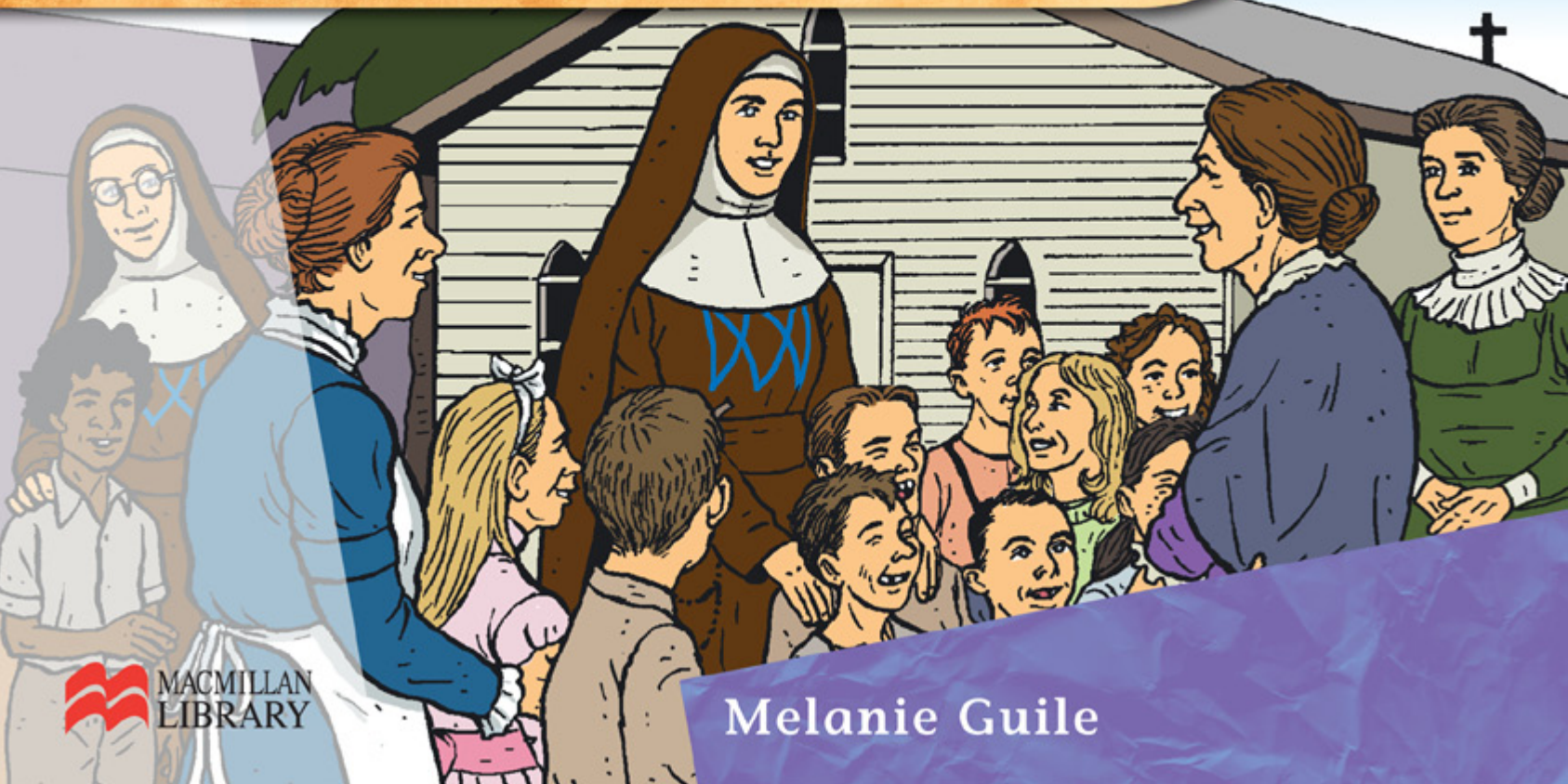


# Stories from Australia's History

## Mary MacKillop's Path to Sainthood



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GRAPHIC  
PAGES!

When a word is printed in **bold**, click on it to find its meaning.

ON THE GRAPHIC PAGES, TEXT WITH THIS COLOURED BACKGROUND COMES FROM A HISTORICAL SOURCE.



# Stories from Australia's history

The story of modern Australia starts on 26 January 1788. On that day, Captain Arthur Phillip arrived in Sydney Cove from England with the **convict** ships of the First Fleet. The new **settlement** brought disaster to Australia's **Indigenous peoples** because the newcomers took their land. This event marks the beginning of Australia as we know it today.

In the earliest days of European settlement in Australia, there was little help for the poor. Then, in the 1860s, a deeply **religious** young woman named Mary MacKillop found a way to make a difference. Together with a **Catholic priest**, Father Julian Woods, she set up the **Order** of the Sisters of St Joseph, a group of **nuns** dedicated to helping the poorest of the poor.

During her lifetime, Mary showed wisdom and religious faith in the face of great difficulties. Many people admired Mary's work with the poor and her deeply religious life, and lobbied the Catholic Church to officially recognise her as a **saint**. Mary MacKillop's path to sainthood is one of the great stories in Australia's history.

## What does it mean?

**saint:** A person declared by the Catholic Church, after they have died, to have lived a holy life devoted to their religion.

Students from St Joseph's College, Sydney, were among thousands of people who celebrated Mary MacKillop's sainthood at St Peter's Square, Vatican City, on 17 October 2010.



# Mary MacKillop's path to sainthood

In January 1866, in Penola, South Australia, a small group of ragged, barefoot children filed into an old stable that had been turned into a schoolhouse. They had never been to school before because their families could not afford the fees. Now, they had a chance to learn to read and write. This was the first of many free schools opened by Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph to educate Australia's poorest children.

Mary MacKillop wanted to devote her life to God and helping others. When Father Julian Woods suggested they establish an Order of nuns and set up a school for poor children, Mary jumped at the chance. The school in Penola was an instant success. Soon Catholic leaders in other parts of Australia wanted Mary's help, too. However, Mary faced many problems as head of her Order, particularly from Catholic churchmen who were not used to women making decisions for themselves.

The work of Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph changed the lives of thousands of poor people and led to the **canonisation** of Australia's first saint. This is the story of the people, the ideas and the events behind Mary MacKillop's work and how it changed Australia forever.



