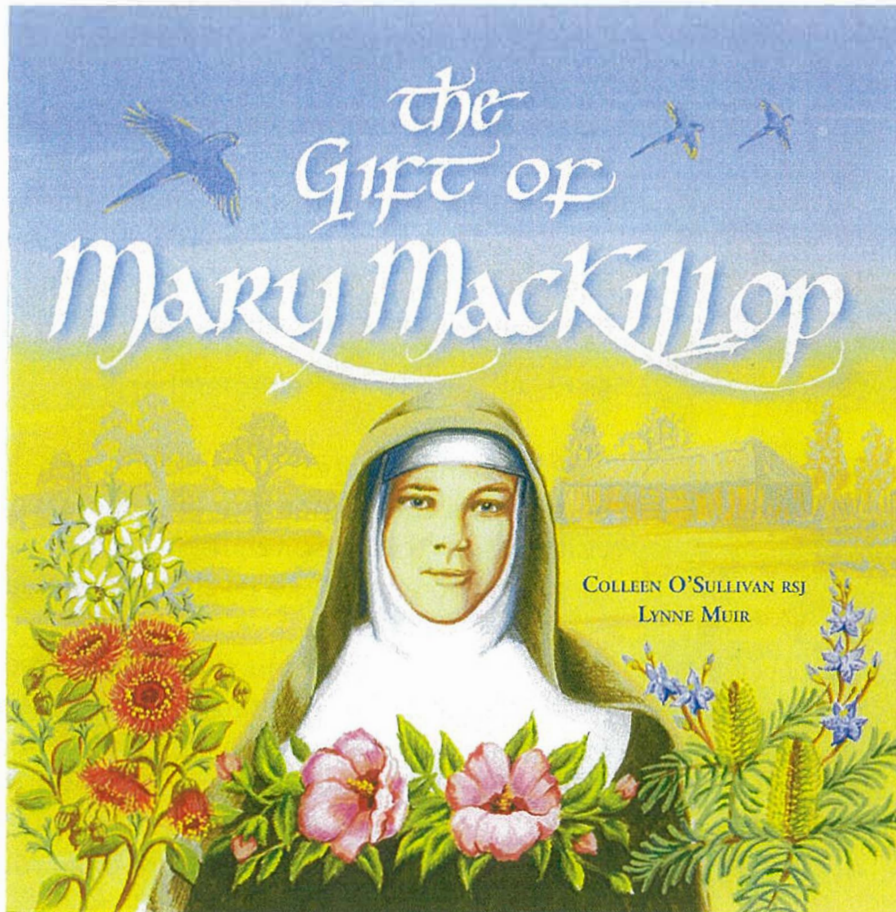


“Make no reserves with God. Reject no one.
You never know what grace can do.”

Mary MacKillop (1871)



‘Personally Mary endured much so that her vision of service for the poor and needy could become a reality. She refused to give in to a society which on the ecclesial and secular level attempted to curb her and bring her and the Sisters of St Joseph into submission. Her example urges Australians to a faith-filled understanding of our time: she gives us hope in an age that has been characterised as one of despair.

‘God is a God of darkness as well as of light and God was present in Mary’s darkness. Her great trust in the providence of God saw her through bitter as well as marvellous experiences. There were many tough times when she could have abandoned the Order but, thinking to obey God’s will, chose to stay.

Australia is richer because of her fidelity.’

Colleen O’Sullivan RSJ, *The Gift of Mary MacKillop* (Mulgrave, VIC: John Garratt Publishing, 2007), 7. Illustrations by Lynne muir.

'I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security.'

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 49.



"Mary did not confine her encouragement to words. She had a deep feeling for all who were in distress of any kind, and in spite of so many official duties she was often seen directly involved with people who needed a friend. Visiting the imprisoned was one of her frequent works of mercy."

Sister Annette Hensche remembers:

'She had the greatest compassion and love for the poor girls and the poor orphans. She used to make us visit the gaol, the hospital, the reformatory girls, and if there was no one else to go she went herself.'

'Many of the girls would not have stayed except for Mother's influence. We had bad characters who came from the gaols, the streets and everywhere. She said they were to have every comfort.'

Annette adds a memorable picture of a problem girl:

'There was a girl there whom they called "Scotch Bella". She came from Queensland. She had committed murder. She dressed as a man for three years and worked on the roads. Nobody could do anything with her. She was sent to gaol in South Australia. Mother Mary got her out and she was brought to the Refuge. She was like a raving lunatic when they brought her there.'

"Not only did Bella calm down – she was eventually baptised, married a husband, gave up drink, and died happily."

Paul Gardiner, *An Extraordinary Australian: Mary MacKillop*, 241.

Mother Mary of the Cross, **pray for us.**
Live Jesus in our hearts, **forever.**