

Josephite Companions of South Australia

PO Box 57
Kent Town, SA 5071
SA.Companions@sosi.org.au



Friendship Prayer Service



*"Our good God
sees the heart."
MMK 1871*

Spring 2023

September 2023 Newsletter

Annual Report August 2022 – August 2023

Mary MacKillop's saying, "Love one another, bear with one another, and let charity guide you all your life," guided our first presentation for the year by Mary Hemmings on 6th August 2022. It is now 40 years since we were invited by the Sisters to share in the Josephite story in a deeper way, through being Josephite Associates and now Josephite Companions. Mary challenged us with these questions:

- What does it mean to be a Josephite Companion?
- How has Mary MacKillop made a difference to our lives today?
- How can we keep Mary's legacy alive in our Church and in our world?

Mary's presentation generated an immediate buzz in the room, and thus began our journey of the Companions, exploring our purpose, legitimacy, identity, mission and meaning. We then celebrated Mary MacKillop's feast with prayer and afternoon tea.

Another one of Mary MacKillop's sayings, "Listen to the whisperings of God in your heart," led Companions to travel to Murray Bridge. At our gathering on 16th October 2022, Mary Hemmings and Patsy Sandretti facilitated our reflections on the life and legacy of Mary MacKillop and the Josephite charism. We were welcomed in Murray Bridge with the parish celebration of the Eucharist with delightful musical accompaniment by a Filipino

musical group. A hearty lunch of homemade soups, sandwiches, slices and fresh fruit prepared us for reflection and lively sharing. Thanks to the Murray Bridge Companions' craft table, we were able to donate considerably to the Josephite Mission in Peru. We left Murray Bridge knowing that Mary MacKillop's gift of faith in a provident God, which came from her mother, and hospitality, lives on in our own hearts.

Mary MacKillop told her Sisters that, "God understands us better than we understand ourselves or each other," and inspired a gathering of people who were interested in deepening their understanding of what it means to be a Josephite Companion. At these gatherings the group was invited to explore the Josephite Charism, by journeying through the *Josephite Companions' Discovery Handbook*. These meetings were held from November 2022 through to July 2023. In August 2023 there was a celebration held in the Chapel to ritualise their commitment.

When our groups at Hectorville and Prospect gather there is a continued connection with each other. We are encouraged to pray, share and listen, as we deal with the concerns, challenges and joys of our daily lives. Friendship, Prayer and Service keeps giving the groups a lens through which to live the Josephite Charism.

cont next page

Mary MacKillop told us to, "Remember we are all but travellers here," and this was brought to the Launch by Mary Cresp rsj of her book about "US," the Josephite Companions, on 1st December 2022. This book, *Evolution of a Movement, Josephite Associates to Josephite Companions 1979 – 2019*, is a history of many Josephite groups across Australia, New Zealand and beyond, and Mary Cresp has managed to weave all the threads together.

On 9th December 2022 we heard Mary MacKillop saying to us, "Find happiness in making others happy," when we gathered in Bethany, for an evening of Christmas Carols. Majella O'Sullivan rsj was our lively entertainer for the evening, ably assisted by Mary Gill on the piano.

2023 began with Mary MacKillop's words from the January page in the Josephite Calendar, "We know not what the hidden designs of God may be." These words encouraged us as we entered a new year of wonder and awe.

Mary MacKillop's words, "Be eager in your desires but humbly patient in their accomplishment," are pertinent to all women in the world especially each year on 8th March when International Women's Day is celebrated. Josephite Companions were invited to our Inaugural Women's Day Presentation this year. This presentation was given by Aboriginal women, Lizzie Wright and Leith Mynott, accompanied by Kenise Neill rsj. These women shared much of their own lived social, economic, cultural and political challenges.

"All created things give us ideas and glimpses of the beauty of the infinitely beautiful Creator." We were all encouraged by these words of Julian Tenison Woods when we interacted with Mary-Ann Casanova rsj when she presented key aspects of the Josephite Laudato Si' Action Plan, 'Explore, Embrace and Embody.'