The first schoolhouse set up by the Sisters of St Joseph was in this stable in Penola, South Australia. Within five years, the Sisters were running 38 schools throughout South Australia.

## What does it mean?

**canonisation:** The process of being officially recognised as a saint by the Catholic Church.

Mary showed wisdom and religious faith in the face of great difficulties. Many people admired Mary's work with the poor and her deeply religious life, and lobbied the Catholic Church to officially recognise her as a saint.



# The big picture

Before 1900, poor people in Australia did not receive money from the government. Life was hard, especially in remote parts of the country. Schools were expensive, so poor children often missed out on an education. Many families could not afford doctors when they fell sick. Old or homeless people begged in the streets. The only help available came from the churches.

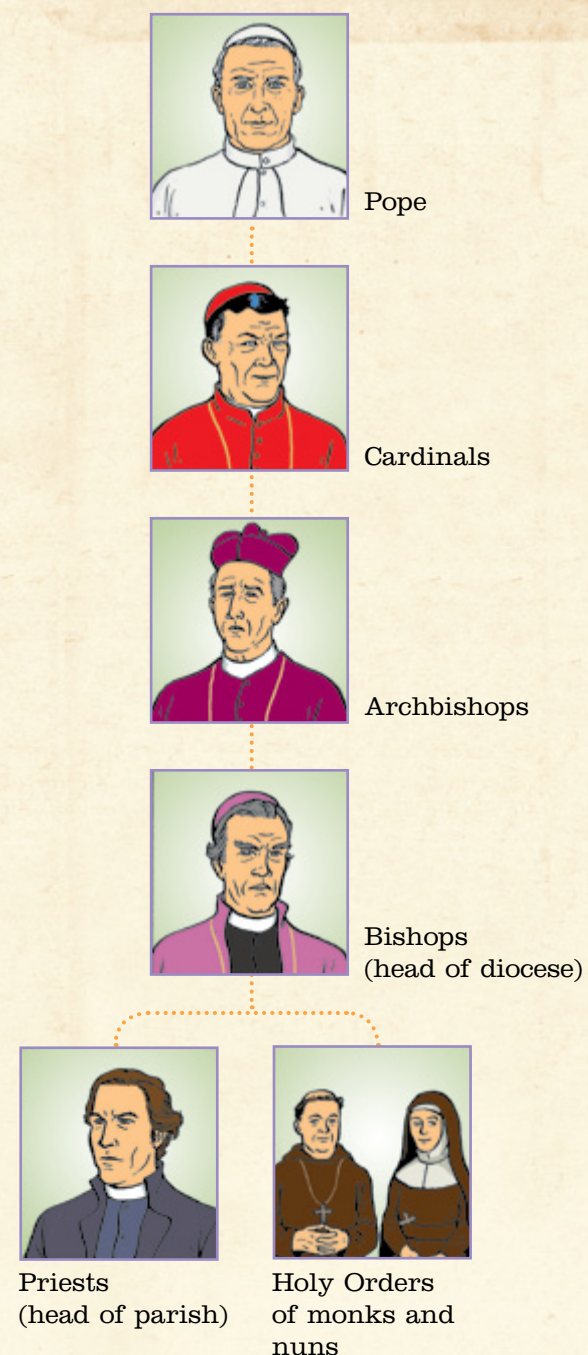
## The Catholic Church

In Australia, the **Catholic** Church set up schools, hospitals and hostels for the poor. These were run by **religious** women known as **nuns**, who devoted their lives to teaching poor children, nursing the sick and looking after elderly people.

The Church had a strict order of leadership. In Australia, all nuns took **vows** of obedience, which meant they must obey their **bishops** without question.

This fitted in with attitudes towards women in the 1800s. At that time, women were thought to be weaker and less intelligent than men. Most men did not believe that women could be strong leaders and decision-makers. Nuns in the Catholic Church were not supposed to think for themselves, but Mary MacKillop was different.

The **Pope** in Rome was the head of the Catholic Church. Under him were **cardinals**, then **archbishops**, then bishops and then parish **priests**. **Orders** of monks and nuns in Australia were under the leadership of the local bishop.



## Mary's Sisters of St Joseph

Mary's goal was to establish an Order of nuns run by an Australian woman for Australian conditions. When Mary set up the Sisters of St Joseph she was determined that they would not stay locked away in **convents**, but would travel in small groups to remote areas. They would open schools and shelters for the poor and homeless, and welcome all those in need. The sisters would take a vow of **poverty**, and would be as poor as the people they helped. Most importantly, Mary MacKillop would make decisions as head of her Order, to ensure that they were free to do their good work without any interference from Catholic priests and bishops. She would answer only to the Pope in Rome.

The Sisters of St Joseph provided shelter for women, children, homeless and troubled people and never turned anyone away. These sisters worked in Camberwell, Victoria, in the early 1900s.

## Eyewitness words

“Never see a need without doing something about it.”

Mary MacKillop, 1872



# Key people

Two people played key roles in setting up the **religious Order of the Sisters of St Joseph**.

## Maria (Mary) Ellen MacKillop

**Born:** 15 January 1842 in Fitzroy, Melbourne, Victoria

**Role:** Co-founder and first head (Mother-General) of the Order of the Sisters of St Joseph

**Religious name:** Mary of the Cross

**Age at the founding of the Order (1866):** 24

**Died:** 8 August 1909

**Appearance:** Average height, slim, clear grey eyes, dark eyebrows, auburn hair

**Character:** Clever, clear-headed, calm, kind and dutiful but strong-willed and quietly determined. Deeply religious, but also good-humoured and practical.

**Comments:** Mary MacKillop was a natural leader with strong ideas. Nothing would stop her from doing what she believed was God's will. She begged in the streets, stood up to powerful churchmen, and went to the **Pope** in Rome for help. She saw troubles as 'crosses', or challenges, sent by God to strengthen her, and refused to judge her enemies harshly.



## Julian Tenison Woods

**Born:** 15 November 1832 in London, England

**Role:** Priest and co-founder of the Order of the Sisters of St Joseph

**Age at the founding of the Order:** 34

**Died:** 7 October 1889

**Appearance:** Tall, slim, brown wavy hair, dark lively eyes

**Character:** Intelligent, talented, widely read and charming, but also over-confident and headstrong

**Comments:** Father Woods set Mary MacKillop on the path to a religious life. His persuasive manner helped the Order of the Sisters of St Joseph to survive its first years and grow in numbers. However, Father Woods could also be difficult and unwise. He believed he could see into the future, spent money he did not have and argued with his **bishops**. Father Woods' strange beliefs and poor decisions finally drove away his friends, including Mary MacKillop.



