

'The Sisters of St Joseph: Educational Endeavours at Mount Street, North Sydney'

Teacher Notes



'Celebrating 150 Years of the Sisters of St Joseph'
1866 - 2016

A resource for Years 5, 7, 8, 9, 11 & 12

Mary MacKillop Place Museum, North Sydney

The Exhibition

The Sisters should have a great love for the children under their care and never forget that they are all the children of God, committed to them by Him as the objects of His most tender love.¹

Mary MacKillop

A sense of mission that inspired the Congregation from its inception was a readiness to answer the call of service to the Church. Mary MacKillop, as an exemplary model of an educator and advocate for the welfare of children, would be a lasting legacy in inspiring contemporary educators today.

In Mary MacKillop's period of residency the site incorporated a Novitiate and the first fee school building. This was the nucleus of the development of the site as a college of advanced education. This Exhibition explores the evolution of the Sisters' of St Joseph Mount Street site as a teacher training centre.



The Sisters of St Joseph were innovators in education and provided a modern approach to learning. As early as the 1920s the Sisters initiated specific training provided by the Montessori lecturers at Blackfriars School, Chippendale. This was for training in primary and sub primary education. Early childhood methods of learning which had been endorsed by the State system of education, under the NSW reforms of 1905 by the Director of Education, Peter Board, came into effect during this period². At this stage St Mary's Practice School, North Sydney was operated by the Sisters of St Joseph with a new learning methodology inspired by Montessori in early childhood learning.³

The combination of providing sound theory and weekly practice as a training model proved to be highly successful. Trainees liaised between the training college and the network of practice schools throughout the Sydney metropolitan area.

The evolution of teacher training on the site involved a policy of inclusiveness in accepting students from other Congregations as early as the 1950s. By the 1970s radical initiatives, referred to as the 'untried concept' of lay and religious academic staff working together, took effect.

Finally the consolidation of Catholic educational institutions in Sydney in 1981 resulted in the opening of the one college known as the Catholic College of Education Sydney, which evolved into the Australian Catholic University.

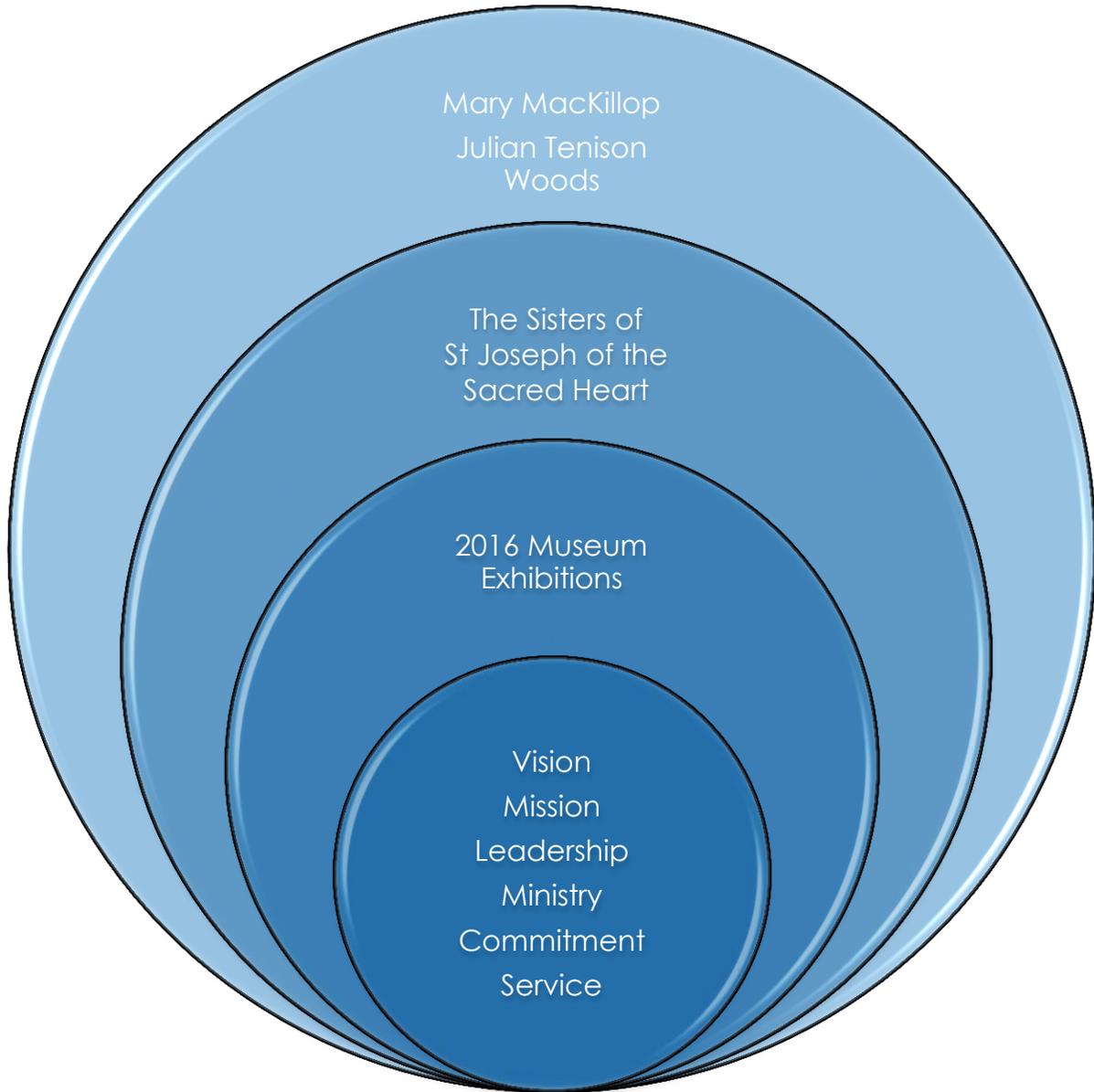
The exhibition works in conjunction with the permanent exhibitions in other galleries.

¹ Customs and Practices of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

² Montessori Education in Australia and New Zealand, Dr Dan O'Donnell & Humble and Obedient Servants: 1901-1960, Peter J. Tyler.

³ The Growth of Catholic Teachers Training College- Mother Leone's Memories, Sr Josephine Mitchell, 1983.