At this gathering on 3rd June 2023, Mary-Ann shared key aspects of the plan, such as the rich heritage which has been part of the Josephite character for more than 150 years, and provided an update on the plan's implementation and the vital role which Companions can play in responding to this shared call.

We gathered on 5th August 2023 for an opportunity to share with students from Mary MacKillop College and one of our own Companions, Trish Cain, in what draws people into Mary's story today and her relevance across generations. Therefore, Mary MacKillop's words inspired them and us to, "Keep your mind in peace whatever happens."

We then moved to the Chapel where we had our *Celebration of Commitment* for all present, old and new, acknowledging all of us who follow in the footsteps of Mary MacKillop as Josephite Companions.

There are Companions who now have met Mary MacKillop in the embrace of God and have heard her welcomingly say, "We have much for which to be thankful." We are truly thankful for their gift to us during their life.

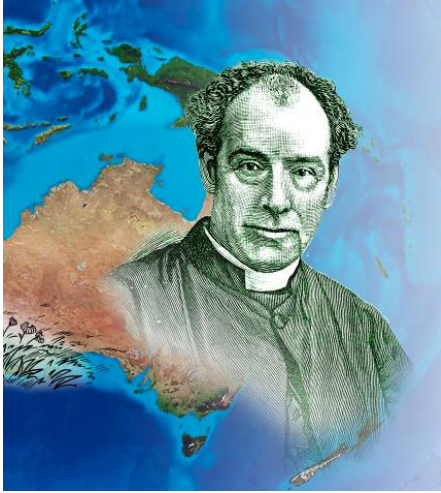
Our Hopes for the year ahead:

"Everything God blesses will prosper." Mary MacKillop's words yet again encourage us to "always look on the bright side of life," as they sang at the end of the film in *Life of Brian!*

In 2023/2024, our Leadership Team endeavours to excite and to explore, by providing challenging experiences.

- We hope that what we provide in our gatherings will enable us all to be a part of our Josephite Companions near and far.
- We will continue to support financially Josephite Ministries, as we have for Peru in 2022/2023.
- We will continue to support each other in Friendship, Prayer and Service wherever we are and with whoever we meet.
- We will continue to provide a newsletter that will inspire, motivate and nourish our spiritual life.
- We will continue to provide inspirational speakers who will encourage our faith-filled lives.
- For Companions who are unable to come together, we hope the newsletter is one way of keeping in touch, even at a distance. You will be amazed when going back over the prayer pages in the newsletters what nourishment you will receive.

cont on page 4



A Jaunt with Julian

Saturday 7th October 2023

2pm

Bethany

4 High St Kensington

Presenter: Mary-Ann Casanova rsj

Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods were the co-founders of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, and the 7th October marks the anniversary of Julian's death.

Julian was a man of many talents – priest, explorer, scientist, environmentalist and a campaigner for social justice. He travelled to many places in Australia, Malaysia and other parts of Asia. Not only was Julian an author of many books but a gifted artist of the natural environment.

This presentation is the second instalment this year by Mary-Ann as she looks at the environment and ecology by exploring aspects of Julian's life.

Afternoon tea will be provided and there will be a raffle to support Josephite ministries.

RSVP Mary on 0417 871 904 or SA.Companions@sosj.org.au

Christmas Carols

Friday 15th December 2023

7pm

Bethany

4 High St Kensington

Presenter: Majella O'Sullivan rsj



We take our lead again from Majella, an accomplished vocalist who will entertain and inspire. She will be ably assisted by Mary Gill who will be *tickling the ivories*, while trying to anticipate Majella's next choice of song. So, we can expect the usual mirth and merriment as we make our way through a variety of traditional and contemporary Christmas carols.

As we have done in the past, please bring along a small Christmas tree decoration to exchange. Refreshments will be provided and there will be a raffle to support Josephite ministries.

