SAINTHOOD IN AUSTRALIA:

MARY MACKILLOP AND THE PRINT MEDIA

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Abstract

Mary MacKillop holds a unique place amongst Australian heroes because of her beatification by the Catholic Church. Since her death in 1909, she has continued to be of interest to those both within this religious institution as well as in the wider community. My involvement as a member of the group she founded, the Sisters of St Joseph, has led to an academic as well as a personal interest in tracing her influence.

Within the Australian culture, all individuals construct a world which becomes their everyday reality. The desire for meaning beyond this everyday reality leads to some cultural symbols becoming endowed with additional significance, or to one aspect of a reality being highlighted to the detriment of other qualities. In this process, a new reality can emerge which individuals can dialogue with, accept or reject.

The Australian print media are barometers of cultural change and construction: they reflect the news but they also help to create it. The way that they have reported and commented upon the Mary MacKillop of History (defined in Chapter 6) has become a new cultural artefact: the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media. This thesis defines and traces the emergence and evolution of this icon.

The study has applied a qualitative approach to the analysis of newspaper texts from all states and territories of Australia. The underlying theoretical framework was devised using sociology of knowledge and media discourse methodologies. Key material providing the sociocultural context for the study is provided in Chapters 4 and 5.

Five specific instances were identified where the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media took a new direction (Chapters 7-11). The initial stage was just after the death of Mary MacKillop in 1909 until her re-interment in

the Memorial Chapel at North Sydney in 1914. The formal investigation of her life by the Catholic Church was commenced in 1926 but, apart from occasional news reports, the new icon did not make any significant shifts until the interest shown by Max Harris. The ten years before 1995 were a pivotal period. His literary skills and influence amongst his peers provided a new direction and exposure to a much wider audience than before. By the time that the Pope arrived in Sydney to beatify her, Mary MacKillop was considered by journalists throughout the country to be part of the everyday reality. Editorials, political cartoons, political speeches and comparisons with other heroes at this time were used to present information and to comment upon aspects of this famous Australian. In the process, Mary MacKillop as a constructed reality took on different emphases. In the five years since the beatification, the new icon has continued to be reflected in the print media: it has developed new directions and become an identifiable reality.

The Mary MacKillop of the Print Media is now a cultural icon quite separate from the Mary MacKillop of History. It has taken on a life of its own and, as such, it is owned by the Australian community, not by the Catholic Church or the Sisters of St Joseph. The reason for this evolution into a widely accepted symbol can be traced to the recognition in Mary MacKillop of the values prized as essential to the Australian identity. These are the values which give continued meaning to life for individuals and the community.

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Candidate's Declaration

Thesis Title: **Sainthood in Australia: Mary MacKillop and the Print Media**

Candidate's Name: **Sheila McCreanor**

I declare that this thesis is the result of my own research, that it does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material submitted for a degree or diploma in any University and that it does not contain any materials previously published, written or produced by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed: S. McCreanor

Date: 26/2/2001

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM BEING ADDRESSED

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This thesis is the culmination of personal interest and professional research. For more than thirty years I have been a member of the Sisters of St Joseph, an organisation of women which owes much of its character and charism to the woman who commenced the group: Mary MacKillop.

As someone who grew up in a household without television and who has seen quantum leaps in media development, influence and variety, I have had a long interest in the role that the media play in society. Since the early 1970s I have been a teacher and a principal of both primary and secondary schools in city and country South Australia. This experience has assisted me to reflect upon the influence of the media on young people, their families and the community at large. I have also been fascinated by the way that the daily print media, and political cartoons in particular, have presented their perception of the Catholic Church and key personnel within it. The way that Mary MacKillop has been both reported on and cartooned has been of particular interest to me. The dynamic relationship between the cult of Mary MacKillop as an Australian religious icon and the print media is the topic of this research.

After working as principal in Catholic schools with high proportions of students from Indo-Chinese and Italian backgrounds, I spent some time travelling through Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Italy. This enabled me to complete a study on the role that Catholic primary schools in South Australia played in the development of ethnic identity amongst young people (McCreanor 1990). This research raised my interest in the question of the development of an Australian identity.

The topic for this thesis has enabled me to combine all of these interests, although I have restricted my examination of the media to examples of print media from specific periods of time. Because of the personal nature of the research, I have

chosen to write in the first person throughout rather than in the more traditional style of the third person.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

While many Christian churches use the term 'saints', it is only the Catholic Church which has an organised and quasi-legalistic system for determining who will bear the official title of saint. Until recent times in Australia, the range of saints had been limited to holy persons born in other places (mostly in Europe) whom Australian Catholics had been taught to venerate.

This situation was changed when, on Wednesday 18 January 1995 Pope John Paul arrived in Sydney to pay tribute to an Australian woman. The purpose of his visit was the beatification of Mary MacKillop, a woman born in Melbourne in 1842 to Scottish immigrant parents.

Mary MacKillop (1842-1909) was an Australian Catholic woman who began a religious congregation called the Sisters of St Joseph[1] to educate and assist the poor, especially those in isolated and rural circumstances. Her single-minded pursuit of the call she believed to be from God led her to face and conquer great difficulties, including temporary excommunication from the Catholic Church. An examination of her life by Vatican authorities led to her being declared Australia's first saint in the beatification ceremony on 19 January 1995. In speaking about historico-factual aspects of her life in this study, I shall refer to her as the Mary MacKillop of History (MMH).

While a person receiving the honour of beatification could have been a focus simply for one section of Australian society (ie those within the Catholic Church), Mary MacKillop has become known to a much wider group of the Australian society in general. Her name has been used for schools, churches, sporting teams and on buildings for many charitable works.[2] There have been many depictions of her by artists, films have been made of her life, a Federal electorate bears her name and

[1] This group is also known as the Josephites.

[2] A summary of some of the ways that Mary MacKillop's name has been used throughout Australia is included as Appendix 1.

there is even a Sydney Harbour Ferry called the *Mary MacKillop Super Cat*. The South Australian float for the Journey of a Nation Federation parade in Sydney (January 2001) included Mary MacKillop amongst the five individuals considered to have made a significant impact on the state. Since her death in 1909, she has continued to be featured in daily newspapers as well as in the Catholic Press. In this format, a cultural construct known as the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media (MMPM) can be identified.

There is a scientific term called symbiosis which is used to describe the way that the union of two things can be mutually advantageous to both: fungus and algae, for example, through their interrelationship, form lichen. Pearls are the result of the relationship between an irritant and the oyster. I am interested as a sociologist in exploring the symbiotic relationship that has developed between the Australian print media and the Mary MacKillop of History. The result is a new cultural icon or artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media. This incorporates aspects of the journalists' exploration of the quest for an Australian identity as well as the basic human search for transcendence and some religious meaning in life.

I believe that there is something about Mary MacKillop as reflected in newspaper reports over the past ninety years, which resonates with these quests. This is one of the reasons for the interest shown in her by a wide cross section of Australian society.

1.2 AIM

The thesis aims to define, trace and explain the new cultural representation of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media (MMPM) from 1909 until 2000.

1.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study will adopt a sociological perspective, using a qualitative methodology that will be developed in Chapter 2. This will combine ideas from both Sociology of Knowledge and Media Discourse. There will be four major strands to this research:

I. The first will be a presentation of the Australian cultural context as well as knowledge about sainthood. These are identified as key elements of the

general framework of knowledge available to both journalists and print media audiences in the development of MMH and MMPM.

II. MMH will be presented in the main part through letters written by Mary MacKillop. Reference will also be made to the different emphases in the various hagiographies about her.

III. The study of a range of Australian news cuttings and political cartoons from specific periods of time will be used to map MMPM. Five stages (or *Timeslices*) have been identified for analysis when there were significant shifts in the development of MMPM.

IV. The dialectical relationship between the Australian print media and MMH will be examined in each *Timeslice* to identify common themes, the impact of the current cultural and political scene and how the version of MMPM developed compares with qualities seen as essential or desirable in the Australian identity.

The five *Timeslices* selected are as follows:

A. **From 1909 until 1914** - This covers the time of Mary MacKillop's death in 1909 until her body was re-interred in the Memorial Chapel at North Sydney in 1914. At this stage, the print media was the dominant form of mass communication and the formal process leading to beatification had not commenced. Reporting in the print media was mostly historical at this stage rather than interpretive but indications could be traced of the emergence of MMPM.

B. **From 1985 until 1995** - After a long lapse when only occasional items could be found, the writings of Max Harris in national and daily newspapers over this decade played a significant part in arousing public interest in Mary MacKillop. The announcement by the Catholic Church that the Pope would visit Australia in 1986 led to much discussion in the media about the possibility that he would beatify Mary MacKillop on this trip. Her formal recognition, however, did not come until a later visit by the Pope in 1995,

ironically, just after the death of Max Harris. The interest in MMPM reached beyond the Catholic community.

C. **Around January 1995** - The visit by Pope John Paul II to Sydney in January 1995 to formally beatify Mary MacKillop attracted blanket media coverage of Mary MacKillop. All major newspapers throughout the country reported on the rituals and events of this occasion as well as offering commentaries about Mary MacKillop. MMPM reached a high point for both journalists and newspaper audiences.

D. **1995 and later political cartoons featuring Mary MacKillop** - The fact that this type of print media was used to portray a saint was seen as a unique phenomenon in the evolution of the new cultural artefact: cartoons were used to create sacred symbols in the secular press. MMPM was used as a vehicle to make comparison with qualities of politicians and those venerated as heroes by Australians.

E. **From 1995 to 2000** – While the amount of media coverage had decreased, the continued mention of Mary MacKillop in the daily and Catholic press showed that her name was being linked to more than just religious matters. MMPM had reached a new stage when it was part of the general pool of knowledge available to the Australian community: it was now quite separate from MMH.

The text examples chosen were drawn from publications from various sections of the Catholic Church as well as from daily newspapers and other magazines. My location within South Australia enabled me to gain access to a wide variety of press cuttings from within this state. The archives of the Sisters of St Joseph throughout Australia provided many of the texts studied. I also sourced examples from newspapers in most states of Australia through microfilm collections of the State Library of South Australia and Newstext (2000).

1.4 CONTEXT FOR THE RESEARCH

1.4.1 The Mary MacKillop of History - MMH

Essential to the understanding of the texts analysed and the gradual development of a new cultural icon, was knowledge of the Mary MacKillop of History. I have traced developments in MMH mainly through some of the many letters written by Mary MacKillop during her lifetime and obtained from archives, along with biographies about her as a specific subset of hagiography. This latter style of writing is considered by some (see Elliott 1987, p 2) to be a branch of historiography but with the special purpose of celebration and edification rather than being purely historical.

1.4.2 Print media, religion and culture

The continued interest in Mary MacKillop by Australians and in particular by the print media of this country, highlights the interrelationship between the media and culture. This connection is as an example of what Giddens (1993a, p 166) and White (1997, p 61) refer to as a 'double hermeneutic': the media are part of the culture whilst at the same time assisting in the construction and reflection of aspects of this culture. Through the creation of text by the print media, new frames of meaning are captured for continued reflection by the audience. Those who are engaged in the preparation of this text – the writers – are able to articulate a sense of the sacred, to interpret and to influence the development of ideas. All of these processes – as well as the reception of texts by the audience - occur against the context of Australian society and culture.

With the increased secularisation of Australian society has come a rise in the importance of the mass media in a role previously served more by organised religion: the provision of meaning, an ultimate purpose for existence and a making sense of the universe. The media construct cultural worlds of meanings which are shaped by different configurations of values, power relationships and knowledge. Such worlds achieve viability because they are supported by groups which, through their acceptance, give plausibility to such constructed worlds. Those who commit themselves to this world are able to define their own roles and identities against a constructed framework and so make sense of human existence.

Through reporting of historical events and the discussion of evolving ideas, the print media play an important part in presenting and recreating the cultural myths from which individuals can construct an identity. At the same time, the media can assist in clarifying new social or collective identities for larger groups or sections within Australian society.

In tracing the way that the Australian print media have developed the new cultural construction of MMPM, I have interpreted the texts chosen against a framework of the social and cultural influences operating at the time of the text production and consumption. This framework (to be outlined in Chapter 2) has been developed using sociology of knowledge and media discourse theories.

My research was broadly situated against a background of the continuing search for an Australian identity. The values and characteristics of Australian heroes epitomise key elements in this identity. Comparisons between these characteristics and those identified by the print media in Mary MacKillop were significant in tracing the evolution that occurred in the development of MMPM.

1.4.3 Australian print media – the daily press

Since the first government gazette was published in New South Wales in 1803, daily newspapers have been a feature of Australian society. Over the years, ownership of the major daily newspapers has become concentrated to a small group of companies run by Rupert Murdoch, Warwick Fairfax, and Conrad Black while Kerry Packer's companies have taken over most of the magazines available throughout the country (Cunningham and Turner 1993). Because of the topic for this thesis, my selection of newspaper cuttings and political cartoons was based on appropriateness of their content for my purposes, rather than on being representative of the different ownership groups.

As with the print media examples from the Catholic press, I have focussed on the text itself as a representation of knowledge. My interest was in the type of knowledge presented, the identity of MMPM created.

1.4.4 Australian Catholic Church print media

A specific subset of the Australian print media is the Catholic press. The Catholic Church in Australia has had a long tradition of providing printed materials for circulation amongst Catholics. These have been used for general interest and for purposes of evangelisation. Early newspapers included *The Freeman's Journal,* and *The Catholic Press* in New South Wales and the *Irish Harp* and *The Southern Cross and Catholic Herald* (1867) in South Australia. *The Australian Catholic Truth Society* provided a wide range of low cost pamphlets and tracts, which circulated by mail order and were sold at church doors. Sections within the Catholic Church have developed magazines to share news particular to their organisation. *The Garland of St Joseph*, produced by the Sisters of St Joseph was one example of this type of publication.

The role and influence of the mass media on society were amongst topics covered at the Second Vatican Council. One of the official documents from this event was the *Decree on the Means of Social Communication (1963)* (see Abbott 1967). Following the recommendations of this Decree, as well as the later pastoral instructions, *Communio et Progressio* (1971) and *Aetatis Novae* (1992) (see Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992), most dioceses in Australia have had a *Catholic Communications* office and have had designated media contact persons. Originally priests filled this role but now lay men and women are involved in some cases.

The high cost of production of Catholic newspapers, the lower numbers of Catholics and the high numbers of these remaining Catholics who do not have English as a first language, have led to the demise of many Australian Catholic publications. *The Catholic Weekly* has survived in New South Wales and in South Australia *The Southern Cross* underwent a metamorphosis in February 2000 to become a monthly newspaper after twelve years as a glossy monthly magazine. The Catholic press in general is aimed at a definite group with specific culturally shared knowledge already in place about saints and sainthood.

1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

During the course of this study, I collected a vast number of cuttings from newspapers and magazines throughout Australia. As it was impossible to include all material in this qualitative study, selections had to be made. Examples chosen have been limited to those making comment about Mary MacKillop as a saint or holy person, rather than those that provided historical or mainly factual reports. The focus was MMPM.

The *Timeslices* outlined for the selection and analysis of texts have meant that some material was excluded from consideration for this research. I chose what I considered important stages since 1909: periods in which a range of texts was available and when significant societal and cultural developments (including milestones in the process leading to beatification) could be identified.

The study was from a sociological not an historical perspective: it was not an analysis of MMH, nor did I attempt to provide a definitive study of the whole Mary MacKillop phenomenon in the Australian society. The thesis did not involve linguistic analysis, semiotics, phenomenology or ethnography, although references from these fields have been used for clarification of the method used.

As a Sister of St Joseph examining this topic, I was immersed in the settings in which many of the texts have been constructed, especially those from the Catholic print media. Along with writers such as Miller (1997, p 81), I believe that subjectivity is a positive advantage in recognising 'the interrelations between institutional texts and contexts', as well as helping 'to appreciate the practical and sociological significance of the interrelations'.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

With the beginning of a new century, the question of Australian identity remains an important one. Through this thesis, I hope to contribute to the debate on this issue. My earlier work on ethnic identity will be linked to the topic of this research. I intend to show that the development of an Australian version of a saint has provided a unique icon: a representation of a person venerated as sacred, one who can inspire hope within the Australian community. This icon has undergone continual change

and reconstruction according to successive generations and different contexts. Authors and audiences for the texts studied have grappled with the identification of the qualities most desired and most admired in Australia. I believe that, for many Australian journalists writing about Mary MacKillop, some of these ideal qualities have been recognised in or ascribed to her in the new cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media.

1.7 Outline of the Thesis

The thesis has been developed through the following sequence of Chapters:

2. Related Studies

The literature review for this thesis has focussed on an examination of significant studies about the life and work of Mary MacKillop. These have included the major hagiographical texts, as well as other interpretive studies. I have also included sociological studies of saints and sainthood to demonstrate that this is a unique piece of research.

3. The Research Approach

The choice of a qualitative method has been justified and a theoretical framework developed. This was based on the work of Berger (1969a; 1971; 1976; 1984); Giddens (1993a); Wuthnow (1992) and White (1997) amongst others in the field of sociology of knowledge. The other strong influence on the underlying structure of this thesis was provided by the work of Fairclough (1992a; 1992b; 1995a; 1995b), Hoover (1997; 1997) and others writing about media discourse and media studies. A framework adapted from Fairclough's diagram for the critical discourse analysis of a communicative event has been presented as the method for this research. Since this study was more interested in examining cultural shifts, rather than developments in media and text production per se, I have focussed mostly on what Fairclough called 'Sociocultural Practice'. In contrast to Fairclough who wrote as a discourse analyst, my major interest as a sociologist was on the cultural strand of this practice. My concern was with the establishment of relationships by the print media with the audience and then the creation of an identity, MMPM.

The next three chapters applied this theory to the context of both MMH and MMPM. These provide amplification of the knowledge which was part of the general frame of reference for both journalists and newspaper audiences.

4. The Australian Cultural Context

This chapter revised and extended some of my previous work on culture and identity as further background to MMPM. The framework of the social and cultural influences operating during and around the *Timeslices* studies has been examined. Of particular interest was an identification of the cultural values seen as integral to the Australian identity.

5. Saints and Sainthood in General

Sainthood is a general concept with relevance to many major world religions. The cultural artefact of sainthood was traced from a general perspective through its use in Christianity and the Roman Catholic Church.

The chapter also covered a description of the process used for making saints by the Catholic Church today. This was essential background to an understanding of MMH.

6. The Mary MacKillop of History – MMH

MMH is a particular cultural artefact of hagiographical history. In examining the situational level of sociocultural influences operating on Australian print media, the person at the centre of the text is significant. I have presented an overview of her life and work, based mostly on her own writings but also noting the differing emphases by biographers over the ninety years of this study. This summary has been situated against a timeline of the technical stages leading to the beatification of Mary MacKillop.

7. The Mary MacKillop of the Print Media (MMPM) from 1909 until 1914

This chapter began to trace the major stages in the evolution of MMPM against the situational, institutional and societal influences identified. I have analysed newspaper writings from the time of Mary MacKillop's death until the re-interment of her body in the Memorial Chapel at North Sydney. According to Fairclough

(1995b, p 124), two processes occur when media write and audiences engage with texts: firstly, the construction of identities for both media and audiences and secondly, the construction of relations between media and audience.

Evidence of the beginning of a change from MMH to MMPM was noted.

8. From 1985 to 1995 – the influence of Max Harris

For many years, the Australian print media did not pay much attention to Mary MacKillop and so I chose to focus on the decade before the beatification. By this time, there had been many books and formal studies written about MMH and the progress of her Cause of Canonisation had reached a critical stage. As a prominent Australian author and journalist with no links to the Catholic Church, Max Harris wrote many feature articles about Mary MacKillop. These were examined to demonstrate the major shift that had occurred in the development of MMPM and to analyse reasons for this advance.

9. The Beatification event – January 1995

This was the next significant stage in the continued evolution of MMPM. Newspapers throughout Australia gave extensive coverage to the visit by Pope John Paul II to Sydney in January 1995. A range of editorials from newspapers in all states and territories was examined as an indication of the common emphases in the construction of the new identity.

Speeches about Mary MacKillop read in Federal Parliament at this time were also considered as a unique reflection of MMPM since I presumed those of a journalistic background wrote such speeches.

10. Political cartoons featuring Mary MacKillop

The emergence of political cartoons about Mary MacKillop marked a significant stage in the development of MMPM. All known examples were examined as a unique Australian perspective on a saint and sainthood.

Because of the formative as well as the influential role of the media, the construction of identities and the construction of relations can be integrally related to questions of power and domination. The values projected by the media and accepted or rejected

by the audience were part of the dynamic relationship in the transmission of cultural values and the new cultural artefact of MMPM.

11. Post Beatification – 1995-2000

This chapter presented media texts containing reference to Mary MacKillop in the daily and Catholic press over the five years since the time of Mary MacKillop's beatification to determine the continued development of MMPM.

In examining a range of these texts, I believe a significant cultural shift can be identified for Australia. While there was such a person as the Mary MacKillop of History whose life and work has been well documented, by this time there was now emerging a new form of knowledge about this significant Australian. For many journalists and for the casual reader in Australia, their knowledge about Mary MacKillop was based more on the popular media rather than on religious biographies. The identity of MMPM was seen to reflect elements of the previous *Timeslices*, as well as taking on some new directions.

12. The Mary MacKillop of the Print Media

The thesis concludes by addressing the following questions:

- What identity has been constructed?
- What factors influenced the evolution of the new cultural artefact of MMPM?
- What does this study say about the continuing search for an Australian identity?
- What further research is suggested as a result?

CHAPTER TWO

RELATED STUDIES

2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Various types of literature exist about Mary MacKillop.[3] For the purpose of this thesis, I have used the following categories in reviewing studies related to my topic:

- Religious Biographies in the Hagiographic style
- Formal Church documents
- Histories with reference to Mary MacKillop as founder
- Interpretive Studies

The various smaller pamphlets, books for children, adaptations of radio broadcasts, school resources that are mostly published by and readily available through the Sisters of St Joseph to aid both knowledge and devotion to Mary MacKillop, have not been included in this review. It was acknowledged that such information, whilst adding to the general body of knowledge about Mary MacKillop, did not contain a specific focus on the print media.

I have also examined literature under the following additional headings:

- Sociological studies of Sainthood
- Formal studies in Media, Religion and Culture

2.1 RELIGIOUS BIOGRAPHIES IN THE HAGIOGRAPHIC STYLE

One of the earliest biographies of Mary MacKillop was written anonymously (Sister of Saint Joseph 1916) but the author was later identified as a member of the Sisters

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[3] In some of the earlier works, the spelling of her name is 'McKillop', although Mary MacKillop used 'MacKillop' in signing her name in letters from Richmond dated 24 May 1860 and in two wills dated 2 April 1879 and 25 August 1899 (Thorpe 1994, Endnote p 211). Gardiner (1989b, p 83) included a footnote to explain the variety of spellings of this family name from the sixteenth century. Lack of literacy, the smudging of ink written in poor light and a general acceptance of variety in surnames were suggested as reasons for the lack of standardisation. The official documents used for the Beatification used the spelling 'MacKillop' and this is now recognised as the standard form.

of St Joseph, Sr Chanel O'Loughlin. The book focussed on the life and letters of Mary MacKillop, was a limited edition and was for circulation only amongst the Sisters of St Joseph.

The main biographies were those written by O'Neill (1931); Thorpe (1957; 1980; 1994); Modystack (1982; 1995); Gardiner (1993b) and O'Brien (1994). I have given a brief summary of each, showing their relevance for this thesis.

By 1919 discussions had commenced between the Sisters of St Joseph, the Archbishop of Sydney, Dr Michael Kelly and the Apostolic Delegate to Australia, Monsignor Cattaneo regarding the possibility of investigating the sanctity of Mary MacKillop. After a false start in 1925 when some technicalities were not observed, the first official step was taken on 19 April 1926. Shortly after Mary MacKillop's *Cause of Canonisation* was commenced for the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints in Rome, the first historical biography was produced by O'Neill (1931). This book relied on the earlier work by O'Loughlin, O'Neill's research for his earlier book on Julian Tenison Woods (1929) as well as personal interviews and many manuscripts that had been collected by the Sisters of St Joseph since Mary MacKillop's death. Some of these were attempts at biographies such as the one mentioned by O'Neill from Miss Queenie Primrose (1923), as well as recollections by various persons who had known and worked with Mary MacKillop. Part of O'Neill's research prior to publication, however, presented a major difficulty to those investigating Mary MacKillop's sanctity: his 'penchant for unearthing historical scandals' coupled with his lack of judgement in weighing up the evidence gathered, led him to write a formal letter to the Commission set up to gather evidence about Mary MacKillop. His concerns lay with her supposed intemperance in the use of alcohol.[4] While later evidence cleared Mary MacKillop of this allegation, O'Neill's letter did slow the initial proceedings (see Gardiner 1989b, Introduction B) and in fact caused a halt in the official investigations of Mary MacKillop as a possible saint from 1931 until 1951 (see Gardiner in Thorpe 1994, p 203).

[4] Discussions with Marie Foale, archivist for Sisters of St Joseph SA and Adelaide Archdiocese suggested that O'Neill's information about Mary MacKillop's use of alcohol may have come from his discussions with the visionary group of Sisters, particularly Magdalen Foley who left the Congregation in 1883 at the height of the Adelaide troubles. Alcohol was not mentioned in any of the manuscripts used by O'Neill.

The biography by O'Neill was referred to in an article in a London journal of 1931 (Martindale 1931). While being complimentary of O'Neill's work – 'we do not think that the story of Mother Mary's trials will ever need to be written very fully again' – this article was interesting in the way that it described O'Neill's work in a manner which followed many of the seven hagiographic Themes A-G identified by Elliott (1987, p 215). Mary MacKillop was a 'puer-senex', a wise child who could take responsibilities beyond her years (Theme A);[5] she embarked on a journey to Penola (Theme B) where she encountered a significant person, Julian Tenison Woods (Theme D) who shared his vision for the education of poor children (Theme E). Her future role as head of a group of women as well as her excommunication were foretold by a stranger (Theme B), while the continued interaction with and opposition from Bishops led to continued journeying (Theme F).