How everything connects



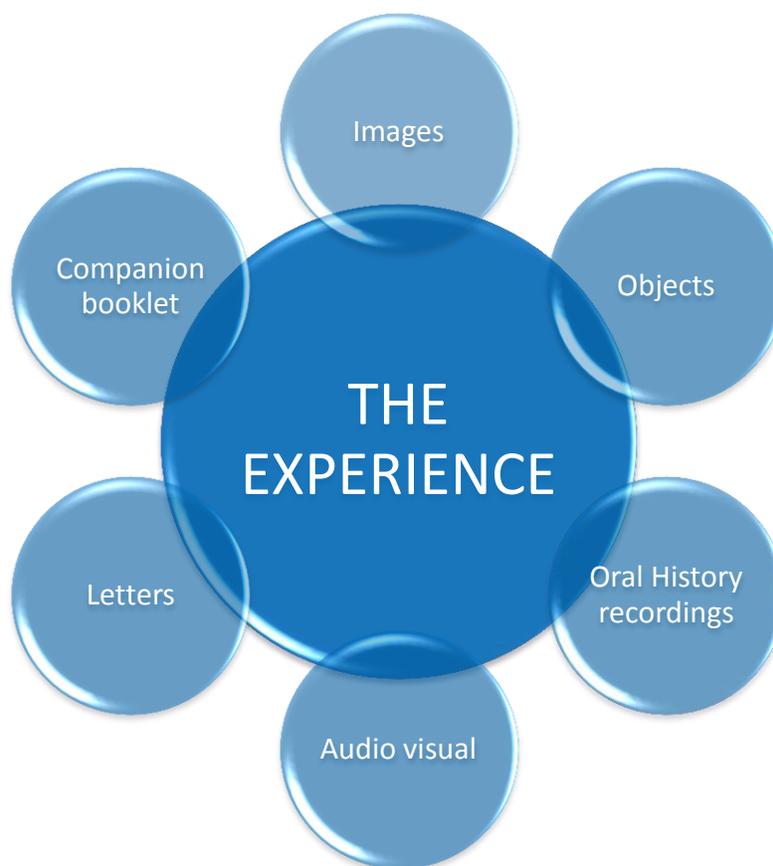
The broad themes

Vision, Mission, Leadership, Ministry, Commitment & Service

The exhibition themes and content overview



The experience



School group options

Museum Guided Tour

This is the standard 90-minute guided tour delivered by an experienced museum guide. The tour features the story of Mary MacKillop, Fr Julian Tenison Woods and the Sisters of St Joseph. The story is presented across the themes of beginnings, growth, challenge, influences and legacy. Visitors also have the opportunity to view highlights of the Sesquicentenary Special Exhibition Teacher notes and online resources are available for schools.

Museum Self-Guided Tour

Groups are welcome to self-guide through the museum within a booked 90-minute time slot. The group members can explore the story of Mary MacKillop, Fr Julian Tenison Woods and the Sisters of St Joseph at their own pace. If required, guide notes are available for the group leader. The story is presented across the themes of beginnings, growth, challenge, influences and legacy. The group also has the opportunity to view highlights of the Sesquicentenary Special Exhibition Teacher notes and online resources are available for schools.

The 'Sesquicentenary Experience' for Schools

The 'Sesquicentenary Experience' is a three-hour experience with two elements inclusive of a lunch break. The first is a 90-minute guided tour delivered by an experienced museum and highlighting the Sesquicentenary Special Exhibition, museum galleries, Alma Cottage and a heritage site walk.

The second element is a 90-minute teacher-directed session with exclusive use of the museum. In this session, students further explore the story through viewing objects and videos, engaging with technology and reading stories. Teachers may use their own activities and/or suggested activities in this resource and from the Museum's online resources. This session is organised by the teacher according to student needs. All participants receive a limited edition sesquicentenary commemorative badge. The guided tour is delivered in the following context:

- Mary MacKillop & Julian Tenison Woods' vision inspiring others to continue the legacy
- The Sesquicentenary: a significant milestone of 150 years of service
- 'Listening to the Heartbeat of the World'
- North Sydney story and significant people who have continued the legacy.

The curriculum links

The exhibition supports outcomes-based classroom learning. Outcomes from the Sydney Archdiocese Religious Education Curriculum for Years 5, 7, 8, 9, 11 & 12 have been linked to the exhibition content.

Year 5	<p>The Catholic Church in Australia has a Special Story (5.5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key people and events that shaped the Catholic Church in Australia
Year 7	<p>School and Church Communities(B7-1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the efforts made by groups and individuals to establish and support the school and the Church in their local community • Recount significant events in the history and current life of their school and parish • Gather information on significant members of their school and parish community
Year 8	<p>People and Ministries in the Church (B8-2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate the need for various functions and ministries within the Church • Identify the variety of ministries and functions in the Church • Demonstrate ways that people show commitment and involvement in the Church
Year 9	<p>Catholic Church in Australia (B9-3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest ways in which different people and groups from the story of the Catholic Church in Australia could be role models for Catholics today • Outline the major events, people and groups contributing to the emergence and development of the Catholic Church in Australia
Year 11/12	<p>Mission, Leadership and Ministry (B6-1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciate the importance of leadership in the life of the Catholic Church • Describe the scope and nature of leadership roles in the Catholic Church • Articulate an understanding of different expressions of leadership in the Catholic Church • Describe specific ministries and works of service within the Catholic Church in Australia • Identify the variety of ministries and works of service within the diocese

Suggested activities for teacher directed learning

All worksheets are located on the Museum Education Resource webpage.

Year 5 Activities (Early Church has a special story)

Pre-visit

- Students research the lives of Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods as well as the story of the Sisters of St Joseph using the following websites: www.marymackillop.org.au, www.sosj.org.au and www.marymackillopplace.org.au. Students write down three facts about Mary, Julian and the Sisters and share with a partner then the class.
- Discuss the following motto with the students, 'Never see a need without doing something about it.' Ask how do you think Mary and Julian 'lived' this motto? Students respond with the [Responding to the Need worksheet](#).
- When Mary MacKillop came to Sydney in 1883, the Church here was growing rapidly. Explore the Sydney Archdiocese website - <http://www.sydneycatholic.org/> then discuss the following questions: What do you think it was like to live in Sydney in the 1880s? What were the challenges for Mary and Sisters of St Joseph? What was the need in the Archdiocese?
- The Museum exhibition covers the following broad themes: Vision, Mission, Leadership, Ministry, Commitment, Service, Initiatives, Innovation and Legacy. Students work in small groups and discuss their understanding of these themes. Choose one student to scribe. Group share their findings. Summarize responses and write a class definition.

