

MY STORY

ST MARY OF THE CROSS

Hi, I'm Mary MacKillop and I am Australia's first canonised saint. When I was made a saint, the church gave me a new name, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. I was born in Melbourne, Australia in 1842 and began working at a young age. I loved children so after working in stores I decided to become a nanny to teach children. I noticed there were lots of poor children in the town where I lived, and they had no education, so I began to teach them too. The priest in my town, Fr Julian Tenison Woods helped me, and we decided to open a school that provided free education for all children. I loved being a teacher, but I felt God was also calling me to be a nun. For me to study to be a nun in Australia, Fr Julian and I had to set up a new order called the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart. In the first year, 10 women joined the order and so the order began to grow. In our second year, we set up schools across Australia as well as an orphanage and a refuge for women released from prison. Not everyone in the church were happy with the ideas and ways we were running the Sisters of St Joseph, so I was excommunicated or told to leave the church in 1871. This made me very sad, so I petitioned to change the decision and was allowed back in in 1872. The Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred heart continued to grow, and children received a free education all over Australia. You can be a saint too, just like me. I always say, "never see a need without doing something about it." To me this means making sure you are always looking out for others, making sure you are sharing God's love and compassion with everyone you meet.