The second major biography published was by Thorpe (1957). This was the most influential biography for almost fifty years as it was meticulously researched and written 'as a popular and attractive story that would hold a reader's interest and leave a vivid impression of her kindness and courage' (see Gardiner in Thorpe 1994, p 203). This book was published not long after Mary MacKillop's Cause for Canonisation was re-commenced at the instigation of Cardinal Norman Gilroy, Archbishop of Sydney and, in his Foreword to the book, Gilroy commended Thorpe as 'a born historian, with scrupulous regard for truth and accuracy'. Thorpe himself stated that the aim of his work was to 'awaken not only a human interest in the work Mother Mary had at heart, but a warm spiritual devotion towards her as a candidate for the Church's highest honours'. The popularity of Thorpe's account was shown by the fact that it was reprinted in 1980 and then again in 1994. The second edition included a Preface by a Sister of St Joseph, Evelyn Pickering, who suggested that Mary MacKillop was 'a truly significant, prophetic woman, in the Church and in the culture of her times' (Thorpe 1980, p 11). She also added that the biography should be read against the background of the 'socio-political-religious movements' of the time in which Mary MacKillop lived. The most recent edition (Thorpe 1994) contained an Epilogue by Paul Gardiner, the Jesuit priest who worked in Rome from

[5] Much of the work of Primrose (1923) referred to by O'Neill stressed this theme.

1984 until 1989 preparing *The Positio*, the formal work required by the Vatican in the consideration of possible saints. Gardiner's comments included a tribute to the scholarship of Thorpe in his collection of documents. Extensive Endnotes were also added to the third edition of Thorpe's work.

In chronological order, the next significant biography of Mary MacKillop was written by William Modystack, a priest of the Archdiocese of Adelaide (Modystack 1982). The book was written at the invitation of Rigby Publishers as a 'popular' biography and the author declared in the Introduction that 'no previous biography of Mary MacKillop has been read or used as a basis for this book'. The book relied heavily on correspondence to and from Mary MacKillop as well as diaries, memoirs and newspapers of the time to confirm the biographical details. Just prior to the beatification of Mary MacKillop in January 1995, this book was reprinted as a paperback version with the updated title, *Blessed Mary MacKillop, A Woman before Her Time* (Modystack 1995).[6] The author added information in the Epilogue about the movement of a Pilgrimage Cross from Penola through Victoria and South Australia to be a feature at the ceremony celebrated by Pope John Paul II.

Another recent work covering the life of Mary MacKillop was that produced by Paul Gardiner (1993b), who had worked in Rome on the formal publication (*The Positio*) for the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints. The book was advertised on the dustjacket as 'The Authorised Biography' by the 'foremost expert on Mary MacKillop' and was based upon the Roman work but adapted to a more readable style. The publisher's blurb stated that the work gave a clear picture of all that Mary MacKillop endured at the hands of 'certain bishops and priests'. Despite all her sufferings, 'the overall picture that emerges was of an energetic, forthright battler who would go through anything to serve the poor and educate their children'. This biography was almost 500 pages in length in a hardcover edition and, in true hagiographic style, presented Mary MacKillop as a person who was worthy of imitation because of her holy life.

[6] The first edition was called, 'Mary MacKillop, a woman before her time'.

The news of 6 July 1993 (*L'Osservatore Romano* 1993) that Mary MacKillop was to be beatified led to another biography authorised by the Sisters of St Joseph. This was written by a journalist, Lesley O'Brien (1994) who had had experience in both radio and print media. Her book marked a significant change in the hagiographical approach to Mary MacKillop as it was the first official biography written by a journalist and a woman rather than a priest. The foreword by Geraldine Doogue, another experienced journalist in all media, described the story of Mary MacKillop as,

> ...a marvellously rich tapestry of guts, impulsiveness, grit, compassion and dreams. It is a story that takes in some of the biggest myths of our culture: the 'small person' versus the authorities; pragmatism; loneliness; engagement with the awesome power of the Australian landscape; and survival against some of the most potent weapons to those in power, including excommunication.

Doogue also paid tribute to Mary MacKillop for the way that she displayed something 'quintessentially Australian – the monumental struggle to create structures that safeguard the precious ethic of egalitarianism, fairness by any other name'. O'Brien's biography was a paperback one and was not burdened with long extracts of letters as was Modystack's version. The journalistic style ensured the popularity of this book in summarising the life and work of Mary MacKillop. For the purpose of this study, I found the Epilogue interesting for the way that it echoed elements at the basis of my thesis: the beatification by the Catholic Church of Mary MacKillop was set against the discussions 'of an Australian republic and what it meant to be an Australian'. The author concluded that the recognition of Mary MacKillop as a saint for Australia was another sign of Australia's maturity as a nation and for the identity of the Catholic Church in this country. The values seen as essential for the Australian identity and believed to be reflected in Mary MacKillop were summarised by O'Brien (1994, p 270) as, 'her egalitarianism; her generosity, courage and integrity; her commitment to her fellow human beings; her belief in the abilities of women'. These themes have been referred to in later sections of this thesis as I explored the development of the new cultural artefact of MMPM.

2.2 FORMAL CHURCH DOCUMENTS

As part of the official process leading to canonisation, thoroughly researched documentation (the *Positio* or *Position*) must be produced about the life and works of the prospective saint. The person charged with the preparation of this work was called the Postulator of the Cause. His role also included the interface with the person known as the Relator, the Roman official who handled the matter on behalf of the Vatican.

The *Positio* for Mary MacKillop was written by Paul Gardiner (1989b), and was the basis of the Decree by Pope John Paul II declaring Mary MacKillop would be recognised in a formal beatification ceremony. The work in three volumes has not been published or widely disseminated in its original form, except through 'in house' circulation to the Sisters of St Joseph and to scholars on request. Much of the biographical data was extracted to provide the recent biography by Gardiner (1993b).

The *Positio* was designed to provide as complete a record as possible of the life of Mary MacKillop and to show that no matter what occurred, she lived a life of heroic virtue. All three volumes of this work have been available to me as a resource during this current thesis.

2.3 HISTORIES WITH REFERENCE TO MARY MACKILLOP AS FOUNDER

In most states of Australia members of the group have written histories of the Sisters of St Joseph and these have been published by the central Josephite office based in Sydney (Burford 1991; Foale 1981; 1989; 1995; Ryan 1992). While each of these included some biographical detail about Mary MacKillop, the main focus has been on the documentation of the foundation and early years of the group.

2.4 INTERPRETIVE STUDIES

A variety of studies, which can be categorised as interpretive, have been produced about Mary MacKillop. Several of these deal with her charism. While the word 'charisma' is the term describing the special personal qualities which enable an individual to influence large numbers of people, 'charism' in its technical religious meaning refers to the gift of the Holy Spirit given to a person for the good of the

Church. Several writers who included biographical details whilst at the same time exploring the spirituality and charism of Mary MacKillop were Lyne (1983; 1994); Hull (1994); and Ryan (1994). At times this writing was done with specific reference to the Australian culture and the development of an Australian spirituality as in Fletcher (1995).

Theses examining the historical significance of Mary MacKillop included Sheedy (1969), McEntee (1978) and Mitchell (1982). They were not sociological studies and focussed on primary sources other than the print media.

In her work, *Mary MacKillop: A Biographical Study of Australian Sainthood*, Steer (1994) made a distinction between the studies which emphasised the Humanity (Weaknesses and Strengths) of Mary MacKillop and those focussing more on her Sainthood (Heroic Virtues). This thesis was from the perspective of the psychology of religion and, through a synthesis of Sainthood in religious biography, sought to highlight Mary MacKillop as a prototype of what it meant to be an Australian saint. It did not examine the print media in reference to this theme.

2.5 SOCIOLOGICAL STUDIES OF SAINTHOOD

Other writers have discussed various sociological dimensions of sainthood (see Delooz 1983; Kieckhefer 1988; Wilson 1983a; Woodward 1990). All of these focussed on the European and North American experience.

Delooz's work was adapted from a Doctoral thesis entitled, *Sociologie et Canonisations* for the University of Liège and was written from a framework of sociology of knowledge. Through a study of structures of the saint making process, as well as the effect of church politics on this activity, Delooz concluded that sainthood can assist in an understanding of religious societies as well as providing 'cohesion and dynamism' to social groups. His work on real and constructed saints has been utilised in a later section of this study.

The works of Kieckhefer and Wilson examined the phenomenon of sainthood in major world religions and the way that sainthood can reflect important features of the society in which it occurred. Woodward's large book was an attempt to provide an investigative journalist's approach to the making of saints and included a great

deal of material from Vatican archives about the process involved in canonisation. Much of the work of Woodward was reproduced by Dunn-Mascetti (1994) in her coffee-table style book entitled, *Saints - the Chosen Few*.

The work of Massam (1996) provided an Australian perspective on saints within the Australian Catholic context. The book examined elements which make up this identity and contained a major section about the veneration of saints in general and Thérèse of Lisieux in particular. This author did not mention Mary MacKillop.

2.6 FORMAL STUDIES IN MEDIA, RELIGION AND CULTURE

Scholars involved in the *Media and Theology Project* at the University of Edinburgh; the three *International Conferences on Media, Religion and Culture* (Uppsala, Sweden 1993, Boulder, USA 1996, Edinburgh, Scotland 1999) as well as the *International Study Commission of Media, Religion and Culture* have considered a wide range of related topics. While much of the identified research from overseas covered all Christian Churches, it contained elements which provided background and points of contrast for my work.

In his comparison of the National Churches in Iceland and Scotland and their impact upon national identity, Johannsson (1999) concluded that the media was not generally hostile to religion. Media writers presumed that religion was a positive thing but the way it was reflected in the churches did not always 'live up to expectations'.

The expertise of Pope John Paul II in using the media to his advantage and also assisting journalists to reconsider their perspective on religious news was discussed by Day (1999). He noted that the Pope is news and, recognising this, the Pope himself has made his overseas trips 'close to an art form'. Using the media to show off the size and strength of the faithful is a form of evangelisation as well as a powerful statement about the links with Rome:

> Papal journeys help integrate past and present, advance peace and social justice, reinforce doctrine, bond shepherd and sheep, and showcase local needs. And they propose a diverse, yet cohesive global Christian culture.....Worship is the emphasis. Nonetheless, a crowd provides a visible sign of strength.

Since part of this thesis involves examining media reports of a papal visit, such a study was relevant to my work, yet at the same time, it highlighted a different angle.

Hutch (1996) made a short analysis of some print media examples from the time of the Pope's visit to Australia for the beatification in 1995. His focus was on the way journalists viewed religion: they often seemed either to sensationalise it or ignore it. He did not go into detail about Mary MacKillop as a cultural artefact as I am doing in this study.

Another short article in which the cultural representation of both 'Weary' Dunlop and Mary MacKillop was discussed was by Martyr (1996) written in response to an earlier piece by Davison (1995). The most significant aspect of this paper was the suggestion that the use of Mary MacKillop's surname in more recent times, rather than the religious name used throughout her life (Mother Mary of the Cross), was an indicator of a new cultural construction. In Martyr's words: 'Who is Mother Mary MacKillop? No-one, in fact. The name perfectly matches the manufactured image, tailored to suit every Australian who is interested'. Martyr did not touch upon the role played by the print media in the construction of the new cultural artefact.

2.7 REVIEW CONCLUSION

Much of the existing work about Mary MacKillop has been done from an historical perspective. Her life, work and impact upon the society of her time have been well documented. Her influence on individuals and the wider community has also received attention from scholars. No other work, however, has focussed on the way that she has been presented in the print media over a long period of time.

Within the wider field of sociological studies about sainthood, media, culture and religion there has been much work from a European and North American perspective. To date, however, there has not been research on the symbiotic process that occurs between the historical person of the saint and the print media journalists resulting in the evolution of the cultural artefact of a saint.

This thesis is, therefore original research which will add to the body of knowledge in religious, media and cultural studies. It seeks to address the gap noted by White (1997, p 45) that there is scope for studies examining 'the communicative process

through which sacred and secular symbols are created and recreated'. At the same time, it will add to the debate about the Australian identity by presenting a cultural artefact, MMPM, which includes many of the values and characteristics prized in Australian heroes and considered as dimensions of the Australian identity.

Chapter 3 will now provide a summary of the research approach I chose to use in my definition and explanation of MMPM.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH APPROACH

3.0 INTRODUCTION

I believe that over the past ninety years, those working in the print media in Australia have helped to construct a new cultural artefact for Australia. Journalists who have written about the Mary MacKillop of History (MMH) have been influenced by their existing frameworks of knowledge about the Catholic Church and saints, by the social context operating at the time they wrote and by the purpose of their writing. Audiences receiving the texts created have likewise been affected by the way the knowledge presented matches, extends or challenges their world view, by the context in which they receive the information as well as by their reasons for engaging with the media texts. This study proposed to trace the symbiotic relationship that has developed over the past ninety years between the Australian print media and the Mary MacKillop of History to form a new cultural artefact for Australia, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media (MMPM). I believe that this cultural construction reflected emerging aspects of the Australian identity. While many biographies have been written about Mary MacKillop and some formal studies have considered these, (or other historical dimensions of her life and work), this thesis is the first to use a sociological analysis to investigate the treatment of Mary MacKillop by the Australian print media.

In writing articles for newspapers or magazines, journalists and authors have to draw on a body of knowledge about their subject. Using the example of newspaper articles, editorials and political cartoons about Mary MacKillop, I have investigated the social context in which this knowledge was created and then received by the target audience. My interpretation of the construction of this knowledge has been influenced by scholars in the field of sociology of knowledge, especially Berger (1969a; 1971; 1976; 1984). Other writers in this sphere whose ideas have assisted in a clarification of the theory underlying this thesis included Bouma (1992; 1996); Giddens (1986; 1987; 1993a; 1993b); Wuthnow (1992) and White (1997).

The works of Fairclough (1992a; 1992b; 1995a; 1995b) in developing Media Discourse were a significant influence on the methods applied to this research. My attendance at the *Third International Conference on Media, Religion and Culture* held at the University of Edinburgh in July 1999 gave me opportunities to exchange ideas and clarify the directions of this study as well as to consider summaries from earlier conferences of this group (Hoover and Lundby 1997).

A review of some of the relevant literature from both of these theoretical influences is woven throughout this chapter.

For this thesis, I chose to use a qualitative method. In this chapter, I have identified and justified this choice before developing a theoretical framework using elements from the perspectives of both sociology of knowledge and media discourse. Sociology of knowledge assisted me in situating MMH and MMPM within a social context whilst media discourse, as a framework for examining printed forms of knowledge, provided the tools for my identification and analysis of MMPM. These two elements have been blended in my approach to this study.

3.1 Choice of Qualitative Methodology

3.1.1 Identification of my approach

In designing this research, study of a wide variety of recent texts including Maykut and Morehouse (1994), Coffey and Atkinson (1996), Allen and Silver (1997), Hammersley (Hammersley 1993), Jensen and Jankowski (1991), Silverman (1985; 1993), Denzin and Lincoln (1994a) led me to decide that a qualitative approach was the most appropriate one to be used. Jensen (1991, p 2) identified the rise in the various forms of mass communication as a stimulus to develop 'new theories and methods to comprehend social and cultural complexity and change'. My research did this by proposing an Australian interpretation of the way that the Australian print media has viewed saints and sainthood against the background of society and culture over the past ninety years using the example of Mary MacKillop.

A qualitative approach allowed for new ways to discover patterns of meaning: its findings did not rely on statistical evidence or justification by mathematical rules.

This research was an investigation of the meanings conveyed by the print media about a specific person within a defined social and cultural context: it dealt with the occurrence of references in a particular context. I have sought to identify themes or patterns in these occurrences: such themes were used to trace or map a new cultural artefact for Australia – the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media.

3.1.2 My research paradigm

Writers such as Denzin and Lincoln (1994b, p 3) outlined how qualitative research, while not having a distinct method of its own, can cover a wide range of techniques and include a variety of interpretive paradigms. Such a paradigm, following the work of Guba and Lincoln (1994, p 105) provided 'the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigators, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways'. The paradigm, which I have utilised for this research, was a multi-focussed approach which included a study of texts in their cultural contexts: a context which included social and organisational settings as well as a consideration of the audiences for the texts.

In considering what Guba and Lincoln (1994) described as 'competing paradigms,' my research can be located in that known as Constructivism. This is the term given to the inquiry paradigm identified as a further development from Critical Theory. In looking at the three areas which make up such paradigms, ontology, epistemology and methodology, the ontological question I have investigated concerned the form and nature of constructed realities as presented in texts. These realities were 'intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature'. Elements of the realities can be shared amongst many individuals: they can be dependent in form and content on individuals or groups holding the constructions. The truth of such constructions is not absolute but rather relative to the degree of information and sophistication of ideas. The evolution of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media over ninety years was an example of such a constructed reality.

The epistemological question for Constructivism focusses on the relationship between the writers of the texts and the audiences receiving them. For this study, the journalists and the object of their investigations – the Mary MacKillop of History –

were assumed to be interactively linked in such a way that the findings were literally created – ie the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media.

My methodology involved hermeneutics and dialectics: through hermeneutics, I have described the individual media constructions and then I used a dialectical approach to compare and contrast these constructions so as to generate my conclusions – ie my reconstruction of the identified reality of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media.

3.1.3 Justification of choice of methodology

One of the most attractive features of the qualitative approach to a researcher is that it can encompass a wide variety of methods. These can include semiotics, ethnographies, narrative studies, textual analysis, observations and interviews. Through use of this approach, I was therefore not limited to a narrow set of parameters but could range widely to select the most suitable tools for my purposes. In making this selection, I was aware that my research was an interactive process: I was what Denzin and Lincoln (1994b, p 3) termed a 'bricoleur' where my own personal history, biography, gender and race all have a bearing on the outcome of my work. The result was 'a bricolage, a complex, dense, reflexive, collagelike creation that represent(ed my) images, understandings, and interpretations of the world or phenomenon under analysis'.

There is in existence a wide body of knowledge of other studies about mass communication methods which have utilised a variety of qualitative approaches. Fowler (1991) used a sociolinguistic approach to analyse editorials from three English newspapers while Bell (1991) used a similar view in his study of the language featured in all forms of the media. Ethnography and textual analysis were the methods employed by Jenkins (1992) in a study of the science fiction fan community; Molotch and Lester (1974) drew on the work of ethnomethodologists such as Garfinkel in their discussion of the creation of news; Koch (1990) utilised an analysis of the narrative form in his study of the news as social context while Tuchman (1972) discussed field notes gathered as a participant observer. In examining the work of Molotch, Lester and Tuchman, Schudson (1989) called for comparative and historical studies of the press. A more recent work by Tuchman (1991) did just that and also supported the use of 'the "constructionist" approach to

news'. Work by Van Dijk (1988) was based on Discourse Analysis in his case study approach to the analysis of International and National newspapers.

Writers such as Coffey and Atkinson (1996, p 5); Allen and Silver (1997, p 5); Marshall and Rossman (1989, p 46) and Janesick (1994, p 212) all identified the way that a quantitive approach considered relationships within a system or culture. Miller and Dingwall (Miller 1997, p 3) expanded on this notion when they described the major focus of qualitative research to be an analysis of the processes involved in the creation of social realities and then an examination of the social relationships connecting individuals within society. They suggested that, 'it is within, and through, these relationships and processes that organizations, institutions, culture and society emerge and are sustained'. This perspective linked into the use of the media discourse ideas to be outlined in a later section of this chapter.

The qualitative methodology was therefore the most appropriate technique for this study since it:

- encompassed a variety of approaches to the study of texts;
- enabled relationships and processes within social structures to be analysed;
- recognised that the researcher must interact with the content under review;
- was an approach which has been used by other researchers in this field.

3.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Any sociological analysis is at the same time a part of human social conduct as well as a reflection upon it. This is often referred do as the 'double hermeneutic' of the social sciences (Giddens 1993a, p 166), or what White (1997, p 61) termed as 'a reflexive double hermeneutic'. He added further that research in religion and media 'is also a process of continually feeding back to religious groups the symbols of the sacred that they sense in their own personal and cultural identities'.

This notion was significant in the analysis of texts in this research, especially in the creation of Mary MacKillop by the print media as an icon over time. The identification of the types of icons or cultural artefacts which inspire hope for a society can assist in understanding a culture (see Allen and Silver 1997).

My development of a theoretical framework to consider the reality and relationships contained in sampled texts was grounded on aspects of both the school of thought known as sociology of knowledge as well as recent developments in media discourse. Relevant aspects of these will now be considered.

3.2.1 Sociology of knowledge as applicable to this research

This approach was summarised by Bouma (1996, p 61) as follows:

> The sociology of knowledge studies socio-cultural influences on the development, distribution and impact of various ideas. It also examines the ways in which certain ideas serve the interests of various groups in a society.

From the point of view of sociology of knowledge, knowledge is created and maintained by a given social group. Knowledge is part of a group's culture. Culture is in a constant state of being produced and reproduced in an on-going dialectical process (Hammond 1986, p 145). Knowledge is a key feature of societies: it both unites and divides groups (Dant 1991, p 1). Knowledge is shared through language. In writing articles for newspapers or magazines - or preparing biographies - journalists and authors have to draw on a body of knowledge about their subject. This existing knowledge can be in the form of books or newspaper items from other journalists. Print media has influenced oral culture, changed scholarly knowledge and assisted in the development of cultural heritages (Swidler and Arditi 1994, p 307-308).

Using newspaper articles and political cartoons about Mary MacKillop, I proposed to investigate the social context in which knowledge was created and thus illustrate what Mannheim (1952, p 188) referred to as a 'sociological change of function'. This is,

> ....a change in the meaning of a concept which occurs when that concept is adopted by a group living in a different social environment, so that the vital significance of the concept becomes different. Each idea acquires a new meaning when it is applied to a new life situation.

The new cultural artefact for Australia, which emerged from the symbiosis between print media journalists who engaged with the Mary MacKillop of History, has been termed the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media. Knowledge about Mary MacKillop

has changed and developed over ninety years but in essence, this knowledge reflected much of the general theory outlined by those writing in this theoretical field.

From the perspective of the sociology of knowledge, all knowledge is socially constructed and is taken for granted as an abstract reality in society. Knowledge as a phenomenon is contingent, in both its content and its form, on social processes (Dant 1991, p 11). These social processes have two dimensions - knowledge is determined both by the object being known and the nature of the knower (see Mannheim cited in Gill 1987, p 88). The knower is affected by and reflects the values of society.

The cultural context of an individual is therefore an essential ingredient in the acquisition of knowledge. Part of this cultural context is the shared meanings available to the whole of society - what Bilton et al (1981, p 739) term the 'common-sense knowledge, or taken for granted assumptions, about society, other actors, the world'. These shared meanings need to be considered for both those who construct the media texts and their audiences.

Within the churches, the religious teachings and practices provide an over-arching frame of reference which provide purpose and meaning to everyday life. During daily life, individuals come into contact with many institutions, each of which has what are termed 'plausibility structures' (Berger 1969a, p 55). These are the frameworks within the organisation, which formalise the social support given to members, and enable the knowledge promoted by the institution to be given greater acceptance. Religious rituals and celebrations maintain the stability of everyday life by providing a link to ultimate reality. The organisation of knowledge by institutions can be of assistance to the individual by providing social support to knowledge already obtained. When the institutions are of a religious nature, the support can be at a deeper level and provide legitimation to meaning systems about ultimate realities.

Religion can provide an extraordinarily high degree of legitimacy when the religious views of individuals are not merely supported in a social context but also believed to be divinely inspired (Hammond 1986, p 145; Haralambos 1985, p 464; White 1997,

p 43). The work of Berger is a significant contribution to the development of the sociology of religion and underlies the work of others in this field. To Berger,

> Religion legitimates social institutions by bestowing upon them an ultimately valid ontological status, that is, by *locating* them within a sacred and cosmic frame of reference.
> (Quoted in Wuthnow et al. 1984, p 128)

A more recent study by Wuthnow (1992) of Berger's work went into more detail on religion as a 'symbol system that imposes order ("cosmos") on the entire universe, on life itself, and thereby holds chaos (disorder) at bay' (p 18). The fact that the Catholic Church as an organised religion has recognised an Australian woman, Mary MacKillop, as being worthy of sainthood, provided the possibility of a new symbolic universe to Australians. It located an individual in space and time: yet at the same time, the beatification recognised that she had transcended both of these dimensions and she became a new symbol. The religious ceremonies associated with this honour played an important part in providing a link to the sacred: they were what White (1997, p 52) described as 'ritual occasions for ecstatic experience of the transcendent'.

In the framework provided by sociology of knowledge, language plays a critical role. It is through language that knowledge is shared, extended and recorded (Berger 1971, p 108). Print media has influenced oral culture, changed scholarly knowledge and assisted in the development of cultural heritages. Language as recorded in newspaper articles and political cartoons of print media is of particular interest for this research.

Knowledge is reliant upon language for its presentation. As oral cultures gave way to print media, knowledge itself was changed as well as being recorded and transmitted in a more effective and long lasting way. Any discussion of written language must include consideration of both the intentions of the author and the forces acting upon the author. These include the author's objectives in producing the text as well as the actual process that occurs as the author engages in 'reflexive monitoring' of ideas (Giddens 1987, p 105). The social and cultural forces affecting the audience were also considered in this study.

As an application of language, the mass media play a significant role at all levels of legitimation by providing a 'direct, anonymous and, as it were, non-institutionalized transmission of a synthetic universe with its appropriate pre-fabricated legitimations' (Berger and Luckmann 1969, p 71). The importance of the mass media in the process of legitimation was supported by Bouma (1992, p 6). He noted that, whereas in an earlier time the 'church service and sermon' were the major sources of information about the meaning of life, now such information is obtained in many cases from television sitcoms, words to popular songs, literature, films, theatre and art.

Within the churches, symbols are widely used as expressions of knowledge. These help to both create and maintain identity. Baum (1987, pp 136-143) noted that 'Christian symbols make known the hidden structure of reality'. He suggested that the knowledge contained in the Christian message should undergo what he terms 'deprivatization' so that this knowledge can more effectively promote group as well as individual identity. The extent to which this has occurred in the development of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media was significant in this research as I traced the way that the boundaries around the knowledge initially held by those within the Catholic Church gradually widened so as to allow for a new cultural artefact available to all elements within the Australian society.

