**Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop**

**8 August**

**PARISH BULLETIN NOTICE**

**Feast Day of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop
8 August (anniversary of her death)**

St Mary of the Cross MacKillop (1842–1909) our first Australian saint, had a passion to ensure that education was available to poor children right across the Australian countryside. She went to extraordinary means and difficulties to pursue the calling and have her sisters travel to where the greatest need existed. She exhibited courage, trust, openness and raw faith in her deliberations and actions. On 15 August 1867, Sister Mary MacKillop took her first Vows as a Religious and the title “of the Cross”, a call to lifetime courage and desire to serve Jesus in very practical ways. She faced many trials and tribulations setting up groups of sisters in and near Adelaide (including Penola), Sydney, Bathurst and Brisbane, travelling widely and writing volumes of letters of support and encouragement available to us today.

Relying on the providence of God, Mary provided care for neglected children, girls in danger and for the aged, poor and incurably ill, as well as refuge for women off the streets or newly from jail. She is remembered for her significant contribution to education, as Mary established a system of elementary Catholic education that would prepare the children of ordinary working class people for suitable employment. Her letters continue to be a support and encouragement for many.

The life and spirituality of our Australian “Saint Mary of the Cross Mackillop” has been officially acclaimed by the Universal Church in her Canonization on 17 October 2010 by Pope Benedict XVI. Her spirit is truly alive in the ongoing work of the Sisters of St Joseph and in the hearts of those who have been inspired by her.

Useful websites:

<http://www.marymackillop.org.au/prayer>

<http://www.catholic.org/saints>

<https://www.sydneycatholic.org>

<https://www.sosj.org.au/who-we-are>

**SUGGESTED PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

**8 August**

Lord, with confidence in your generous providence, and joining with Saint Mary MacKillop, we ask that our faith and hope be refreshed by the Holy Spirit to live with courage, trust and openness as she did.