



Most Rev Anthony Randazzo
Bishop of Broken Bay

Message for BBNeighbourhoods
4 August 2020

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

This week, I would like to offer you a short quote from Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop, whose feast day we celebrate on Saturday 8 August. Our Saint, who suffered much due to the uncharitable ways of a couple of bishops and priests, and several of her own Sisters, simply said, “God gives me strength for what is necessary.”

I have no doubt that Saint Mary was familiar with the struggles of her time. She was a Prophetess for the poor, she advocated for children and the vulnerable, and she blazoned new ways of reaching out to those on the edge of the Church and society. To do all these things, and more, meant that she often stirred the minds and hearts of men and women who were happy with the status quo and who sometimes avoided change because change has a tendency to make some people feel uncomfortable.

As a woman of faith, Mary MacKillop was a woman of prayer who meditated deeply on the Word of God and who fed on the Body of Christ. She knew Jesus Christ personally in her life and in the community of the Church. Despite her many hardships, hurts, and frustrations, she never abandoned her faith. Faith is a gift from God. Once given, God never takes the gift back, and no one can rob us of it. Saint Mary teaches us that all things are possible, if we realise that God desires only what is good and holy for us in our lives.

God calls the Christian community to be a witness in human history. This is our vocation. Each one of us, like Saint Mary of the Cross, is called to proclaim by word and deed that God is our strength. In challenging times such as these, the world needs witnesses of faith. For our part, our discipleship as sisters and brothers of Jesus, leads us always into the world – where Jesus has gone before us.

Not everyone is open to hearing or receiving the Good News. Some will reject it while others will reject the messenger. No one particularly likes rejection. Preaching the Gospel of Jesus is seldom an experience of comfort or ease. Yet, that is what we do as Christians. The great reward in evangelising is the joy we receive when others come to life in Christ.

In his Encyclical on Christian Hope, Pope Benedict XVI gave us some insight into why we must persist in our joyful proclamation of the Gospel. He reminds us that we are created for greatness—for God himself; we are created to be filled by God. (Benedict XVI, *Spe salvi* 33) Our vocation is ultimately a calling to be with God.

In a spirit of faith and hope, I invite you this week to discern once more your calling as a Catholic Christian. One part of your discernment will be asking God what you are to do in life. The other part of your discernment will be discovering who God is calling you to be.

Enjoy your time with the Lord who gives you strength for what is necessary.

+Anthony