

Holy Cross Retreat



Letter 77

6th August, 2021

Marrickville lock down

Our St Brigid's community in Marrickville, Sydney was in self-isolation this past week unable to gather or meet with each other. They had a daily Zoom meeting to keep in touch. Now we are joining in the Brisbane-Sydney-Melbourne lockdown.

Mary of the Cross MacKillop

This Sunday we celebrate the feast of Mary Mackillop, Australia's first official saint. It is good to recall something of her life and to note the part Julian Tenison Woods played in her life and mission.



Mary's parents emigrated from Scotland and she was born in Melbourne, in January 1842. She was the eldest of eight children. One brother became a Jesuit priest and another a Good Samaritan sister. She was well educated but her father was often out of work. At age sixteen Mary began work as a clerk and helped support her family. Two years later she moved to Penola in South Australia, to become the governess to her Aunty's children. She educated the children in her care and others who lived in poverty including aboriginal children.

It was here that she met Julian Tenison Woods, who was parish priest. Julian hoped to found a religious Order whose members would become teachers so that schools could be established in South Australia. He became Mary's spiritual mentor and even after she returned to her Victoria, she and Julian continued to work on their plan. Mary returned to Penola in 1866, and took charge of the school Julian had set up. Soon afterwards, he was transferred to Adelaide and appointed Director of Catholic Education in South Australia.

Be eager in your desires but humbly
patient in their accomplishment.
~ Author: Mary MacKillop

Julian invited Mary to help train his teachers, and together they established the Rule for the Sister of Saint Joseph. Mary and another sister returned to Penola to conduct a Catholic school which was open to any child who wished to learn, regardless of whether they could pay for their education.

Believe in the whisperings
of God to your own heart.

Mary MacKillop

The schools that she and the Order founded provided secular as well as religious education regardless of the religious affiliation of

the students. They would not accept no money from the government remaining open to all and accepting only the tuition parents could afford. Mary declared her intention to serve God as a religious sister and became Sister Mary of the Cross. By 1869, there were 82 sisters managing twenty-three schools, an orphanage, a refuge for women in need of protection and a house for the homeless. Bishop James Quinn invited the sisters of St Joseph to make a foundation in Queensland so Mary and four companions left to set up the community there.

In 1871, Mary returned to Adelaide. There were sixty-eight Catholic schools in the diocese; thirty-five of them conducted by Josephite sisters. Bishop Sheil had spent considerable time out of the diocese between 1869-1871 and there was a sense of mild chaos among clergy and laypeople. Having appointed Julian to a role in education, the Bishop now sent him away from the diocese and began trying to force Mary and the sisters to make significant changes to their Rule of Life. The fledgling congregation was plagued by trouble and Mary made it her mission to support the sisters and oversee the ministries.



Mary and some of her sisters had heard disturbing stories about a priest, who was allegedly abusing children. They told the director Fr Julian, who took the complaint to the Vicar General. The priest concerned was sent back to Ireland and one of his priest friend's swore revenge against Julian and the Josephites. He urged the bishop to change the Sister's rule and break them up. When Mary refused to comply she was banished from the

church. She was aged 29. Five months later Bishop Shiel was gravely ill and dying and from his deathbed he instructed that Mary be absolved and restored. Most of the sisters renewed their vows. A Vatican appointed Commission declared Mary and her sisters were innocent of any wrongdoing but found Julian not a fit as a director of education.

Mary travelled to Rome to seek formal approval for the Rule and eventually accepted a new constitution. She was elected as Mother General. However, there was still much opposition to Mary's order especially from those who wanted to control the Order. She was removed from her leadership position but re-elected seventeen years later.

In 1907 she established a training school, which eventually became part of Australian Catholic University. Mary's health declined until her death in 1909.

"DO ALL YOU CAN WITH THE
MEANS AT YOUR DISPOSAL,
AND CALMLY LEAVE THE REST TO GOD."
ST MARY OF THE CROSS



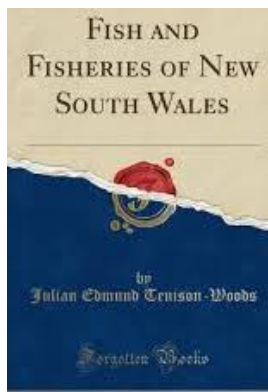
In a week where we have seen and heard athletes living their dream, Mary's dream was to give the poorest families and most neglected children access to education and safe shelter. She devoted her life to fulfilling that dream and was acknowledged for her faithfulness in 2010 by being declared Australia's first saint.

Julian Tenison-Woods



Julian Tenison-Woods was born in England in 1832. He was raised a Protestant, but became a Catholic around age 16. He met and was inspired by Ignatius Spencer of the same family as Princess Diana. He converted to Catholicism and left his wealth and family behind to become a Passionist. After profession, because of poor health and the demanding nature of the life, Julian was advised to leave.