Teacher-directed experience during visit

- View video clip of Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian in Gallery 1. Discuss Mary and Julian's vision and how the Sisters of St Joseph were founded. What was the need and what did Mary and Julian do about it?
- Listen to oral history recordings using the museum's audio pens. See Background Reading for an overview of the content. Focus on Interviews 1 & 2 with Sr Agnes. Discuss what it was like for Sr Agnes as she entered the Congregation in 1922. Early teaching days as a young Sister. Life in Mount Isa as a young Sister of St Joseph. Students discuss and share their findings.
- View 'In Thy Hands' video (3 min) in special exhibition in Gallery 1. Students discuss what it would have been like to go to school at this time.
- View objects in showcases. Choose one object from the special exhibition and, using the [Museum Object Study worksheet](#), students record a detailed description. Share with a partner.
- Explore North Sydney content (Map icon) on the Interactive Touchtable device in Gallery 2 then discuss findings.
- View the Museum Building from courtyard and using the Background Reading notes, discuss the history of the building. Ask students to imagine what it might have been like to be a young Sister of St Joseph in the Novitiate, or later, a student teacher at the Teachers' College.
- Explore Alma Cottage. Read the Sisters' Daily Routine as displayed on the table in the cottage and discuss. Ask students what they think it would have been like to live in the Cottage as a young Sister of St Joseph and carry out the daily routine. Share responses with the group.

Post-Visit

- Key enquiry questions for research and discussion: How have Mary MacKillop, Julian Tenison Woods and the Sisters of St Joseph helped to shape the Catholic Church? How have the Sisters of St Joseph in North Sydney contributed to the local Church story in Sydney? How are the Sisters 'Listening to the Heartbeat of the World'? What can you do to continue the legacy?
- Oral History: interviews on audio pens. Ask students the following reflective questions - What was it like to listen to these stories? Why is oral history so important? Why should we keep stories alive? Interview an elderly person about their school days. What are the similarities and differences compared with your experience of school?
- What is the vision and mission of your school? How do you contribute? How do you display leadership, commitment and service?

Year 7 Activities (Supporting School and Church Communities)

Pre-Visit

- Students research the lives of Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods as well as the story of the Sisters of St Joseph using the following websites: www.marymackillop.org.au, www.sosj.org.au and www.marymackillopplace.org.au. Students write down three facts about Mary, Julian and the Sisters and share with a partner then the class.
- Discuss the following motto with the students, 'Never see a need without doing something about it.' Ask how do you think Mary and Julian 'lived' this motto? [Responding to the Need worksheet](#) (Museum Education Resource webpage).
- When Mary MacKillop came to Sydney in 1883, the Church here was growing rapidly. Read more about Bishops Vaughan and Moran on The Sydney Archdiocese website - <http://www.sydneycatholic.org/>. Research some interesting facts about each bishop and discuss with a partner then the class.
- The Museum exhibition covers the following broad themes: Vision, Mission, Leadership, Ministry, Commitment, Service, Initiatives, Innovation and Legacy. Students write down their understanding of these themes. Share in small groups then summarize responses and write a group definition.

Teacher-directed experience during visit

- View video clip of Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian in Gallery 1. Students discuss Mary and Julian's vision and how the Sisters of St Joseph were founded. What was the need and what did Mary and Julian do about it? Discuss what life was like for many people during these colonial days. What were the challenges for people during these colonial times (1860 – 1880)?
- Listen to oral history recordings using the Museum's audio pens. See Background Reading for an overview of the content. Focus on Interviews 1 & 2 with Sr Agnes. Discuss what it was like for Sr Agnes as she entered the Congregation in 1922. Early teaching days as a young Sister. Life in Mount Isa as a young Sisters of St Joseph. Students discuss and share their findings.
- View 'In Thy Hands' video (3 min) in special exhibition in Gallery 1. Students discuss what it would have been like to go to school at this time.
- View objects in showcases. Choose one object from the special exhibition and, using the [Object Study worksheet](#), students record a detailed description.
- Explore North Sydney content (Map icon) on the Interactive Touchtable device in Gallery 2 then discuss findings. Ask students to read the letter (narrative) from a character named 'Elizabeth'. Discuss what it would have been like to live in North Sydney in 1900.
- View the Museum Building from courtyard and using the Background Reading notes, discuss the history of the building. Ask students to imagine what it might have been like to be a young Sister of St Joseph in the Novitiate, or later, a student teacher at the Teachers' College.
- Explore Alma Cottage. Read the Sisters' Daily Routine on the table in the Cottage and discuss. Ask students what they think it would have been like to live in the Cottage as a young Sister of St Joseph and carry out the daily routine. Share responses with the group.
- Students read the [Sisters' Daily Routine for Novices and Postulants worksheet](#) then respond to reflective questions in the previous point. Share responses with the group.

Post-Visit

- Key enquiry questions for research and discussion: How have the Sisters of St Joseph supported school and Church communities? How are the Sisters 'Listening to the Heartbeat of the World'?
- Oral History: interviews on audio pens. Ask students the following reflective questions - Why is oral history so important? Why should we keep stories alive? Interview an elderly person about their school days. What are the similarities and differences compared with your experience of school?
- Students reflect on the following questions: How do you support your school and Church community? What can you do to continue the legacy or 'listen to the heartbeat of the world'?

Year 8 Activities (Ministries in the Church)

Pre-Visit

- Students research the lives of Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods as well as the story of the Sisters of St Joseph using the following websites: www.marymackillop.org.au, www.sosj.org.au and www.marymackillopplace.org.au. Students write down three facts about Mary, Julian and the Sisters and share with a partner then the class.
- When Mary MacKillop came to Sydney in 1883, the Church was growing rapidly. Read more about Bishops Vaughan and Moran on The Sydney Archdiocese website - <http://www.sydneycatholic.org/>. Research some interesting facts about each bishop and discuss with a partner then the class. Consider the following questions: What were the challenges for the Archdiocese at this time? How did Bishops Vaughan and Moran respond to the needs? How did Religious Orders/Congregations like the Sisters of St Joseph respond to the needs?
- The Museum exhibition covers the following broad themes: Vision, Mission, Leadership, Ministry, Commitment, Service, Initiatives, Innovation and Legacy. Students write down their understanding of these themes. Share in small groups then summarize responses and write a group definition.