# First steps towards sainthood

Mary MacKillop had always wanted to be a nun but she had to work to support her family. Then she met a young priest, Father Woods, who invited her to work with him in Penola, South Australia. There, they planned a new Order of teaching nuns, the Sisters of St Joseph. Mary would be the first member.

**January 1866** Mary MacKillop travelled to Penola, South Australia, to help Father Woods.



Mary searched for a schoolhouse.



**19 March** Mary decided to dedicate herself to God.

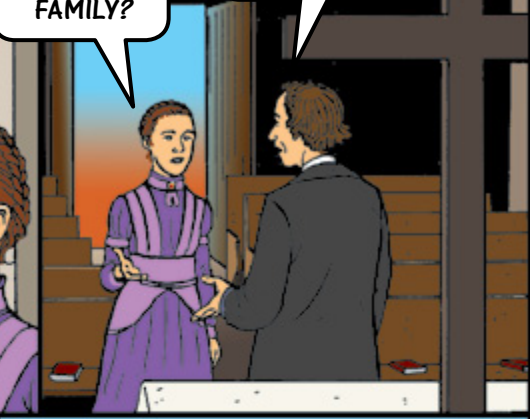


MARY, I WANT TO OPEN A FREE SCHOOL FOR THE POOR. WILL YOU HELP ME?



BUT WHAT ABOUT MY FAMILY?

YOU WILL WORK FOR GOD NOW.



Soon the Penola Catholic school opened. It was free to students. Mary was not paid for her work.



Mary's brother John helped with repairs.



She wore a simple black dress to church ...



Mary and Father Woods drew up rules for the new Order of nuns. This marked the beginning of the Order of the Sisters of St Joseph.

*Sisters of St Joseph must:*

- be poor and own no property
- be led by a sister
- take orders only from the Pope in Rome.

... and she prepared to become a nun.

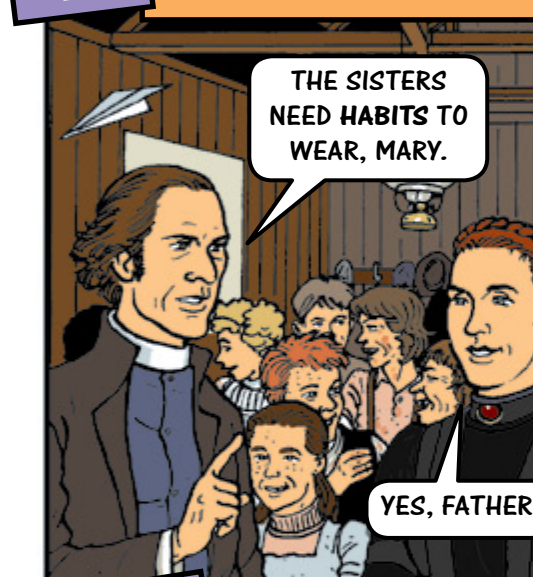
As the school at Penola grew, so did the Order of the Sisters of St Joseph.

I WANT TO JOIN THE ORDER.



WELCOME, SISTER.

**April** Meanwhile, back in Penola ...



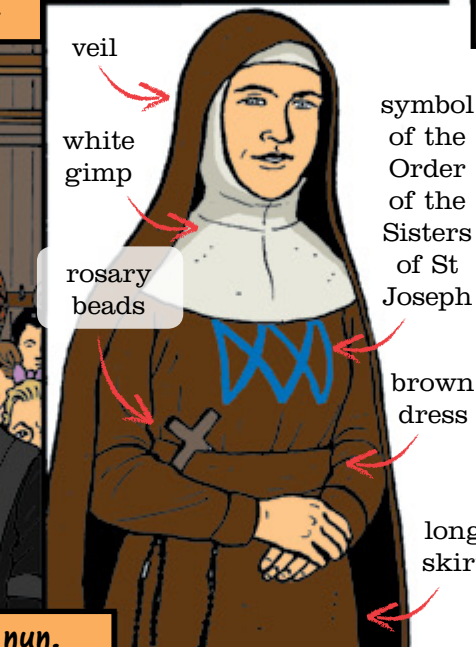
THE SISTERS NEED HABITS TO WEAR, MARY.

YES, FATHER.

**15 August** Mary took her vows as a nun.



I NAME YOU 'MARY OF THE CROSS'.



symbol of the Order of the Sisters of St Joseph

brown dress

long skirt

Soon the new habits were ready.



'The Cross' meant pain and trouble, which Mary would overcome with God's help.

**1867** Word about the sisters' work spread to Adelaide.



I HEAR THEY ARE DOING GOOD WORK, FATHER WOODS.

YES, BISHOP SHEIL.

WE NEED SCHOOLS FOR THE POOR HERE IN ADELAIDE, TOO.



I'LL BRING SOME SISTERS.

Bishop Sheil was so pleased that he made Father Woods Director of Catholic Education in South Australia.