For the total community, the recognition and use of MMPM as generally accepted knowledge within the group can strengthen the sense of identity (Bouma 1992, pp 7-26, 144-146). This is particularly important in the transmission of knowledge about those identified as heroes or saints: the 'community has a vested interest in its saints living up to their image'. Saints can reinforce group identity by the way that they 'sustain commitment to beliefs, values or orientations; ... act as role models and ... point the ways for the rest'. At this stage, saints and heroes become 'objectified' in Berger's terms: they have taken on a new construction and become 'a feature of the outside world' (Wuthnow 1992, p 20). In the case of Mary MacKillop, the retelling of her story, the link with many aspects of Australian culture and the general acceptance of her in the general knowledge of Australians are an indication that she has become what Bennett and Lawrence (1995, p 23) termed a 'news icon'. In

seeking to trace the way that this icon or new cultural artefact had evolved over a period of ninety years, I chose to employ techniques from media discourse.

3.2.2 Media discourse – key relevant points

Against the background of the perspective obtained from sociology of knowledge, the work of Fairclough (1992a; 1992b; 1995a; 1995b) provided one method to analyse examples from media. Another author who has written extensively in this field is van Dijk (1988; 1993a; 1993b; 1994). Their works contain many elements in common with the sociology of knowledge perspective outlined above, although their focus is applied in particular to the link between language and culture.

In his work on critical discourse analysis and media discourse, Fairclough (1995a; 1995b) identified language as being in a dialectical relationship with other facets of society. Language is shaped by, but also shapes, society. The media is socioculturally shaped while at the same time helping to shape society and culture (see also van Dijk 1988, p 2).

Fairclough (1995a, p 62) suggested that there are three dimensions of critical discourse analysis: the relationships between 'text, discourse practice and sociocultural practice'. Text refers to the printed work, both words and graphics, as well as to the oral form. The texts are seen to reflect reality as well as constituting versions of reality, depending upon the social position and interests of those who produce them. Discourse practice is the process of text production and consumption and Fairclough used 'intertextual analysis' (1995b) as an interpretive approach to bridge the two levels of text and discourse practice. In his framework, sociocultural practice is the social and cultural framework in which the text is located. Since it is the aim of this study to further develop knowledge about culture rather than media per se, it is the dimension of sociocultural practice which is of particular interest to me, although I have used elements of intertextual analysis in my examination of various examples of text.

Fairclough identified three levels in this sociocultural area to explain how the author represents the world and what identity is created. These levels were considered for each article and political cartoon (the text) chosen for analysis.

Situational: This covered both the immediate context of the text and that of the larger social context in which the newspaper circulated. The person at the centre of the text was significant as were the others mentioned in the editorial, article or cartoon. In my analysis of the various *Timeslices*, I looked at links with the wider social context at the time texts were produced and read.

Institutional: The text was seen to reflect the underlying systems of knowledge, beliefs and power of the society in which the text was located. An attempt was made to identify the way that Mary MacKillop in the text was linked to other institutions such as the Catholic Church in Australia, or to individuals in other institutions such as government.

Societal impact: The articles and cartoons chosen were studied to identify the cultural values reflected and promoted by the text. The reader of the text was left to interpret the message. This required a filling in of gaps according to the reader's experience and frame of reference. The same media might therefore have different messages for different people. Audiences were presumed to engage in what Fairclough (1995a, p 124) called 'interpretative activity' with texts.

As audiences engaged with texts, Fairclough identified two processes which occurred: the construction of identities and the construction of relations. Each of these processes needed to be examined in relation to its condition of production and its reception by a particular audience. During this examination, it was possible to identify presuppositions or 'taken for granted' knowledge of journalists as well as 'interpretive frameworks' on the part of the audience (van Dijk 1988, pp 27-28).

The link between the identities constructed by both the reporter/artist and the audience is the main focus of this paper. The values projected by one and accepted or rejected by the other are part of the dynamic relationship of the transmission of cultural values and, in this research, the construction of a version of sainthood unique to Australia.

3.3 METHOD FOR THIS RESEARCH

3.3.1 Media discourse case study

The theory from sociology of knowledge and the analytical framework from media discourse were dovetailed in my approach. A case study method was used to examine a range of newspaper articles, editorials and political cartoons in this qualitative research since I hoped to identify themes and patterns from the texts studied (see Coffey and Atkinson 1996, p 9; Janesick 1994, p 215).

In keeping with my constructivism paradigm and adapting ideas from Sarantakos (1993, p 261), my method had the following characteristics:

- Reality was perceived as emerging from the interaction of an audience with selected texts. This reality involved both the construction of relations and the construction of identities. As a researcher, I used a hermeneutical and dialectical approach to document this reality.
- The reality documented was an interpreted reality rather than an objective one. The interpretation was dependent upon the level of sophistication of the ideas presented and the amount of information contained in the selected texts. It was also affected by my own background and life experiences.
- Texts studied were taken from their natural state or context within newspapers rather than being artificially constructed for the purpose of this study.

Keeping in mind the danger of what Janesick (1994, p 215) called 'Methodolatry ....the slavish attachment and devotion to method' rather than on the substance of the findings, I have provided a detailed background to the context of the media samples studied. This has provided an overarching framework based on Fairclough's sociocultural practice as I examined the Australian cultural context, the Australian Roman Catholic Church culture, saints and sainthood in general, the Mary MacKillop of History. A detailed treatment of these areas has demonstrated my immersion as the researcher in the context of this study, as well as providing a framework for readers to interpret the findings.

In the analysis of texts from five specific historical periods - the *Timeslices,* the approach was one of analysis and interpretation rather than merely description. Data was interpreted under the following headings –

The text itself

I have traced how the presentation of an Australian saint by the print media has become what Fairclough (1995b, p 41) called 'recontextualized'. The text examples taken from over ninety years provide summaries of communication over time, thus becoming a form of social practice and an indicator of changes in cultural values. I would agree with the perception by Fairclough (1995b, p 60) that 'media texts are sensitive barometers of cultural change'. The cultural change under investigation was the way that a new cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media has emerged over time. This was traced through an analysis of what is represented in the texts - ie what is said - and then by what identities are constructed – ie what is emphasised. The relationship between the writer and the audience was gauged by the style of writing, such as formal vs informal, conversational or commentary. Evidence of boundaries between writers and readers, as well as between different sections of the community, were also considered in the construction of identities: these were useful in clarifying the movement of the new cultural artefact into the general frame of reference.

Discourse practice

This focussed on the production and consumption of the media texts studied. Within each *Timeslice*, texts were considered for evidence of editorial bias or influence. This was shown by such factors as the positioning of the article, the headline given and the inclusion of any pictures or graphics. I looked for traces of 'intertextual chains' – the way that texts were embedded, repeated and transformed over time or in different media examples (see Fairclough 1995b p 77). These chains provided evidence of the intertextual and historical links made by journalists to prior or presumed knowledge on the part of the audience. They also demonstrated ways that the Mary MacKillop of History has influenced the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media.

Sociocultural practice

Both text and discourse practice elements provided a foundation to the major aspect of the study, the sociocultural practice. In my interpretation of the patterns or themes from the texts studied, I sought to identify the cultural values given prominence and to determine the underlying ideology. Within each *Timeslice* and against the overall summary presented at the macro level in the next few chapters, I provided sociocultural details relevant for that period. Of particular relevance was a summary of the state of the beatification process for Mary MacKillop at that time.

Adapting the work of Janesick (1994, p 215) and Maykut & Morehouse (1994, p 134), as well as developing ideas I have already published in this field (McCreanor 1998, p 18), the following process was utilised in the discussion of texts:

- The context of each example was analysed from the three levels of what Fairclough (1995a, p 62) called sociocultural practice: the situational, institutional and societal impact.
- Phrases or themes, which assisted in building up the answers to the key questions, were identified.
- An interpretation was made of these key phrases or statements against the sociocultural context of the text.
- Any recurrence of cultural themes or patterns was noted both within the specific *Timeslices* studied as well as across these periods.

The aim was to search for cultural themes and patterns from the data in order to identify the evolution of the cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media and to gain answers to the following key questions:

- What type of identity has been constructed?
- What factors influenced the evolution of the new cultural artefact of MMPM?
- What does this study say about the continuing search for an Australian identity?

3.3.2 Data collection – the Timeslices

This research covered five *Timeslices* showing the way that Mary MacKillop was reported upon and discussed by the print media in editorials, political cartoons,

newspaper and magazine articles. As outlined in Chapter One, these *Timeslices* and their major foci are as follows:

- From 1909 until 1914
- From 1985 until 1995 – the influence of Max Harris
- The Beatification event - January 1995
- Political cartoons featuring Mary MacKillop
- Post Beatification - 1995 to 2000

More information about the social, cultural and religious influences operating during each of these *Timeslices* is given in each appropriate chapter.

3.3.3 Collection and selection criteria

Since I began this study in 1994, I have collected many print media examples of reports about Mary MacKillop, her life and work, as well as references to those who are continuing the ministries she commenced. This has enabled me to have a wide range of texts from which to make a selection for this thesis.

As a member of the Sisters of St Joseph, I was given access to archives of this group (referred to as the Congregational archives) and have spent significant time in those at North Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide. The personnel who work in these archives throughout Australia were very helpful in sharing their resources with me and allowing me to select from their range of print media examples.

I also spent time in the Adelaide Diocesan archives; the Veech Library (housing the collection from St Patrick's Seminary, Manly); the Adelaide Theological Library (which includes the collection from St Francis Xavier's Seminary in Adelaide); and utilised the services of newspaper collections in public libraries of both Sydney and Adelaide. Electronic databases of newspapers were checked as well.

Within each of the *Timeslices* studied, I chose a representative sample of texts from both the Catholic press and daily newspapers. The choice was determined by:

Accessibility - This was particularly true for the samples from the earliest period under review as many of these early newspapers were in a very fragile state.

Availability - With the political cartoons and editorials, there were only a limited number which have been published.

Interpretive in preference to Descriptive - Since this research was on the way that the print media were helping to create a new cultural artefact for Australia, preference was given to articles such as editorials or comment which discussed ideas and trends affecting society as a whole.

Universal appeal - National newspapers, major dailies and some magazines were checked and examples found from all states and territories of Australia. The bulk of the texts, however, came from two states: South Australia (where Mary MacKillop began her work in 1866); and New South Wales (where she died in 1909 and is buried in a memorial chapel at North Sydney).

At the conclusion of this thesis, I shall be lodging my print media collection in the Adelaide archives of the Sisters of St Joseph.

3.3.4 Validity and generalization

I have analysed all samples of text within their sociocultural context. The focus was to 'generate an understanding of a community at a given time' and, in particular, 'the ability of that community to find, create, or share common symbols' (Allen and Silver 1997, p 10).

The boundaries of these contexts were interpreted by me within the framework of my world. I have presumed that, within a context, similar events would have similar meanings. Thus, while I have studied only a small sample of texts, I believe that some generalizations can be drawn (Coffey and Atkinson 1996, p 144; Hodder 1994, p 399). These generalizations were not to be a standardized list which could be produced by any other researcher presented with the same material since they were interpreted from my unique framework. The aim was 'to produce a coherent and illuminating description of and perspective on a situation that is based on and consistent with detailed study of that situation' (Schofield 1993, p 202).

The study is not expected to be replicated, although it may stimulate the investigation of related questions. Suggestions for these will be made in my final chapter.

In keeping with the constructionist paradigm being utilised, I was in a dialectical relationship with the data (Hodder 1994, p 401). To support the validity of this study, or what Marshall and Rossman (1989, p 147) refer to as 'confirmability', my own experience and previous study will be outlined as part of the next chapter.

3.3.5 Ethical considerations

All media texts analysed as part of this study were from the public domain. The topic of my research was widely circulated amongst the Sisters of St Joseph throughout Australia and, as a member of this group, all resources, including letters written by Mary MacKillop, were placed at my disposal. I have undertaken to present a copy of the completed thesis to each of the Congregational archives once it is accepted.

The family of Max Harris were advised of my focus on his work: they have read and approved a draft of Chapter 8. Their support for my thesis has been indicated by the way that they have provided me with previous unpublished poetry written by Harris about Mary MacKillop.[7]

3.4 CONCLUSIONS

I have identified the qualitative approach as being the most appropriate for this work and have used a constructivist paradigm as the underlying philosophy. My interest was in the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media as a constructed reality – a cultural artefact described and developed by journalists who are in a relationship with both the Mary MacKillop of History and their audiences.

Through the research approach outlined, my engagement with the cultural dialectics of this process led me to conclusions about new forms of knowledge. This knowledge was set against a theoretical background of sociology of knowledge and analysed using a media discourse case study approach.

Practical questions such as methods of data collection, the criteria used in the selection of texts, the scope of the search for these texts as well as the issues of validity and ethics have been covered.

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[7] This will be referred to in more detail in Chapter 8 and is provided as Appendix 3.

Within the framework of this study, I was immersed in the subject as well as being in a dialectical relationship with the texts. Chapter 4 will therefore review and extend some of my previous research on culture and identity as well as outlining the Australian cultural context which was available as background to both journalists and newspaper audiences.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE AUSTRALIAN CULTURAL CONTEXT

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The two cultural representations of the Mary MacKillop of History (MMH) and the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media (MMPM) can be situated against a macro framework of Australian society and culture. In this chapter I have used the situational and institutional levels of sociocultural practice to present a background both to MMH (as considered in Chapter 6) and the media texts as examples of MMPM which are examined in Chapters 7-11.

In looking at the more immediate situational context to myself as the researcher, I have outlined relevant personal background before summarising my own interest in and previous work in cultural studies.

The construction of MMPM can be related to the search for an Australian identity and the desire for heroes and icons who reflect prized qualities and values. When considering the wider frame of Australian society and culture, the adulation of individuals has been situated within the general search for meaning and plausibility using sociology of knowledge theory. The role of religion in general in providing additional meaning through some link to the transcendent has also been discussed.

Institutions such as the Roman Catholic Church constitute a specific subset of Australian society and culture. In the third part of the chapter, I have considered this organisation as a cultural construct and presented evidence showing that both the Roman and the Irish traditions have influenced the development of the Catholic Church in Australia. Both of these strands have affected the general knowledge available to journalists and an audience for texts about Mary MacKillop.

The Australian mass media as an institution, and in particular the print media, are powerful influences upon society and culture through their availability and through the way that they both reflect and construct the values of a society. An examination of the Australian print media vis-à-vis the Catholic Church in Australia will conclude this chapter.

4.1 PERSONAL BACKGROUND

My own context as a researcher is central to this project. For more than thirty years, I have been a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph founded by Mary MacKillop. In this role, I have had access to historical studies of Mary MacKillop as well as to the many news clippings from print media throughout Australia which are contained in the Archives of the Sisters of St Joseph. All published biographies of Mary MacKillop, such as those by O'Neill (1931), Thorpe (1957; 1980; 1994), Modystack (1982; 1995), Lyne (1983; 1994), Gardiner (1993b) and O'Brien (1994) have been available to me. I have also read a copy of the *Positio*, the formal life of Mary MacKillop prepared in Rome by Gardiner (1989b). This work to date has not been published but has been circulated privately.

As part of this research, I have read many of the letters written by Mary MacKillop to those who joined her in her work as well as much of the correspondence received by her. These letters are in the private collections of the archives of the Sisters of St Joseph and have assisted me in building up a perception of Mary MacKillop, the person.

In January 1995 I attended the ceremonies in Sydney when Pope John Paul II came to Australia to declare that Mary MacKillop was beatified – ie proclaimed a saint for Australia. For a week I was immersed in the pomp, ceremony and rituals. I experienced all the media coverage of this event and was able to collect a wide range of newspaper cuttings to assist in this research.

4.1.1 Previous work and interest in culture and identity

In an earlier study (McCreanor 1990), I examined the question of ethnic identity as it related to students in Catholic primary schools. Interviews were conducted in three schools with staff, students, parish priests and parents on the question of ethnic identity. One school had a high proportion of students from Italian background; another had a very strong representation of students from various Indo-Chinese countries whilst the third had almost 100% children born in Australia with no obvious links to any other non-English speaking country.

I also interviewed staff in key positions at the Catholic Education Office in Adelaide as well as the two Archbishops of Adelaide. For six years I had been principal of a Catholic primary school in an area to which many of the first Indo-Chinese boat people came. I had also spent seven years as principal in another Catholic primary school where the majority of students were from an Italian background and where all students had three lessons in Italian per week.

One of the major findings of my research was that, while many efforts were being made to assist students of Italian and Indo-Chinese background to maintain their ethnic identities, not so much was done to assist those of Anglo-Australian heritage to recognise that they even had an ethnic identity. In the concluding chapter, I wrote,

> Another outcome, which emerged very strongly from the research, was that the Anglo-Australian identity is largely unrecognised. Even taking into account the fact that Anglo-Australians are not as exuberant at expressing emotions as are others of European background, the perception of staff, students and parents was that generally Australians are not as proud of being Australians as, say Italians are of being Italian. Staff found it more difficult to name what was being done to assist Australian students learn of their cultural heritage than to think of specific programmes targetted at the Indo-Chinese or Italian groups.
>
> It could be concluded that in all three schools surveyed there was a general sense that it was a 'taken for granted reality' (Berger and Luckmann 1967, p 163) that nothing needed to be done to assist Anglo-Australians to develop an appropriate ethnic identity. (McCreanor 1990, p 317)

A more recent study, and one which was developed further in this research, involved an analysis of political cartoons featuring Mary MacKillop (McCreanor 1998; 1999).

My most recent ministry experience was four years as principal of a South Australian country Catholic regional school that included both primary and secondary classes. It was in an area with a significant indigenous population; there were few families from non-English speaking backgrounds and many individuals displayed attitudes which could only be described as xenophobic. Those with the latter attitudes displayed little or no awareness of any national Australian identity that encompassed other than their own kind.

4.1.2 A definition of culture

My earlier studies and the variety of my work environments led to a continued interest in the Australian culture and identity. Culture is not just a summary or listing of external signs but rather the totality of the life shared by those who live in a group. It encompasses thoughts, actions, emotions, and above all, values that are prized and inspire hope for the future. The outward expressions of culture – the symbols and icons revered – are reflections of the reality experienced within individuals and the group. Such symbols have a unique meaning for those within the culture and are subject to frequent changes or constructions from both within and without the boundaries of the group. A person constructs an identity by the internalisation of those elements of the shared culture which provide a basic meaning to life: such an identity is viable when it is given acceptance by the wider group.

Saints and sainthood have a particular meaning within the culture of the Catholic Church: they are part of the outward expressions of this culture and involve many signs and symbols. In some countries with a longer history than Australia's, religion and saints are intrinsically linked to the culture – eg Ireland and St Patrick. The construction of the meaning or relevance of the saints may have undergone significant changes over time but there is still a relationship that is evident and prized. Within Australia, there has been no such tradition that is unique to this country but there has been a great deal of research on the related question of the search for heroes and icons which reflect the key values of this culture.

4.2 AUSTRALIAN CULTURE AND IDENTITY

4.2.1 The underlying theory

From the perspective of sociology of knowledge, individuals construct a world which becomes their everyday reality. In his discussion of Berger's work, Wuthnow (1992, p 15) summarised this as follows:

> It is a routine world, an orderly world in which things have their place. Deeper questions, longer-range goals, memories of the past, fundamental values, ambiguity and complexity – all are minimized (to a certain extent) in relation to the pragmatic considerations that govern us in the here and now. Everyday reality is also a safe, secure world in which we know our place and can safely take for granted the objects and persons in our immediate environment. Furthermore, it facilitates social interaction: since time and space are standardized, we know what to expect, and since the norms governing this world make for familiarity and routine, we can interact with others on common ground.

While such a framework can generally satisfy the daily requirements of life, it is not enough to explain all events. Illness, accidents, natural disasters, unexplained mysteries and death lead individuals to seek a broader meaning to everyday life. There is a recognition that reality does transcend this most obvious level of existence.

The term, 'symbolic universe' was coined by Berger and Luckmann (1984, pp 113-122) to provide an 'over-arching symbol system' to refer to this level of reality (Wuthnow 1992, p 18). It is defined as 'the matrix of all socially objectivated and subjectively real meanings' and, for an individual, all life events take place in such a universe. Within a symbolic universe there can be 'different spheres of reality' which become integrated, thus providing meaning to an individual and ultimately, through socialisation, to a wider group (see Berger and Luckmann 1984, pp 114-122).

This meaning occurs in a dialectical process as symbols are identified by individuals in their social interaction. While Berger considered such symbols to be 'bodies of theoretical tradition' (p 113), later writers have extended the notion to include 'anecdotes, images, pictures, connotatively rich names and places, rituals and personal experiences' (Wuthnow 1992, p 33). These secular or sacred symbols, once accepted by individuals and groups, become 'objectified', they take on a life of their own and become a new reality which can be codified in some formal way. This can be through literature, art or ritual. At this stage, and with further social interaction with the symbol, the new reality is internalised by an individual, becomes part of their world view and subjective identity (p 20). It is then part of their everyday reality. The maintenance of any symbol system such as religion, is dependent upon

'plausibility systems': the continued 'conversation and interaction' between those who seek to share their beliefs (p 20). Institutions such as churches or the print media can provide formal plausibility systems: the symbolic definitions of reality which they maintain only remain credible, in fact, because of the interaction between individuals and the institution (see Wuthnow et al. 1984). It is this dialectical process that allows the individual to deepen the understanding of the symbol system with the result that a person develops a greater allegiance to it. Members of the group actively support the symbol system: for its part, it is responsible for providing them with a deeper level of meaning. Religion becomes a special type of symbolic universe, or what Berger referred to as a 'sacred canopy' (1969b).

The focus in this thesis is on the way that MMPM as a cultural symbol has been developed over time through a dialectical process between journalists as individuals and as a group reacting with one symbol, MMH and presenting their construction to the newspaper audience as MMPM. Both journalists and those receiving the texts are affected by their existing frames of reference, their symbolic universes which contain a vast array of knowledge and information about Australian culture. This would include information – symbols – about heroes and icons who have been 'objectified': their stories told and re-told as part of the continued social interaction and search for meaning by individuals and the total group (Bouma 1992).

As background to the way that this process has occurred with Mary MacKillop, I have traced the way that some codification has occurred with Australian symbols. Many of these, through the work of institutions such as the media, have become internalised by individuals and the total group. They are now part of the taken for granted reality: they are a component of what Swidler and Arditi (1994) refer to as the 'collective memory' and are aspects of the symbolic universe or system of meaning known as the Australian identity. Much has been written on this issue (Carroll 1992b; King 1978; Luck 1992; Mackay 1999; Price 1991; Re: Public 1997; Schaffer 1988; Ward 1988; White 1981). In this next section, I have reviewed their work to highlight values which are recognised, respected and form a part of the over-arching symbol system for Australians. The following values and themes have been selected from these works to illustrate this point and to provide parallels with the

qualities stressed about Mary MacKillop in the print media texts examined in later chapters.

The values and themes are:

- The Aussie Battler
- Attitudes to authority
- Exceptional courage and commitment
- Strong women
- Mateship
- Egalitarianism

I have concluded this section with a discussion of Ned Kelly as a secular Australian saint and reference to the formal (institutionalised) identification of Australian heroes through the Australian of the Year award.

4.2.2 The Aussie Battler

What has come to be known as the 'Aussie Battler' is a stereotype encompassing many dimensions. The harsh physical environment of Australia (especially in the early days of European settlement), along with the isolation of vast distances, forced many pioneers to become very ingenious. The Stump Jump plough, Southern Cross windmills, the Pedal Wireless were all made by Australian inventors battling against the odds (Luck 1992).

There are numerous examples from Australian literature where characters exemplify aspects of the Aussie Battler. These include many of the writings of Paterson (1980), Lawson (1966) and the poetry of Dennis (1988). Hirst (1992, p 23) would argue that Lawson and Paterson 'were making a tradition as well as reflecting one'.

The publication of the handwritten manuscript by Facey (1981) resulted in the author being described as 'the classic Aussie Battler' in publicity by University of Western Australia (1999). His description of experiences at Gallipoli, during the Great Depression and in the early days of rural settlement led to the work being described

on their web page as 'an Australian icon'. Despite the odds, he remained optimistic as is shown by the title of his autobiography, *A Fortunate Life*.

Jim Bancks provided another unique dimension of the Aussie Battler in the comic strip, *Ginger Meggs*, an Australian Icon identified by Luck (1992). The attitudes of, 'You might as well have a go,' and 'I've got nothing to lose,' coupled with a shrewd sense of irony and mischief, made this character very popular with the Australian audience.

Australians respect those who struggle against the odds, the little people who rise above the difficulties of their lives, those who can stubbornly continue to battle against adversity whilst at the same time maintaining a sense of humour, being optimistic and working hard. These are often venerated as heroes – mostly unsung and unrecognised except for the epithet and compliment of, 'You're a real Aussie Battler.'

It is significant, according to Mackay (1999, p 9) that the Melbourne Cup is such a national event for Australians: this horse race is,

> ...a handicap event in which some of the most popular winners have been rank outsiders, battlers, who symbolise the idea that this is a place where you can come from nowhere and succeed.

Australians revere as heroes those who display ingenuity, inventiveness and who maintain their optimism despite the odds being against them. Those who can show a sense of humour and persevere in their faithful devotion to duty, particularly in the care of their families, are held in high regard.

4.2.3 Attitudes to authority

In his summary of what he terms, 'The Coming Australian' White (1981, p 77) noted that a 'certain disrespect for authority' was generally accepted as 'distinctly Australian'. The recognition by Australians of *Waltzing Matilda* as the unofficial national anthem supports this view (see Ward 1988). The popularity of illegal gambling, especially the game of two-up, is another indicator of the way that Australians have displayed this trait. According to Luck (1992, p 167), this game has traditionally been played on Anzac Day when police have turned a blind eye. It is

almost as if the police too were seeking hero status and acceptance on this day at least, by their willingness to ignore the strict letter of the law.

Schedvin (1992, p 107) and King (1978, p 17) both traced this quality back to the convict origins of this country: it arose as a survival mechanism in the face of brutal authoritarianism. By the time of the Australian participation in the First World War, it had become such an integral part of the Australian identity that, as Ward (1988, p 232) noted, 'stories and jokes about the Australian soldier's reluctance to salute his officers (were) legion'. In reflecting upon this characteristic, Sir John Monash, one of the commanders of the Anzac forces was quoted in White (1981, p 133) as saying about the Australian soldier:

> Psychologically, he was easy to lead but difficult to drive...Taking him all in all, the Australian soldier was, when understood, not difficult to handle. But he required a sympathetic handling, which appealed to his intelligence and satisfied his instinct for a 'square deal'.