Teacher-directed experience during visit

- View video clip of Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian in Gallery 1. Students discuss Mary and Julian's vision and how the Sisters of St Joseph were founded. What was the need and what did Mary and Julian do about it? Discuss what life was like for many people during these colonial days. What were the challenges for people during these colonial times (1860 – 1880)?
- Listen to oral history recordings using the Museum's audio pens. See Background Reading for an overview of the content. Focus on Interviews 1 & 2 with Sr Agnes. Discuss what it was like for Sr Agnes as she entered the Congregation in 1922. Early teaching days as a young Sister. Life in Mount Isa as a young Sister of St Joseph. Students discuss and share their findings.
- View 'In Thy Hands' video (3 min) in special exhibition in Gallery 1. Students discuss what it would have been like to go to school at this time.
- View objects in showcases. Choose one object from the special exhibition and, using the [Museum Object Study worksheet](#), students record a detailed description.
- Explore North Sydney content (Map icon) on the Interactive Touchtable device in Gallery 2 then discuss findings. Ask students to read the letter (narrative) from a character named 'Elizabeth'. Discuss what it would have been like to live in North Sydney in 1900.
- View the Museum Building from courtyard and using the Background Reading notes, discuss the history of the building. Ask students to imagine what it might have been like to be a young Sister of St Joseph in the Novitiate, or later, a student teacher at the Teachers' College.
- Explore Alma Cottage. Read the Sisters' Daily Routine on the table in the Cottage and discuss. Ask students what they think it would have been like to live in the Cottage as a young Sister of St Joseph and carry out the daily routine. Share responses with the group.
- Students read the [Sisters' Daily Routine for Novices and Postulants worksheet](#) then respond to reflective questions. Ask students what they think it would have been like to live in the Cottage as a young Sister of St Joseph and carry out the daily routine. Share responses with the group.
- View Sr Anne Marie Gallagher's interview on the touchscreen in the Path to Sainthood gallery in Gallery 1 and discuss what it is like to be a Sister of St Joseph today. Discuss with a partner.

Post-Visit

- Key enquiry questions for research and discussion: How have the Sisters of St Joseph demonstrated commitment and involvement in the Church community? Identify some of the Josephite ministries and explain their function. How are the Sisters 'Listening to the Heartbeat of the World'? Explore the Sisters of St Joseph website under the 'About the Sisters' tab and learn more about the various Josephite ministries. How are the Sisters making a difference?
- Oral History: interviews on audio pens. Ask students the following reflective questions - Why is oral history so important? Why should we keep stories alive? Interview an elderly person about their school days. What are the similarities and differences compared with your experience of school?

Year 9 Activities (Role Models, Contributions, Emergence & Development of Church)

Pre-Visit

- Students research the lives of Mary MacKillop, Julian Tenison Woods as well as the story of the Sisters of St Joseph using the following websites: www.marymackillop.org.au, www.sosj.org.au and www.marymackillopplace.org.au. What is the significance of Mary and Julian's story today?
- When Mary MacKillop came to Sydney in 1883, the Church was growing rapidly. Read more about Bishops Vaughan and Moran on The Sydney Archdiocese website - <http://www.sydneycatholic.org/>. Consider the following questions: What were the challenges for the Archdiocese at this time? How did Bishops Vaughan and Moran respond to the needs? How did Religious Orders/Congregations like the Sisters of St Joseph respond to the needs? What was the political climate at the time? What were the challenges of Church-State relationships?
- The Museum exhibition covers the following broad themes: Vision, Mission, Leadership, Ministry, Commitment, Service, Initiatives, Innovation and Legacy. Students write down their understanding of these themes. Share responses.
- View ['The Sisters Give Thanks for 150 Years' video](#) with Sr Monica Cavanagh (Congregational Leader) on the Sisters of St Joseph website. To view the video and download Sr Monica's words, go to <http://sosj.org.au//who-we-are/index.cfm?loadref=536>.

Teacher-directed experience during visit

- View video clip of Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian in Gallery 1. Students discuss Mary and Julian's vision and how the Sisters of St Joseph were founded. How would you explain the 'Josephite vision'? Discuss with a partner.
- Listen to oral history recordings using the Museum's audio pens. See Background Reading notes for an overview of the content. Focus on Interviews 1 & 2 with Sr Agnes. Discuss what it was like for Sr Agnes as she entered the Congregation in 1922. Early teaching days as a young Sister. Life in Mount Isa as a young Sister of St Joseph. Then listen to Interviews 3, 4 and 5. Discuss the development of the first Catholic Teacher Training College in Mount Street and the development of the Australian Catholic University. Students discuss and share their findings.
- View 'In Thy Hands' video (3 min) in special exhibition in Gallery 1. Students compare and contrast the 1960s and present day in relation to vocations, teacher training and education.
- View objects in showcases. Choose one object from the special exhibition, and using the [Museum Object Study worksheet](#), students record a detailed description.
- View the Museum Building from courtyard and using the Background Reading notes, discuss the history of the building. Ask students to imagine what it might have been like to be a young Sister of St Joseph in the Novitiate or later, a student teacher at the Teachers' College.
- Explore Alma Cottage. Read the Sisters Daily Routine on the table in the Cottage and discuss. Ask students what they think it would have been like to live in the Cottage as a young Sister of St Joseph and carry out the daily routine. Share responses with the group.
- Students read the [Sisters' Daily Routine for Novices and Postulants worksheet](#) then respond to reflective questions. Ask students what they think it would have been like to live in the Cottage as a young Sister of St Joseph and carry out the daily routine. Share responses with the group.
- View Sr Anne Marie Gallagher's interview on the touchscreen in the Path to Sainthood gallery in Gallery 1 and discuss what it is like to be a Sister of St Joseph today. Why do you think there are not as many religious vocations today? What qualities does it take to make such a commitment? Discuss with a partner.

Post-Visit

- Key enquiry questions for research and discussion: How have the Sisters of St Joseph demonstrated being role models and contributors to the emergence and development of Church?
- Oral History: interviews on audio pens. Ask students the following reflective questions – How have Sr Agnes and Mother Leone been role models? How have these Sisters contributed to the emergence and development of Church?
- View images in the Background Reading notes and ask students to respond in context of what they have experienced in the special exhibition. Share responses.
- Explore the following YouTube videos (Screenshots in Background Reading notes):
 - 'Sisters talk about life as a Josephite nun'
 - 'Catholic Education: Our Purpose'
 - 'The Catholic Church in Australia and Religious Education'

How are the people in these stories contributing to the Church?

Year 11 & 12 Activities (Mission, Leadership, Ministry, Service)

Pre-Visit

- Explore the Sydney Archdiocese website - <http://www.sydneycatholic.org/>. The Sisters' story in the Sydney Archdiocese from 1880. Consider the following questions: What were the challenges for the Archdiocese at this time? How did Bishops Vaughan and Moran respond to the needs? How did Religious Orders/Congregations like the Sisters of St Joseph respond to the needs? What was the political climate at the time? What were the challenges of Church-State relationships?
- The Museum exhibition covers the following broad themes: Vision, Mission, Leadership, Ministry, Commitment, Service, Initiatives, Innovation and Legacy. Students write down their understanding of these themes. Share responses.
- View '[The Sisters Give Thanks for 150 Years' video](#) with Sr Monica Cavanagh (Congregational Leader) on the Sisters of St Joseph website. To view the video and download Sr Monica's words, go to <http://sosj.org.au//who-we-are/index.cfm?loadref=536>.