**RSVP by Friday 8th December 2023:
Mary on 0417 871 904 or SA.Companions@sosj.org.au**

Come along ... Bring a friend ... All are welcome!

cont from page 2

We are grateful to all who have been able to gather at our events over this past year.

We are grateful to those who have contributed financially to enable our activities to occur, to support others in need, and our International Josephite Companions Leadership Team (JCoLT).

Please visit the Sisters of St Joseph's website for news and events. It is very informative:
<https://www.sosj.org.au>

You are welcome to contact us as we would like to hear from you about any ideas, or needs, that you feel need to be addressed.

Please make contact on:
0417 871 904 (Mary Hemmings) or email SA.Companions@sosj.org.au

Julie Langman and Majella O'Sullivan rsj on behalf of Bridgette Barrett, Lucia Ciocca, Mary Hemmings, Carla Mastrangelo, Patsy Sandretti, Helen Smith.

God Will Provide!

This past year and a bit, the Companions have been raising funds for Peru to support the work of Katrina van Ruth rsj. A couple of months ago we sent an email to Katrina in Peru and asked her what the best way was to transfer funds to her. This is the reply we received in an email on 15th June 2023:



Thank you for your email. You and the Companions might just be the answer to my recent prayer. One of the many tasks that I have is to work with children in what we call the Taller de Creatividad (Workshop of Creativity). We run various programmes for the children of about six communities up on one of the hills not far from our house.

Many of the people who live in these communities live below the poverty line. We provide English classes (yours truly), help with homework, a reading club, gymnastic activities and handicrafts. We also provide monthly talks for the parents on a variety of topics.

Mary MacKillop Today agreed that I use some left-over funds (from when we could not run all our programmes during the Pandemic) to upgrade the outside space that we use which was very run down with broken cement and dust, and in other words, not a very welcoming place.

After getting quotes for the work, I decided to go ahead. We started last Monday even though I do not have enough to cover all costs,

trusting in Mary MacKillop's words, "God will provide." Your donation will be very gratefully received.

\$1,200.00 was transferred through the Sisters of St Joseph in Sydney to Katrina in Peru, and the following is a snippet of Katrina's reply to us in her email in August:

Thought I'd send this photo showing the upgraded space being used for a presentation to parents recently. We are so grateful for your help in enabling us to complete this part of the project.

Blessings
to you all.
Katrina xxx



Re-purpose your used Stamps

Stamps for the Missions are still being collected! Those that are donated are then processed, parcelled up and sold. The money raised goes to **Mary MacKillop Today** for the Missions in Brazil, Peru and Timor-Leste. Please send your used stamps, leaving a 1cm border, to:
Used Stamps, Locked Bag 3031, Burwood, NSW, 1805

Breaking Through Barriers

adapted from a Homily by Fr Maurice Shinnick

Throughout my primary and secondary education, then SA School of Mines and the Seminary, I never encountered an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. My first conscious meeting of an aboriginal person was of a young lad, adopted into a white family, when I was Assistant Priest at Christies Beach. In his late teens he went through a distressing time of understanding his true identity and emerged after some years as a confident leader among his people.

As we observe the current state of our nation, we do so at an incredibly important moment in our history: the referendum on a First Nations Voice to Parliament.

When the British established their first settlement in Sydney in 1788, this whole continent was regarded as *terra nullius*, which means *nobody's land*, even though there were up to 750,000 aboriginal people living here, speaking 260 distinct languages, with a history of some 60,000 years. Some people would remember that it was only in 1967, when a referendum was held which made it possible for First Nations People to be counted in a national census.

Six years ago, 500 Aboriginal leaders gathered at Uluru and issued the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*. They concluded it with the words: "We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future." It has since been endorsed by the Australian Bishops and the Australian Catholic Plenary Council.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus said, *Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and those who welcome me welcome the one who sent me.* What are we being asked as Australian citizens? Will we welcome the First Nations People who have been excluded from their own country?