In a converse way, this quotation showed why Monash himself was seen as a hero by many: he could see the goodness in individuals rather than expecting blind obedience and obeisance.

Those who can flaunt their disregard for authority in some sort of flamboyant manner amongst their mates are often recognised as heroes by their peers. Dawn Fraser would be an example of this when she incurred severe penalties from Australian authorities for marching in the Opening Ceremony of the Olympics and not wearing a regulation swimming costume in Tokyo. The hero status she enjoyed with the general public could be traced more perhaps to this episode than to the three gold medals she won in swimming (Fraser and Gordon 1965). Her recognition as Australian of the Year in 1964 showed that her attitude to authority and her enjoyment of life did not diminish her popularity amongst Australians.

4.2.4 Exceptional courage and commitment

In his discussion of Australian heroes, Mackay (1999, p 89) provided a definition of the two ingredients he considered essential for genuine heroes:

> They make personal sacrifices – in the form of risk or sustained devoted work – in pioneering new frontiers of human endeavour.

> They stir in the rest of us an expanded sense of human potential; they heighten our sense of *what we can do and who we can be.*

Along with these elements, those who can display exceptional courage and commitment are revered for their humility in the face of their talents. The quiet dignity of Don Bradman, referred to by Mackay (1999, p 92) as 'possibly the greatest batsman the world has ever seen' has led to his continued veneration as a hero to many generations who never saw him play cricket. Carroll (1992a, p 233) suggested that it was not just his genius that made Bradman a hero, but the fact that 'his story stresses the ordinariness of his background and the typicality of his character, its unassuming urbanity'.

The Australian love of sports has led to the identification of many heroes: the recent Olympic Games in Sydney meant that many Australians with talent in every possible sport were presented to the public. Their commitment to long and arduous training in the hope of a Gold Medal was held up as an inspiration to all. Those who excel in cricket, tennis and the various codes of football are rewarded with star status by the media and adulation by fans while Mackay (1999, p 7) noted that 'Peter Brock is, for Holden fans, about as close to sainthood as Mary MacKillop'.

War times have led to the identification of many heroes displaying exceptional courage. In his collection of Australian Icons, Luck (1992) included Simpson who, with his donkey, braved sniper fire to rescue the injured at Gallipoli. He also described the actions of Albert Jacka, who won the first Victoria Cross to be awarded to the AIF in the 1914-1918 War and then went on to win a Military Cross and Bar for further heroism. The exploits of Edward 'Weary' Dunlop in a prisoner of war camp during the Second World War led him to be revered as a hero: his courage, restraint and willingness to sacrifice himself for others earned him the respect of both friends and enemies.

Mackay (1999, p 93) made the point that with those opening new frontiers today, 'we are more likely to be impressed by sacrifice made in the name of social progress than in some grand feat of human endurance'. He described some of the spectacular and daring feats of endurance which can be called the 'heroics of self-indulgence': the activities are for personal reasons, such as being the first to do something, rather than

for the common good. His conclusion about a new definition of heroism today can also be interpreted as a reason for the continued public interest in someone like Mary MacKillop:

> Responsiveness, not just to the urge for adventure but to the needs of others, has become the crucial test of heroism in the postmodern world. When all around are bent on serving their own ends, and when materialism has a society in its grip, it is the small voice of service – the whispered expression of non-material values – that begins to sound heroic.

With this definition, medical humanitarians such as Victor Chang or Fred Hollows were accorded heroic status, although, as Mackay (1999, p 91) pointed out, the publicity given to the latter included many aspects of Hollows' life that were less than perfect so 'perhaps his death saved him from overexposure'.

4.2.5 Strong women

Over the years in Australia there has been evidence of strong masculine bonds of mateship, as well as inequalities in conditions of employment and salaries for women. Writers such as King (1978, p 193) described the attempts made by the Women's Movement in Australia to counteract the feeling by women that they were, in the words of Germaine Greer, 'female eunuchs'. Despite these facts, I believe that a case can be made for the way that Australians include amongst the traditional heroes, those who can be termed strong women.

Women who show that they can cope with life, whatever vicissitudes it brings, were accorded great status in early Australian literature. *The Drover's Wife* (Lawson 1966) was one of the classics (see also Hirst 1992): the woman, alone with her children while her husband was away working, confronted the threat of a snake hiding beneath the house. As she kept watch during the night to safeguard her family, she reflected on her lot in life. Coping with loneliness, birth of children, the vagaries of the weather as well as unwanted guests were all taken in her stride:

> She seems contented with her lot. She loves her children, but has no time to show it. She seems harsh to them. Her surroundings are not favourable to the development of the 'womanly' or sentimental side of nature.

The simple story of a woman killing a snake can be found to have many layers of meaning. In her analysis of this story, Schaffer (1988, pp 132-139) spoke of one interpretation of the woman as 'an image of the Australian character':

> The tough stock of transplanted Britons whom the drover's wife personifies produce for them a national type which will lead the country to maturity as an independent, strong and resourceful nation. Women are pioneers. They function as symbols of hope.

Although the woman's name was not given in the story, she is remembered as an Australian pioneer against whom others can be measured.

In his research into the Australian identity, Ward (1988) provided a further reason for the importance of women in the early days of Australian settlement. When women were present in the frontier societies, there was some restraining influence on the behaviour of men. While squatters generally sought men 'with no encumbrances' to work in remote areas, Caroline Chisholm and others tried to encourage women and families to venture out into the developing lands. Men outnumbered women by almost four to one in some of the squatting districts of 1841: their rarity helped to build up the hero status accorded to strong women.

The respect that prominent men displayed for their mothers also assisted in the idealisation of women. Part of the reason for Ned Kelly's final stance leading to his death could be traced to his desire to avenge his mother's arrest and her sentence of three years jail (McIntyre 1992, p 39).

Popular writers of Australian fiction such as Ruth Park (1986) have provided examples of strong women who are able to hold a family together and cope with adversity without giving in. Her story of Margaret Kilker, 'Mumma', who married Hugh Darcy and brought up a family in Sydney's Surrey Hills, has helped a new generation to develop respect for women like her.

In more recent years, the national outpouring of grief by Australians after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales was another indication of the way that Australians sought to honour what was perceived by many as a Strong or Ideal Woman.[8] In the

[8] A cultural artefact, Diana of the Print Media could be traced in a similar way to this study.

days after her sudden death on 31 August 1997, the Australian national media in all forms provided extensive coverage of the actual events, the reactions of the Royal Family and the funeral watched by millions throughout the world. Daily print media provided supplements such as eight coloured magazines (Kay and Levy 1998) which detailed the life and loves of this tragic figure.

While Diana was almost canonised by popular acclaim (Boer 1997, p 86), (McPhillips 1997, pp 87-91) she did not exactly lead a highly moral life. It was the constructed reality of her image which was the focus of the attention, rather than the historical person. As one Australian writer reflected on the first anniversary of her death when further global grieving occurred:

> ..... had it been a woman from Altona or West Perth or Darwin that jumped into some rich guy's car – a car, driven by an intoxicated driver doing speeds in excess of 150 kph, and in which only one person was wearing a seatbelt – would the world have shed tears then? Or would it have barely made the local papers, with those hearing about it thinking that 'she was just asking for trouble'. (Taylor 1998)

A more positive female role model was provided by Dame Roma Mitchell, former Governor of South Australia with a long history of firsts behind her, all achieved on merit and through the maintenance of high principles. She was the first woman Queen's Counsel, Supreme Court Judge, Chancellor of the University of Adelaide and Governor of the State (King 2000). Her forthright manner and desire for social justice along with her qualities of compassion, wisdom, and sense of humour made her a hero in South Australia and beyond. After her retirement as Governor, she returned to a quieter life style but still maintained a commitment to service of others: her obituary in *The Australian* made mention of her 'three year stint as a Meals on Wheels deliverer to often surprised senior Adelaide citizens in rooming houses' (Quoted in Jordan 2000). Her continued importance within the collective meaning systems for South Australians was shown by her inclusion, along with Mary

MacKillop, as one of the five state visionaries selected for the Federation Day parade float in Sydney in January 2001.[9]

4.2.6 Mateship

The central idea of Russel Ward's *The Australian Legend* was that the ideal of Australian mateship can be traced to those who settled in the bush regions of Australia (see also King 1978, p 130). These were in particular the 'outback employees, the semi-nomadic drovers, shepherds, shearers, bullock-drivers, stockmen, boundary-riders, station-hands and others of the pastoral industry' (Ward 1988, p 2). The isolation, vast distances and need for assistance in emergencies were some of the practical reasons which forced people to rely on each other. As Ward (1988, p 84) noted,

> The hazards and hardships, but above all the loneliness of up-country life were such that, to make life tolerable, often merely to preserve it, every man had habitually to treat every other man as a brother.

Early literature, especially the ballads, poems and stories of Paterson, Lawson, AH Davis ('Steele Rudd') and CJ Dennis, played a great role in celebrating and perpetrating the stories of mateship in bush settings. The exclusion of women from the concept in its traditional form was discussed by Schaffer (1988) who saw mateship, particularly as described in the work of Henry Lawson, as a retreat by men from the harshness of the Australian landscape and the madness of women.

The recent attempt by the Prime Minister to use, 'mateship', in a new preamble to the Australian Constitution and the consequent debate that this word excluded women, led to the conclusion by Mackay (1999, p 126) that, while the term of mateship is perhaps outmoded, 'the concept lives on'.

This heritage of mateship can be traced through the bushmen, the Anzacs, men in country towns and lifesavers (Dempsey 1992; Ward 1988; White 1981). While Carroll (1992a, p 148) argued that mateship is not limited to Australian culture, even

[9] Other persons featured were astronaut Dr Andy Thomas, explorer Charles Sturt, indigenous advocate, author and preacher David Unaipon (Hurrell 2001).

though it is more widespread in this context, others view mateship as a substitute for religion (see King 1978 p 128; Ward 1988 p 183).

Mates are loyal to friends and such loyalty is highly prized. Children in Australia learn from an early age that, 'you don't dob'. While at times this can lead to misplaced loyalty so that bullies are not revealed, it does reflect the bush tradition. In the early days of settlement of the bush, shearers organised their solidarity with each other into one of the first Trade Unions in Australia, the Amalgamated Shearers' Union, formed in 1886. In describing this development, Spence wrote in 1909 (cited in Ward 1988, p 214), 'a man's character was gauged by whether he stood true to Union rules or 'scabbed' it on his fellows'. Even today, one of the greatest Australian insults is to call someone a 'scab'.

The offering of hospitality amongst early settlers was documented by Ward as part of what he termed, *The Australian Legend* (Ward 1988, p 84). Doors were never locked and travellers were welcome to make use of food and shelter, whether or not the residents were at home. Early pubs and shanties did not charge for food, tea and shelter but relied on bar trade for profits. War stories of the sharing of rations, helping out neighbours by bringing food in hard times or even the prodigious catering by Country Women's League groups throughout the countryside all added to this tradition that hospitality is a prized Australian attribute. In more recent times, the popularity of the Australian barbecue continues this theme of hospitality.

A 'mate' will respond to a need simply because that need exists and thus accept responsibility for the well-being of others. This aspect of mateship may perhaps have been dimmed in recent years as 'waltzing materialism' (King 1978, p 11) pervades society. While accepting King's notion that a large degree of selfishness can be identified in the behaviour of Australians, I believe that sufficient examples of altruism still exist. The high regard by the community for the work done by The Salvation Army; the numbers who respond in times of national crisis, such as bushfires or floods; the army of volunteers who made the Sydney Olympics such a success; those who give up their time on a regular basis to work in Country Fire Services and St John Ambulance all bear testimony to this quality.

Within the context of this study I view the meaning of mateship – or solidarity with friends – to encompass the qualities of loyalty, the offering of hospitality, being willing to respond to a need simply because the need exists and therefore accepting responsibility for the well-being of others. While accepting that these qualities may exist in other cultures, I believe that their display is seen to be an important aspect of the Australian identity.

4.2.7 Egalitarianism

According to popular thinking and, as expressed by a recent writer, 'Australia has made itself famous as the land of the *fair go*' (Mackay 1999, p 127). This can mean equality of persons should equate to equality of opportunity: the ideal of egalitarianism.

In the early days of Australia's settlement, the country was promoted within England as a 'workingman's paradise' (White 1981, p 42). Those who came and ventured into the developing areas were often able to improve their social status. As they found themselves in positions of influence which they could never have reached in England, they considered it to be 'evidence of egalitarian prosperity'.

Structural factors within country towns also assisted the growth of this ideal. Towns had very small populations and were often geographically isolated. Finances were scarce and separate facilities could not be provided for the relaxation of different social classes (Dempsey 1992, p 137).

By the time of the First World War, the official historian, C E W Bean, chronicled the influence of the bush on those who joined the services. While recognising that the diggers came from both city and country in roughly the same numbers, 'Yet he goes on to proclaim that even city-bred Australians were bushmen at heart, equipped with all the bushmen's virtues and vices' (Ward 1988, p 230). Because of the bush heritage, the soldiers were inclined to respect their officers more as individuals rather than because of their rank. The officers, for their part, 'were more likely to fraternize with the men than in other armies'. Carroll (1992c, p 147) continued in his article to describe this as 'a special egalitarian trait'.

The ideal of egalitarianism has not always been achieved in practice, as discussed by Mackay (1999, p 127), since it has not always 'stretched to include Aboriginal people'. I do believe, however, that there is something in the Australian identity that resonates with and respects persons who show that they honour the individual dignity of others. Those who display such a quality without the expectation of anything in return are recognised as true Australian heroes.

4.2.8 Ned Kelly – an example of a secular saint

The unofficial Australian national anthem is *Waltzing Matilda*, a story of a swagman arrested for stealing a sheep. He chose suicide rather than face the legal consequences of his actions. The swagman in this instance was only a minor bushranger but the song remains popular and leads to identification with Australia around the world. Along with this phenomenon evoking national pride, the many ballads about Ben Hall; the folk song about Jack Donahoe, 'The Wild Colonial Boy'; as well as the continued cult about the exploits of the Kelly Gang all touch into the way that Australians see such characters as Superheroes. In his analysis of the 'culture-hero' associated with bushrangers, Ward (1988, pp 145 - 179) noted that 'every child knows something of Ned Kelly'.

While they were first known as 'bolters', the term, 'bushranger' had come into usage by 1806. At first it was used to refer to anyone living in and off the bush but by the 1840s, a distinction had been made between the lawless bushrangers and those who had become known as 'bushmen'.

The general public saw the bushrangers as symbols of resistance to authority. Those charged with upholding the law, the first police forces, were usually ex-convicts. They were held in contempt because of their extreme measures but mostly because they were seen to be disloyal to their mates.

For their part, the bushrangers often turned to crime after escaping the inhuman imprisonment and floggings. Those who became the subject of popular acclaim were the ones who acted in a Robin Hood role, only robbing the rich and sharing illegally obtained rum with the poor. They avoided violence as much as possible. At times, they turned against squatters who were harsh and unjust in their treatment of

workers. For these reasons, the bushrangers were described by Ward (1988, p 164) as 'folk heroes because they were symbols of the emergent Australian national feeling'.

Of all Australian bushrangers, it is Ned Kelly who is remembered most today. As mentioned earlier, a significant factor in his turning to a life of crime was his anger at his mother's arrest and sentence to three years jail (McIntyre 1992, p 39). When he was finally captured and sentenced to death, he still enjoyed great popularity: a petition of 32,000 signatures called for his reprieve. An unsigned poem printed in the *Bulletin,* however, showed that not all displayed sympathy for the convicted bushranger:

> As he's lived, let him die! A base wretch without feeling:
> A bushel of quicklime is all that he's worth!
> Let the grave of a felon his corpse be concealing, -
> And blot his name off from the face of the earth!
> Quoted in (Ward 1988, p 153)

Ned Kelly may be dead but he is certainly not forgotten: those in the tourist trade around the pseudo shrines in the Victorian town of Glenrowan encourage pilgrimages of the faithful. In his discussion of the Australian character, White (1981, p 154) described Ned Kelly as being,

> ... canonised in Douglas Stewart's verse play in 1942,
> Sidney Nolan's first Kelly series of paintings in 1945 – 47,
> and the Borovansky ballet, 'The Outlaw,' in 1951.

Another writer who explored the notion of Ned Kelly as a secular saint was Dunstan (1980), whose book was entitled, *Saint Ned: the near sanctification of an Australian Outlaw.* While not ascribing sainthood to this bushranger, Carroll (1992c, p 150) did admit that, even today, 'a large majority of Australians when asked to name the national hero answer Ned Kelly'.

Reasons for the continued fascination with Ned Kelly could be a thesis topic in its own right. For the purpose of this research, I agree with the conclusion by McIntyre (1992, p 52) that Ned Kelly has become a figure larger than life because of his aspirations to invulnerability. He had a grandiose self-image, boasted of his skills in shooting and horsemanship and made dire threats against anyone who opposed him.

His charisma as leader was evidenced by the comment of a contemporary to the police:

> .... I look upon Ned Kelly as an extraordinary man; there is no man in the world like him, he is superhuman....I look upon him as invulnerable, you can do nothing with him. (Quoted in McIntyre 1992, p 48)

These words were spoken by Aaron Sherritt, a member of the Kelly Gang who turned police informant and who was then assassinated by the Gang.

The final shootout between the Gang and police had many similarities to sieges of today captured on television and witnessed by many. It was a very public affair with over a thousand gathered in the town of Glenrowan to witness the final stand between Ned Kelly and the police. For this occasion, Ned had chosen to make his expressed invulnerability even more obvious: he wore a head and body shield as armour protection. These were made from mould boards stolen from ploughs. It is this armoured body suit and helmet which, even though it did not prevent Ned's death, provide an icon remembered today (Luck 1992, p 5).

The continued fame of Ned Kelly is an indication of the way that Australians revere bravery - even though in the wrong cause. He was a battler from the bush who could take a stand against authority, display filial respect and who could be larger than life in assertions of invulnerability. Somehow, he has captured the imagination of many in this country for more than a hundred years. To many Australians, Ned Kelly is a secular saint.

4.2.9 The Australian of the Year awards

Within the Australian cultural matrix (or symbolic universe), the individuals named as Australians of the Year are given a formal recognition of their hero status. Since no one person 'stands for the virtues we admire, the values we espouse, the verities we believe in,' the Australia Day Council 'manufacture(s) a fresh hero every year' (Mackay 1999, p 7). To Adams (2000a) the award process is an attempt to 'respond to changes and shifts in political and cultural reality'. It reflects the ongoing process of social interaction and search for meaning by the total Australian culture, or, in the words of Adams, because the award is given after nominations by the general public, 'we all get a chance to comment on the characteristics, values and ideas which

contribute to the increasingly complex mosaic of Australian national identities'. The Council objectives (National Australia Day Council 2001) include:

- To foster national pride in each and every Australian;
- To instill in all Australians, whatever their origins, a desire to contribute to Australia's future;
- To stimulate concern for Australia as a nation
- To create an awareness of, and value for, Australia's heritage.

While this may be the theory, the practice is not quite so inclusive. The awards were initially decided (from 1961 until 1979) by the Victorian Australia Day committee with tacit agreement from other states and territories. A new national committee was set up to oversee the choice in 1979: the aim being to engender patriotism in the lead up to the Bicentenary of 1988. Since 1990 the committee has been an incorporated public company with ten community board members appointed by the federal government (Australian of the Year web page 2000).

The results of this decision-making process present an interesting summary of the way that community perceptions of heroes have changed over the past forty years. For the first ten years, recipients were mainly those who had achieved an international reputation in the arts, sport or science. Two Nobel Prize winners for medicine were honoured: Sir Macfarlane Burnett (1960) and Sir John Eccles (1963). Artists included Dame Joan Sutherland (1961), Sir Robert Helpmann (1965) and The Seekers (1967) whilst those recognised for sporting prowess were the American Cup challenger skipper, Alexander 'Jock' Sturrock (1962), swimmer Dawn Fraser (1964), Sir Jack Brabham (1966) and boxer Lionel Rose (1968).

The next decade saw a swing towards individuals who had made a mark more on the local rather than the international scene, although some of the latter still received attention such as a further two Nobel prize winners: Patrick White (1973) and Sir John Cornforth in 1975. The Catholic Cardinal Sir Norman Gilroy was honoured in 1970: there were two indigenous winners in Evonne Goolagong Cawley (1971) and Galarrwuy Yunupingu (1978). Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop was named in 1976 and

the move towards environmental concerns was reflected in the choice of Harry Butler in 1979.

In the eighties, those who were singled out for this honour were asked to travel the country to address a wide range of community groups. Some aroused controversy, such as Manning Clark (1980); others recognised for individual achievements included Kay Cottee, solo yachtswoman (1988), Robert De Castella (1983) and Allan Border (1989). There was a certain flamboyant individuality about winners like Paul Hogan (1985), Dick Smith (1986) and John Farnham (1987) whilst Lois (Lowitja) O'Donoghue received the award in 1984 as an Aboriginal leader.

The past decade has focussed on altruistic personalities: those who have shown that they can make a difference to Australian society. They include Fred Hollows (1990), Ian Kiernan of the Clean up Australia campaign (1994) and Anglican Archbishop Peter Hollingworth (1991). Cathy Freeman (1998) was the only woman named to this honour in the decade; she and Mandawuy Yunupingu were two indigenous Australians recognised. It was not until 1996 that the first overseas born Australian from a non-English speaking background was named Australian of the Year: Dr John Wu, a paediatrician born in China. The recipient for 2000, Sir Gustav Nossal, an immunologist, was also of European origin.

The themes discussed earlier about the values recognised and accepted as part of the over-arching symbol system for Australians can be recognised amongst the list of those who have received this top community award. Aussie Battlers would include Norman Gilroy, Lionel Rose and Dawn Fraser who also has an appeal because of her attitude to rigid authority. Paul Hogan as the stereotyped Australian larrikin was another who reflected this theme. Many examples could be found of those who displayed courage and commitment – eg all Australian Nobel Prize winners since the inception of the award, 'Weary' Dunlop, Fred Hollows and the two Yunupingu brothers. Women have been underrepresented as only eight individuals have been named, although each would be recognised as a strong woman. The ideal of mateship is obvious in many of the recipients, although perhaps more along the lines of genuine concern for the welfare of others, no matter what their background or

social status, rather than the earlier masculine bonding. Egalitarianism has come to mean a recognition of the rights of all individuals for a 'fair go'.

While the Australian of the Year is a reflection of the institutional context and the way that governments try to influence the construction of identities, the reality for many Australians is somewhat different. A Queensland study (Phillips and Smith 2000), considered amongst other questions the type of person seen as representing 'Australianness'. Some Australians of the Year were named in this survey: John Farnham, Paul Hogan, Cathy Freeman, Joan Sutherland, Fred Hollows and Dick Smith. Other common names were Bob Hawke, Greg Norman, Elle McPherson and Olivia Newton-John. Lists developed contained a minority of women, few non-Anglo Australians and a high preponderance of sporting identities. The study also identified the key Australian quality as mateship (defined as 'volunteering, helping others, pulling together') whilst other values included egalitarianism, the priority of family and the development of a sense of community. It was the local, more immediate perceptions which were prominent:

> ... Australian values and ideals seem to be grounded in, and shaped, by everyday life, in popular culture, real individuals, real places and real community groups, rather than by the abstract ideals of political discourse (p 319).

This finding would support Berger's notion that individuals have an 'everyday reality' which stresses the 'here and now' – 'that which intuitively seems most real to us consists of those things closest to us in time and space' (Wuthnow 1992, p 13). Information obtained through the mass media could thus be seen as more influential in developing overall meaning systems for individual Australians than the decisions of a government body or more remote institution. At the same time, the names of those identified as Australian of the Year do provide a summary of the type of person considered a hero over the last forty years.

4.3 CULTURE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

In the third part of this chapter, I have examined some general aspects of the culture of the Catholic Church in Australia to provide further institutional context to my research. It is the Catholic Church worldwide which still maintains a monopoly on the formal creation of saints. The local version of this church in Australia has played

a significant part in nurturing, supporting, criticising and finally proposing Mary MacKillop as a candidate for canonisation by the Pope. The Catholic Church as it exists in Australia provides a cultural backdrop for this study. Knowledge of the Church's tradition, practices and structures has been available to those working in the print media and the newspaper audiences. To varying degrees, it has informed and influenced the production or consumption of media texts.

Two distinct traditions, each leaving a lasting legacy, can be traced in the way that the Catholic Church has developed in Australia. These are the Irish and the Roman traditions. Their existence is an indication of the way that, within a symbolic universe, there can be many different spheres of reality, all available to individuals for potential internalisation (see Berger and Luckmann 1984, p 114).

4.3.1 The Irish Tradition

Within the Catholic Church in Australia, the Irish tradition has held a dominant position and been discussed by many writers such as McGovern and O'Farrell (1971); O'Farrell (1985; 1987); Ryan (1988); Campion (1982; 1987) and Turner (1992b). Further evidence of belief in the dominant nature of the Irish tradition was provided by Pittarello (1980, p 20), Goosen (1986, p 244), Hally (1986, p 37), and Collins (1986, p 225).

Campion (1982, p 46) noted that St Patrick's words, 'If you would be Christian, be Roman,' were transposed in nineteenth century Australia as, 'If you would be Irish, be Catholic'. The identification between Irish and Catholic in Australia was maintained until very recent times in the description of Catholics as micks or paddies and this highlighted the whole question of the Irish dimension of the Catholic Church in Australia.

The historical antagonism between English and Irish was transported to Australia along with the early settlers and was very evident in the early days of New South Wales. The appointment of John Bede Polding as Australia's first Catholic bishop was the beginning of a long series of events with great implications for the Australian Church. Polding was an English Benedictine who intended that the monastic life would be the main focus of the new Church. He even went so far as to

presume that Irish priests would join the Benedictine Order when they came to Australia. As the majority of both Catholics and clergy in Australia were from Ireland, there was resentment towards English bishops. Polding recognised this and tried to emphasise the new identity of Catholics: 'Before everything else we are Catholics; and next, by a name swallowing up all distinctions of origin, we are Australians.' About thirty years later (1884) Patrick Francis Moran, an Irishman appointed as Archbishop of Sydney, echoed these sentiments. His first public words on arrival in Australia were, 'Becoming today an Australian among Australians...'(see Campion 1987, pp 23, 67).