Teacher-directed experience during visit

- View video clip of Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian in Gallery 1. Students discuss Mary and Julian's vision and how the Sisters of St Joseph were founded. How would you explain the 'Josephite vision'? Discuss with a partner.
- Listen to oral history recordings using the Museum's audio pens. See Background Reading for an overview of the content. Focus on Interviews 1 & 2 with Sr Agnes. Discuss what it was like for Sr Agnes as she entered the Congregation in 1922. Early teaching days as a young Sister. Life in Mount Isa as a young Sister of St Joseph. Then listen to Interviews 3, 4 and 5. Discuss the development of the first Catholic Teacher Training College in Mount Street and the development of the Australian Catholic University. Students discuss and share their findings.
- View 'In Thy Hands' video (3 min) in special exhibition in Gallery 1. Students compare and contrast the 1960s and present day in relation to vocations, teacher training and education. How does this video production reflect the Church, religious organisations, vocations and Catholic education at this time in Australia? (Video screenshots in Background Reading notes).
- View objects in showcases. Choose one object from the special exhibition, and using the [Museum Object Study worksheet](#), students record a detailed description.
- View the Museum Building from courtyard and using the Background Reading notes, discuss the history of the building. Ask students to imagine what it might have been like to be a young Sister of St Joseph in the Novitiate, or later, a student teacher at the Teachers' College.

- Explore Alma Cottage. Read the Sisters' Daily Routine on the table in the Cottage and discuss. Ask students what they think it would have been like to live in the Cottage as a young Sister of St Joseph and carry out the daily routine. Share responses with the group.
- Students read the [Sisters' Daily Routine for Novices and Postulants worksheet](#) then respond to reflective questions. Ask students what they think it would have been like to live in the Cottage as a young Sister of St Joseph and carry out the daily routine. Share responses with the group.
- View Sr Anne Marie Gallagher's interview on the touchscreen in the Path to Sainthood gallery in Gallery 1 and discuss what it is like to be a Sister of St Joseph today. Why do you think there are not as many religious vocations today? What qualities does it take to make such a commitment? What challenges does the Church have in today's world? Discuss with a partner.

Post-Visit

- Key enquiry questions for research and discussion: How have the Sisters of St Joseph demonstrated mission, leadership, ministry and service? How did Bishops Moran and Vaughan display leadership? What is your understanding of different expressions of leadership in the Catholic Church today?
- Read the two Mary MacKillop quotes in the Background Reading notes and comment on Mary's thoughts about educating children and nurturing the Sisters for the Church. Could Mary's ideas be applied to today's world?
- Oral History: interviews on audio pens. Ask students the following reflective questions – How have Sr Agnes and Mother Leone demonstrated mission, leadership and service?
- View images in the Background Reading notes and ask students to respond in the context of what they have experienced in the special exhibition. Share responses.
- Read the profile about Mother Leone and the 'Milestones in the Development of Teacher Training at Mount St, North Sydney' timeline in the Background Reading notes. Identify how Mother Leone was a woman of initiative and innovation.
- Explore the following YouTube videos (Screenshots in Background Reading notes):
 - 'Sisters talk about life as a Josephite nun'
 - 'Catholic Education: Our Purpose'
 - 'The Catholic Church in Australia and Religious Education'

How are the people in these stories reflecting mission, leadership and ministry?



Background Reading

Mary MacKillop's Ideas on Education

Mary's concept of Catholic education was truly formational. It was based on Gospel values, and was not just the transfer of information, knowledge, and skills of literacy and numeracy as prescribed by the curriculum. Reverence and reciprocal personal respect were essential to her idea of a strictly Catholic School. Her curriculum included attitudes of self-discipline, regularity, tidiness and attentiveness, and the practice of devotional hymns and prayers.

Mary's concept of teaching and creating a learning environment is clear in the *Directives* she wrote for the Sisters. In her writings she outlined the daily management and organisation of the school and the classroom.

"The Sisters should have a great love for the children under their care and never forget that they are all the children of God, committed to them by Him as the objects of His most tender love."

(Kath Burford RSJ 2002, MacKillop, *The Necessity of the Institute for Australia*, 1873 and *History of the Institute*, 1900)

Philosophy of Education as set out in the Josephite Rules by Father Julian Tenison Woods

The aims of a Catholic school as spelt out in the Rules of the Institute of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, 1867, were:

- To impress upon the children religious maxims and rules of conduct
- To eradicate their faults
- To form their characters
- To prepare them for the reception of the Sacraments of the Church
- To make the children learn, and see that they have understood what they have learnt.
- To leave nothing untried as a matter of justice to the parents to [ensure] that the children might progress in worldly learning

Father Julian Woods insisted that the Sisters were bound, as a duty they owed to God and their neighbours, to work towards the achievement of these aims. He urged them to remember that the Church could succeed in keeping its hold against the wicked, secular instruction of the world only by offering a superior education (Ref Woods, *Rules*, pp.13-14).

The Sisters of St Joseph Educational System

Consistency of delivery was very important to the Founders' view of an education system for the Sisters of St Joseph. The same curriculum was to be taught in all Josephite schools. Consistency of training and curriculum made this method of education so successful and transferable. All that changed for the Sisters were the surroundings and resources at each new school. Mary's *Directory, or Order of Discipline for the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart*, was first published in 1870. It gives a clear outline for the Sisters on the method of school management and lessons to be taught, and lists the resources needed.

In the disagreements with some bishops and priests, Father Woods and Mary MacKillop worked hard to maintain the consistency of message. Central Government of the Institute was the mechanism which maintained this consistency. The Founders were aiming to provide a good basic educational base for a population of children that would otherwise have no access to any education. In most cases the parents' educational level was extremely limited. By setting the aims of their teaching to good

literacy skills, basic mathematics as well as self-discipline and respect for others they were giving the children the opportunity to find good jobs and to have choices in their future lives. Their teaching also gave the children a good grounding in the practice of the Catholic religion.

The curriculum and method of teaching were also created in such a way that the training of the Sisters to teach could be achieved by working with a trained Sister at any of the schools and transferred to a new school. The training of the teachers was very much through practical example and practice.

Curriculum

As central government was very important for the establishment of the Institute of the Sisters of St Joseph, so was the consistency of the curriculum for the achievement of the aims of the Sisters. Trained in what was needed to fulfil the educational and religious needs of the poor Catholic population, all the Sisters were able to spread a consistent message across great distances. Because the curriculum was simple and universal, training the Sisters was easier, and maintaining standards in all Josephite schools achievable, even in the most difficult and remote areas. See [St Joseph's School Timetable 1870 worksheet](#) on the Museum's Resource page for the Syllabus and Timetable used by the Sisters as it is set out in the *Directory or Order of Discipline* published in 1870 from the original set out by Mary for Father Woods.