People have diverse views about the referendum, even among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People themselves. It does not matter if we vote Labor or Liberal, National or Green, Independent or Informal in the election of governments, but in a referendum, we vote, each one of us, as individual Australian citizens. What is important is that we are guided by the principals of justice and respect, reconciliation and harmony, mercy and love. We need to free our minds and hearts of any racism or prejudice and come to the referendum with a clear conscience.

When Jesus lived on Earth, he broke through so many barriers of his culture and religion, to the extent that he scandalised many people.



He touched the untouchable lepers with healing, ate with tax collectors, spoke openly with the Samaritan woman, held the hand of the dead daughter of Jairus and the dead son of the widow of Nain. He healed and encouraged the crippled man and the blind man and a boy suffering seizures, and time and time again forgave sinners. No one was outside of the circle of his love and mercy.

We are at a moment of national importance. I recall the words of Psalm 89 as a guide:

*I will sing forever of your love, O God;
through all ages my mouth
will proclaim your truth.
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts forever,
that your truth is firmly
established as the heavens.*

***"I am full of confidence in our good
God's mercy that by working together
the common good will be secured."
MMK 1874***

What Draws Me to Mary MacKillop and the Josephite Charism?

A Reflection given on the 5th August by Trish Cain

The more I learn about Mary MacKillop, the more I continue to be amazed at her faith and trust in God, her courage, bravery and dedication in mission, her compassion and wisdom. The example she set, in the power of one person, to make a difference, is inspirational to us all, but I think especially today to young people, showing them what can be achieved, even at a young age. When the young struggle to find meaning in their lives, looking to the life of Australia's first saint, I hope can give courage and help them find purpose. The choices Mary made shaped the lives of those who followed, and are the road signs along our path still today.

My mother was educated by the Sisters of St Joseph at the Balaklava Convent. I went to Ellangowan at St Peters and then Mary MacKillop College. Mum kept in touch with her teachers, and mine, throughout their lives. We'd visit regularly, with home baked biscuits, every Christmas. The story of Mary and her Sisters has passed from my mother to me, and onto the next generation, with Mum's grandchildren attending St Monica's at Walkerville, which is also a Josephite school. The story is part of my heritage, my DNA, who I am. Just as indigenous peoples throughout the world pass on their stories from one generation to another, we pass on our culture of the charism of Mary MacKillop.

There is joy in coming together to remember and to pass on the story to the next generation. In South Australia especially, the Sisters went out to where-ever the people were, often into very remote areas. The communities supported the Sisters and were grateful for their presence. I think that is, in part, why Old Scholar Associations have been particularly strong here in South Australia, wanting to keep the connections, and I have been fortunate to play a part in the Mary MacKillop and St Joseph's Old Scholar communities.

The Associates, now named Companions, have however, allowed me greater connectivity with the charism of Mary MacKillop and a community of people who have a similar sense of faith, of compassion and social justice, and of gratitude for the many blessings we have here in Australia. Sometimes the wider church can be frustrating, but within the Companions I find again and again refreshment in re-centring on the simplicity of Mary's trust in God and her faith in following God's will. Be it in small or larger gatherings of the Companions, my spirituality grows and is nourished.

And to be able to pray in the Kensington Chapel, where Mary MacKillop once lived and worshipped, to walk the paths that she once walked, ... that is truly an amazing gift!



Josephite Companions' Commitment Prayer

We who have been touched
by the spirit of Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods,
ask you, God, to help us explore and live out the Josephite charism in the world.

Today we commit ourselves to you,
as we recognise your presence in every person we meet
and reach out to the suffering and the poor.

In our next newsletter, read other reflections by students from Mary MacKillop College.

