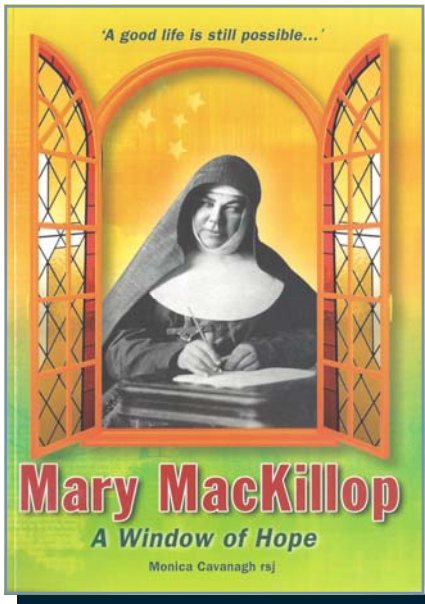


# A WINDOW OF HOPE FOR OUR WORLD

## Kindness and support to the suffering ...

*"Try to keep God with us by charity of thought, word and act."*

Mary MacKillop 1890



The Sisters who knew Mary MacKillop spoke time and time again of her kindness. People who suffered from illness and sorrow had a special place in Mary MacKillop's commitments.

If a Sister was in a difficult circumstance, Mary would do her utmost to relieve the situation. In Port Augusta, one of the Sisters was putting out a kerosene lamp when it burst into flames and set her alight. On hearing the news Mary set out immediately and despite the difficulty of getting there she managed to arrive in time to console the dying Sister Laurencia Honner.

At the Mother House an infirm old Sister was walking in the garden when she fell down. Mary MacKillop called one of the Sisters at once and said, *"Look at poor dear Sister, She must not be left alone"* and added sadly, *"Ah Sister if we do not love and care for the old and sick amongst us our Order will never prosper."*

When Dr Benson, who was not a Catholic, died in Adelaide, Mary wrote to the Sisters, *"I feel this death more than words can express"*. He had attended the Sisters without cost on many occasions. Mary went on to explain to the Sisters that his too generous heart left very little provision for Mrs Benson, Lottie and the boys. Mary offered to educate the children and encouraged the Sisters to find support for the Mayor's fund set up to assist Mrs Benson and the children. The Sisters gave one small piece of their property for the erection of a monument in his honour.

Mary was attentive to those who were grieving. She wrote to Mr O'Brien on the death of his son:

*I am so grieved to hear of the death of your dear little boy, and beg that you will accept my deepest sympathy with Mrs O'Brien and yourself in your affliction. Great as your sorrow must be, for it is always hard to lose a loved child, you will both, I trust, find consolation in bowing to the will of God.*

On another occasion a minister's wife came to the convent for some instruction and became a convert. Shortly after her conversion, her husband died in unfortunate circumstances. Mary went with another Sister to the house and stayed there as long as they were needed.

***Mary MacKillop's life invites us to support those  
who are suffering and sick in our world.***

***May it call forth in each of us the genuine kindness for which Mary is remembered.***

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**"Mary MacKillop embodied all that is best in your nation and in its people:**

**genuine openness to others, hospitality to strangers, generosity to the needy,  
justice to those unfairly treated, perseverance in the face of adversity,  
forgiveness to those who hurt her,**

**kindness and support to the suffering.**

**Think of Mother Mary MacKillop and learn from her to be a gift of love and compassion for  
one another and for all Australians"**

Pope John Paul 11—January 1995