

# Mary MacKillop

Mary MacKillop was born on January 15th, 1842. Her parents were Alexander MacKillop and Flora MacDonald. Mary had three sisters and four brothers. She was the eldest of the eight children.

After leaving school, Mary worked as a governess and looked after children in order to support her family. At the age of eighteen, she met Fr. Julian Tenison Woods in Penola, South Australia. In 1866, they opened the first Josephite School in a disused stable. Mary wanted everyone to receive a good education, especially those who were less fortunate in life.

On September 22nd, 1871, Mary was excommunicated by Bishop Shiel, because of a conflict over educational matters. In 1872, her excommunication was lifted and she was free to continue her work. In her later years, Mary spent most of her time travelling again. She opened orphanages, schools and hospitals to help those people who were in need.

At the end of her life, Mary suffered a severe stroke and was confined to a wheelchair. She passed away on August 8th, 1909.

Mary MacKillop was an inspiring woman. On January 9th, 1995, Pope John Paul II announced that she could become Australia's first saint.