RSJ Companions SA

Income and Expenditure for 2022/2023

INCOME	
Opening Balance	2,583.59
Subscriptions & Donations	1,530.00
Fundraising – Raffles, Stalls & Donations	1,210.00
Bank Interest	0.00
TOTAL INCOME	5,323.59
EXPENDITURE	
Stamps & Envelopes	951.97
Printing the Newsletter	500.00
Guest Speakers & Facilitator	500.00
Half Yearly Payment to JCoLT	600.00
Donation to Peru via Sr Katrina	1,200.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3,751.97
LEAVING A 30/6/23 BALANCE OF ...	1,571.62

Julie Langman, Treasurer 11/9/2023

✂-----

Companions: Subscriptions for 2023 – 2024

The Leadership Team sincerely thanks you for paying your subscription, which enables us to remain in contact with you and support those in need. To make a payment over the internet, our **BankSA** account details are:

BSB Number: 105-087
 Account Number: 039066240
 Account Name: RSJ Associates SA (our Account Name remains unchanged)

We are keeping our postage expenditure down as more Companions provide email addresses.

Payment Amount: \$30.00 – this includes \$10.00 to support our International JCoLT
 or Other _____

Payment Method: Cash Cheque BankSA deposit/transfer
(payable to RSJ Associates SA)

Title: _____ Name: _____

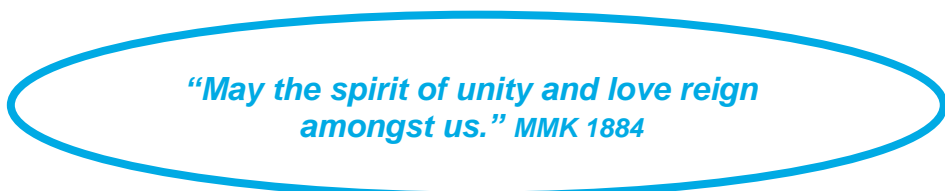
Address: _____

Email: _____

Would you prefer the newsletter sent to you via email? Yes No

Telephone Number: _____

Please post this form to: Julie Langman, 16 Greenwood Cres, Glenalta, 5052



Our Josephite Partners

Living in the Spirit of Mary MacKillop

- **St Joseph's Old Scholars Association**

An Old Scholar is anyone (female or male) who has ever been connected to a Josephite school or college in Australia, as a student or teacher. Our Association has been in existence for over one hundred years.

We are looking for a big crowd for our **Spring Luncheon** this year:

Wednesday 25th October

The Lockleys Hotel, 493 Henley Beach Rd, Lockleys

11.45am for a 12noon start

Seniors' Menu (\$22), door prizes and a raffle!

RSVP: Friday 20th October to Josie (8295 3667) or Margaret (8264 0780)

More information is available in the September edition of the SJOSA newsletter.

- **Mary MacKillop Old Scholars Association**

The Association continues the friendships and encourages the building of life-long networks amongst past students and staff. It also fosters justice and compassion, hospitality and concern for those in need and has a special relationship with the Sisters of St Joseph.

The **Annual Reunion Dinner**:

Friday 27th October

Walkerville Bowling Club

College tour 4.30pm (optional) followed by dinner at 6.30pm

Bookings for both via Trybooking <https://www.trybooking.com/CJYBF>

Our popular Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/179768134304>) keeps people in touch with each other. Make contact and share your news.

- **Mary MacKillop Precinct – Museum, Chapel and Bethany**

- Museum and Gift Shop – open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm (now closed Sundays)

The Museum tells the South Australian stories of some of the early companions of Mary MacKillop, and the history and legacy of the Josephites.

The Gift Shop has many products available for sale including the monthly *Southern Cross* magazine, books, cards and, soon to come, the Josephite Calendar – \$10 each + p&h

Orders and information: www.marymackillopadelaide.org.au or 8130 5910

- St Joseph's Chapel – open every day, 10am to 4pm

A place for quiet reflection and prayer. A place where Mary MacKillop herself prayed!