While studying science back in London in 1853, he was encouraged by Bishop Wilson of Hobart to go there and train as a priest and then teach in the seminary. Once in Hobart he found he was teaching school children and he didn't see this as his vocation. The cold climate damaged his health. Before returning to London, he decided to visit one of his married brothers who was living in Adelaide. During that visit he was encouraged to study for the priesthood under the Jesuits at Seven Hill in the Clare Valley of South Australia and was ordained for the diocese in 1857.



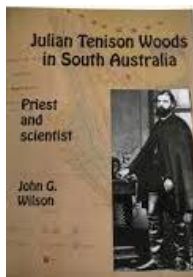
Julian became the Parish Priest of Penola which covered a huge distance of over 80,000 square kilometres. He travelled on horseback to attend sick calls, in intense heat and across swollen rivers. While riding his horse on vast travels, he read many books on spirituality and science, and he wrote articles for scientific journals. As a result of his scientific expertise, he identified the now famed Coonawarra district as being suitable for wine growing. He spent weeks visiting farming areas as far away as Portland in Victoria and it was there that he met the Finn family and their neighbours, the MacKillops. He baptized Mrs Finn and her sponsor was her young next door neighbour, Mary MacKillop.

Some time afterwards, Mary MacKillop moved to Penola to act as governess to her nieces and she and Julian often discussed their hopes of setting up a school in Penola to care for poor children. Mary and two of her sisters, Annie and Lexie took over teaching in the school and Mary began to think of ways she could join or create a religious order to carry out this work.



As Director of Education in Adelaide Julian was able to identify a need for teachers that he and Mary had often spoken about. Subsequently he wrote a more formal rule of life for Mary and her companions and they made their first vows in June 1867. Within one year there were twenty-five young women in the group. Later, the Sisters wore a cross in their belts in the same way as the Passionists used to do.

Julian left Adelaide and travelled around New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland in response to requests for parish missions, the traditional work of Passionists of the time. In 1883 Julian travelled to Indonesia, the Philippines, China and Japan. He returned in 1886 with many specimens, and then set out to study the mineral wealth of the Northern Territory. Julian settled in Sydney in 1887 the same year the Passionists were established in Sydney. He suffered declining health and was granted his request to be dressed in a Passionist habit in which he was buried in at the age of 56.



He had received medals and honours from many English and other scientific societies to which he belonged. He published more than two hundred scientific articles during his life. He also wrote a collection of Catholic hymns. He was influenced by five Congregations: Franciscan, Passionist, Marist, Blessed Sacrament & Jesuit. He co-founded the Josephites and the Brotherhood of the Sacred Heart (which folded) and the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration

In 1873 - 1874 Mary Mackillop was visited the Passionist Generalate, Ss Giovanni e Paolo several times! In her diary we read of one of these visits *"I was able to hear mass in the Chapel of St Paul of the Cross where, through the kind permission of the Father General, the body of the saint was shown to me. It lay there in its habit, crucifix and beads, and a silver lily of St Joseph in one hand, just as if he were asleep, so tranquil. Father General later gave me a relic containing part of the bone of St Paul of the Cross. I had visited their Generalate several times in my attempts to find priests for Adelaide .*

I was particularly hopeful that a community of Passionists would be established there, as it might pave the way for Father Woods to join them as he had once tried to do in England. This would have ensured his status among the clergy in Australia".

God, we lift our hearts in thanksgiving for the life of Julian Tenison Woods.

We remember his founding with Mary MacKillop, which brought the Congregation to birth.

We remember his gifts as pastor, scientist, artist and poet, his passion for mission, his reverence of Earth, his respect for the Aboriginal peoples, and his love of you.

We give thanks for his influence in our Josephite lives. To you be praise and honour.

Amen. (Josephite Prayer Book, p 72)



Mary travelled to Rome to gain the necessary permission from the Pope for her Order. The Pope she saw was Pius 9th, who had applied to join the Passionists but was rejected because of concerns for his health. Pius finished up being the longest serving Pope (31 years!) and during his term he canonised Paul of the Cross. It is reasonable to assume that Mary and the Pope made the connection of Tenison Woods' influence, and given the Pope's favourable disposition to the Passionists, this could only have helped her.

A reflection - (of my own)

I think I have a choice,
there is a potential call, and a preferred denial
but I wouldn't choose that.
Am I free? Who is free?
We think we are free
But really we are all to some degree - trapped
Some are....
trapped in horror; trapped in poverty; trapped in lovelessness
trapped in pain; trapped in disease; trapped in addiction
trapped by COVID-19
trapped in a prison though innocent
trapped in employment; trapped in culture; trapped in a family
trapped in lifestyle; trapped in religion.
Trapped are we all - more or less
so why not identify with the truly trapped
and accept hardship,
lack of true choice
as an opportunity to truly live
nay, the reality of life
that freedom comes with responsibility
that to whom much is given,
much is expected.