Nurturing the Life of the Sisters

Mother Mary had concerns about the spiritual and professional training of the Sisters. She wrote to Monsignor Kirby in 1874:

"The Sisters must be trained spiritually and in the worldly knowledge necessary to enable them to take the stand the Church in Australia requires of them."

- 1880 First school in the city of Sydney staffed by Sisters of St Joseph in Kent Street Sydney.
- 1884 St Joseph's Novitiate is established at Mount Street North Sydney.
- 1896 Professed Sisters are to be examined and classified by two Sisters appointed by the Mother General.
- 1900 Free school for the poor is at Mount Street as a Practice School for teacher trainees; the nucleus on which the St Joseph's Teachers' Training School is established.
- 1907 Victorian Government passes legislation for the registration of teachers and schools.
- 1908 Registration of the Teachers and Schools Act is passed by Victorian Government. At the establishment of the Department of Education, a separate council of Public Instruction for non-government schools in Victoria is to examine and evaluate teacher training in schools in that State.
- 1911 Negotiations take place between the Victorian Council of Public Instruction and the Sisters of St Joseph (represented by Mother Baptista Molloy).
- 1913 The teacher training centre of the Sisters of St Joseph is formally named as St Joseph's Training School, North Sydney.
- 1914 First inspection by the Victorian Council of Public Instruction of primary teacher trainees takes place.
- 1916 St Mary's School, Ridge Street North Sydney provides classes in formal teaching practice for trainees.
- 1921 St Joseph's Training School begins infants training with Sister Leone Ryan. She is appointed Mistress of Infant Method and attends Montessori training at Blackfriars School, Sydney.
- 1924 At the Mount Street School site level 2 is built to provide a Demonstration School for infants and primary under the direction of Mother Lawrence O'Brien.
- 1927 The Bishops of NSW agree to the proposal to establish a Board of Registration for Catholic Teacher Training Colleges delivering consistent standards in religious education.
- 1932 Rev. John C Thompson CM from Strawberry Hills Training College London is appointed NSW Director of Teachers' Education.
- 1944 British Education Act subsidises teachers with a teacher certificate in the Pacific islands. Bishop Victor Foley SM makes a request for Sisters to teach in Fiji.
- 1946 Sisters of Missionary Congregations enrol for training at St Joseph's Training School to prepare for teaching in Fiji and the Solomon Islands.
- 1954 Archbishop Romolo Carboni, Apostolic Delegate to Australia (1953-59) inaugurates the Conference of Major Religious Superiors of NSW. From this comes the suggestion to coordinate religious teaching colleges and consolidate them into one.
- 1955 Superior General, Mother Leone Ryan, offers all Religious Congregations entry to St Joseph's Training School North Sydney for teacher training.

- 1956 The original St Joseph's Novitiate building is vacated to expand the Teachers' College. A new Novitiate is established at Baulkham Hills.
- 1958 Archdiocesan scheme to train lay teachers for expanding the Catholic School system is initiated. All are certified under the name of the Catholic Teachers' College.
- 1963 Sisters of St Joseph's Domestic Science School closes. The Wyndham Report and Educational Act of 1961 precipitates this closure.
- 1971 Archdiocese of Sydney takes responsibility for the finance and administration of the College.
- 1973 Appointment of the first lay principal, William McGrath, is made.
- 1974 Catholic Teachers' College is recognised as a College of Advanced Education and receives Federal Government funding.
- 1980 William Moore is appointed as Principal of the Catholic Teachers' College
- 1981 Federal Government requires amalgamation of all Catholic Teachers' Colleges in Sydney.
- 1982 One central college comprising many Religious Congregations is formed. This is known as the Catholic College of Education Sydney.
- 1991 Australian Catholic University is opened.

History of the Mary MacKillop Place Museum Building

- 1915 Abbotsleigh School, which had been established 20 July 1885, moved out of the terrace houses on the western side of the Chapel.

The Sisters of St Joseph purchased the site at 7 Mount Street. There is a plaque on the front fence. The Novitiate moved into the buildings on this site (from the Mother House premises). The Museum is now on this site.
- 1924 St Joseph's was built, extra floors and façade added (present day Museum site), in harmony with the Mother House.
- 1952 St Joseph's was built at the rear of the Novitiate. It housed the study and conference rooms (upstairs) and laundry (downstairs). After 1958, it was used as residential accommodation for the ever-increasing number of professed Sisters.
- 1956 The Novitiate transferred to Baulkham Hills.
- 1958 Vacated Novitiate building was used as an annexe to the Catholic Teachers' College (later Catholic University) until 1992.
- 1995 The old Novitiate buildings were transformed into the Museum when Mary MacKillop Place was established.

Oral history interviews (audio pen content)

Interview 1 - Recollections from the life of a Sister of St Joseph Sr Agnes Cecilia Boyle in conversation with Sr Mary Pullen 1994

Sr Agnes Cecilia Boyle recounts her early connections with the Sisters of St Joseph since her arrival in Sydney from Western Australia in 1908. Sr Agnes began her schooling at St Joseph's School in Mount Street, North Sydney. In 1922 she entered the Congregation at St Joseph's Novitiate in Mount Street at age 22. Her final profession was in 1930.

Within the first two years of entering the Congregation (1924) she taught in Armidale NSW until 1932. She then moved to Queensland to continue her role as a music teacher in a number of locations. She remained in Queensland during the 1930s and 40s before returning to New South Wales.

Interview 2 – Teaching music in the 1930s and 1940s Sr Agnes Cecilia Boyle in conversation with Sr Mary Pullen 1994

Sr Agnes Cecilia Boyle was born in 1901 in Western Australia and taught music until the age of 80. Sr Agnes completed her Diploma at the Conservatorium of Music, Trinity College, London, majoring in piano, before entering the Congregation. She taught music for 47 years.

Sr Agnes recalls, at the age of 90 her teaching years at Mount Isa in Queensland. The teaching conditions were very difficult because of a shortage of pianos for the children to practise on. She comments on the natural talent of the children she taught and the music examiner from the Australian Music Board who visited yearly.

Interview 3 – The vision for establishing the Catholic Teachers' College - 1957 Dr Victor Couch in conversation with Sr Catherine Thom and Sr Mary Pullen, 1994

Dr. Couch played an important role in bringing the Catholic College of Education Sydney into the national university system. As Chairman of the College Council, he was a member of the Australian Catholic University Planning Committee and was instrumental in transforming the College into the Australian Catholic University. Dr Couch reflects on his voyage from London to Sydney in 1955 and his chance meeting with Mother Leone Ryan on board the *Statheden*. Mother Leone was returning from Ireland with young Irish recruits. This audio describes their combined role in the establishment of the Catholic Teachers College in 1957.