- Bethany

Check out the *2023 Events Programme* which offers workshops, reflection and retreat days. Details online through www.marymackillopadelaide.org.au or collect a copy when visiting the Museum.

- Spotlight on Mary MacKillop

Continues each 8th of the month from 10am to 12pm, except on *Sunday 8th October*. Join us in Bethany for opportunities to enrich our appreciation of Mary's story and legacy. All are welcome! No registration/no cost. Enquiries: infos@sosj.org.au or 8130 5900

- Garden Party – see pg 9 for details

Our Josephite Partners – cont...

Garden Party – Step into Spring

Sunday 29th October 2023, 2.30pm

The Garden around Bethany, 4 High St, Kensington

Cost: \$40 which includes a glass of champagne and a *delicious afternoon tea!*

Please advise of any dietary requirements at the time of booking

Tickets available from the Mary MacKillop Museum or phone Bridgette 0438 805 579

PRIZES, RAFFLES & MUSIC

• Josephites are the Future

This group was formed in 2022 and aims to raise an awareness of the many and varied groups associated with Josephite life, work and ministry. We strive to do this through providing ways for individuals and groups, connected with the Josephite story, to come together.

We have an opportunity in October to celebrate and to strengthen our connections to each other in the Josephite family. Please join us for:

A Josephite Celebration – Tales out of School

Saturday 14th October 2023, 2pm – 4.30pm

Mt Carmel College, 33 Newcastle St Rosewater

Parking and entrance off Miles St only.

Afternoon tea will be provided.

RSVP by Friday 6th October to David:

david.cotton@mcc.catholic.edu.au or 0417 853 519

It should be fun! Bring your memories!



Covenant Josephite Commitment

From the September edition of the *Around the CentreWest* Newsletter

It was a day of great rejoicing for all of us when Carla Mastrangelo recently made her Commitment as a Covenant Josephite. It was a meaningful ceremony attended by many Sisters, Carla's family, Josephite Companions and Covenant Josephites.

We gathered to give witness to Carla's commitment as she formally began her journey as a Covenant Josephite. Her journey began in baptism and it is through baptism that she was invited to a deeper communion with God, others and creation. Carla freely chose to deepen her baptismal consecration in a covenant with God and in affiliation with the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart for a period of three years.

Carla's Community, Yarus, were very involved in the celebrations and Mary McNamara set up the beautiful focus at the front of the chapel.

Kathy Gallasch creatively decorated a huge sponge cake and the Kensington Community provided a most hospitable afternoon tea. It was a wonderful day of celebration.



Yarus Community L-R:
Mary, Angela, Carla,
Marie & Mary-Ann



Kathy & Carla



JULIAN TENISON WOODS

This is part of a Novena inviting us to sit with Julian, allowing his words to touch our hearts.

Introduction

Let us give thanks for all that Julian contributed to our Josephite foundational story and for the ways in which his gifts have enhanced the wider church and community. Often when we reflect with Julian, we are drawn to his rich insights into how God's beauty is revealed in all of creation. Like Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*, Julian knew 'The entire material universe speaks of God's love, God's boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God.' (LS 84) In the gifts of creation he discovers God in all things.

Extract of a letter by Monica Cavanagh rsj, Congregational Leader

Gospel: Matthew 6:26

Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow, they do not harvest nor do they store food in barns, and yet your Heavenly Creator feeds them. Are you not worth much more than birds?



From the Pen of Julian Tenison Woods

I see God in the flowers, in the insects, in the birds as they fly and I can only turn sadly away from all and think of the beauty I have never seen. 1870

Reflection

Sit with Julian's photo and allow him to speak to your heart.



Blessing

May the abiding presence of God encourage us.
May the abundance of God's love enliven us.
May the vision of Julian Tenison Woods inspire us.
May our love for one another support us.
May God bless us – Provident, Overflowing
Generosity, and Ground of our Hope.

Amen

Adapted from 'Nine Days of Prayer with JTW'