

St Mary MacKillop of the Cross

Leader We come together with joy and thanksgiving on this feast of St Mary MacKillop. We gather as ones who find inspiration from her living of the Gospel.

We gather in the name of God,
Provident One, Sacred Heart, and Advocate of Mission,
Three in one, Community of Love.
Amen.

All Gather us now in this hour,
Join with us here in this place.
Our faith is our own special gift
To share as we journey through life. m

Readings

Mary MacKillop believed that God was active in her life
and in the lives of her early companions
and was calling them to the service of others.

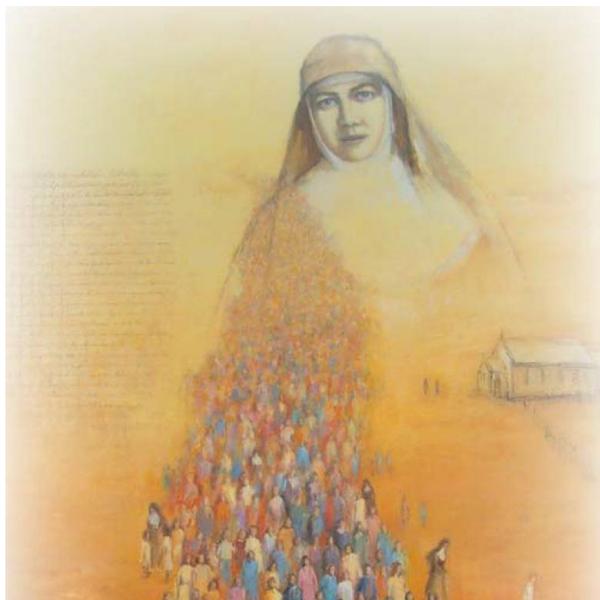
She expressed her trust
in the loving Providence of God our Father
by founding a Congregation
which was dependent on Providence for its support
and was devoted to the service of the poor.

Its members were women
who worked in a simple ordinary way
to bring to the poor
the message of their human dignity
and of Christ's saving love.

Mary MacKillop believed that in this way
God's compassionate love,
symbolized for her by the Sacred Heart,
would become a reality for her Sisters
and for the people with whom they shared their lives.

Her call as foundress
was to be one with Christ,
faithful in life and in death
to the will of the Father.

She called her Sisters
to be open to God's action
In and through their weakness
in a joyful and generous spirit
for in fidelity to the Cross
they would be open to love and
freed for mission.



Blessing

(Each person to read one blessing)

- May the abundant blessings of God and of God's friend Mary MacKillop be with us:
- May we embrace life wherever we are and, with fresh hearts, put our reliance on Providence.
- May we see the suffering, neglected ones of our societies and do something to relieve their plight.
- May we listen for the insights and wisdom of those of different cultures, social classes and religious traditions and be prompted by the Spirit to respond with reverence, hospitality and neighbourliness.
- May we run with whatever life deals us personally and bow receptively before the Source and Mystery of Life.
- May we become aware of where and how we are stuck and open our hearts to conversion.
- May we appreciate the rich Josephite tradition of spirituality and share generously with whoever seeks.
- May we live lovingly and faithfully inspired by Mary of the Cross.

All: St Mary MacKillop rejoice with and through us!

The Preferential Option for the Poor Reflections from Saint Augustine

All:

We are called to emulate God by showing a special preference for those who are poor and weak.

R1:

This is the fourth principle of Catholic social teaching on the obligations of Christians in today's society. The Gospel calls Christians to put the needs of the poor first. A common moral test of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable people.

Precisely because we wish to be at the service of all of society, our primary concern will always be those who live on its margin, excluded from the essential services. Wherever there is structural injustice, Christians are called to oppose it. Those with the greatest need require the greatest response.

God is Father of all, without exception, and we firmly believe in the equal dignity of all. It is this belief which commits us in faith to promote respect for the inalienable rights of all and their integration in society.

R2:

God does not demand much of you. He asks back what he gave you, and from him you take what is enough for you. The superfluities of the rich are the necessities of the poor. When you possess superfluities, you possess what belongs to others. (Exposition on Psalm 147, 12).

R3:

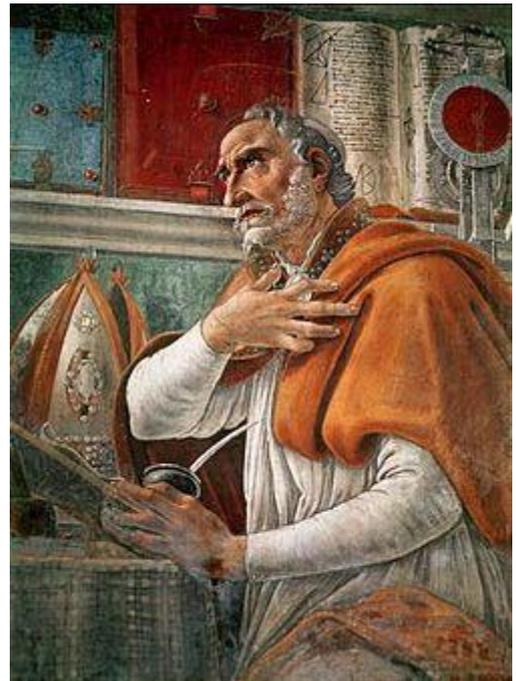
Christ who is rich in heaven chose to be hungry in the poor. Yet in your humanity you hesitate to give to your fellow human being. Don't you realize that what you give, you give to Christ, from whom you received whatever you have to give in the first place. (Commentary on Psalm 75,9)

R4:

Go on making use of your special, expensive foods, because you have got into the habit of them, because if you change your habits you get sick. Go on making use of your superfluities, but give the poor their necessities. He looks to you, you look to God. He looks to a hand that was made as he was, you look to a hand that made you.

But it didn't only make you, it also made the poor man with you. He gave you both this life as a single road to travel along. You have found yourselves companions, walking along the same road; he's carrying nothing, you have an excessive load.

He's carrying nothing with him, you are carrying more than you need. You are overloaded; give him some of what you've got. At a stroke, you feed him and lessen your load. So give to the poor; I'm begging you, I'm warning you, I'm commanding you, I'm ordering you. Give to the poor whatever you like. (Sermon 389,5-6)



R5:

Do you think it's a small matter that you are eating someone else's food? Listen to the apostle: We brought nothing into this world. You have come into the world, you have found a full table spread for you. But the Lord's is the earth and its fullness.

God bestows the world on the poor, he bestows it on the rich. (Sermon 29, 2)

Let Us All Pray Together:

Christ is at once rich and poor:

as God, rich; as a human person, poor.

Truly, that Man rose to heaven already rich,

and now sits at the right hand of the Father,

but here, among us, he still suffers hunger, thirst and nakedness:

here he is poor and is in the poor.

Guide us Lord, in our mission of stewardship,

Let our sense of Mercy guide our sense of Justice,

Let us always recall that the assets we administer

are held on trust for the poor and downtrodden.

We ask this,

Through Christ our Lord,

Amen.

--Adapted from the International Augustinian Secretariate for Justice and Peace Bulletin

http://www.midwestaugustinians.org/justpaxprefopt_aug.html