**July** Mary set up a convent in Adelaide and opened a school, which the sisters supported by begging.



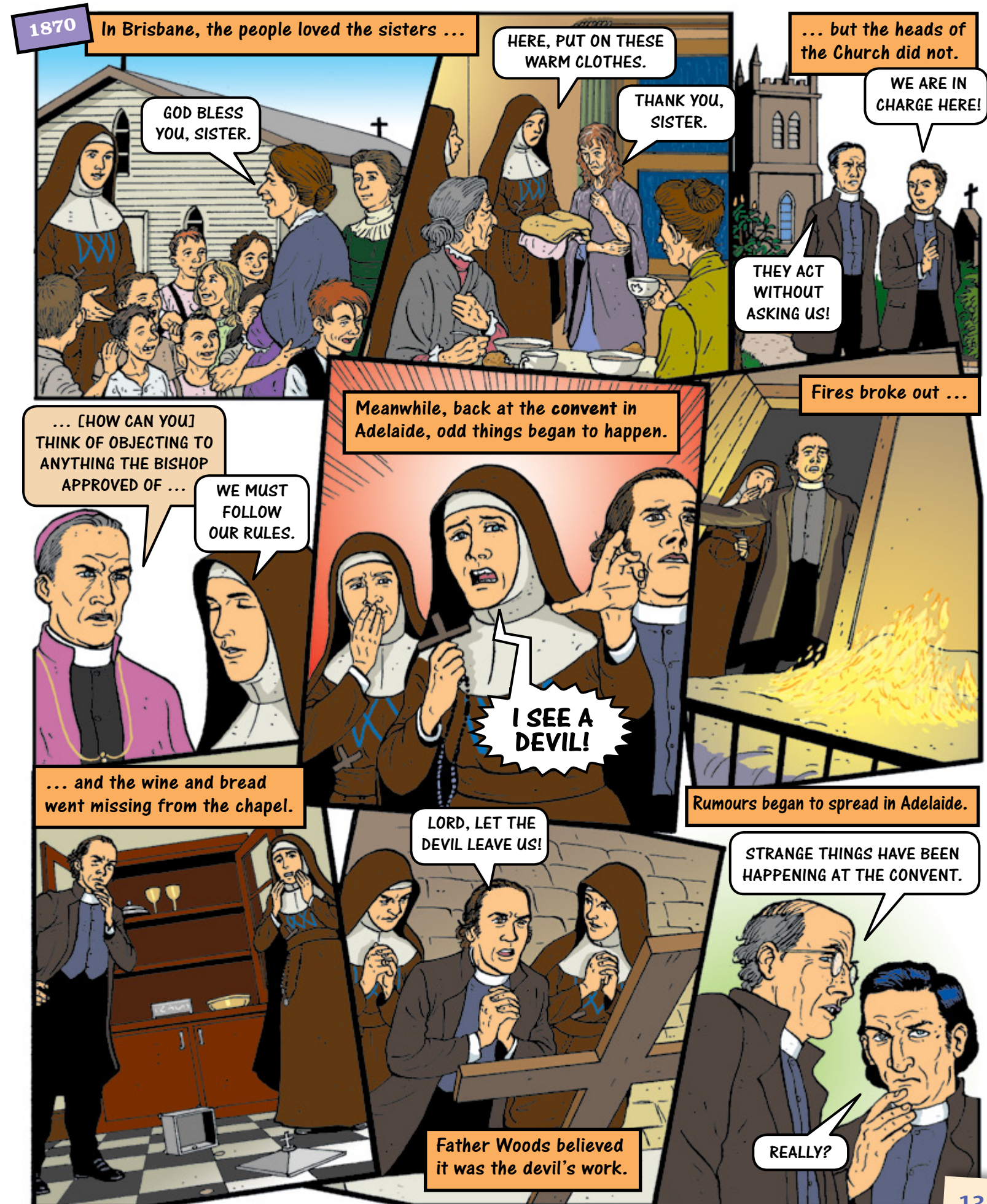
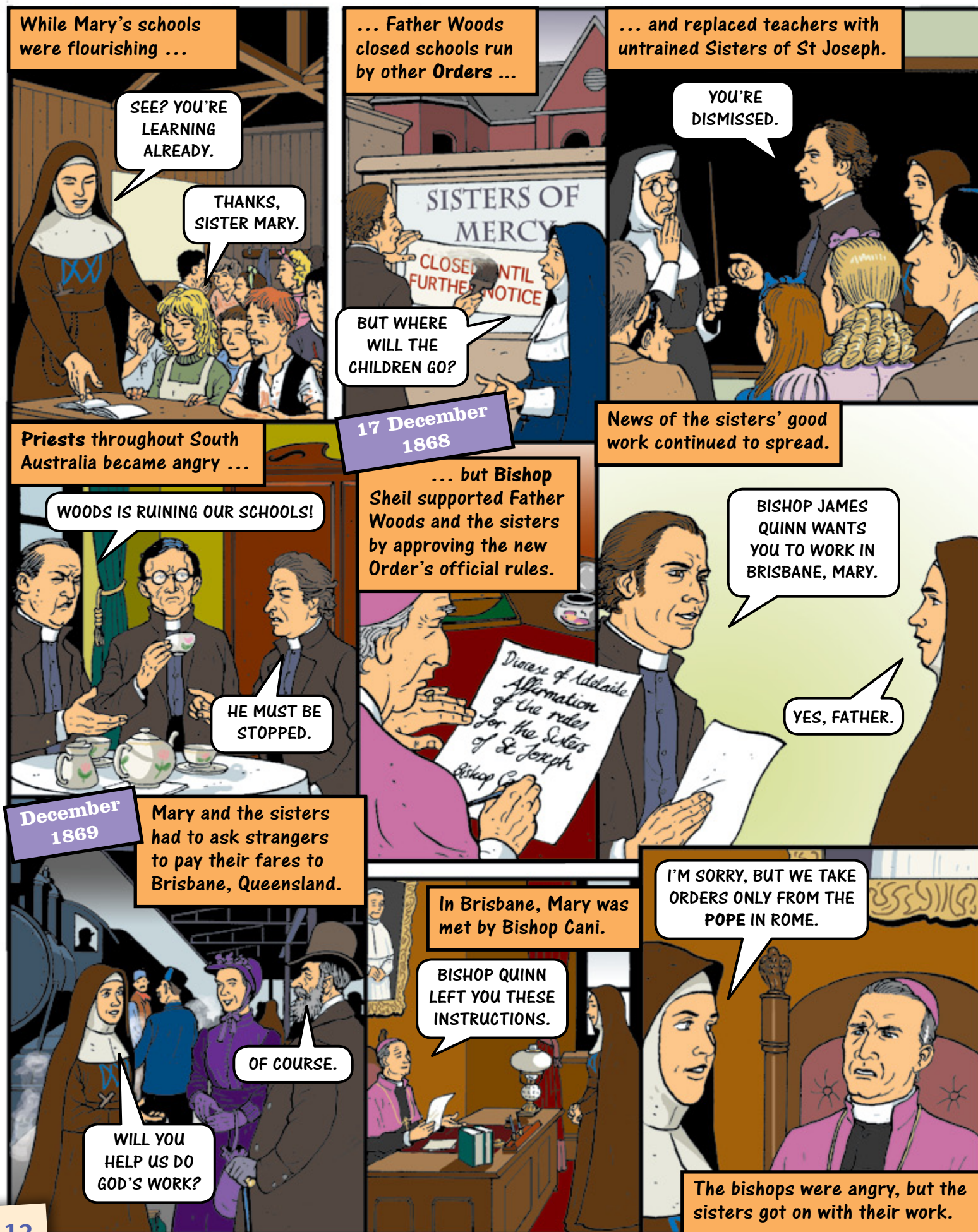
GOD BLESS YOU.