Despite the attempts by these two bishops to assist in creating an Australian identity, the Catholic sub-culture of Australia began to develop a very definite link with Ireland. Even though the number of Irish immigrants was dropping, Ireland continued to provide the majority of clergy and it was through the influence of these clergy that the Irish character of the Australian Church was established. McGovern and O'Farrell (1971, pp 60-61) identified the Moran era (1884-1911) as 'the period in which Irishism became loudly triumphant within the Church and permeated its entire atmosphere'. These were significant years for Mary MacKillop as they covered the period when she had moved to Sydney, commenced schools and other works in Victoria and then resumed her position as leader of the Sisters of St Joseph. It was Moran too who played a pivotal role in her life when he decided that her election as leader of the Sisters of St Joseph in 1881 was invalid, named a replacement (who caused much grief to Mary) and prevented her from exercising a direct role of governance for twelve years.

The Irish Australian Catholic sub-culture continued to develop and was possibly at it peak from the 1880s to the 1930s. Fr P J Hartigan, writing as John O'Brien in *Around the Boree Log* and *The Parish of St Mel's* perhaps best encapsulated it (O'Brien 1973; 1978). His view of the Catholic enclave was summarised by McGovern and O'Farrell (1971, p 63) as follows:

> Here is a community closely grouped around church and priest, with the priest (Irish of course) reverenced as both the spiritual leader and a kind of local squire: a priest-centred culture. Family structures are firm and tight, dominated by 'the little Irish mother' sweetly ruling a household in which 'Daddah' has a secondary place. A pious faith is central to the life of the family, and the main devotion is the rosary, plus copious trimmings - additional prayers. Conversation is in thick brogue, interspersed with Gaelic words. It is an intensely religious and closely tribal community to which Protestants, Catholic backsliders and the world generally seemed hostile and outsiders: indeed it seems a kind of extension into lay life of the religious world of the Irish clergy.

Both of these books of poems were very popular as they were obviously recognised by many Australians as a cameo of Catholic life. The emergence of priestly and religious vocations from the type of family described in this literature helped to perpetuate this Irish Catholic sub-culture.

4.3.2 The Irish impact upon the schools

The Irish influence on the Catholic Church in Australia was considerably strengthened by the establishment of Catholic schools which had been commenced by Bishops who, as Fogarty (1959, p 310) reported, believed in 'schools before Churches'. According to Press (1986, p 166), the initial move was an attempt to reinforce the fortress mentality: to develop a Catholic identity by sheltering Catholic students from other denominations. Carey (1996, p 90) suggested that, with the advent of their own schools, 'Catholics recovered to a large extent the Irish sense of grievance and tribal adherence which had been threatened by the migration experience'.

A fear of secularisation also influenced the separate school system. O'Farrell (1985, p 160) noted that the Irish bishops of the mid-1860's had come from a country where, in 1863, the Irish hierarchy had categorically denounced the Irish National Education system because of the way that religion was merely included with a programme of secular instruction. Pius IX in his *Syllabus of Errors* (1864) also formally condemned such a style of education. The Australian bishops, meeting during the 1869-70 Vatican Council, made direct reference to both the Roman and Irish viewpoints and attempted to enforce similar views on Australian schools. The direct

teaching of Catholic doctrine was to be linked with a religious atmosphere in which all aspects of school life were to be permeated with Catholic ideals and practices. Methods for teaching religion were standardised and, by 1886, a catechism was printed for the whole of Australia. Fogarty (1959, p 393) noted that this was an adaptation of one issued by the National Council of Ireland in 1875.

The extent to which the Catholic education system was saturated with such an intense Irish atmosphere was shown by the comment in 1911 at the NSW Catholic Educational Conference by Monsignor M J O'Reilly CM: 'It was true that their children were not Irish - they were Australians - but everything that was best and noblest in Australia was Irish' (O'Farrell 1987, p 171).

While placing great emphasis on religious instruction and attendance at Mass, the curriculum within some Australian Catholic schools also included Irish history. The Irish Christian Brothers produced several of the textbooks used. Research by Mazzaroli (see O'Farrell 1987, p 185) on the content of school concerts in Catholic schools showed that recollections of the high Irish content were not borne out in fact. People tended to remember 'the unusual, the different' and forget 'the usual and the ordinary'. The perception, part of the everyday reality for many, does however support the influence of the Irish tradition.

Many aspects of the veneration of saints in Australia reflected the Irish tradition. The latter was highlighted by the importance given to the celebration of the feast of St Patrick: there were colourful parades in most capital cities as well as lengthy church services and concerts. There were many Irish teaching brothers and sisters in Catholic schools: the early bishops recruited many groups to come as missionaries. Before 1900, the following religious congregations had made foundations from Ireland and provided Irish staff to work in schools: Dominican priests and Sisters, the Christian Brothers, Patrician Brothers, along with many women from the Brigidines, the Sisters of Charity, the Loreto Sisters, the Sisters of Mercy and the Presentation Sisters (Carey 1996, pp 107-110). Of the Sisters of St Joseph, the group founded by Mary MacKillop, 64% were Irish in the early years up until 1871. By 1967, however, this figure had dropped to 19%.

The fact that so many teachers in Catholic schools were Irish religious who had come as missionaries to Australia meant that many generations of Australians were taught about the significance of the Irish heritage, and about the importance of the feast of St Patrick.[10]

In the early days of the Catholic Church in Australia, it was the Irish priests who played a significant role in ministering to those who settled in country towns and areas beyond Sydney. In my earlier study (McCreanor 1990, pp 31-37), I established that from 1858, the majority of the Catholic clergy working in South Australia were Irish. The percentage rose from 42% in 1850 to a highpoint of 73% in 1901. While the priests who served in South Australia did include English, Italian and a significant number of German Jesuits, those from Ireland continued to outnumber them. The situation remained until after 1950 when 48% of South Australian priests were Irish. The chaplains who came to work with those of various ethnic groups arriving through increased migration as well as the number of local born clergy meant that the Irish numbers were gradually reduced until they were only 7% in 1990.

The dramatic increase in numbers of Irish priests from 1867 onwards coincided with Bishop Sheil's deliberate recruitment in Ireland. Many Irish, having experienced the famine decade (1845-1855), considered the priesthood as a means of support for themselves and their families. McGovern and O'Farrell (1971, p 23) noted that some Irish priests refused to go to Adelaide because the diocese was poor and payment was low and uncertain. Others who did respond to Sheil's invitation were adventurous young men, who preferred travel to ministry. Some of these had a colourful career moving from diocese to diocese, as Schumann (1986, p 10) described. The Reverend J O'Connor, for example, ran up huge bills for extravagant meals and incited younger priests to insubordination. He was eventually dispatched to a fresh start in Auckland. Francis Coyle was renowned for being the President of

[10] Over the years this day has gradually had more cultural than religious meaning. This can produce some interesting juxtapositions: I have experienced the sight of a school population with about 90 per cent of the students of Indo-Chinese background, wearing green, displaying shamrocks and singing Irish songs on St Patrick's Day. They were taught by someone who, in her earlier years, had come from Ireland to join a religious order.

the Catholic Temperance Society whilst at the same time giving public displays of intemperance. He eventually left for the Californian goldfields.

In contrast, there were many Irish priests who laboured long and hard under conditions which could only be described as heroic: Edmund Mahoney, the second resident priest in Adelaide, was a great horseman who travelled widely to compile a census list of Catholic for the 1844 Census. As Archbishop Polding entrusted the whole of South Australia to his care, Mahoney combined diplomacy with pastoral skills and managed to influence Governor Grey to amend an Act of Parliament regulating Marriages so that the position of Catholics was not jeopardised. His fervour in ministry led to a deterioration of his health and an early death at the age of 33. The two administrators who took care of the diocese during the long absences of Bishops Geoghegan and Sheil were responsible for maintaining stability in the Church during difficult days. Michael Ryan and John Smyth were Irishmen of vision and compassion. Ryan was respected by all creeds because of his tolerance and sincerity while Smyth made a point of being concerned for the health of young priests in lonely circumstances (see Press 1986, pp 43-44; Schumann 1986, pp 11-15).

These examples from South Australia could be extrapolated to indicate a similar picture in other Australian states. The religious revolution in Ireland in the latter half of the nineteenth century led to the migration of an increasing number of priests of great fervour and missionary zeal. From the beginning of the twentieth century, many came as missionaries to Australia where they led exemplary lives and had great influence on the religious life of the laity. They were typified by the bush pastor in the poetry of Fr P J Hartigan in *Around the Boree Log* (O'Brien 1973; 1978) and recognisable to many generations of Catholics who only ever knew Irish parish priests. As a further link with the bush tradition, O'Farrell (1987, p 192) described how it was Hartigan who gave the last sacraments to Jack Riley, the man on whom Banjo Patterson based his poem, *The Man from Snowy River.*

4.3.3 The Roman influence

An alternative view was presented by Molony (1969, p 1) who examined in detail the period in the Australian Church between 1846 and 1878. His perception was that,

'when the accents of Ireland were most loudly heard in the Australian Church, the ideas and attitudes they conveyed were not Irish but Roman'. While his study only covered a relatively short period, he suggested that these were critical years in the formation of the Australian Church. They did, in fact cover the years when Mary MacKillop commenced her work and experienced such serious opposition that she travelled to Rome to seek the direct intervention of the Pope.

Molony's argument relied on the strong influence of the Irish Bishops appointed to Australia:

> The Irishmen who so largely ruled the Church in this country in the latter half of the nineteenth century were themselves products of an Irish Church undergoing a thoroughgoing Romanization at the hands of prelates trained in Rome, oriented to Rome, and consciously seeking to shape the Church both in Ireland and Australia in the Roman mould.

In the period studied by Molony, the Pope was Pius IX who was elected in 1846. He was remembered for his letter, the *Syllabus of Errors*, a formal paper sent out in 1864 to the whole of the Catholic Church, even though it was primarily directed at the Italian political scene with the loss of what had formerly been known as the Papal States. This, along with the formal decree on the Immaculate Conception in 1854 and Papal Infallibility in 1870 'were intended to clarify and cement the role of the papacy in the whole church' (Molony 1969, p 114). Other writers such as Ryan (1988, p 27) commented on this era as the Roman Pope reacting to the loss of material territory by assertions of spiritual supremacy. It was a time within the Catholic Church when there was great stress on the importance of obedience (particularly to the hierarchy), of faith and the traditions of the Church. As Catholics struggled to find an identity as a group within Australian society, they found security, according to Molony (1969, p 168) in the strength of the Vatican pronouncements: 'To them what mattered was not so much what the Pope said, but the fact that Rome had spoken'.

In her study, Mitchell (1982, p 8) supported Molony's view and noted that the attitude by the early Bishops to Roman authority allowed them to strongly assert their own authority within their diocese. They had, in fact been given the canonical

status of Vicars Apostolic which gave them greater powers than if they had been appointed simply to a residential See.

Several Irish bishops who played a pivotal role in the Catholic Church in Australia and who influenced media perception were Paul Cullen, Patrick Moran and Daniel Mannix. The first of these, Paul Cullen did not ever come to Australia. His importance lay in the fact that, after thirty years in Rome, he was appointed as Cardinal to the See of Dublin in Ireland. Cullen, who was described by Campion (1982, p 59) as a 'Romanized Irishman', was related to many of the bishops who were sent to Australia: James Quinn of Brisbane (1859), Matthew Quinn of Bathurst (1865), James Murray of Maitland (1859) and Patrick Moran of Sydney (1884). The Quinn brothers[11] were to play a significant part in the life of Mary MacKillop and perhaps their later stance can be better understood when it is linked back to Cullen's influence of ruling through law:

> Those bishops whom Cullen sent out to Australia made laws about everything: laws about women wearing hats in church and laws about fasting; laws about Lenten observance and laws about receiving Communion at Eastertime; laws about who could wash the altar linen and who could not; laws forbidding priests to stay out late at night; laws forbidding them to frequent theatres or racecourses or prize fights; laws forbidding them to join political parties, or read uncatholic papers, or become guardians or tutors; and laws ordering what they must wear. (Campion 1982, p 60)

Australian Catholicism became a very legalistic and narrow religion: unquestioning obedience to law and hence to the Pope, was seen as the height of virtue. The main aim of these bishops, according to Bowen (1983, p 29), was a 'resolve to extend papal authority'.

Many clergy who have worked in Australia, both Irish missionaries and others, have had close exposure to the Italian culture and the Roman-Italian church because of years spent training in Italy, usually in Rome. The Bishops in South Australia provide a snap shot of this influence. My earlier study (McCreanor 1990, pp 23-24) identified the training of those who have served as bishops or archbishops of

[11] At their Episcopal consecration in Clonliffe Ireland, the liturgy and ecclesiastical dress were described as being 'in the Roman style' (Bowen 1983, p146).

Adelaide. Laurence Sheil (1866-1872), Christopher Reynolds (1873-1893),[12] Matthew Beovich (1939-1971) and Leonard Faulkner (1985 to 2001), all studied in Italy. In the Port Pirie diocese Norman Gilroy (1935-1937), Thomas McCabe (1938-1951) and Bryan Gallagher (1952-1980) all spent time as students in Rome. A recent bishop of this diocese, Peter De Campo, whilst he did not actually study in Italy, was of Italian heritage and made frequent visits to the country. In his work, Molony (1969, pp 154-155) provided a photo gallery of Australian bishops who had studied at Propaganda Fide College in Rome: Matthew Beovich of Adelaide, Norman Gilroy, Cardinal of Sydney, Guilford Young of Hobart, Lancelot Goody of Perth, J R Knox of Melbourne, P M O'Donnell of Brisbane, James Collins of Ballarat and T V Cahill of Canberra.

Holding a key position amongst all Australian bishops is the official papal ambassador called the Apostolic Delegate. As Collins (1991, p 25) noted, this position is almost always filled by 'a career diplomat' and, with one exception who was from Belgium, all have been Italians. The main function of this position is to ensure that Roman policy is carried out.

For many years until Vatican II, Latin had been the traditional language of the Catholic Church both in formal communication and in liturgy. This, perhaps more than anything else, acted as the strongest reflection of the Roman influence on the Australian Catholic Church. There is a minority of Catholics who have rejected the change to the vernacular and who have maintained enclaves of Latin worship, with and without official approval. They are seeking to maintain the 'classical liturgical forms developed in the late Roman world' according to Collins (1986, p 65). For many Catholics, the change to use English instead of Latin was the single most memorable aspect of Vatican II. While this development may reflect a lessening of the Roman tradition, it could also be interpreted as recognition by Rome that different branches of the Catholic Church were mature enough to develop their own individual identity. In a subtle way, then, the introduction of the vernacular and other liturgical changes could enhance the prestige and authority of Rome.

[12] He spent some time as a novice in a Benedictine monastery in Italy before further study in both Perth and Sevenhill.

Another very obvious way that the Roman-Italian tradition was made more visible in Australia was by the waves of migrants from Italy: in particular since the Second World War. In an analysis of figure available from the 1986 Census, Turner (1992b, pp 184-201) concluded that Italians formed the largest single group amongst Catholic migrant groups. They represented 5·86% of the total Catholic population. The righteousness and orthodoxy of some Catholic parishes could almost be determined by the quantity of statues of saints and the number of candles lit before them. The fact that most of these obscure saints were known only to families who came from small villages highlighted the fact that religion was once again playing an important role in the maintenance of the Italian cultural identity.

Roman authorities play a critical role in the making of saints. Whilst the Catholic Church is in theory a universal church, it is Vatican authorities, located in Rome, who decide whether proposed candidates will proceed to beatification and ultimately canonisation. Because these authorities have so much influence, as well as the fact that those of Italian background are a significant group within the Australian Catholic Church, the Roman/Italian model of sainthood could be taken as the dominant cultural form for saints in the eyes of many Australians.

4.4 THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE PRINT MEDIA

This final section of the general sociocultural context for my research considers the way that the Catholic Church in general is perceived and presented by the print media, as well as ways that both institutions were of mutual benefit to each other in reporting about the beatification event.

In his analysis, Goosen (1997, pp 180-195) noted that in this country, the media has marginalised religion: it is considered a minor round for newspaper journalists, there are very few religion specialists on the staff of newspapers and editors can filter stories to match company policy. The media shows most interest in religious stories which are 'sensational, controversial, a novelty or somehow capable of a laugh'. One example of this was the two page report in *The Advertiser* of 8 January 2000 entitled, 'Critical Mass' (Kemp 2000). It was a lurid and sensationalist story about the 'factional war' within the Catholic Church in South Australia and described

'guerrilla-style' methods used by opposing factions. The report contained many factual errors and was countered by a formal response from the Adelaide Church media spokesman and press releases to all parishes about the true situation.

Catholic schools are news, especially when some point of conflict can be found such as comparison of results with Government schools or varying shares of public funding. Occasionally serious issues are found newsworthy such as the work done by the St Vincent de Paul Society or other individuals who work quietly to assist those on the fringes of society.

As in the British Isles, Australia has had media coverage of clergy scandals and both suspected and proven child abuse cases. Goosen, cited above, made the case that it is these instances as well as 'the beatification of Mary MacKillop' which have raised the media profile of Catholics over the past ten years'.

4.4.1 Formal links between the Catholic Church and the Print Media

One of the first two documents resulting from the Vatican Council was the *Decree on the Instruments of Social Communications*, often referred to by its Latin name of *Inter Mirifica* (see Abbott 1967, pp 317-335). Some of the key elements in this document included that the gathering of news should respect individual dignity; journalists should join professional groups requiring adherence to codes of ethical conduct; a Catholic press should be fostered for a specific purpose:

> ..... let it be clearly edited with this goal: that it may form, strengthen, and spread public views which are in harmony with the natural law, and with Catholic teachings and precepts; let is publicize and correctly interpret facts which pertain to the life of the Church. (Paragraph 14)

Inter Mirifica encouraged appropriate training for those who work with the Catholic media, as well as for critics in 'the literary, movie, radio and television, and other fields'. Schools and seminaries were told to study the media and Catholic were urged to not only utilise Catholic media, but 'to give willingly and generously of their resources and talents' to ensure the success of such media (see Paragraphs 16-17). It was suggested that one day each year be identified when priests would preach on this topic and organise collections for the continued funding of Catholic media. Conferences of Bishops in each country were encouraged to set up National

Communications Offices to promote Catholic viewpoints and liaise with other media groups.

Many of the structural recommendations of this Vatican II document have been implemented in the Vatican and in Australia. *The Official Directory of the Catholic Church in Australia 2000* (National Council of Priests of Australia Inc 2000) listed the *Pontifical Council for Social Communication* as one of the official bodies in the Vatican. The Australian Bishops Conference has a *Committee for the Media* with a Permanent Secretariat. The Mandate for this committee, published on the Bishops' Web page,[13] was adopted in May 1998. It shows the formal structure from Rome through the Bishops' Conference to the work of the Catholic Church in Australia.

In Canberra there is also a *National Catholic Media* office with a Research Department and a Pastoral Research Projects Officer. Almost all Australian dioceses have some form of media office such as the Catholic Communications Centre in Adelaide, the Press Media Office and the Communications Centre of the Archdiocese of Sydney, and the Catholic Communications Commission of the Canberra-Goulburn diocese. In some cases, this office also includes the editorial staff for a Catholic newspaper (as in Adelaide), whilst larger dioceses such as Sydney have completely separate groups involved in the production of their print media. Minor variations of the Mandate cited above would be the charter for the work done in all Catholic diocesan media offices.

In its structure, the Catholic Church as an institution has recognised that it can utilise the media in achieving its goals. The merger of two plausibility systems – of religion and the media – provide a strong message to those seeking the meaning beyond that of everyday reality.

4.4.2 Mutual benefits

Both the Catholic Church and the print media in Australia recognised the possibilities once the beatification of Mary MacKillop was announced. The ceremonies associated with this honour are usually held in Rome but the Sisters of St

[13] This page features an image of Mary MacKillop: a rather ironic inclusion considering the difficulties she faced in her communications with bishops during her lifetime.

Joseph requested that, if possible, the celebration for this Australian be held in the country of her birth. The announcement that the Pope would officiate at this event escalated the planning to a very different plane than if he had deputised someone to officiate on his behalf. The stakeholders now included the Vatican as well as the Diocese of Sydney, the Sisters of St Joseph, and other dioceses and people of Australia (Loxley 1994). The media were presented with two significant personalities - Mary MacKillop and Pope John Paul II to use in their role of 'cultural negotiation' (White 1997, p 62) and they were not slow to exploit both as news in whatever way they could, as I have demonstrated in more detail in Chapter 9 and subsequent chapters.

Many of the texts examined for this study relate to the events of January 1995 during the Pope's visit. The many celebrations and rituals held during his brief time in Australia[14] were organised by the Catholic Church as a way of strengthening the bonds with the faithful and reminding them of the collective memory of saints. The Papal events honouring Mary MacKillop were opportunities to integrate the notion of holiness achieved by one individual with the everyday reality of Australians. The use of rituals was significant: as Australians have become less of a Church going society, such occasions assist in the 'creation of liminal space apart from everyday life and (provide) a space for the "real self" to come forward' (p 52). They became opportunities for individuals to engage in the continued search for meaning: to experience symbols that connected with their usual world view and yet at the same time, challenged them to move forward to a different level of reality.

The print media played a significant part in this whole process. Through the production of texts which captured the experience for continued reflection, described and analysed the rituals, and provided one level of interpretation, the newspapers and magazines assisted in the search for individual and group identity. They recorded the continued cultural dialectics as events occurred: they presented but also constructed the news which was then available for another cycle of acceptance or rejection by

[14] According to the official booklet containing the outlines of all ceremonies, he arrived at 6.25 pm on Wednesday 18 January and departed Sydney at 9.30 am on Friday 20 January.

their audiences as they compared and contrasted the symbols presented with their current version of everyday reality.

For both the Catholic Church and the various print media businesses, the events leading up to as well as the actual beatification and its aftermath have been opportunities to extend and develop their plausibility structures. The celebrations sponsored by various sections of the Catholic Church (different dioceses, groups of Josephites, schools and parishes) which occurred throughout Australia, not just in Sydney, meant renewed allegiance by many to the church. While this may not have translated into church attendance, at least it gave many individuals the chance to view the institutional church in a different and perhaps a more positive light. The newspapers and magazines (which provided vast coverage especially during the days of the Papal visit) certainly made themselves more plausible in terms of their increased sales and the popularity of the various souvenir editions, medals and special editions they sponsored. The increased revenue and financial viability from their involvement enabled the media to engage in continued explorations of the search for meaning.

4.5 CONCLUSIONS

Fairclough's media discourse theory has enabled me to focus on the situational and institutional levels of sociocultural practice as background to my presentation of the Mary MacKillop of History and then the cultural construction of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media. These have been considered using the theory of sociology of knowledge, in particular the work of Berger, White and Wuthnow.

The focus on Australian culture and identity has continued my own interest and research in this area: from a search of literature, I have identified several major themes which highlight the values prized in Australian heroes and in the Australian identity. Many of those respected and recognised through literature, the collective memory and through the formal Australian of the Year award, can be described as Aussie Battlers and Strong Women. They often displayed a certain irreverence towards authority (when it was perceived as misguided); displayed exceptional courage and commitment to helping others; valued the ideals of mateship and

egalitarianism. These are the values generally recognised as being in the everyday reality of Australians: part of their taken for granted knowledge. A person in Australia, such as Mary MacKillop, who is being considered for sainthood, would need to reflect these general qualities of heroes so as to be acceptable to the broad groups within Australian society.

In considering the way that she is presented to the public, I have focussed on the role of the Catholic Church in Australia and that of the print media. Both of these provide symbolic universes enabling individuals to extend their everyday reality to include more transcendent dimensions.

The Catholic Church in Australia is linked structurally as an institution to the Catholic Church in Rome whilst at the same time being affected by both the Roman and the Irish cultures. There have been large numbers of Irish priests, bishops and religious who have made very obvious impacts, particularly through their work in Catholic schools, many of which were in small country towns. These Irish missionaries have influenced curriculum, attitudes, literature and celebrations with the legacy of St Patrick's Day. Several Irish bishops have left lasting impressions on the whole of Australian society and their memory can still influence perceptions of the Catholic Church today.

While the Irish dimension of the Catholic Church may be the more obvious one, it is the Roman tradition which provides the framework and foundation. Many Australian bishops have studied in Roman seminaries. The Catholic Church in this country has a bishop (usually Italian) appointed by the Pope to be an official ambassador between the Vatican and Australia. When the orthodoxy of practices within the Church are questioned, this ambassador can play a vital role in filtering information to Rome and so influencing the perception in Rome of the Catholic Church in Australia. He also plays a significant part in the recommendation of those to be appointed as bishops.

Immigrants from Italy are now the largest single group amongst Catholic migrant groups. Through sheer numbers, the cultural expressions of their Catholic religion are now common features of many Australian Catholic churches eg statues of obscure Italian saints, gilded ornaments, pious practices, many candles, a love of

processions and festivals. These obvious expressions of religion can colour the general perception of how saints are honoured in the Catholic tradition.

Those who work in the print media in Australia are influenced by the general Australian vision of what constitutes a hero as well as by the institution of the Catholic Church with strong links to both Irish and Roman traditions. Journalists who work in the daily newspapers generally consider reporting of religious events or news as of minor importance. The sensational happenings or evidence of conflict are items given most coverage.

The Catholic Church in Australia has sought to implement the recommendations of the Vatican Council regarding the use of the mass media. Throughout the country there are church media offices as well as a variety of Catholic newspapers and magazines which can at times influence popular opinion about the Catholic Church. The links between the print media sponsored by the Church and that producing the daily papers can be critical in building up the general perception of an Australian saint. New symbols can be created and accepted as part of the development of culture. Mutual benefits for both the Church and the media can be identified in the events and reporting of the beatification of Mary MacKillop.

Before 1995, the main Australian individual who had been described as a saint, informally canonised and held up for adulation had been the bushranger, Ned Kelly. The visit by Pope John Paul to Sydney in January 1995 for the beatification of Mary MacKillop has led Australian society in general to an interest in this woman, her life, work and legacy. It has also resulted in an increased awareness and interest in saints, how they are made and what are the essential elements for recognition by the Catholic Church. The next chapter will provide information on the question of what constitutes a saint within the Catholic Church.