So no tears or fears, no regret at difficult demands;
Just acceptance that this 'lot'
is so small, so painless
compared with that of most of those
who have ever lived and live now.

"My spouse has died
or no longer loves me"

“My child has died
or is lost”
“Our home has gone
and we are refugees”
“We have nowhere to go
No one to welcome us”.
We have been invaded
and have only ever known war”
Who will free us?

I text friends endlessly
but few reply.
I have so much - but I’m empty inside
I’m young, I’m old’ I am not free”
Though I’m not in jail
and no one barricades me,
like everyone, I suffer from not being free

I am one of the world family
blessed with opportunities.
When ‘the soldiers’ call me, and mistake me for Simon,
forcing me to share the pain of others
I am humbled by their courage
by their number, by their need for Simons.
At times I too need a Simon;
This is community, the kingdom.

There is great pain
God suffers within each of us.
God weeps too.
The Calvary scene
vivid and painful, is everywhere.

May I carry a few crosses to
that place of the skull,
and there find
New life.

Humour.....The two Opera Singers

The lady sings first and then the guy copies her
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l29lQnokLlo>

...and the baby Olympics: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x04jgjQ_hLI

High Jump



In Mexico at the 1968 Olympic Games, Dick Fosbury lined up for high jump and used an entirely different style to jump 2.24 metres, to win the event. The 'The Fosbury Flop' as it had become known had not been seen before and nearly

everyone has used since. One of my brothers recounted a school experience. "I remember when I was about 12 or 13 there were only two of us left in the high jump. I was not very tall then and the other bloke towered over me! Mother later commented that it was like the other bloke was out of land of the giants, against me. We both used the scissor kick method and I remember thinking the other bloke could pretty much walk over the bar! However when he did his scissor kick he kept putting his hand on the bar knocking it off. After three goes I won the pennant - and the rest is history!"

Humour.....A Future language

A European Commission announced a recommendation whereby English would be the official language of the EU rather than German which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations, the British Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and accepted a 5 year phase-in plan that would be known as "Euro-English".

In the first year, "s" will replace the soft "c". Certainly, this will make the sivil servants jump with joy. The hard "c" will be dropped in favour of the "k". This should klear up konfursion and keyboards can have 1 less letter.

There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year, when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced with "f". This will make words like "fotograf" 20% shorter.

In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be ekspekted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible. Governments will enkorage the removal of double letters, which have always ben a deterrent to akurate speling. Also, al wil agre that the horrible mes of the silent "e"s in the language is disgraseful, and they should go away.

By the fourth year, peopl wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing "th" with "z" and "w" with "v". During ze fifz year, ze unesesary "o" kan be dropd from vords kontaining "ou" and similar changes vud of kors be aplid to ozer kombinations of letters.

After zis fifz yer, ve vil hav a reli sensibl riten styl. Zer vil be no mor trubl or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi to understand ech ozer. Ze drem vil finali kum tru! And zen ve vil tak over ze world!

At the Olympics a man went up to a competitor who was carrying a very long pole.

"Are you a pole vaulter?"

"No, I'm German, but how did you know my name is Walter?"

An incomplete book: "The Olympic Trials" by Willy Qualify.

Q How do you fix a broken tuba?

A With a tuba glue.

Q What did the grape say when it was stepped on?

A Nothing, it just let out a little wine.

Q How did Darth Vader know what Luke was getting for Christmas?

A. He felt his presents.

Q Why are fish easy to weigh?

A Because they have their own scales.

Q Why couldn't Dracula's wife get to sleep?

A Because of his coffin.

Q What does a lawyer wear to work?

A A law suit.

Q On what kind of ships do students study?

A Scholarships.

Masses

Unfortunately as the result of lockdown 6, Masses at Holy Cross are cancelled again for this Sunday and next Tuesday.

The link for the recorded Mass will be sent tomorrow afternoon

We remember

All those affected emotionally, physically or financially by COVID lockdowns throughout Australia and the rest of the world.

**I thank my God
every time I
remember you.
In all of my prayers
for all of you,
I always pray with joy.**

Philippians 1:3-4

Please remember Peter Owen, Jan Mulally, Graham Hille, Maree Bartoli, Maria Robson, Jim Molan, Anne Jenkins, Pam Grehan, Angelo Vigilante, Pam Gartland, Patricia Keeghan, Brian Tresseder, Maeve and John Reardon, Michael O'Callaghan Michael and Mardi Doyle, Jim Monaghan,

Kate and Mary Dunn, Ray Sanchez CP, Jim Coucher CP and all who seek or need our prayers.

Have a good weekend

Brian