Within a year, there were 30 sisters running 8 schools and 2 homeless shelters in South Australia.



COME IN, DEAR.







Father Woods was very popular, and Sisters Angela and Ignatius were causing trouble to try to get his attention.



In Brisbane, Mary received news of the events in Adelaide.



HOW COULD FATHER WOODS BE TAKEN IN? IT'S ALL NONSENSE.

In Adelaide, things got worse when Bishop Sheil went overseas.

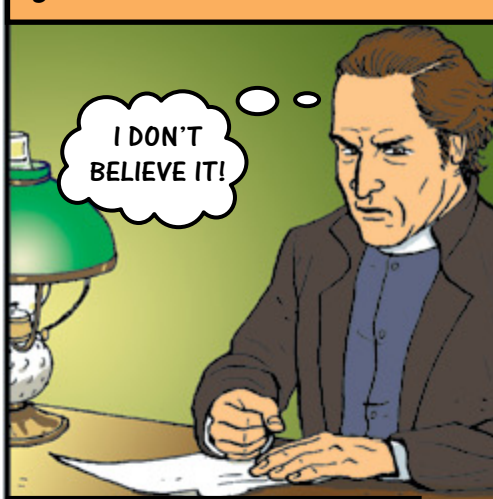


I CAN SEE INTO THE FUTURE!

WOODS IS A FOOL.

?

An investigation into the convent proved that Sisters Angela and Ignatius had deceived Father Woods.



I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

Bishop Sheil began to turn against Father Woods and the sisters in Adelaide.



WE'RE £4000 IN DEBT, FATHER WOODS!

BUT WE'RE RUNNING 40 SCHOOLS.

Early 1871

As troubles mounted, Father Woods asked Mary to return to Adelaide.



... you will come [back] ... to a nest of crosses (troubles).

April

Mary returned to Adelaide at last.



THANK GOD YOU'RE BACK.

IT'S BEEN TERRIBLE, MARY. FATHER WOODS HAS ACTED FOOLISHLY.

February

When Bishop Sheil returned, everything seemed to be falling apart.



WOODS IS MAD!

THE SISTERS ARE BAD TEACHERS.

August

Mary took control. She wrote plainly to Father Woods, who had travelled to New South Wales.



I am changed, dear Father ... at any cost I will say what I think to you in the future.

Bishop Sheil tried to take control of the sisters.



ALL TEACHERS SHALL BE TESTED AND YOUR SCHOOLS MUST CHARGE FEES.

BUT THAT'S AGAINST OUR RULES.

21 September

Father Horan gave Mary the Bishop's order to go out of town.



WILL YOU GO TO ST JOHN'S TOMORROW?

BUT I CANNOT OBEY AN ORDER FROM THE BISHOP.

LET ME SPEAK TO BISHOP SHEIL FIRST.

All the sisters left the convent with Mary.



GOD WILL HELP US, SISTERS.

January 1872

Bishop Sheil became ill.



I'VE MADE A TERRIBLE MISTAKE.

YOU DARE TO DISOBEY?

NO, BISHOP, BUT WE CANNOT BREAK OUR VOWS.

YOU KNOW YOU CAN BE EXCOMMUNICATED FOR DISOBEYING A BISHOP'S ORDER.

BUT I'VE DONE NOTHING WRONG!

Bishop Sheil was furious.



IF YOU REMOVE MARY, THE SISTERS WILL OBEY YOU.

YOU'RE RIGHT. I'LL SEND HER OUT OF TOWN FOR A DAY OR TWO.

The next morning, the Bishop and priests came to the convent.

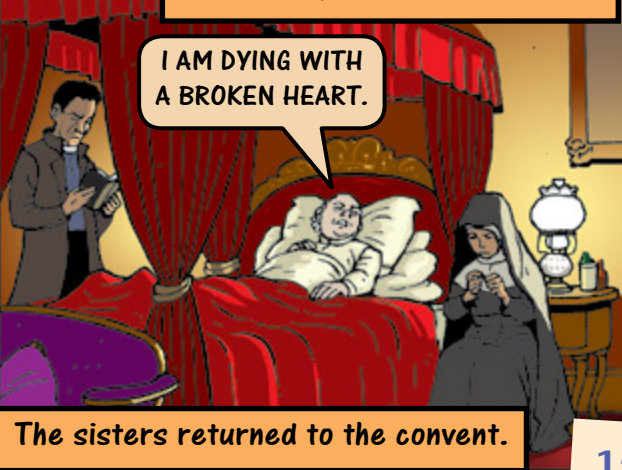


MARY OF THE CROSS, YOU ARE DISOBEDIENT AND REBELLIOUS. I EXCOMMUNICATE YOU.

This meant Mary was banned from the Catholic Church, the worst punishment possible.

23 February

On his deathbed, Bishop Sheil lifted Mary's excommunication.



I AM DYING WITH A BROKEN HEART.

The sisters returned to the convent.



# Viewpoints

Most **Catholic** churchmen believed that they had a right to make decisions on behalf of women, particularly the **nuns** in their diocese, or church district. However, Mary believed that the Sisters of St Joseph should have control of their own affairs to protect them from any unwise decisions made by powerful **priests** and **bishops**. The following two extracts show these different points of view.

## Bishop James Quinn, Bishop of Brisbane, Queensland

Bishop James Quinn believed he should have complete control over Catholic affairs in his own diocese. He could not accept that Mary was in charge of the sisters in Brisbane and could act without his permission.

“[It is] impossible for me to accept the government of a woman or to have a community of nuns governed by a lady from Adelaide. I won't allow any woman to make a disturbance in my diocese.”

Bishop James Quinn, around 1879

Bishop Quinn, like so many Catholic leaders at the time, was furious that Mary would not take orders from him.



## Mary MacKillop, Mother-General of the Sisters of St Joseph

Mary understood that she was locked in a power struggle with Bishop James Quinn, who wanted the sisters to stay in Brisbane, but only if they were under his command. Mary believed that she had to be strong if her **Order** was to maintain its rules and remain **independent**.