The interview reveals the formation of a scheme in 1958 to fund Catholic girls for teacher training at St Joseph's Training School. These lay students were certified as teachers by the Archdiocese of Sydney, under the name of the Catholic Teachers College, Sydney. In 1956 Sr Isobel Menton was appointed as the first Principal. This was 16 years before government funding was available. The college opened in 1957 with 40 lay students and 60 religious. On Thursdays Dr Couch taught lessons in the theory of Child Growth and Development.

Interview 4 – An age of change: the opening of the Catholic College of Education Sydney in 1982

Dr Victor Couch in conversation with Sr Catherine Thom and Sr Mary Pullen, 1994

At the age of 82, Dr Couch recalls the events that took place in response to the Federal Government's recommendations for the amalgamation of Catholic colleges in Sydney. This audio recording covers Dr Couch's description of aspects of the early inception of the Catholic College of Education, which opened in 1982. At this time the first lay principal, Bill McGrath, was appointed to the Catholic College of Education.

Dr Couch's position as a visiting lecturer from 1958 to 1973 was independent of the one he held at the Sydney Teachers' College at Balmain. This lectureship in primary education satisfied his deep interest in childhood learning. Dr Couch, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Planning Committee, brought about the amalgamation of all Catholic colleges. In this process, he oversaw the negotiations of all Congregations regarding their amalgamation under one council and one principal. Their reluctance was soon overcome when they realised that, if they failed to agree with the government's recommendations, they could be forced into a State - based amalgamation.

Polding College, Mount St Mary College of Education and The Good Samaritans' Teachers' College joined in the amalgamation because of the need for financial consolidation at that time. Congregations continued to contribute buildings and staff for the development of the new college. Today the North Sydney Library at ACU is named after Doctor Victor Couch (1926-1996). He was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia on 12 June, 1989 and received an Honorary Doctorate from ACU on 11 April, 1996.

Interview 5 - An 'untried concept': Reflecting back on 20 years of the Catholic Teachers' College during the 1970s

Bill Blissenden and John Murray in conversation with Sr Catherine Thom and Sr Mary Pullen 1994

Lay academic staff members, Bill Blissenden and John Murray, reflect on 20 years of the history of the Catholic Teachers' College from the 1970s. Both men joined the college as lecturers in 1974 and 1975 after leaving positions at the Balmain Teachers' College which had opened in 1946. By 1974 all teachers' colleges had become independent of the Department of Education, and were established as, or absorbed into, colleges of advanced education.

Both men reflect back on the college as a teacher training institution – before amalgamation, and on the changes that were subsequently made as the college grew in size. They describe the college and its additional buildings in North Sydney, and the fact that the campus was –wide-spread across many locations in the area.

The 'untried concept', as it was termed, fostered a sense of belonging in which the students, staff and Sisters were actively engaged in the college community.

Roger William Bede Vaughan (1834-1883), by Henry Samuel Sadd, 1891
 Australian Dictionary of Biography excerpt

'He found New South Wales Denominational education on the defensive and concluded there would be 'godless' secular education 'in the end', so Catholics must prepare to organize their own system from their own resources. Ready to take the initiative in rousing Catholics with 'a small earthquake', Vaughan was handicapped by the distrustful suffragans. Faced with plans for State grammar schools and the formation of the strong Parkes-Robertson coalition ministry, he was delighted when Matthew Quinn offered in April 1879 to co-operate. A bishops' meeting in May left Vaughan to draft a joint pastoral (letter); published in July as *Catholic Education*, it condemned schools founded on 'secularist' principles as 'seedplots of future immorality, infidelity and lawlessness', and precipitated fierce sectarian conflict which helped Parkes to abolish State aid. Vaughan rightly believed that the pastoral was the occasion not the cause of the 1880 Public Instruction Act.



He issued five more pastorals in the next six months, spoke constantly in defense of Catholic rights and, enjoying 'real stand up public fighting', provoked Parkes to brand him as 'seditious'. In 1880 Vaughan bought the *Catholic Times* from Joseph O'Connor and published it as the *Express* to personally 'red pepper' his opponents. In organizing an education system he could build on the sound financial administration he had introduced, but religious teachers were essential. He had early established good relations with the Marist Brothers and in 1877 he invited the Jesuits to open secondary schools; from 1878 he provided welcome patronage for Mother Mary MacKillop's Sisters of St Joseph in their troubles with the Quinn brothers. In 1873-83 the number of schools and pupils more than doubled; by 1883 12,500 of Sydney's 15,200 Catholic children were in the system.

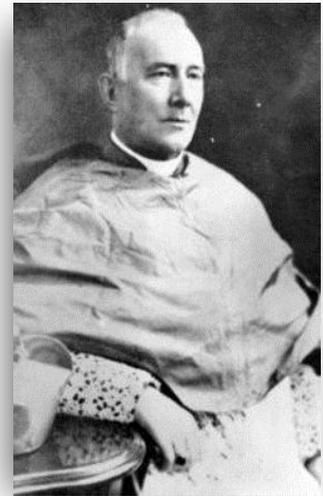
Realizing that education would now dominate Church finance, Vaughan made a major effort to build a usable section of the new St Mary's Cathedral before all State aid ended in 1882. To complete a plan by William Wardell, he raised almost £30,000 in two and a half years by writing about 3000 personal letters. He dedicated the new cathedral in September, but under the physical strain of incessant work his health was rapidly deteriorating. He had travelled constantly throughout the archdiocese as far as Brisbane in episcopal visitations. Late in 1882 he announced that he would make an *ad limina* visit to Rome intending to recruit religious teachers and plan for a synod late in 1883. He left Sydney on 19 April 1883 and travelled slowly to Europe via North America. At Liverpool he went to the near-by home of Weld relations, Ince Blundell Hall, and on 18 August he died of heart disease in his sleep. He was buried there in the family vault but his remains were moved to Belmont in 1887 and finally reburied in the crypt of St Mary's Cathedral in August 1946. Vaughan left almost all of his estate, valued for probate at £61,828, to his successor.'

[National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an9860722](http://nla.pic-an9860722)

Patrick Francis Moran (1830-1911)

Moran was determined to have all Catholic children in schools staffed by Religious Orders. By 1911 more than three-quarters of the Catholic children in Sydney of primary-school age were in his system, and he had laid the basis for a similar secondary system. He almost trebled the number of teaching brothers and more than trebled the number of nuns. He had authorized the expenditure of more than £1,250,000 on building churches, schools and institutions.

