

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **Saint Mary MacKillop's profound impact on the next generation**

More than 500 school children from across the Sandhurst Diocese will feature in the unveiling of the new 3-metre statue honoring Saint Mary MacKillop at Sacred Heart Cathedral on Friday.

Handwritten messages by the school children – who represent the seven Josephite schools founded by Saint Mary MacKillop in the Sandhurst Diocese – show just what a profound ripple effect that the Saint continues to have in the lives of the next generation.

Her legacy of *'Never see a need without doing something about it'* resonates with all ages, regardless of faith or creed, and this is evidenced by some of the inspiring messages coming through from the school children:

*"She was kind and this inspires me to care for others"*

*"Saint Mary MacKillop inspires me to be a teacher because I want to make sure that every child gets a good education"*

*"Saint Mary MacKillop shows us how to do the right thing every day"*

*"Saint Mary MacKillop has inspired me to have faith in myself and others"*

School children are coming from Numurkah, Eaglehawk, Pyramid Hill, Rushworth, Nagambie, Tallangatta and Corryong, and three delegates will be interviewed during the ceremony to share the ways in which this remarkable woman's story continues to inspire our young people.

Margaret O'Rourke, Executive Director of the Aspire Cultural and Charitable Foundation, said that the statue is an important part of not only recognising Saint Mary MacKillop's contribution to the wider region, but also her legacy in setting an education benchmark that continues to set Australia apart.

"She is more than just a Catholic icon. She is an inspiration to any young girl or boy who has a dream or vision to make a difference in their community.

"Her message of hope, faith and charity is as relevant today as it was 100 years ago, and indeed it's important we commemorate great women like Saint Mary as role models for the next generation.

"The statue is a reminder to us all of the deep connection that she shared with our community, connecting the threads of daily life, spirituality and purpose – elements we all have in common."

The hand-written messages and drawings will be on display at the Sacred Heart Cathedral from this

Friday, alongside displays about the schools across the Sandhurst Diocese that Saint Mary founded.

Saint Mary MacKillop's legacy of faith, pilgrimage and inter-faith connection forms the inspiration behind the exciting new development being built adjacent to the Sacred Heart Cathedral, which will also be unveiled onsite on Friday.

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**MEDIA CONTACT:** Julia Keady, C/- Aspire Foundation, phone 0412 628 036, [jkme@me.com](mailto:jkme@me.com)