“Our position is extremely painful in Queensland. The good Bishop there seems determined not to work with us and yet does not seem to wish any sisters to return to [the Adelaide **convent**] ... it would be much better to withdraw all our sisters from a place where ... their position seems to do more harm than good to **religion**.”

Mary MacKillop, 1879



Mary MacKillop was determined to ensure that the Order of the Sisters of St Joseph remained independent and took orders only from the **Pope** in Rome.





# A nest of crosses

By 1872, the Sisters of St Joseph ran schools in Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia. Mary's excommunication had been lifted, but this was the first of many battles she would fight to defend her Order's rules against priests and bishops who wanted to take control. Father Woods was right – Mary had a 'nest of crosses' still to face.

**May 1872**

Mary's friends in Adelaide were outraged at her unjust punishment.

WE NEED AN INQUIRY.

LET'S WRITE TO THE POPE. HE WILL FIND OUT THE TRUTH.

**June 1872**

Report into the Actions of the Late Bishop Sheil:

- The Bishop was misled
- Father Horan to blame
- Sister Mary did no wrong
- Father Woods must be dismissed as Director of the Sisters of St Joseph.

Meanwhile, Father Woods took Sisters Angela and Ignatius to New South Wales to open a convent.

THIS IS UNWISE OF HIM.

SISTER MARY, HOW CAN FATHER WOODS TRUST THOSE SISTERS AFTER THEIR TRICKS?

**February 1873**

Bishop Reynolds, the new Bishop of Adelaide, agreed.

FATHER WOODS SAYS I MUST GO TO ROME.

LEAVE NEXT MONTH. I'LL SEND FOR FATHER WOODS SO YOU CAN PLAN WITH HIM.

THANK YOU.

**28 March**

Mary sailed for Rome to meet the Pope.

HE REFUSES TO COME!

THEN I MUST GO WITHOUT SEEING HIM.

LET MARY COME TO ME.

Still, Mary took advice from Father Woods.

1873

My Dear Father, How can we protect our rules ...?

THE POPE HIMSELF MUST SIGN THE RULES.

**11 May**

Mary arrived in Rome.

She wrote to the Pope explaining her visit.

Holy Father ... Please approve our rules so we can do God's work under your protection. Mary of the Cross

**1 June**

Mary met the Pope.

YOU ARE THE EXCOMMUNICATED ONE?

YES, HOLY FATHER.

**August**

While she waited for the new rules, Mary travelled to meet her relatives in Scotland.

GOD BLESS YOU, MY CHILD.

Church officials told Mary her rules needed re-writing.

CERTAINLY, FATHER. OUR RULES ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO US.

I UNDERSTAND.

Finally, in March 1874, Mary travelled back to Rome to collect the new rules.

The new rules said no more begging ...

(SIGH) WE MUST GIVE UP OUR VOW OF POVERTY.

THANK GOD.

Mary could return to Australia.

A DAY WORTH YEARS OF SUFFERING.

... but the sisters would still be under the Pope's control.



While Mary was overseas, people plotted against her, including Father Woods in Bathurst, New South Wales.

MARY WENT TO ROME AGAINST MY WISHES.

REALLY, FATHER WOODS?

NO SHE DIDN'T.

THE SISTERS DID NOT KNOW WHO TO BELIEVE.

FATHER WOODS WOULD NOT LIE!

HE IS MISTAKEN, SISTER ANGELA.

IN THE BRISBANE CONVENT, BISHOP JAMES QUINN TRIED TO TURN THE SISTERS AGAINST MARY.

MARY DOESN'T HAVE THE POPE'S PERMISSION TO RULE YOU.

REALLY?

THAT'S UNTRUE.

January 1875

Mary returned to Adelaide.

19 March

Mary organised a General Chapter – a meeting of the sisters.

THE NEW RULES SAY WE MUST ELECT A SISTER TO LEAD US.

Mary was elected Mother-General of the Sisters of St Joseph.

WELCOME HOME!

The sisters were happy ...

April

Mary decided to go to Brisbane to talk to the Bishop.

... but in Brisbane, Bishop Quinn was furious.

I'M IN CHARGE HERE, NOT SISTER MARY!

AS MOTHER-GENERAL, I—

IF YOU GO TO THE CONVENT HERE, I'LL CALL THE POLICE!

THEN I WILL TAKE THE SISTERS AWAY FROM BRISBANE.

The Bishop backed down – for the time being.

24 December

Then, the Bishop's brother, Matthew, made trouble in the Bathurst convent.

I FORBID YOU TO SEE OR WRITE TO MARY.

BUT—

ACCEPT ME AS YOUR HEAD OR LEAVE!

THE BISHOP HAS A RIGHT TO RUN HIS OWN CONVENTS.

YES, BUT NOT TO TAKE OVER OURS. LET'S WRITE TO MARY.

January 1876

Bathurst convent

Mary visited the country sisters.

WE'RE ILL, SO WE HAD TO CLOSE THE SCHOOL.

I'M SORRY, MOTHER MARY, BUT THE BISHOP ORDERED US NOT TO LET YOU IN.

PLEASE TAKE US AWAY!

February

Mary removed her sisters from New South Wales. Bishop Matthew Quinn was furious.

SHE IS POWER-HUNGRY AND SPITEFUL!

1879

Mary's battle with Bishop James Quinn also came to a head.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO ACCEPT THE GOVERNMENT OF A WOMAN!

In spite of all the difficulties she experienced, Mary continued her good works.

He set up his own Order, the 'Black Josephites', with the help of Father Woods.

Mary removed the sisters from Brisbane, too.

However, worse was to come ...



**1883** Bishop Reynolds in Adelaide had always supported Mary but ...

LOOK, BISHOP, WE'RE £10 000 IN DEBT!

WHAT IS MOTHER MARY DOING WITH THE MONEY?

HMM ...

Mary's enemies turned Bishop Reynolds against her.

I HEAR MARY HAS A DRINKING PROBLEM.

DISGRACEFUL!

Mary sometimes took tiny amounts of alcohol on doctor's orders, but was never drunk.

**April** Bishop Reynolds decided to act.

THE POPE HAS ORDERED ME TO INVESTIGATE YOU.

I WONDER WHY?

