of trust to make all come right. Mary MacKillop 1874*

*Let us turn our faces and look into the heart of God and say: 'You are my way and into your heart I will look and leave all else to You' ... God knows that we can do nothing but so dearly loves us to trust.*

*Julian Tenison Woods 1889*

## Reflection

As you ponder the words from the Gospel of Luke and the writings of Mary & Julian what touches your heart?

(Your name) God will provide for the future

*Mary MacKillop 1873*

How is the mystery of God's mission in the world unfolding in your life?

*(take as much time as you can to reflect on this)*

To what does this call me today?



*United with those who reveal the loving Providence of God through their care of the Sisters, we pray:*

*We give thanks for God's generosity  
in calling the Sisters of St Joseph into being.*

*For Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods  
the first sisters, the children in schools  
the families around them  
the friends supporting them.*

*For the vision, energy and legacy they left.*

*We give thanks for the Josephite spirit in God's mission  
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*Join with us, all who have gone before  
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*Amen.*

# NINE DAYS OF THANKSGIVING

## Day Eight

### Focus

Today we give thanks for colleagues in Ministry with the Sisters of St Joseph.

We are mindful of St Joseph who responded to God and together with Mary nurtured Jesus.



*'The Holy Family with the little bird' by Bartolome Esteban Murillo*

*Out of his infinite glory, may God give you the power through the Spirit for your hidden self to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith, and then, planted in love and built on love, you will with all the saints have strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth: until, knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, you are filled with the utter fullness of God.*

*Ephesians 3:16-19*

*Truly our great God will be gratified by the love and the zeal of many. Mary MacKillop 1873*

*Try earnestly to correspond with God's grace.*

*Julian Tenison Woods 1868*

## Reflection

As you ponder the words from Paul's letter to the Ephesians and the writings of Mary & Julian, what touches your heart?

(Your name) who in your life are in most need of nurturing?

How is the mystery of God's mission unfolding in your life?

*(take as much time as you can to reflect on this)*

To what does this call me today?



*United with those who are colleagues in Ministry with the Sisters of St Joseph, we pray:*

*We give thanks for God's generosity in calling the Sisters of St Joseph into being.*

*For Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods the first sisters, the children in schools the families around them the friends supporting them.*

*For the vision, energy and legacy they left.*

*We give thanks for the Josephite spirit in God's mission for the women who heeded the call the people who supported the mission the families who welcomed the sisters. For the love and healing in our parishes.*

*Join with us, all who have gone before walking the Josephite way supporting the Josephite vision drawn into Josephite communion.*

*Join us in praising God's abounding kindness.*

*Amen.*

# NINE DAYS OF THANKSGIVING

## Day Nine

### Focus

Today we give thanks for the Sisters who have gone before us.

We are mindful of St Joseph -  
the strong and silent one.



*God will do the fighting  
for you; you have only  
to keep still and silent.*

*Exodus 14:14*

*...and in the wilderness,  
where you saw how the  
Lord your God carried  
you, just as one carries  
a child, all the way  
that you travelled until  
you reached this place.*

*Deuteronomy 1:31-32*

*We know that St  
Joseph was humble and  
hidden...are we always  
as humble, as retiring,  
as modest as a child  
of the lowly St Joseph  
should be?*

*Mary MacKillop 1893*

## Reflection

As you ponder the words from the Books of Exodus, Deuteronomy and the writings of Mary MacKillop, what touches your heart?

(Your name) God has carried you to where you are today, listen to Him.

How is the mystery of God's mission unfolding in your life?

*(take as much time as you can to reflect on this)*

To what does this call me today?



*Mindful of the Sisters of St Joseph who have gone before us, we pray:*

*We give thanks for God's generosity in calling the Sisters of St Joseph into being.*

*For Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods the first sisters, the children in schools the families around them the friends supporting them.*

*For the vision, energy and legacy they left.*

*We give thanks for the Josephite spirit in God's mission for the women who heeded the call the people who supported the mission the families who welcomed the sisters. For the love and healing in our parishes.*

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*Amen.*