CHAPTER FIVE

SAINTS AND SAINTHOOD

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The decision by Pope John Paul II to declare that Mary MacKillop was formally recognised by the Catholic Church as a likely saint would have caused many journalists to investigate this concept. Those who read the many articles in the print media on the topic would also have been trying to link the term of saint into their existing knowledge: to find links with their everyday reality.

The majority of Australians do not have any frame of reference for a saint, other than the way that they see this term used in the media. Recent censuses (see Carey 1996, pp 198-209) show that Catholics, who own the saint-making process, have comprised between 23% of the population in 1901 to 27% in 1991. They have never been a majority group within this country and it would be true to surmise that of those who identified themselves as Catholics in a census, many would have limited knowledge about saints. For many in this country, the idea of heroes as discussed in the previous chapter would be the closest they have come to thinking about saints. Their cultural matrix is a mainly secular one.

As part of the sociocultural practice in looking at the situational, societal and institutional factors relating to the media texts featuring Mary MacKillop, the notion of saints and sainthood was a critical one. The concept of hero from the secular culture was held up against the religious cultural matrix with its highly structured notion of saints and sainthood. Information on this important area was developed as follows:

- saints in major world religions
- the meaning of saints in the Christian Catholic tradition
- dimensions of Christian sainthood
- the making of saints today
- an ecumenical approach to saints today.

I have concluded this chapter with a review of the way that the Australian press reported on the death of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. This can be taken as an indication of the type of knowledge available about those considered saints today, as well as what it is presumed the audiences wish to read about.

5.1 SAINTS IN MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS

Despite the fact that the term 'saint' is now most commonly used to refer to the Christian (and usually Catholic) tradition, articles such as that written by Cohn (1987, pp 1-6) in *The Encyclopedia of Religion,* showed that the concept of sainthood has been applied to certain holy persons in many religious faiths:

> The Jewish *hasid* or *tsaddiq*, the Muslim *waliy*, the Zoroastrian *fravashi*, the Hindu *rsi* or *guru*, the Buddhist *arahant* or *bodhisattva*, the Taoist *sheng-jen*, the Shinto *kami*, and others have all been referred to as saints.

Others who have written about this wider meaning of saints include Dunn-Mascetti (1994); Cohn (1987) and Kieckhefer (1988b). I have adopted the definition of Bellah (1964, p 263) that religion is 'a set of symbolic forms and acts' through which an individual is related 'to the ultimate conditions of his existence'. Consideration has been given to the meaning of the concept of sainthood in Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism.

Within the Islamic tradition, the Prophet Muhammad was venerated as the messenger of God. While Muhammad 'represents to the faithful the paradigm of human virtue that all Muslims should cultivate,' he was not considered a saint, but rather a special spokesman of God. The closest parallel to sainthood was described by the term *walī* which was understood as a particular kind of friend of God: one who was identified not by a formal canonisation process but by being spontaneously enraptured by God and recognised as being near to God (see Dunn-Mascetti 1994, pp 99-119). The *walī,* however, is considered to be of a lower spiritual rank than the prophets but popular consensus has led to some veneration and pilgrimages to their graves, especially for those revered as *Sūfī* masters. These were mystics who believed and taught that salvation was possible through individual devotion to the deity (see Kieckhefer and Bond 1988a; SarDesai 1989).

Judaism, without any formal approval of either hagiography or hagiolatry, reveres many biblical figures, rabbinic sages and martyrs. Their burial sites are a place of pilgrimage and religious tension as in Jerusalem today. More recent examples of individuals have been referred to as a *zaddik* or just man: those whose lives reflect strict adherence to the Torah and who are thus able to intercede with God on behalf of others and raise them to higher spiritual achievement (Cohn 1987, p 4). They possess a 'special cosmic significance' which can at times cause difficulties for their disciples, the *hasidim,* because of the lack of any institutional structure within Judaism to formalise sainthood (Kieckhefer and Bond 1988a, p 249).

For Hindus the distinction between humanity and divinity is not as sharply defined as in the strictly monotheistic faiths. Human saints are often not distinguished from divine incarnations; 'Hindu deities are regularly described anthropomorphically, and highly spiritual humans manifest divinity' as, for example, the god *Krsna* in the *Bhagavadgītā*, the most popular Hindu text. As the oldest world religion (tracing its origins from the Vedas books of knowledge in India dated between 1500 to 500 BCE), Hinduism has many variations. The *bhakti* (devotion) movements which worship Vishnu (the Preserver) and Shiva (the Destroyer), have given rise to *gurus* who are seen as teachers of the Vedas as well as models who could be imitated by those wishing to achieve spiritual liberation. One of the most famous *gurus* or Hindu saint in recent times has been Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948). His commitment to and exemplification of ancient Indian mysticism made him a secular hero and a religious saint in the social justice movement in his country (see Cohn 1987; SarDesai 1989).

Within Buddhism there are two major traditions, the *Mahāyāna* and the *Hinayāna*, (also known as the *Theravāda*) each having a distinct idea of sainthood. The *Theravāda* revere the *arahant* as the pinnacle of human perfection and stories are told to the faithful about 'the previous lives of the *arahants*, the ways they attain wisdom, their virtues, and their miraculous powers' (Cohn 1987). They inspire veneration rather than imitation; offerings are made at pagodas containing *arahant's* relics in the hope of purifying the mind and earning merit. The *Mahāyāna* tradition believes that the *bodhisattva* (literally Buddha to be) have superseded the *arahant*

and can aid ordinary persons in the search for complete enlightenment. They are seen as meritorious people who are reborn into a higher order until *Nirvana* is obtained. Unlike the *arahant* who seek to discover *Nirvana* in the presence of Buddha, *bodhisattva* postpones his (or her) own attainment for many lifetimes out of a sense of compassion for others. Temples may honour them and effigies of them can be venerated.[15] Tibetan Buddhists who follow this strand of Buddhism revere the Dalai Lama as an incarnation of the celestial *bodhisattva, Avalokitesvara*. When the Dalai Lama dies, it is believed that this incarnation passes to an infant born forty-nine days later. This infant must be discovered and raised in an appropriate manner for his important role (see Cohn 1987, pp 4-5; Dunn-Mascetti 1994, pp 145-167; Kieckhefer and Bond 1988a, p 245).

Confucianism has a very distinct notion of sainthood. Initially saints were identified with the sage-kings, according to Confucius and recorded in the Analects. They were able to reveal the ways of Heaven and ruled accordingly. In order to become a *sheng* or *sage*, the individual must undergo rigorous study and reflection to realise the full potential of nature and become at one with all things. *Sages* were recognised by their warmth, peacefulness, honesty and empathy for all beings. They were venerated for their wisdom as well as their humanitarian efforts (Cohn 1987; Kieckhefer and Bond 1988a).

No matter what the religious tradition, sainthood refers to the acclamation of a person's spiritual perfection even though the actual definition of sanctity may be varied. In all traditions, saints are seen as what Cohn (1987, p 1) terms, 'subjects for imitation' and 'objects of veneration'. While the cultural expression may differ,

> Saints have, throughout all ages and cultures, always been uniquely important – as well as providing aid, fellowship and example, they incarnate for the ordinary human being that "otherness" which brings wholesome meaning to life (Dunn-Mascetti 1994, p 244).

[15] The Khmer civilisation used a blend of both Hindu and Buddhist beliefs. On a visit to Angkor Thom in Cambodia, I saw the remains of the famous Buddhist temple, the Bayon with its statue of the *bodhisattva*, Lokeswara, said to resemble the king, Jayavarman who ruled from 1181-1219. Many of the smaller buildings surrounding this temple contain carvings of the Hindu gods, Vishnu and Shiva, along with many other lesser gods and goddesses. These carvings were said to be portraits of the royal family and other members of the nobility and were a way of 'seeking extra spiritual insurance through the pursuit of Hindu, Buddhist, and indigenous beliefs' (SarDesai 1989, p 27).

As part of the sacred canopy of religion, knowledge of saints in all major non-Christian religions is available to individuals to take them beyond their everyday meaning into opportunities for additional meaning and transcendence.

5.2 THE MEANING OF SAINTS IN THE CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN TRADITION

In the early Christian writings, the term 'saint' or 'hagios' was used in a fairly general way to describe those who followed the teachings of Jesus Christ (see Frend 1985; Kieckhefer 1988; Wilson 1983a). It was used extensively by the apostle, Paul in writing to the faithful: to those in Rome, for example, he wrote,

> To you all, then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called to be his saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.
> Rom. 1:7 - Jerusalem Bible translation (see Jones 1966)

Similar greetings are used to greet the church in Corinth (1 Cor 1:2, 2 Cor 1:1) and Ephesus (Eph 1:1).

Over the past two thousand years, the Roman Catholic Church has gradually refined the definition of sainthood. In the process, as Delooz (1983, p 189) noted, the Catholic Church was providing a reflection of its own 'structural evolution'. Those designated as saints are seen as ideal types for their particular period of time and place. At the same time, a decision not to recognise sanctity can be just as important in identifying 'the spiritual character of a generation' (Chittister 1997).

The English translation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994) defined saints as those who are 'authentic witnesses' (par 2030) and who have lived lives of 'exemplary fidelity to the Lord' (par 2156). It also described them as people who 'practised heroic virtue and lived in fidelity to God's grace' (par 828). The term 'heroic virtue' is a key term in the formal approval of saints who were not martyrs: Woodward (1990, p 393) traced this phrase to the 'translation of Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* in 1328 by Robert Grossteste, bishop of Lincoln, and one of the witnesses to the signing of the Magna Carta'. For Aristotle, the term implied 'moral virtue on a heroic or godlike scale' and, once the phrase was adopted by St Thomas Aquinas, it continued on in the official documents and procedures of canonisation. From a sociological perspective, 'it is not virtue itself which is

important, but the way in which people interpret behaviour in terms of virtue' (Delooz 1983, p 203). The implication of this is that such interpretations could be open to influence, politics or error.

Despite this negative possibility, saints in the Catholic Christian tradition are those who, after careful examination in a structured process of their life and work, are considered to have lived lives of heroic virtue. They are believed to be eternally with God and may be venerated with a public cult (Cohn 1987).

5.3 DIMENSIONS OF CHRISTIAN SAINTHOOD

In considering the knowledge which may have influenced both the journalists who wrote about Mary MacKillop as well as those who received their writings, there are many dimensions of Christian sainthood which are part of popular culture. These could, in varying degrees, be part of the meaning system – the sacred canopy - already in place for individuals. As further contextual background to the development of MMPM, I have examined both formal studies and examples of Australian media references to the cult of saints and the place of relics; pilgrimages and shrines; the role and purpose of miracles as well as hagiography as a genre.

5.3.1 The cult of saints and the place of relics

The term 'cult' has a rather negative meaning today, but I am using it in an objective fashion to describe the organised veneration of those considered to be saints. While much has been written about saints in general and individual saints in particular, only a few works go into extensive detail about the cult of saints as a general topic. The work of Wilson (1983b) was particularly relevant to my study since it approached the topic from a sociological viewpoint. A historical approach was given by Brown (1981), Farmer (1997) and Tavard (1990).

In the early days of the Christian religion, 'the Greco-Roman practice of honouring heroes and demi-gods' was adapted and transferred to those who had died as martyrs for their beliefs. A page published in the Sydney *Telegraph Mirror* during the week of Mary MacKillop's beatification included an historical overview of saints: it noted that the word 'martyrs' was, in fact, 'taken from the Greek word meaning witness' (1995a). Tavard (1990, p 47) referred to this as a 'phenomenon of inculturation'

while Wilson (1983b, p 4) viewed 'the process as one of opposition rather than osmosis'. Veneration of Christian saints was, in Wilson's view, used to replace and supplant the heroes of the older religions: this was the case with 'the cult of St Babylas (which) was introduced at Daphne in the mid-fourth century in order to oust the oracle of Apollo'.

From the earliest days of Christianity, there had been discussion about the role of saints: St Augustine and St Jerome, amongst others gave one of the earliest clarifications. It was their view that:

> Worship proper (*latria*) was due to God alone; the saints were to receive only veneration (*dulia*) while the Virgin Mary was to be honoured with *hyperdulia*. Neither veneration of the saints nor of the Virgin Mary was held to be absolutely necessary to salvation. The saints, moreover, were to be venerated, not in themselves but as possible 'channels of grace' from God (Wilson 1983a, p 4).

According to Brown (1981), who studied the rise of Christianity in the first six centuries, the people of these times sought the patronage of the holy dead, particularly the martyrs, to obtain justice, forgiveness and to find role models for Christian virtues. Wilson (1983a, pp 9-10) also discussed the importance of honour given to the dead who had lived holy lives and whose death had a special significance. While initially all saints were martyrs, as persecutions ceased, the saints were increasingly those who had lived lives of ascetism, often of an extreme kind. As a reflection of the cult surrounding them, the burial site for saints became significant. Unlike ordinary mortals, they were often buried in shrines, caskets, within churches or special crypts. Such burial places became sites of pilgrimage, as followers believed the saint was present in a special way, most particularly on their feast day, which was usually the anniversary of death. The honour given to the bodies of those who died in opposition to the established Greek and Roman religions marked a major point of divergence in the emergence of Christian saints. The normal boundaries of Roman life did not include the handling of the dead, the frequenting of burial sites or such sites becoming places of celebration. As Brown (1981, pp 4-5) noted, 'to a Mediterranean man of traditional background, much of this would have been peripheral, and some of it, downright disgusting'.

Over the centuries, saints gradually became an integral feature of daily life: throughout the calendar important dates for agriculture, business and celebrations were marked by the feastdays of the various saints. Many countries have official patron saints who are celebrated in religious and cultural festivals. Ireland has St Patrick[16] (17 March); Scotland has St Andrew (30 November); Italy has St Francis of Assisi (4 October) and St Anthony of Padua (13 June); Poland has St Stanislaus of Cracow (11 April), to name just a few. There are also patrons for particular causes: this practice was discussed in an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* by Gill (1991) who noted that the custom was of 'medieval origin and is more in the nature of pious belief than official dogma'. Mention was made of 'St Valentine (who) helps lovers; St Anthony helps motorists find car parking spaces'. St Jude was cited as the patron of 'impossible causes' and the journalist added that, 'this newspaper ... regularly prints classified ads thanking him for favours received'.

In some cases, the popularity of a particular saint can be linked to social conditions of the time. One such case was that of St Anne whom Dresen-Coenders (1987, p 123) noted was the subject of increased veneration around 1500 when the nobility were losing power to the rising middle class. Writers of the time generally accepted the long held tradition that St Anne, the mother of the Mary and grandmother to Jesus was married three times. As wife, mother, widow and grandmother she was seen as a model to counter the challenges to the place and value of marriage and family in society. Recent writers such as O'Grady (1995) in the weekend magazine published in *The Age* just prior to Mary MacKillop's beatification, suggested that Pope John Paul II has a similar motive in naming more saints than all of his predecessors combined: it is 'crucial to his policy of rekindling the religious imagination'. According to this journalist (who was described as a 'Rome based writer'), saint-making achieves this because it can 'convince people that God intervened in history'.

[16] In a reflection of the Irish tradition influencing early Australian veneration of this saint, *The Catholic Press* of 18 March 1909 carried an article about 'Saint Darcrea' described as 'St Patrick's Sister'. I have been unable to find any evidence of a cult for her in Australia.

Other ways in which the Catholic Church venerates saints include the formal liturgies and rituals such as a special Eucharistic celebration, inclusion in the Litany of Saints, or special prayers said by clergy in the daily *Divine Office*.

The memory of saints (their cult) lives on in the way that their name continues to be used. Children may be named after them, although the choice of names may be for reasons other than devotion to the saint. All Catholic (and Christian) churches are named after saints and many Catholic schools also remember saints in this way. This has on occasion caused difficulties as, for example, when the officials in Rome decided that the existence of some saints was in doubt. The identity venerated was seen to be most likely a constructed one, rather belonging to a real person (see Kieckhefer 1988, p 9). One such saint was Philomena, recognised as a saint after bones were discovered in a catacomb along with inscriptions suggesting that they were from a fifteen year old virgin of this name who had been martyred in the Roman persecutions many centuries before (also Delooz 1983, pp 195, 200; Farmer 1997, p 408). She was the patron of a school and church in Adelaide at Woodville Gardens and a large statue of her was in the church. Despite the fact that Philomena had been venerated by such people as St John Vianney and was reputed to have cured many at her shrine at the church of Mugnano, Italy, later archaeological discoveries cast doubt on her existence. In 1960, her name was removed from the list of approved saints. This caused the school and Church at Woodville Gardens to be renamed as Corpus Christi, in recognition of Jesus present in the Eucharist as the Body of Christ.

The bones or even entire bodies of saints have been an important part of the cult of saints. They are termed 'relics'; a word derived from the Latin word, *reliquia*, meaning the remains of a dead person, the inheritance left. As noted by Head (1990, p 11), 'relics were the manifestation of the saints in the physical world'. They helped to form personal relationships between the living and the dead and were 'an objectification of the saint's charisma'. In her examination of saints today, Dunn-Mascetti (1994, p 29) explained relics as offering ' a sense of reassurance to devotees as solid evidence of divine origin'. In early Christianity, it was the distribution of relics from the original site which caused the spread of cults for particular saints.

Relics came to include not just the bones of a saint but also other items which may have touched the saint's body, or objects from near the original tomb. Possession of relics was at times also used for political purposes by monasteries in the tenth and eleventh centuries: rumours that relics held were not genuine were used to discredit one group by another (see Brown 1981, p 93; Wilson 1983a, p 27). In his study of relics in Anglo-Saxon England, Rollason (1989, pp 11, 161) described how those wishing to curry favour with royalty presented them with relics. He cited the example in 926 of Duke Hugh of France presenting the King of England with relics which included, 'the sword of Constantine the Great in the pommel of which was fixed an iron nail made for the crucifixion of Christ' as well as 'the spear of Charlemagne which had been used to pierce Christ's side'.

Over the years, trade in relics became such a commercial venture that all religious meaning was often lost. The trafficking was described by Kieckhefer (1988, p 5) as being 'complete with thefts, counterfeits and potentially embarrassing duplications'. The variety of relics held was summarised by Kieckhefer - and almost quoted verbatim by Dunn-Mascetti (1994, p 58) – in describing the collection of relics held at Reading Abbey, England in the twelfth century:

> .... the abbey possessed 242 items altogether, including the bones of Sts Aethelmod and Branwalator; a rib and another bone from St David; ... a fragment of the tomb of St Edward the Confessor; bits of the Blessed Virgin's hair, her bed, and her belts; the hand of St James; the head of St Phillip; and the head, jawbone, vestments, one rib, and some hair from St Brigid.

Rollason (1989, pp 159-163) also provided an extensive record of the collections of relics held by English Kings from the ninth century. Such collections were described and displayed to advertise the 'great wealth, power and piety' and thus prestige of the kings.

In her book, Dunn-Mascetti (1994) included photos of other gruesome relics held in churches today: the mummified head of Saint Oliver Plunkett in St Peter's Church Drogheda, Ireland; the heart of St Roque Gonzales; a bone from St Chad. Finucane (1977, p 31) described the relics venerated at some shrines as bordering on the bizarre: 'Christ's breath in a bottle, his tears or blood, Mary's milk, even the tip of

Lucifer's tail'. Many Italian churches today promote their relics of saints' bodies to tourists: Assisi has Saints Francis and St Clare, Padua has St Anthony (his mummified tongue has pride of place), Reggio Calabria has an arm of St Paul the Apostle and the tomb of St Peter is a special feature of the Vatican. Almost every Italian church throughout the country has some relic of a patron saint and the annual feastday is a cause for great festival. The potential danger in the use and honouring of relics was recognised by the Italian bishops of Campania. In February 1974, they issued a pastoral letter about popular religion,

> ... with special reference to the cult of saints. They duly noted the sociological and folk dimensions of this cult. They pointed out a number of patent abuses in their part of the world ('The saints are the object of an all but pagan cult...') along with the necessity of a proper renovation of these devotions (Tavard 1990, p 48).

Within Australia, relics of saints have been treasured as objects of piety. These relics have usually been a piece of cloth which has touched the body or burial place of a saint. Often such relics are pinned to the clothing of a sick person or the one seeking a favour from God. A saint whose relics were very popular for many years was St Gerard Majella, patron of mothers. This was despite the fact that he was a religious brother of the Redemptorist Order whose only contact with women seems to have been his mother and three sisters with whom he lived for some years after his ill health prevented his acceptance by the Franciscan Order. Expectant mothers (or those hoping to become pregnant) would obtain a relic of this saint, pray for his intercession and give thanks for the safe birth of children. A macabre point about this saint (by the standards of today) was given by Wilson (1983a, p 10) who described the 'popular necrophilia' operating at the time of Gerard Majella's death in 1755. His veins were opened after he died 'to allow people to dip handkerchiefs in his blood while it was still warm'. Such souvenirs were highly prized as relics.

Relics still play a central role in the Catholic Church. From the earliest times and then reiterated by the Seventh General Council of Nicea in 787, all altars used in a Catholic Church must have a relic incorporated into the altar (Wilson 1983a, p 5). This usually takes the form of a fragment of a saint's bone, which is sealed into a small block of marble set into the altar and known as the 'altar stone'. The origins of

this practice were discussed by Rollason (1989, p 25): he noted that the use of saints' bones as relics may have been necessary in cases where a pagan temple was dedicated as a Christian church. He also posed the question, however, as to whether 'the relics were essential to the dedication of the churches, or the altars were set up to honour the relics'.

5.3.2 Pilgrimages and shrines

The notion of a religious pilgrimage is a very ancient one: throughout history people of all races and religions have travelled to holy places in the search for transcendence, healing, forgiveness, in response to vows or as an act of thanksgiving. Finucane (1977, p 39) provided a summary of the way that pilgrimage evolved over time. It was a part of the life of the Egyptian, Babylonians and Greeks. To the Jews, a visit to Jerusalem was an essential part of their religion; even today, Buddhists travel with begging bowls and Moslems go to Mecca. In the Christian tradition, pilgrimages to Rome and the Holy Land were common by the fourth century. According to Hunt (1984, p 49), it was St Helena who played a significant part in popularising pilgrimage to Jerusalem and places associated with the life of Jesus. Her status as the mother of the emperor, Constantine, and the story of her role in finding fragments of the cross on which Jesus died, ensued that 'journeys of those who sought out the holy places became a natural element in a Christian Roman Empire'. In his article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* about saints, Gill (1991) referred to a recent example of pilgrimage in Australia:

> A few years ago the Benedictine Abbey in New Norcia, about 100 kilometres north of Perth, was visited by a young American who had walked from Sydney towing a large wooden cross. He was a Protestant. The prior still talks about it. "I told him, 'Now that's real devotion. Your faith is far stronger than mine'."

Venues commemorating apparitions or miracles, such as those associated with the Virgin Mary, are also popular. These would include the officially approved shrines such as Lourdes in France, Fatima in Portugal, and Knock in Ireland.

For many people in Australia today, their understanding of pilgrimage would be coloured by literature such as Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales,* stories of the Crusades or memories of their home culture. The Irish, for example, would be

familiar with pilgrimages to Croagh Patrick, St Patrick's Mountain, where it is the custom to walk barefooted to the summit.

Many relics of saints are held in shrines which have become the focus of pilgrimage over the years. As already mentioned, famous basilicas such as those at Assisi, Padua and many of the Churches within Rome were built around the burial sites of saints. In other cases, bodies of holy people presumed to be saints were often interred within churches. In his discussion about relics and shrines of England and Europe, Rollason (1989, pp 26-43) suggested that this practice enabled the church hierarchy to have a greater control over the cult of the particular saint and perhaps even to exploit any miraculous powers which could be present. On a much smaller scale, there are many wayside shrines throughout Ireland which attract local devotion. In Italy, every small village has its own patron saint: one example is Tolve with St Roch (see Wilson 1983a, p 24). In many cases, these locally honoured saints have never been through any formal canonisation procedure but rather their cult has developed through popular acclaim over the centuries. The role of these saints is one of protection and patronage. They also provide legitimation for festivals which serve practical purposes such as enabling family reunions for those who have left the village and thus retaining their links with a community.

In his study, Wilson noted that 'the shrines of the saints were, above all, shrines of healing'. Primitive medical knowledge and a willingness to attribute much to supernatural causes meant that saints were often given recognition for cures. Many people came to shrines and followed rituals such as the saying of certain prayers, being touched by relics, going in procession, drinking water from special springs or water which had been in some way associated with the relics of the saint. Those who were cured often made gifts to the shrines to advertise the fact that they were healed or had received some good fortune. These gifts, known as 'ex-votos,' often,

> ...included wax models of parts of the body that had been cured, crutches, the chains of released prisoners, model ships given by those who had survived shipwreck, horseshoes, and shirts of successful sportsmen, as well as written messages, printed notices in newspapers, plaques at the shrine and paintings illustrating the circumstances of the favour received (Wilson 1983a, p 21).

The tradition of ex-votos continues today at shrines such as Lourdes with its large display of crutches from those who have been cured through praying at this shrine.[17]

Within the homes of Catholic families, there has been a long tradition of venerating sacred images and statues of Jesus, Mary and various saints. Such practices of providing domestic shrines enable those who cannot travel to the major shrines to benefit from the patronage of their chosen saint. In her study of Australian spirituality, Massam (1996, pp 10-11) highlighted that for those 'Catholics whose religion was much more cultural than doctrinal' the statues and pictures displayed within the home 'fostered a self-sufficient domestic church, quite separate from the parish where the saints were from a different tradition'. While those from Italy in particular placed great importance on their domestic shrines, the practice in Australia has been a wide one. Some of the religious objects or statues displayed may not have had much artistic appeal by the standards of today, yet their presence as a form of shrine did serve to identify families as Catholic as well as to provide a sense of security in what for many was an economically insecure world.