CERTAINLY, BISHOP.

The inquiry began with the sisters being questioned.

DOES MOTHER MARY TAKE BRANDY?

SOMETIMES, BUT ...

YOU ADMIT IT!

The inquiry was biased against Mary and rumours spread.

THEY SAY SHE HAS STOLEN OUR MONEY.

SHOCKING!

**November 1883** Bishop Reynolds ordered changes.

YOU MUST CHARGE FEES - AND TEACH FRENCH AND MUSIC.

BUT WHAT ABOUT POOR CHILDREN?

YOU DARE TO DISOBEY? LEAVE ADELAIDE IMMEDIATELY!

So Mary went to Sydney, New South Wales, where a convent had just been opened.

HOW PEACEFUL ... I'LL MAKE THE BEST OF IT.

**From Sydney, Mary wrote to Rome for advice.**

MOTHER MARY HAS BEEN THROWN OUT OF ADELAIDE!

WHAT?!

**In Rome, they knew nothing about the Adelaide inquiry.**

THE BISHOP CLAIMED WE ORDERED IT!

WE MUST SET THIS RIGHT.

**November 1884** Archbishop Moran of Sydney was asked by Rome to find out the truth.

THEY TOLD WICKED LIES ABOUT OUR MOTHER-GENERAL!

SHE'S INNOCENT!

WHAT CAN THE POOR BISHOP HAVE BEEN THINKING?

**November 1885** The Archbishop's report cleared Mary, but replaced her as Mother-General.

BUT YOU ARE OUR MOTHER.

GOD'S WILL BE DONE.

Mother Bernard was a weak Mother-General, but Mary supported her and the Order expanded to Victoria ...

... and even to New Zealand.

Over the years, the Sisters of St Joseph became famous for their work ...

10 + 16 =  
23 - 7 =  
14 + 44 =  
38 - 15 =

... and Mary was re-elected Mother-General in 1899.

Mary's loving kindness never failed throughout her life.

MARY'S LIKE A SAINT.

SISTER, NEVER SEE A NEED WITHOUT DOING SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

Mary MacKillop was on the path to sainthood.



# What happened next?

After Mary MacKillop was re-elected Mother-General in 1899, the **Order** of the Sisters of St Joseph ran smoothly. The sisters continued helping poor families, orphans, ex-prisoners, addicts and beggars. They also set up schools for **Indigenous peoples** in remote areas of Australia and for Maori children in New Zealand. By 1909, there were 750 Sisters of St Joseph running 117 schools, as well as shelters for the poor, ill and homeless.

In May 1902, Mary suffered a **stroke** while visiting **convents** in New Zealand. She lost the use of the right side of her body and never fully recovered. Nevertheless, the sisters re-elected her as Mother-General in 1905. She continued her work while based at the Mount Street convent in North Sydney. She died there in August 1909, aged 67, and was buried at Gore Hill cemetery. However, many mourners took dirt from around her grave as souvenirs, so in 1913 her body was transferred to a memorial chapel at the Mount Street convent.

Each year, thousands of **Catholics** visit the Mary MacKillop Memorial Chapel in Sydney to pray at her marble tomb.



## The slow path to sainthood

In 1925, the head of the Sisters of St Joseph suggested to Rome that the Catholic Church should canonise Mary MacKillop as a saint. The **nuns** in the Order felt that Mary's life spent helping others, her **founding** of a great Order, and her patience and kindness through all difficulties were saintly qualities. The long, slow path to sainthood began in 1951 with careful inquiries into Mary's life and work. An official Church biography by Jesuit **priest** Paul Gardiner followed as part of the process.

### Beatification

In 1993, **Pope** John Paul II pronounced that Mary was 'among the blessed'. The Pope's pronouncement was part of Mary's **beatification**. However, two **miracles** had to be confirmed before Mary could be declared a saint. Two cancer patients were cured after they prayed to Mary. When the Catholic Church recognised these cures as miracles, Mary's path to sainthood was complete. Mary MacKillop was officially declared a saint by Pope Benedict XVI on 17 October 2010.

## Eyewitness words

**Cardinal** Moran of Sydney prayed with Mary at her deathbed. Afterwards, he told the sisters:

“Her death will bring many blessings ... on the whole Australian Church. ... I consider I have this day assisted at the deathbed of a saint.”

### What does it mean?

**miracles:** Things that happen that cannot be explained by science.

Mary showed  
compassion and re-  
sistance in the face  
of difficulties  
any people a-  
dmitted Mary's wo-  
rds were poor an-  
d religious  
bodied the  
Church  
recognised  
a saint



At a ceremony in Rome on 17 October 2010, Mary MacKillop was named as Australia's first saint by Pope Benedict XVI.



# The effects of Mary MacKillop's work

Mary MacKillop's work as co-founder and head of the Order of the Sisters of St Joseph had wide-ranging effects.

## Good works

By providing free schooling, the Sisters of St Joseph helped thousands of children throughout Australia and New Zealand to receive an education. In teaching children of all races, cultures and **religions**, the sisters were among the first people to promote **diversity**. The Order also provided **refuges** for ex-prisoners, addicts and abused women, and helped change society's attitudes towards these people.

### What does it mean?

**diversity:** A variety of races, cultures and religions

## Attitudes to women

Mary MacKillop was a strong leader who refused to be bullied by men of the Church. Many **priests** and bishops were enraged by the fact that the Sisters of St Joseph took orders only from the Pope. However, Mary stood firm and, as a result, the Order remained **independent**. Mary's calm determination and good sense helped change men's opinions about what women could do.

Although Father Woods allowed Mary MacKillop to visit him several times before his death, their friendship was never really repaired.

### What ever happened to ...

## Father Julian Tenison Woods?

After being replaced as Director of the sisters in 1872, Father Woods never returned to South Australia. In 1874, he founded the Order of the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Queensland. Father Woods never forgave Mary for what he believed was her disloyalty. He travelled throughout Australia and overseas, preaching and conducting scientific studies of plants, animals and rocks. In 1887, he returned to Sydney in poor health. Sister Ignatius, now renamed 'Mrs Abbot', nursed him until he died in 1889, aged 56.

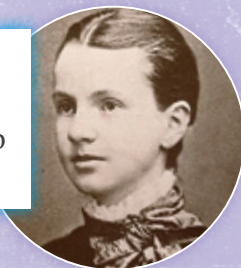


## Timeline

This timeline shows the most important events related to Mary MacKillop's path to sainthood.

