

The second letter from the book:

Mary MacKillop and Flora

This book can be purchased at

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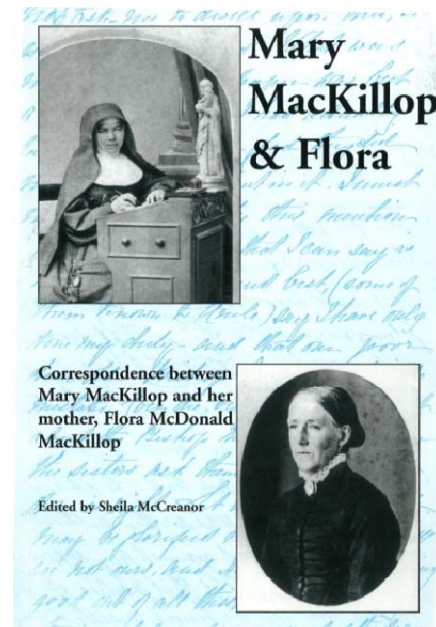
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27 November 1866 – Penola



My own dear Mamma,

By the time you receive this, you will know all that I have long since wished to tell you, and for which I trust our Heavenly Father has prepared you. Your loving heart will, I fear, be inclined to grieve at this perhaps earlier separation than you expected, but ah! do not indulge the feeling, for does not God honour us all? He has made your life one of many trials that in the midst of such you might serve Him in the manner most pleasing to Him. It was in hardships, poverty and even want that you had to rear your children, but in the bitterest trial and greatest need your confidence in Divine Providence never failed. May that bright confidence now enable you to give your children cheerfully to the service of God Who so highly honours them by giving them a desire for the Religious Life.

Long and earnestly as I have wished to enter Religion, the thought of leaving you, my loved mother, gave me so much pain and anxiety that I had to make it the subject of many Communions. Kind friends, too, prayed for me, and now I am very happy, for I am sure you will not look for any other happiness in this world than that of serving God in any way He pleases. No matter what sacrifices of the will or inclinations we may make, the more and the deeper felt the better, so long as we do God's Will - that is all we want. Oh! how I wish we would only remember that we are but travellers here. With this thought ever in our minds, how easy would the daily trials of life become to us. I do not expect, nor do I desire, earthly happiness for you, but I do desire much in the world to come. 'Tis useless my trying to explain what I feel, but I think God can make us very happy even in this world, that is, when He gives us opportunities of suffering cheerfully for Him. What to worldly eyes appear great crosses should be to us great blessings, and ever prized as such.

Do not, dearest Mamma, wish that Lexie should see more of the world. When I was her age, I began first to long for a Religious Life, but had it not been for the loving care of God Who sent me what then certainly appeared many sorrows, I might, after that, have lost the grace of my vocation. Thanks be to God for every little sorrow I had. I did not bear them well, I know, and am now very sorry for all the impatience and irritability I gave way to so often, particularly towards poor Papa. Lexie has not taken any decided step as yet, but I trust the time is not distant when we can all do so - and that, I hope, with your own and Papa's full approval. I will leave writing about our Portland affair until another time. Those debts are a subject of much anxiety, but we must hope on. Perhaps if I had not them ever before me as humiliations, I might be more forgetful of God's mercies than I am.

You may now understand why I wished you to come up at Christmas, but there was another reason, too. I wanted you to have the means of going to your duties, and I think also of enjoying a little more of Father Woods' society before he would leave this, but should it please God to deny us this pleasure, you will bear the remembrance of your children in your heart. In mine, my own dear mother, you can never be forgotten.

I cannot write more tonight. Pray for me, dear Mamma.

Mary

Thank you for the smelling bottle you sent. I always forgot to tell you I would prize it.

Tell Goldstein to excuse my tardiness. I never thanked him for the paper he sent me.

M.McK.