A recent document of the *Vatican Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People,* entitled *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* (Catholic Church 1998), showed that the Catholic Church continues to rate pilgrimages and shrines as important dimensions of the practice of their faith by Catholics. While it recognised the long history of pilgrimage throughout many civilisations, it noted that 'evangelisation is the ultimate reason for which the Church proposes and encourages pilgrimages' (para 2). The document referred to the world travels of the pontiffs as 'papal pilgrimages' (para 18), and described Pope John Paul II as 'a pilgrim in the world' who was 'the principal evangeliser in these last two decades'. The visit by the Pope to many countries was called 'a pilgrimage of peace and solidarity' (para 22). In an interesting adaptation to modern media, the document referred to a 'virtual pilgrimage' through telecommunications which 'can be a means of proclaiming faith and love, positive messages, fruitful and efficacious

[17] This custom is also retained in different ways. I saw evidence of it in many Italian churches, particularly St Anthony's at Padua which contained many testimonies and evidence of response to prayers. On a visit to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) I noted that in the Cathedral there was a large statue of the Virgin Mary in an alcove which had been decorated with many tiles indicating the gratitude of those who had prayed there.

contacts' (para 27). The pre-eminence of Rome and Jerusalem as shrines for pilgrimage by Christians was restated (para 31), along with the importance of the 'great Marian shrines (like Lourdes, Fatima or Loreto; Czestochowa, Altötting or Mariazell; Guadalupe, Aparecida or Luján)' (para 42). The focus of shrines was seen to be a chance for Christians to 'listen to the word of God and to sacramental celebration' (para 32), especially the sacrament of reconciliation (para 36). A warning was given that 'religious tourism' must include a spiritual dimension, not just 'cultural enrichment' but allowed that 'contemplation of beauty is a source of spirituality' (para 41).

Applications of this more recent interpretation of pilgrimage can be found in events such as a 'reconciliation pilgrimage from Canberra to Uluru' by the leaders of Australian Christian Churches. There has also been the 'children's pilgrimage' by 34,000 students from South Australian Catholic Schools to the Adelaide Oval 'to celebrate the 2000th anniversary of Christ's birth' (The Advertiser 2000a, pp 2,22).

5.3.3 The role and purpose of miracles

A very detailed study of miracles during medieval times was provided by Finucane (1977). For unsophisticated and illiterate people, miracles 'stemmed partially from ignorance of the natural world and partially from an overwhelming need, created by the conditions of medieval life, to believe in miracles' (p 55). Poor hygiene, insufficient food and shelter, along with the general ignorance of anatomy and physiology led to any unexpected event being termed a miracle. Finucane documented an interesting link between social classification and miracles at some English and French shrines. His research covered reports from more than 2,300 pilgrims.

> It is clear that the social and sexual characteristics of the crowds involved in the miracles could differ a great deal from one shrine to the next. For example, there were more women (69%) and more lower-class pilgrims (87%) involved in the miracles of Godric of Finchale than in the miracles of any other saint, and most of these pilgrims were local people (p.142).

Miracles documented for the upper classes and clergy were more numerous at shrines of Becket, Simon de Montfort and William of Norwich; cures for blindness

and crippling ailments were more often recorded for women of low status while non-healing miracles were more likely to be reported and recorded for upper-class men. Finucane suggested that there were environmental, social and psychological reasons for these links. His ultimate conclusion was that the need for miracles was so great that even when most English shrines were destroyed during the Reformation, English society developed alternative means (such as the increasing use of natural baths) so that cures at least could continue.

By the eighteenth century Prospero Lambertini (later Pope Benedict XIV) summarised conditions and characteristics of miracles in his work, *De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione*.

According to Kieckhefer (1988, pp 20-24), a miracle was seen as a deed of God rather than of the saint although the saint could ask for the miracle and even provide the occasion for it. Dresen-Coenders (1987, p 95) supported the view that in many cases, miracles led to increased devotion to the saint in the period of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, rather than a recognition of the power of God. The majority of miracles were of the healing type although nature miracles and prophecies were also described.

Delooz (1983, pp 208-212) examined the question of miracles from a sociological point of view and noted that the Catholic Church saw a miracle as a social event,

> ... since it can only exist as a miracle if someone sees it as such; but it is also an event which expresses the saintly quality of the person who is presumed to intervene in this way.

The distinction between real and constructed miracles was discussed in great detail. In contrast to real miracles which are clearly obvious and have many witnesses, what Delooz called constructed miracles 'exist only in collective mental representations'. A study of this type of miracle, it was suggested, would provide important information about the social groups which 'selected, elaborated and transmitted them'. Most of these 'constructed miracles' referred to saints in earlier times when the canonisation process (and hence the documentation of miracles) was not as stringent:

> There are numerous cases of saints putting out fires, miraculously lighting lamps, making springs gush forth, going through fire without being burnt, causing rain to fall during a drought, changing water into wine, multiplying bread and wine, freeing prisoners from gaol or from irons at a distance or after their deaths, walking on water or making others walk on water (p 211).

5.3.4 Writings about saints: hagiography as a genre

Literary works about the lives and deeds of saints originated with the eulogies written upon their deaths. These were later developed into more complete life stories to highlight reasons why the saint should be venerated. In times when literacy was restricted to the wealthy, the clergy and religious, the written works about saints were prepared by and restricted to a small number of people.

> The composition of hagiography was controlled by the clergy and the cult of the saints fostered by that hagiography served clerical ends by inspiring devotion, harnessing pious beliefs, promoting certain forms of religious practice, and protecting the saints' property. (Head 1990, p 19)

In many cases, the lives of saints became merely pious and sanctimonious stories, which did not show the saint as having any faults. A study by McGinley (1970) provided many interesting human dimensions to some of the more famous saints: Teresa of Avila who enjoyed a good meal, Francis Xavier who cut the signatures from letters received from friends when on mission fields and kept them next to his heart as a reminder of friendship and Augustine who enjoyed every possible human vice before changing his ways -

> There have been, among the saints, thieves, beggars, and vagabonds, even men who killed. That they turned the fury of their impulses toward good and toward God instead of toward the evil they knew perfectly well existed, is their accolade (McGinley 1970, p 6).

As noted by Kieckhefer (1988, p2), one of the most comprehensive collections of biographies in this field was Butler's *The Lives of the Saints,* published in the early twentieth century and which contained summaries of over three thousand saints. This extensive work attempted to gather into some organised fashion many of the stories and legends which had been passed down through history. During the Middle Ages, for example, collections of legends about saints were a popular form of literature. Regional collections about saints were prepared by both Gregory of Tours

and Pope Gregory I; an Encyclopedia of saints entitled the *Golden Legend* was developed by Jacob of Voragaine in the thirteenth century (Kieckhefer 1988, p 4).

The popularity of the religious life for women led to the writing of many biographies of those who had chosen this way of life. It was suggested by Dresen-Coenders (1987) that these stories were composed for a particular audience: usually to be read as inspiration during the many silent mealtimes in convents. The selection and construction of such writings by the authors usually led to the emphasis on spiritual and moral messages, rather than on strict historical accuracy.

Besides instructing others about the saints and thus leading to imitation of them, Head (1990, p 17) noted that hagiography was a work of piety on the part of the writer. Such a work could assist writers in the search for salvation as closer contact was made with the person about whom they wrote. In the process, it was thought that the writer would imbibe the virtues of the holy person. In his conclusions to his study of hagiography, Head (1990, p 284) made the point that many early saints whose stories and miracles were not developed into a literary form often faded from history.

According to McLeod (1994), the sociological dimensions of reading the lives of saints today need to be acknowledged. While many present day writers about saints are still influenced by the traditional hagiographical style,

> .....we will probably discover that their works are also reflective of the cultural values and religious concerns of our age, particularly regarding the promotion of Christian evangelism, a faith leading one to act justly in society, and a sensitivity to environmental, racial , and gender issues (McLeod 1994, p 414).

Elliott (1987, p 2) noted that some students of hagiography consider it to be a branch of historiography. She discounted this view and would instead support the stance taken by McLeod that, since many of the examples of hagiography were written before 'critical standards of modern historiography became the norm,' the stories be taken as myths with messages relevant for our lives today. The traditional style of this genre was examined in detail by Elliott who highlighted significant features based on an examination of writings up to the year 1000. The main aim was the attempt to lead the faithful to the love of God. This goal superseded, in the author's

eyes, the need for strictly factual writing. Hagiographic accounts had a certain sameness about them which made it easier both for the writers and the audience in times of limited literacy as well as assisting in the enjoyment for the listeners. An interesting comparison with current writings was noted: Umberto Eco was quoted by Elliott (1987, p 7) as commenting that the James Bond thrillers of today were popular for exactly the same reasons as were the lives of saints in previous days. The pattern was well known, good triumphed after some struggles and the outcome was always predictable.

From her study of early writers, Elliott (1987, p 215) identified common themes and motifs which can be found in hagiographic literature. These can be summarised as follows -

Theme A ***Circumstances preceding departure from society to a dedicated life.***
From the beginning of his/her life, the saint is marked as someone special, someone with outstanding wisdom or ability to cope with difficult situations. The emphasis is on the person's uniqueness or difference from the ordinary human role, and the way that he/she sought a deeper level of spirituality through a response to God's call.

Theme B ***The journey***
In order to attain sanctity, the saint has to seek out new roads to salvation. The journey is symbolised by darkness and descent. An unusual guide such as an angel may feature in the story and, in the case of female saints, disguise is often used as the person assumes an interim identity on the road to final goal.

Theme C ***Discovery of a place***
This is usually a cave or place where the saint can find solitude.

Theme D ***Encounter (discovery of a person)***
During the journey, the saint meets a 'father figure' or significant person who shares wisdom and provides guidance.

Theme E ***The tale***
The person met shares his/her life story with the saint and the narrative pattern is strengthened.

Theme F The request

The saint's request for assistance from God or others is often denied and so a new journey is commenced.

Theme G Burial

The saint or hero has attained paradise and the place of burial becomes a shrine for the inspiration of the faithful.

This framework, and the general notion of hagiography, have been useful in examining biographies written about Mary MacKillop which have been considered in more detail in the next chapter.

5.4 THE MAKING OF SAINTS TODAY

Woodward (1999), amongst others, has referred to Pope John Paul's propensity for saint-making: he 'has made many more saints than did all his predecessors'. By the end of 2000, he had beatified 996 people and canonised 446. The year 2000 was a 'record-breaking year in a record-breaking pontificate' as he canonised 151 and beatified 56: he 'declared more saints than he had in any other year of his reign' (Catholic Telecommunications 2001). A report in both *The Australian* and *The Advertiser* (1996; 1996) had earlier noted that not everyone in the Vatican had agreed with the vast increase in the number of saints: articles headed 'Vatican a "saint factory", says cardinal in gibe at the Pope,' and 'Cardinal slams Vatican "saint factory"' described how the memoirs of Cardinal Silvio Oddi included a 'rare criticism of the Pope' for the way he had used the Vatican as a 'saint factory'.

The history of the process of saint making has been documented by writers such as Cunningham (1987); Head (1990); Dunn-Mascetti (1994) and Farmer, (1997). The title of the work by Woodward (1990) – *Making Saints – How the Catholic Church determines who becomes a saint, who doesn't and why* – summarised the thrust of this book written in a popular style, and much of this work was adapted by Dunn-Mascetti in her later work.

Initially saints were simply decided by public acclamation or by a decree of a local bishop. Lists of these saints were called 'canons' and such lists were read out during religious celebrations. 'The act of putting a saint's name into the canon is where the

word "canonization" (declaring that someone is a saint) was originally used' (Dunn-Mascetti 1994, p 61).

By the thirteenth century, (1234) Pope Gregory IX restricted all declarations of individuals as canonised saints to the papacy itself. In 1588 Pope Sixtus V created a more formal mechanism for canonisations by the establishment of the Sacred Congregation of Rites. In 1727 Prospero Lambertini (who became Pope Benedict XIV) provided a very detailed summary of the procedures for canonisation. According to Tavard (1990, p 41), this 'was more a reaction against Protestantism than the harmonious development of accepted theological principles'. During the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther had serious objections to the veneration of saints, and this had a profound effect on Christian churches originating at that time. Some reference to this aspect of saints will be made in a later section about the ecumenical recognition of saints today.

More recent amendments to the process were made by the revision of the Code of Canon Law, most recently in 1983. Canon 1403 of this Code refers to 'special pontifical law' governing this process. Aspects of this law are contained in the Apostolic Constitution of John Paul II known as *Divinus Perfectionis Magister* released on 25 January 1983 (cited in Tavard 1990, p 41). Canons 1186 to 1190 of the revised Code of Canon Law provide other rules for 'The Cult of Saints, of Sacred Images and of Relics' (see Catholic Church 1997, pp 312, 262-263). Mary, the Mother of God is seen as a special saint while the 'true and authentic cult' of other saints is encouraged. Public recognition of saints can only be given once such persons have been 'numbered by ecclesiastical authority among the Saints or the Blessed'. While 'sacred images' for veneration in churches are to be recognised and retained, such 'images are to be displayed in moderate numbers and in suitable fashion'. A warning is given that these 'images' should not be disturbing nor cause 'less than appropriate devotion'. The local bishop is given responsibility, after consulting experts, for the repair of any images deemed precious because of 'age, art or cult' and the sale of relics is expressively forbidden.

The reforms of 1983 in the saint making process were described in *The Catholic Weekly* (Macken 1993) as containing 'a striking paradigm shift'. In the previous

legal model, described in detail in the weekend magazine of *The Age* (O'Grady 1995), the 'Promoter of the Faith, popularly known as the Devil's Advocate, tried in every way to disprove the candidate's virtues'. An interview with the person who held this role for Mary MacKillop was reported in the *Australasian Post* (Travers 1986). Dr Colin McKay was quoted as describing his role as 'to obtain the truth and see that all the processes are done correctly, without any manipulation of evidence'. The current process relies on a more academic approach in which extensive research about the proposed saint is written up as a position paper, or *Positio*, which can then be considered by a committee of theologians and historians,

As background to his work, Woodward (1999; 1990) gained access to many of the *Positiones*, the actual documents by which candidates for sainthood are judged by Vatican authorities. Using these materials as sources, Woodward showed how the lives of potential saints were investigated and interpreted, how miracles were proved or rejected, and identified some of the political forces from both papal and secular areas which have had a profound influence on those who are eventually declared saints. Many current examples are given of men and women from recent times who have been considered for sainthood.

In his analysis of these examples, Woodward (1990, p 24) provided a concise summary of what, in the eyes of the Catholic Church, determined whether or not a person was worthy of the title of Saint. These were that the person must have exercised Christian virtues (particularly faith, hope and charity) to an heroic degree and that the proclamation as a saint must be an act of great importance for the whole Church. This latter element referred to the way that saints were seen to be role models - calling the faithful to meet standards of behaviour far in excess of the ordinary.

It is interesting to note that since the seventeenth century, most of those formally recognised by the Catholic Church as saints have been the founders, heads or members of religious orders.

> An order has a long memory. It has the continuity, the organization, and usually the funds to keep its case before the proper committees (McGinley 1970, p 205).

In the case of Mary MacKillop, it has been the Sisters of St Joseph who have covered the costs of the research involved in preparing the *Positio* for consideration by Vatican authorities.

Woodward's study (1990) concluded with the notion that perhaps the time has come for a new kind of saint and quoted a letter of Simone Weil in which she,

> .....wrote of the need for saints of 'genius' who could illuminate 'the present moment' in ways that the saints of the past no longer can (Woodward 1990, p 406).

Stourton (1998, p 80) supported this view in his description of the saints named by Pope John Paul as having 'relevance in the contemporary life of the Church ... (they) are not dead, they are living companions'. A similar line was stressed by Chittister (1997) who noted that society today needs 'models of people who fire the soul of their own culture or who swim against the current and offer resistance where it is needed'. She named Maximilian Kolbe, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Edith Stein, Franz Jägerstätter and Dorothy Day as some who would do this.

5.5 AN ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE ON SAINTHOOD

Studies about saints from an ecumenical perspective can be found in works by Rabe (1991), Tavard (1990) and Ellingsen (1987). Kieckhefer (1988) provided a discussion of ways that saints can be integrated into modern Christianity.

During the Reformation, one of the major theological differences that led Martin Luther and others to break from the Catholic Church was the question of saints. By the early sixteenth century, books such as Jacob of Voragaine's *Golden Legend* were extremely popular. Luther objected that the theological distinction between adoration and veneration had become blurred to the extent that the ordinary people were confused about the role of saints, Mary and the position of Jesus Christ. Anderson et al (1992) and Kolb (1987) examine this matter in great detail. While rejecting the Catholic notion of the intercessory power of saints, those who joined the Reformist movement still saw a place for hagiography. Writers such as John Foxe, for example, published stories of Protestant martyrs as inspiration for the faithful.

Recent media news support the view that those from other major Christian denominations may be recognised by the Catholic Church in the modern

identification of saints. Articles such as that featured in *The Weekend Australian* of 22-23 January 2000 provide some relevant examples. It was reported that the Pope was considering naming Martin Luther King as a martyr, despite the fact that he was a Baptist rather than a Catholic. A Vatican source was quoted as saying that this honour was being considered by the Pope because of King's 'passion for ecumenism' (Owen 2000).

The context for this story was the preparation for a special religious service in the Roman Colosseum to honour the 'martyrs and other witnesses to Christ in the twentieth century'. This event was held on 6 May 2000. A special commission, set up at the request of the Pope, identified a total of 12,962 such persons to 'acknowledge how Christians of different traditions had jointly borne witness through shared sacrifice in a communion of suffering'. Those honoured came from all continents, although the majority of 67% came from Europe (The Tablet 2000).

The Anglican Church has shown an interest in naming saints in recent times. The English weekly Catholic press, *The Tablet*, in a report that Oscar Romero was one of the ten statues of modern martyrs being unveiled in Westminster Abbey, noted,

> The fact that the Anglican Church has decided to honour a Catholic bishop in what is one of its central and most venerable shrines is proof that Romero has now become a universal saint for our time (Campbell-Johnston 1998).

According to Stourton (1998, p 109), there was quite a cult associated with Romero in San Salvador, the city in which he was murdered. His former home 'has become a shrine' complete with relics: 'a glass case contains the bloodied surplice and vestments he was wearing when he was shot'. While the Catholic Church 'has not granted the status of saint to Oscar Romero,' Stourton had no doubt that 'he has been canonized by popular devotion,' despite the fact that the Pope had used his 'executive' powers to prevent his official Cause for Canonisation being introduced for fifty years (Macken 1993).

The ten martyrs honoured at Westminster Cathedral in the ceremony on 9 July 1998 were representative of all continents and Christian denominations. Along with Romero, they were: Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Catholic priest who died in Auschwitz; Martin Luther King, the Baptist preacher who had won the Nobel Peace

Prize in 1967 and was assassinated a year later; Esther John, born Qamar Zia, who was a Christian teacher in Pakistan; Janani Luwum, an Anglican bishop murdered by Idi Amin's troops in Uganda; Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German theologian with a great interest in ecumenism who was executed in Germany a few days before the end of the Second World War; Wang Zhiming, a Christian killed in the Chinese Cultural Revolution; Manche Masemola, an African woman killed for her Christian beliefs and whose grave has become a site of pilgrimage, and Elizabeth of Hesse-Darmstadt, a Russian aristocrat who founded an order of religious women and who had been recognised as a saint by the Russian Orthodox Church.

In a more controversial approach to the identification of saints and definitions of sanctity, this Orthodox Church was reported to be considering the canonisation of the last Tsar of Russia, Nicholas II and his family (The Tablet 1998). The Russian Orthodox Church abroad was reported as agreeing to this notion and there was a hope that the move would be accepted also by the Moscow patriarchate once the family's remains were positively identified. It seemed accepted that the Tsar did not live a life of heroic virtue but the honour was requested 'as a symbol of all those who perished in the communist era'.

5.6 MOTHER TERESA – PRINT MEDIA APPROACH TO A CONTEMPORARY SAINT

Reports on the death and burial of Mother Teresa of Calcutta provide an insight into the way that the print media of today report on someone who was considered by many to be a saint. Headlines in South Australian papers included: 'Tributes flow in for Mother Teresa, the little nun called a living saint' (Sunday Mail 1997a); 'Orphans weep for the saint they called Ma' (Mukherjee 1997); 'An icon, a saint, a tough little old lady' (Kovacs 1997); and 'People's funeral for Saint of the Gutters' (The Advertiser 1997a).

Her ability to influence the whole spectrum of society and the world family was emphasised by the way that she was accorded 'a state funeral attended by presidents, prime ministers and cardinals' from some 23 countries (The Advertiser 1997a). At the same time, 35,000 people, mostly the very poor of India, were reported to have

lined up for many hours for a final viewing of her body lying in state (Sunday Mail 1997c).

The reports showed further indication of a cult of Mother Teresa in the traditional manner of saints. Kovacs (1997) described how, on visits to the United States, 'crowds would line streets and pack Masses' to see her, to get near to her, 'touching her and dropping gifts at her feet'. Her influence was not just restricted to those who shared her Roman Catholic faith but she 'transcended religious boundaries in (the) overwhelmingly Hindu country' (The Advertiser 1997c). One of the Hindus who came to pay their respects to her body was quoted as saying that 'he revered Mother Teresa as much as he did Swami Vivekananda, a 19th century social reformer considered a saint by many Hindus' (The Advertiser 1997b). The editorial on the same day paid tribute to her: 'Many millions who did not share her faith still found her life an inspiration' (Editorial 1997).

This editorial also made comparisons and links between Mother Teresa and Princess Diana. Their deaths had been within a short time of each other and there was even a report that Mother Teresa had 'died while writing a message of condolence over the death of Diana on the eve of the Princess' funeral' (Loudon 1997). Letters to the Editor had focussed on a comparison of the two women: 'One a Hollywood saint (whose life was played out on a stage). The other a real saint' (March 1997).

In several reports, mention was made of the possibility that formal consideration would be given to Mother Teresa's canonisation by the Catholic Church. In one of the first stories about her death, *The Advertiser* ran a quarter column article entitled, 'Sainthood no certainty, says Vatican archbishop' (Reuter 1997). The Archbishop's role in the Vatican was noted as being 'President of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications' which is not the body that considers the causes of potential saints. He was, at least, a Vatican authority who could lend credence to the story for the readers. The article did remind the audience of the processes involved in making of saints, explained the difference between beatification and canonisation and noted that a five-year waiting period after the death of a person was required before any formal processes could be commenced. This was 'to avoid any momentary enthusiasm after the death of a person and to make sure that there is solid, deep-rooted admiration for

that person's holiness'. Despite this official line, another report a few days later quoted a comment of 'the only British brother in Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity order':

> ...he believed it was only a matter of time before Mother Teresa was made a saint. He said, "The Pope has contacted the Order and we understand he wants to make her a saint straight away."

This view was countered by a report about her funeral, which cited 'Cardinal Ratzinger, the Vatican spokesman on matters of doctrine' as saying that 'it was unlikely the church would try to speed up the process, even for Mother Teresa'. This article also quoted 'Newsweek religion editor Kenneth L Woodward' in presenting a summary of the usual process for the declaration of saints, thus supporting the view that his writing in this area was seen to be influential. He was reported as saying that if the early form of 'popular canonisation' was still in place, she would already be called 'St Teresa of Calcutta' (Sunday Mail 1997b).[18]

In much of the journalistic writing about Mother Teresa, elements of a hagiographic style can be traced. The story of her life was presented in a manner aimed at adulation, veneration and imitation. Some of the traditional themes of this genre, as outlined by Elliott (1987, p215), are evident in reports such as the first report of her death (Sunday Mail 1997a). Her initial call to work as a missionary in India was inspired by a priest (a significant guide) who came to her church in Albania (Theme D); she embarked on a long journey literally and figuratively as she left her country for India where she became a Loreto Sister and worked for a number of years as a teacher (Theme B). She then received what she described as a 'call within a call' to live and work among the poor, and so departed from society to a new dedicated life (Theme A). Theme G, the way that her burial became the venue for the very tangible expression of her cult, was given great coverage in this and all of the reports cited.

[18] Despite the usual five-year wait before any formal moves towards sainthood, by the second anniversary of her death, the Archbishop of Calcutta had begun to 'gather evidence about her sanctity and virtue' (Flanagan 1999). This first phase in the process leading to her beatification was expected to be completed by the end of 2000 (Catholic Telecommunications 2000).

5.7 CONCLUSIONS

The concept of sainthood can be found in all major world religions. While the Catholic Church has a formal system of naming saints, the process is one that in more recent years, seems to be of interest to other Christian denominations as well. In the Catholic tradition, those persons who have been judged in a formal manner by the Catholic Church to be persons of heroic virtue and whose lives are deemed worthy of imitation are given the title 'Blessed' once they have reached the beatification level of the saint-making process. Vatican authorities must accept proof of an additional miracle obtained through the saint's intercession before the final stage of canonisation is reached and the person can be called 'Saint'.

To Australian journalists and their readers, the frame of reference (or symbolic universe) in which they would consider saints, would include information about Australian heroes: both the formally defined as in the Australian of the Year, and the popularly acclaimed such as Ned Kelly. Evidence can be found that journalists are aware of many of the dimensions of the formally recognised sainthood, the process for making saints and hagiography as a genre. There is a presumption on their part that their audience is also familiar with them. An examination of various reports[19] in South Australian newspapers at the time of the death of Mother Teresa gave evidence of the blurring of the boundaries between the secular hero and the saint. The print media was creating a new cultural icon.

Before presenting the practical details of how this has occurred in the case of Mary MacKillop, the next chapter will provide an outline of the cultural construct, the Mary MacKillop of History.

[19] All of these were syndicated stories available to the Murdoch press throughout Australia.

CHAPTER SIX

THE MARY MACKILLOP OF HISTORY

6.0 INTRODUCTION

The Mary MacKillop of History is a particular cultural artefact of hagiographical history. Those who met her and the people who shared her life in a first hand manner knew Mary MacKillop as a person. For some years after her death, there were many who could relate their memories of her.[20] The objective facts were her family connections and significant dates such as her birth and when she died: with her death in 1909, however, knowledge about Mary MacKillop changed. From that moment, the Mary MacKillop of History began to emerge in the stories, the biographies, the official research leading to her Beatification, as well as in aspects of her continuing cult.

As an introduction to an examination of the various life stories written about Mary MacKillop, I have provided a further discussion on the nature of hagiography as a specific genre. From the major biographies, I have highlighted themes or emphases which reflected the sociocultural influences of the period in which they were written, as well as the link these books may have had to the Canonisation process at that period of time.