**15 January 1842**

Mary MacKillop is born.



**January 1866**

Mary begins teaching at Penola.

**22 September 1871**

Mary is excommunicated by Bishop Sheil.



**23 February 1872**

Mary's excommunication is lifted.

**March 1875**

Mary is elected Mother-General of the Sisters of St Joseph.

**1883**

Bishop Reynolds accuses Mary of being an alcoholic and orders her to leave Adelaide.

**1885**

Mary is cleared of wrongdoing but is replaced as Mother-General.

**1 February 1973**

Pope Paul VI agrees to begin the beatification process for Mary.

**July 1993**

Pope John Paul II declares Mary among the blessed.



1840

1860

1870

1880

1900

1920

1970

1990

2010

**1860**

Mary meets Father Julian Woods in Penola, South Australia.

**19 March 1866**

Mary wears a black dress to show she is the first Sister of St Joseph.

**15 August 1867**

Mary takes her nun's vows as 'Mary of the Cross'.



**March 1873–December 1874**

Mary travels to Rome to see the Pope.



**11 May 1902**

Mary suffers a stroke in New Zealand.

**8 August 1909**

Mary MacKillop dies in Sydney.



**1926**

In Rome, investigations begin into the possibility of Mary being declared a saint.

**17 October 2010**

Mary becomes a saint of the Catholic Church.





# What do you think?

The life and work of Mary MacKillop raises questions about society's attitudes towards poor people and what should be done to help them. Try the following activities to test your own ideas about this subject.

## Who is right?

Some people believe that it is the government's job to look after those who cannot help themselves, but others support giving to **charity** to help the poor. Read the following opinions and have a discussion about who you think is right.

### For government help

It is the government's job to help the poor. We all pay taxes, which the government uses to pay pensions and benefits to the poor. That should be enough.

### For charity

Helping poor people is everyone's responsibility, not just the government's. It is only fair and right that people share their wealth by giving money to those who have less.



## What would you do?

The following events actually happened during Mary MacKillop's life. Read each scene then choose what you would do.

### Scene 1

You are Mary MacKillop. One day, you see a poor homeless man, whom you recognise as the former headmaster of a school where you once taught. Years before, this man acted dishonestly, which led to you losing your job. Would you ...

- A** pretend you do not see him
- B** tell him that he did the wrong thing, but that God would forgive him
- C** give him money to help him out?

### Scene 2

You are Mary MacKillop. The Governor of South Australia asks you to enrol his grandson in one of your schools. However, he requests that a screen be put up around the boy's desk to separate him from the other pupils in the classroom. Would you ...

- A** refuse the request, saying you treat all children the same
- B** refuse to set up a screen, but allow the boy to sit separately from the other children
- C** reluctantly agree to set up the screen?

### Scene 3

You are Father Julian Woods on your deathbed. You have refused to speak to Mary MacKillop for many years, but now she asks to see you. Would you ...

- A** welcome her as an old friend
- B** reluctantly agree to see her
- C** refuse to have anything to do with her?

Once you have chosen what you would do in each scene, find out what actually happened on page 31.



# Find out more

## Websites

<http://www.sosj.org.au/>

This is the website of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart. It includes detailed information about the sisters' aims and beliefs, and their current work in Australia and around the world.

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

This website devoted to Mary MacKillop includes history, an illustrated timeline of Mary's life, an online prayer space and useful links.

## DVDs

*Mary, directed by Kay Pavlou, 1994*

This film, based on Mary MacKillop's life, was made with the official support of the Sisters of St Joseph.

*Mary, Miracles and Saints, presented by Geraldine Doogue, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2010*

A full transcript of this episode of *Compass* can be found at:  
<http://www.abc.net.au/compass/s2968600.htm>

*Mary MacKillop: Soul of the Sunburnt Country, produced by the Trustees of the Sisters of St Joseph, 2010*

This DVD about Mary MacKillop's life was released to coincide with Mary's canonisation.

## Places to visit

*Mary MacKillop Place, Mount Street, North Sydney, New South Wales*

This is the site of the Mary MacKillop Memorial Chapel and tomb. The complex also includes educational facilities and a museum.

*Mary MacKillop Penola Centre, South Australia*

The Penola Centre includes the Mary MacKillop Interpretive Centre and Woods MacKillop Schoolhouse, which commemorate the **founding** of the **Order** of the Sisters of St Joseph in Penola. The Centre and Schoolhouse feature displays, photographs and artefacts.



Mary MacKillop Memorial Chapel, Sydney

Mary MacKillop Centres are found in all states of Australia except Tasmania.

To find your closest Centre, go to:

<http://www.sosj.org.au/what-we-are-doing/index.cfm?loadref=110>



# Glossary

- archbishops** high-ranking Catholic priests in charge of other bishops
- beatification** the first step in the process of becoming a saint
- bishops** high-ranking Catholic priests in charge of a diocese, or Church district
- cardinals** Catholic priests who are second in rank to the Pope
- Catholic** a worldwide Christian faith under the authority of the Pope
- charity** giving money or help to those in need
- convents** buildings in which nuns live
- convict** someone serving a sentence in jail for committing a crime
- excommunicated** banned from the Catholic Church
- founder** a person who starts an organisation
- habits** uniforms worn by nuns
- independent** working alone, not influenced by other people or organisations
- Indigenous peoples** the original peoples of Australia
- nuns** female members of a religious group
- Order** a religious community
- Pope** the head of the Catholic Church based at the Vatican in Rome, Italy
- poverty** being poor
- priest** a minister of the Catholic Church
- refuges** places offering shelter and protection
- religious** believing in a particular faith and living your life according to that belief
- settlement** a place where people live
- stroke** an illness of the brain causing paralysis
- vows** sacred promises

## What actually happened in the 'What would you do?' scenes described on page 29:

Scene 1: C. Mary greeted her old headmaster, Mr Cusack, kindly and gave him money for a place to stay.

Scene 2: A. Mary refused to screen off the Governor's grandson from the other pupils, saying that she treated all children the same no matter what their background.

Scene 3: B. Mary repeatedly asked to see Father Woods when he was dying. Eventually, he reluctantly agreed. She visited him a number of times but their friendship was never renewed.



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