On the 20th anniversary of his arrival he noted that he had personally blessed 88 foundation stones for churches or schools in the diocese. The largest single building project was the near-completion of St Mary's Cathedral. He had first finished the northern end, then built the central section including 'the Cardinal's Tower' by 1900, and was able to consecrate it all, debt free, in 1905. In his last years he decided to begin work on the southern part of the original plan, set a foundation stone in 1909, and in the second half of 1910 was speaking almost weekly in a tour of parishes to raise money.



Mother Leone Ryan (1900-1989) by Mary Cresp rsj

This article was published in [Australian Dictionary of Biography, Vol. 18 \(MUP\), 2012](#)

Mother Leone Ryan (1900-1989), Sister of St Joseph and educator, was born on 22 March 1900 at Allendale, Victoria, youngest of five children of Irish-born Denis Ryan, miner, and his Victorian-born wife Winifred, née McCormick. Named Annie, she was educated at Ascot Vale and trained as a pupil-teacher with the Victorian Education Department. After a brief period teaching at Maribyrnong she entered the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, Hawthorn, just before her nineteenth birthday.

Making her religious vows on 13 April 1921, Sr Leone furthered her studies in Sydney, in Montessori methods at Blackfriars teachers' college, and at the Kindergarten Union training college at Woolloomooloo. In 1922 she was appointed mistress of studies at St Joseph's Training School, North Sydney, which was run by the Sisters for their members. She held this position, in which she was responsible for the training of hundreds of Sister-teachers for 25 years.



Mother Leone's election as superior-general of the Sisters of St Joseph in 1947 coincided with an influx of post-war European migrants. The effects of the 'baby boom' soon followed and class sizes in parochial schools soared into the hundreds. To deal with this challenge Mother Leone opened the facilities of St Joseph's Training School (in 1971 renamed the Catholic Teachers' College), first to other religious congregations and then, in 1958, to Catholic lay students. Working in consultation with Monsignor John Slowey, the director of Catholic schools in the Sydney archdiocese, she enabled the employment of lay teachers in the Catholic school system, a turning point in the history of Catholic education in Australia.

Mother Leone was also concerned about Catholic children attending government schools and those in the outback. In the 1950s she oversaw the extension throughout Australia of the 'motor mission', whereby two Sisters travelled to State schools, giving Catholic instruction either during 'scripture' lessons or out of school hours. From 1954 the religion correspondence school posted catechism lessons to isolated rural families. She also encouraged Sisters to provide lessons through the new medium of television. After two six-year terms as superior-general Mother Leone served (1959-71) as assistant superior-general. In 1983 the council of the Catholic College of Education, Sydney—which had absorbed the Catholic Teachers' College—conferred on her an honorary Bachelor of Education degree, citing 60 years of dynamic leadership, professional competence and her outstanding contribution to teacher education.

Mother Leone has been described, like Saint Mary MacKillop, the founder of the Congregation, as a true 'Aussie pioneer': forthright, honest, courageous, big-minded and resourceful. Apparently unworried by insufficient funds, she encouraged many new ventures such as the erection of a large novitiate at Baulkham Hills. The 'common good' always took precedence over local and provincial aims. Her practical, down-to-earth style endures in sayings cited still, for example, 'the school exists for the child, not the child for the school'. When almost blind and unable to walk, she would ask, 'Wouldn't I be the most ungrateful creature under heaven if I had complained after all He has done for me?' She died on 19 April 1989 at North Sydney and was buried in Northern Suburbs cemetery, North Ryde.

Select Bibliography: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 May 1989, p 6, *Catholic Weekly*, 17 May 1989, p 22 Ryan personal file (Sisters of St Joseph archives, NorthSydney)

ACU - History of North Sydney campus

Mary MacKillop founded the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph in South Australia in 1866 and moved to a cottage in Mount Street, North Sydney, in the 1880s.

In 1913, the Sisters established a training school at North Sydney for the teacher training of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. In 1958, lay students were admitted to the College which in 1971 became the Catholic Teachers' College. In 1982, this College became part of Catholic College of Education. It was at this stage that the name MacKillop was given to this campus to identify it as a discrete part of the College and to recognise the ongoing support of the Sisters of St Joseph.

At the end of 1990, the Catholic College of Education Sydney formally handed over responsibility for the College and its operations, which now rests with ACU.

Mary MacKillop's special significance for ACU: St Mary of the Cross MacKillop believed that we should never see a need without doing something about it, so hopefully her enthusiastic love for life and all people may influence the lives of students and staff on the North Sydney Campus (MacKillop) and at Australian Catholic University (ACU).

Born on 15 January 1842 in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, directly opposite the University's Melbourne Campus (St Patrick's), she dedicated her life to works and values which resonate deeply with the University's Mission. Co-founder of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart, St Mary MacKillop is the only Australian to be canonised, making her Australia's first saint.

Her order opened schools and orphanages around the country, along with facilities for the homeless and refuges for former prisoners and prostitutes looking to make a fresh start. Her respect for the dignity of all people, her service of the disadvantaged, and her efforts to build the capacity of those communities she served are qualities which ACU seeks to instill in its staff, students and graduates.

Reference: ACU website

Image study



The Mother House and adjacent buildings, Mount Street 1966



St Joseph's Domestic Science Class, Mount Street 1940s



Catholic Teachers' College Mount Street 1960s



St Joseph's School, Mount Street, 1950s

Object study

Below is a selection of objects from the special exhibition. Investigate your chosen object and record its attributes on the Object Study worksheets (primary and secondary levels).

School Tie



Lecture Chair



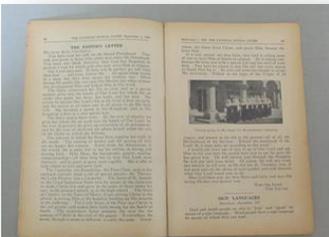
School Hat Band



Copper square plate with engraved painted crest



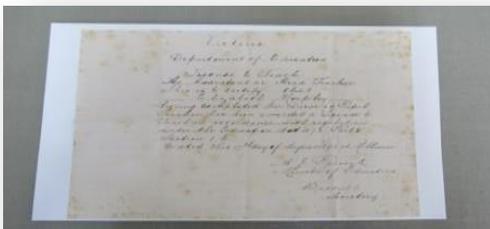
Catholic School Paper



Catholic Teachers' College plaque



Teacher's License



Certificate of Honor



YouTube study



How are the people in these stories contributing to the Church?



How are they reflecting mission, leadership and ministry?



Video study

'In Thy Hands' Production (estimate on production year late 50s early 60s)



How does this video production reflect the Church, religious organisations, vocations and Catholic education at this time in Australia?

What are the challenges for the Church, religious organisations, vocations and Catholic education in today's world?