Against the background of the meaning of hagiography and an overview of the major biographies, the main part of this chapter is an overview of my construction of Mary MacKillop's biography. This has included the major milestones in her life; her relationship to family, friends and Church authorities; her travels, as well as her appreciation of her own ethnic identity as an Australian of Scots heritage. Her life

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[20] This link is now second hand but has had an impact on me: when I first went to Sydney in 1968, I met several Sisters of St Joseph who had met and worked with Mary MacKillop. Amongst the last people alive in 1991 who had met her was Bill McLeod. McCarthy (1991), in a NSW regional newspaper, reported that he was then 101 and had been brought up in an orphanage run by the Sisters of St Joseph. When he was eight, she visited them, and left a lasting memory – the report concluded that 'he and the other 100 boys at Kincumber at the turn of the century considered Mother Mary a saint because without her they would have been homeless'.

has been situated against the sociocultural background of her time. Where possible, I have used Mary MacKillop's own words from her many letters to convey her meaning. When writing to Monsignor Tobias Kirby at the Vatican (17/7/1873), Mary admitted that she found it easier to express her deepest feelings in writing, rather than in speaking, and this has been fortunate for those seeking to examine her life. Around 1300 letters were collected after her death and these have been preserved in the archives of the Sisters of St Joseph in Adelaide and Sydney. Some have been cited in the various biographies produced to date. Unless otherwise indicated, I have used the letters from the archival collections.

The method by which the Catholic Church makes saints is a complex one which was referred to in the discussion about Saints in general. The application of this process to Mary MacKillop is outlined in the final section of this chapter. Throughout this chapter, I also utilised information from the official documents (*Positio*) produced as part of this process for the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome (1989a; Gardiner 1989b). This publication emphasised what was known as her 'heroic virtues,' and, as a special type of hagiography, has been influential in the construction of the Mary MacKillop of History (MMH) as a cultural artefact.

6.1 BIOGRAPHIES – THE HAGIOGRAPHY AND ITS DIFFERENT EMPHASES

While a biography is intended to be an historical record, written records of the lives of the saints – hagiography – have what McLeod (1994, p 414) termed 'multilayered meanings'. The goals of this genre can be summarised as being a celebration of the saint's life and for the edification of the reader (Elliott 1987, p 6; McLeod 1994, p 404). As a form of literature, hagiography does this in a way that is reflective of the time it was written: it captures the notion of sanctity as it was understood at that time and for a particular society. In addition, these texts are available for study over time and, through a hermeneutical approach, can continue to provide examples of holy lives to be imitated (McLeod 1994, p 404).

In this thesis, I have considered all major biographies of Mary MacKillop to be also hagiographies: each was commissioned for the specific purpose of promoting the cult of Mary MacKillop. As this is a sociological study, I have focussed on identifying

the interrelationship between these biographies and their social contexts. The impact that these writings have had on the knowledge available about Mary MacKillop – to both journalists and readers – was an important factor in the examination of the development of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media (MMPM).

There were three biographies that had a significant impact up until 1985. The first was the one published by the Josephites with no identification of the author other than the fact that she was a Sister of Saint Joseph (1916).[21] This was followed by that of O'Neill (1931) and then by the work of Thorpe (1957). This latter book was revised in 1980 and then again in 1994. I have referred to the latest version in this chapter, since the substance of my references was mostly information available from the time of the first edition. Biographies published for the first time after 1985, such as O'Brien (1994) and Gardiner (1993b) have been referred to in this chapter but also have provided part of the sociocultural context for the print media examples considered in later chapters.

The initial biography of Mary MacKillop (Sister of Saint Joseph 1916) written soon after Mary MacKillop's death, was for private circulation amongst the Sisters of St Joseph. It was a small print run called the *Life and Letters* and was distributed to all convents so that new members would have some way of learning about the foundress. In the print style of the day, it was poorly formatted, difficult to read with many pages of one paragraph and it contained long unedited extracts from Mary's letters. Most of these writings were admonitions and words of encouragement. The writing style was verbose, as the writer attempted to provide a book which reflected the high regard felt by the sisters for Mary MacKillop. The introduction to the book was written by Archbishop Michael Kelly, who had himself met with Mary on many occasions. The front section included a copy of a letter from the Apostolic Delegate of the time, Monsignor Cerretti endorsing the book with a hope that 'your Institute may ever be true to the best spirit and traditions that were infused into it by its Foundress'.

[21] The author has since been identified as Sr Chanel O'Loughlin.

The *Life and Letters* was read aloud in the communities of the Josephites with the contents stimulating the memories of those who had shared in some of the events described. In this way, the Josephite oral history was developed and new members were instructed about Mary MacKillop. As they went about their various work, mostly in schools, they shared the stories about her and laid the foundations for knowledge still present in the consciousness of many today. In the days when newspapers were few (and could not be afforded by convents where basic necessities were the first priority) and other forms of media covering religious topics had yet to develop, this book had a significant effect on many sisters and their pupils. Through it, they formed a perception of the type of person Mary MacKillop was and this was added to by the oral history of the local area. This differed significantly from place to place: the South Australian tradition, for example, played up the stories of the early days and the difficulties faced in Adelaide. The establishment of a second novitiate in Sydney and the subsequent closure of the Adelaide one was remembered with sadness for many years by some who were close to this event.

Since the time that the formal enquiry into Mary MacKillop's possible canonisation had begun in 1925, the Jesuit, George O'Neill had been collecting material about her and Julian Tenison Woods. He had already published the *Life of Reverend Julian E T Woods* (1929) before embarking upon a companion volume (1931) for one whom he described in his Preface as 'probably the most gifted and influential woman that has yet seen the light under Australian skies'. His sources were interviews with Gertrude Abbott and other survivors of the visionary group of the early Josephites; the book, *Life and Letters,* along with much archival material provided by the Sisters of St Joseph. He also made use of the recollections of Annie MacKillop, those from several members of the Cameron family who were distantly related to Mary MacKillop, and articles by a Miss Queenie Primrose (1923) published in the Adelaide Catholic newspaper, *The Southern Cross*. O'Neill admitted his bias: he made reference to the difficulties faced by Mary MacKillop from those 'whom she intensely longed to love as friends or to honour as superiors'. This caused her an 'inner conflict, the violence of which would have broken the heart of a weaker woman'. He then added, 'I have not found it possible to tell the tale without sharing sympathetically in those conflicting sentiments of the heroine' (p xi).

O'Neill's investigation of the intemperance issue and his correspondence on this matter to the Commission of Enquiry in 1926 were affected by his limited access to all the sources which became available at a later time. Despite the fact that, with the benefit of hindsight, it was essential that the question of the alleged intemperance was scrutinised, O'Neill's actions affected his credibility with many, especially within the Sisters of St Joseph of the time. Whilst other documentary evidence in 1929 also brought up the question of Mary MacKillop's use of alcohol, it was O'Neill who was often blamed within the Sisters of St Joseph for the fact that her Cause for Canonisation was halted for twenty years. This was shown by the way that his book was not widely available within convent libraries. It was generally considered to be more on the line of sensationalised fiction, rather than historical accuracy or useful hagiography.[22] This book, therefore, did not have such a large impact on the knowledge about Mary MacKillop transmitted through schools by Josephites to their pupils. It had its greatest impact through its adaptation and publication as a small, cheap pamphlet published by the Catholic Truth Society and on sale at church doors. One version of this was prepared by Ryan (1936), reissued in 1944 and 1962 before another revision and reprinting in 1978.[23] Such pamphlets were well circulated in Catholic circles; they were influential in the transmission of knowledge and the maintenance of the Catholic sub-culture within Australia.

The most influential biography for more than fifty years was that written by the Passionist priest, Osmund Thorpe and first published in 1957. Cardinal Gilroy, who had been involved in the work of Mary MacKillop's Cause since it commenced in 1926, wrote the Foreword to that edition. In contrast to his description of O'Neill, he was lavish in his praise of Thorpe, describing him as 'a born historian, with scrupulous regard for truth and accuracy'. By this time, the first part of the process for declaring Mary MacKillop a saint had been completed and all the documentation

[22] This issue was discussed at length in the *Positio* by Gardiner (1989b) in his Introduction B: he quoted Cardinal Gilroy as saying that the Commission of Enquiry would never have heard of the charge of intemperance against Mary MacKillop 'but for the action of Father George O'Neill SJ' whom he described as a person who 'had a penchant for unearthing historical scandals, but lacked judgment in weighing testimony'.

[23] Cost varied from 3d in 1936 for an edition with photos, to 2d for the 1944 version, 6d in 1962 and then 20 cents in 1978.

sent to Rome. A favourable response had been received and work on the Cause was continuing slowly.

The basic work of Thorpe was reprinted in 1980 with a new Preface and then again in 1994. This book was considered the orthodox version amongst Josephites and was freely distributed through schools and libraries. The second edition was produced as a low cost paperback and provided a stimulus for continued interest in Mary MacKillop following on from Pope Paul's visit to her tomb in 1970 and then the official declaration in 1973 that her Cause could proceed. A second papal visit to the tomb by Pope John Paul II in 1986 and then the announcement in 1993 that she was eligible for Beatification led to a renewed public interest in Mary MacKillop. Thorpe's book was therefore put into a third edition, which was also a paperback, although of a slightly better quality paper and presentation than the second edition.

Elements of the traditional hagiographic style can be traced in the biography by Thorpe. This was alluded to in the Foreword by Cardinal Gilroy and the themes identified by Elliott (1987) were evident. Mary was identified as a 'puer-senex', a wise child given the special privilege of receiving her First Communion at the earlier age of eight rather than the usual ten or twelve. Thorpe noted that this provided evidence of 'her expert knowledge of the catechism but still more for her spiritual preparedness and insight into divine things' (1980, p 22). The meeting of a significant person (Julian Tenison Woods), the sharing of a vision, the opposition faced, the use of a disguise in her travel to Rome, the continued journeying in search of the vision and then the holy death were all key features of the hagiographic style.

6.2 LIFE EXPERIENCES

I have traced the constructed reality of MMH through the texts of these biographies and the *Positio*, as well as using many of the letters written by Mary MacKillop herself.

6.2.1 Family

Mary MacKillop was born in Melbourne on 15 January 1842, the first child of Scottish immigrants, Alexander MacKillop and Flora McDonald. Her parents were both Highland Scots from the Lochaber area: Alexander's family came from a small

croft (or farm) just outside Roybridge near the ancient site known as Tom Aingeal. A restored church and an extensive burial ground called Cille Choirill stand on this site as monuments to the beginnings of Christianity in Scotland from the time of St Ninian in 450. Christianity spread when St Columba established his monastery in Iona in 563 and sent monks as missionaries throughout the Highlands. In modern times, the area had a strong tradition of Catholic families who were very staunch in their beliefs and practice.

Alexander was educated for the priesthood from an early age: Gardiner (1989b, p 46) noted that he was only thirteen when he left Scotland to attend the Scots College in Rome. Before that, he had spent 'some time as a young seminarian on the island of Lismore' in Scotland. Although he did not complete his studies and was never ordained, the knowledge gained during his extensive education enabled him to travel to Australia in 1838, listing his occupation as 'schoolmaster' (Gardiner 1989b ,p 63; Thorpe 1994,p 15).

Flora's family came from an area very close to where Alexander grew up. She was one of the McDonald clan that came from Keppoch, a small village which is also close to Roybridge. The family's loyalty to Catholic traditions was shown by the fact that she was given the name of the famous Jacobite heroine, Flora McDonald. Flora's mother (Catherine Drochaid) travelled to Australia in April 1840, leaving her husband, Donald behind to face the bank over a debt he had guaranteed for his cousin (Macdonald 1994). On arrival in Melbourne, Flora, along with her mother and brother, Donald, spent until the middle of June in quarantine due to the outbreak of typhoid fever during the voyage.[24] On their release, they were offered hospitality by Alexander MacKillop in his home in Melbourne. The fact that Alexander and Flora were married on 14 July of this same year could indicate that their courtship had begun before both left Scotland, although there is no conclusive evidence to support this.

[24] Flora's brother, Alistair (also referred to as Alexander in Macdonald (1994, p 21), caught this fever and drowned after falling overboard. The quarantine period during this first winter in Australia was in tents near Port Philip (Gardiner 1989b, p 87).

Mary had three sisters and four brothers – Margarite or Maggie (1843-1872), John (1845-1867), Alexander or Alick (1846-1847), Annie (1848-1929), Alexandrina or Lexie (1850-1882), Donald (1853-1925) and Peter (1857-1878).

While Alexander may have been intellectually quite brilliant, he lacked the ability to deal with more practical matters associated with such a large family. The fact that he had left home before his teenage years to begin his training for the priesthood meant that his formative years were spent in institutions rather than in observing the functioning of a family. His business ventures were disastrous, he was imprudent in his choice of friends and was unable to provide the basic necessities of food and shelter to his family for any extended period of time (Thorpe 1994, p 16). The fiercely anti-Catholic stance of the Reverend John Dunmore Lang caused Alexander to draw on his well-developed skills of rhetoric and debate in writing for the local press. His activities resulted in the loss of his employment and he became known as 'Mr Highland MacKillop', a term which Gardiner (1989b, p 69) noted, 'became a byword for sectarian confrontation'. Alexander's interest in political and religious debate led him to at least two unsuccessful attempts to stand for Parliament. A topic during one of these campaigns was education for those in remote and isolated parts of the colony: an issue which Mary, who then was eleven, tried to address in her later work. On another occasion, he mortgaged the property they had at the time (without telling Flora), and used the funds to travel to Scotland with a dying friend. When he returned after seventeen months, he found that his brother, from whom he had obtained the funds, had foreclosed on the mortgage. This had caused Flora to seek hospitality and support from her brother, Donald (Gardiner 1989b), one of the many times she had to seek help from him and other members of her extended family during her life.

While Mary did have a wonderful bond with her father and was largely educated by him, she had a very deep affection for her mother who was, for the most part, a sole parent of a large family in days when there was no social security. As the eldest of the family, Mary gave whatever practical assistance she could: the Memoirs of her sister, Annie, described one incident in which Mary pawned her pet cow to help

Flora pay a pressing debt (Sisters of St Joseph 1983, p 16).[25] Many letters exist which Mary wrote to her mother: her care for her younger siblings was indicated in that of 14 August 1866 when she mentioned that she had Lexie, Annie and Donald with her in Penola, whilst Flora remained in Portland with the rest of the family. Flora may not always have agreed with Mary as Mary's letter to Julian Tenison Woods of 12 March 1867 included Mary's comment that Flora 'blamed me for the way I was bringing Annie up'.

From her early teenage years, Mary worked in Melbourne to help support the family. Her positions included that of a nursery governess and then as a shop assistant with Sands & Kenny (later Sands and McDougall). In 1860, she was invited to become a governess to her cousins, the Camerons at Penola. Alexander Cameron (known to Mary as Uncle Sandy and around Penola as King Cameron because of his vast holdings) had married Alexander's sister, Margaret. As noted by Thorpe (1994, p 20), 'the Camerons were wealthy and it was essential in the interests of her family to keep on friendly terms with them'. Her move to Penola started a chain of events which focussed the direction of her life from that point forward.

Mary was a prolific letter writer and in correspondence (Ascension Thursday, 1873) with Monsignor Kirby, the Rector of the Irish College in Rome, she shared her reflection on her family:

> (God) gave me good Catholic parents, a mother that in patience, resignation and suffering seemed to me, and to many more, a second Monica. My father had been educated for the Church and had studied very deeply. From him I learnt so much of the teachings of our holy Faith.....
>
> My life as a child was one of sorrows, my home, when I had it, a most unhappy one. (God) gave me a most keen sense of duty, and in the discharge of what appeared to be my duty, I felt it impossible to pause or to consider my own (feelings) no matter how much they had to be trampled upon.
>
> When I was little more than 16 years of age, the principal care of a very large family fell upon me, and from that until I was nearly 25 I felt its burthen (sic) yearly more and more.

[25] O'Neill (1931, p 12) described this incident differently: in his version, the calf had been pledged by Alexander as security for a debt. When the animal was about to be seized by a creditor, Mary was said to have jumped onto 'an untamed and frisky colt' and ridden to another relative for the amount of the outstanding debt.

One of the things that Mary found hardest when she chose to live as a religious was the constraint placed by Julian Tenison Woods on her letter-writing to her mother – it 'was truly the hardest thing I had to do' (to Woods 3/6/1870). With the lifting of this restriction, she wrote two letters in quick succession to Flora. In the one of 4 June 1870, she reflected on the adjustments she had had to make in her choice of lifestyle and noted that, 'no one, I think, but our good God knows what it cost me to leave you and Uncle' and spoke further of her 'great love for you and Uncle'. This latter was her Uncle Donald McDonald, Flora's brother. Mary made no mention of her father, Alexander in this letter, although she did so in that of 6 June 1870 when she mentioned 'poor Papa's happy death' and noted that she 'was not long in religion when (she) clearly saw how much (she) owed to him'. This letter also acknowledged the role that Flora played in Mary's own spiritual development: 'your submission to the Will of God, your resignation under affliction, and your always confiding simple trust in Divine Providence proved a wonderful comfort and example to me'.

While most of her siblings died at relatively young ages, both Annie and Donald outlived her, Annie till 1929 and Donald until 1925. Mary was very close to these two: Annie acted as her nurse and companion during her final visit to New Zealand and was present at her death bed, reading prayers at Mary's request. The reading was interrupted for a nurse to attend to Mary and, when this was finished, Mary was heard to say, 'Go on'. These were her last words (O'Neill 1931, p 401; Sisters of St Joseph 1983, p 60).[26] Donald became a Jesuit priest and their correspondence revealed that Mary at times was able to share some of her burdens which she could not disclose to anyone else. This was particularly the case in the years when Mother Bernard Walsh was appointed Mother-General of the Sisters of St Joseph and Mary was in many respects a token deputy to an ineffective leader. In 1897, just after Mother Bernard had been confirmed in office for a further term until 1902, Mary wrote to Donald of dreading to go to Sydney to the main house of the Congregation: 'you can have no idea of the falseness of my position there. ... I do not and cannot

[26] While Annie was able to be with Mary at her death, she was not able to be present at her funeral. Gardiner (1993b, p 482) noted that, despite being promised a reserved seat in the Church, Annie was unable to find room. He explained that the misunderstanding could be traced perhaps to the fact that Cardinal Moran, without any consultation, announced to the Sisters on Monday afternoon that he had arranged the funeral for Tuesday and so details such as reserved seating may have been overlooked in the rush.

approve of things I see done or undone'. She confided to Donald that Mother Bernard 'is not my friend with the Cardinal' and that she (Mary) had 'lost my temper with (her) on one particular occasion which I shall ever regret for I forgot what I owed to her in her position' (Gardiner 1993b, p 436-437). Closer examination of the total letter from the archives revealed an insight into the frustration she experienced at the poor leadership, whilst at the same time, showing the strength of her character in accepting the situation:

> I am truly sorry that the Cardinal has done this, as unknowingly, he has done our poor Institute a great wrong. He simply does not know the utter unfitness for her position of the one he has placed over this widely spread Institute. May our good God help us not to fail in submission. Pray that I at least fail not, that when moments of bitter and painful trial come, I may do my duty, and the 'dirty work' for his sake who has been so good to me. I have not said to anyone else what I have said to you about her unfitness. My duty is clearly to uphold her, and with God's help I will.[27]

At the time of Mary's death, Donald was in country South Australia, offering Mass in the Port Augusta Convent Chapel (Sisters of St Joseph 1983, p 77).

6.2.2 Scots Heritage and Celtic Christianity

Those who knew Mary MacKillop maintained that she spoke with a faint Scots accent,[28] a legacy of her heritage and close contact in her early years with many Scots relatives, especially her maternal grandfather, Donald McDonald. He had joined his family in Australia and died when she was five. It from him that she learnt Gaelic: he was said to have always referred to her as 'gnothach miadhail' – precious thing (Gardiner 1989b, p 62). Mary obviously maintained her knowledge of this second language because she embarrassed some Highlanders she met when visiting Scotland in 1873: they realised from her expression that she could understand their conversation about her (Gardiner 1993b, p 139).

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[27] The original contained the words underlined as shown.

[28] Burford (1995, p 2) cited recollections from one of the Sisters who knew Mary MacKillop: the example given was that when she had sufficient of something, she said that she had 'ahmple'. Thorpe (1994, p 186) referred to this word being used in a different context and spelt it as 'aumple'. Her use of the Scottish term, 'burthen' in the letter quoted above to Monsignor Kirby was also a reflection of her Scottish manner of speech.

Mary spent some time travelling in Europe during 1873 and 1874 awaiting a decision from Roman authorities about the Rule of the Sisters of St Joseph. The opportunity to visit Scotland during this time was not one which Mary undertook simply as a tourist or to make contact with distant relatives. As she explained in a letter to her mother (30/9/1873):

> You, dearest Mamma, who know how my heart ever clinged to anything connected with Grandpa and what he loved, to say nothing of yourself and Uncle, can imagine what a tempting invitation this is to me, but I do not know, or yet see that I can or ought to go. If I can help our great work in any way then I know I can, but otherwise I may not think of it (Quoted in Gardiner 1989b, p 489).

She had admitted in a letter a few days before to the Sisters back in Australia (25/9/1873), that she had been tempted 'to see the oft heard of White Cliffs of England'. She then continued, 'If I felt that for England's cliffs, what, you may imagine must I not wish to see if I go near Scotland' (MacKillop 1976, p 36). To Mary, her Highland Scots ancestry was synonymous with her Celtic spirituality. After due consideration, she did go to Scotland and her letters revealed her contentment and joy at being in 'one of the oldest Catholic parts of the Highlands, where nearly all the people are now Catholics, and where I hear the most beautiful things about the fidelity of the people' (MacKillop 1976, p 49). Her letter of 16 February 1874 provided a very extensive outline of her travels throughout Scotland, particularly in the Highlands: she enjoyed the hospitality and friendship offered by her distant relatives as well as by many priests, some of whom had studied with her father in Rome. She also described how she visited her father's brother, Archibald who lived just outside of Edinburgh. He was the only member of her father's immediate family who had remained in Scotland and he had given up the practice of his Catholic faith. Mary introduced him to the local parish priest and obviously tried to persuade him to reconsider his ways but without success.

A happier experience was reported when she visited relatives of her mother, the McDonalds of Cranochan: 'Just imagine my going, accompanied by Father McDougall, to a wild grand glen – the home of five wonderful, eccentric

Highlanders, all brothers and none married'.[29] In an earlier letter (27/10/1873) Mary MacKillop shared with Flora her delight in being in Scotland: 'Won't it cheer you my own dear Mamma to know that your child sees the parts you have known and loved, and meets so many who have known and loved you'. A month later (26/11/1873) she had also written to her mother about her feelings of kinship when meeting other McDonald cousins in Cranachan: 'the moment I saw John Cranachan in Church, I felt that I was near one of our own, and strange to say it was more than I could bear unmoved' (Both letters cited in Gardiner 1989b, p 493).

Throughout her life, Mary retained a great pride in her Highland Scots heritage. On a visit to New Zealand in 1897, she met up with Scots families who were only distantly related through marriage but she noted in a letter, 'I am very fond of all Highland friends' (quoted in Gardiner 1989b, p 58). On another occasion, she was in France and enjoyed a conversation with a priest she met there. She noted that they became good friends and added in justification, 'He was from Scotland – the Highlands too. I need not say any more' (Sister of Saint Joseph 1916, p 162).

Mary's early family experiences and her ethnic heritage affected her appreciation of the importance of a close-knit community or clan solidarity. Her father's lack of practical expertise caused her to recognise the importance of being adaptable to the circumstances of life and to realise that she could remain detached from possessions and property. From an early age, she shouldered family responsibilities, developed a strong bond with her mother and her maternal relatives in particular, as well as establishing a character marked by determination, a strong awareness of her duty and a sense of her own worth. The development of a group of women dedicated to providing education for the poor in remote rural as well as city schools could be traced to the impressions left by her father's involvement in a political campaign espousing the provision of education for all (1989a, p 71; Gardiner 1993b, p 17). The manner in which she eventually provided this education was quite probably affected by her experience of the Celtic missionaries who travelled to remote

[29] She went on to say that she 'really must reserve particulars of this visit until I see you' but unfortunately no further details have survived of what must have been a great occasion of Scottish hospitality.

Scottish villages to spread the Catholic faith. I would agree with the suggestion by Burford (1995, p 22) that,

> ...the Scot in Mary MacKillop saw strong relationships between her radical concept of mission in the 19th Century Australian Church and the pattern of life of the early monastic Celtic communities.

6.2.3 Major milestones

As a framework for later discussions, I have outlined the major events in Mary MacKillop's life. These have been adapted from Modystack (1995, pp 274-282); Thorpe (1994, pp 205-210); Gardiner (1989b, pp i-xv) as well as information from the archives of the Sisters of St Joseph.

1842	January 15	Born in Melbourne
1860-1861		Worked as governess to her cousins, the Camerons in Penola where she first met Fr Julian Tenison Woods
1863-1865		Employed in Portland as a teacher in the Denominational School and then in Bay View House School for Young Ladies
1866	January	Went to Penola and commenced a school in a refurbished stable
	March 19	Wore a plain black dress as a sign of religious dedication
1867	January	Addressed as 'Sister Mary' by Bishop Shiel on his first visit to Penola
	June 22	Travelled to Adelaide to begin school there
	August 15	Took first vows as a religious
	November	Opened first country school from Adelaide at Yankalilla (closed in 1874)
1871	September 22	Excommunicated
1872	February 22	Excommunication lifted
1873	March 28	Departed for Rome
	May 11	Arrived in Rome; met Monsignor Kirby amongst others
	August 13	Arrived in London
	September	Made a Pilgrimage to France to Paray-le-Monial
	October 15	Left London for travel in Scotland

1874	March 14	Returned to Rome
	April 24	Left Rome after receiving approval for the Constitutions of the Sisters of St Joseph with central government
	June, July	Travelled in Ireland
	October 31	Sailed for Australia with 15 Irish girls who wished to join her
1875	January 4	Arrived back in Adelaide
	March 19	First General Chapter[30] for Sisters of St Joseph; Elected as Superior-General based in Adelaide
1881	June 19	Second General Chapter; again elected Superior-General, although she considered herself ineligible[31]
1883	November 17	Ordered by Bishop Reynolds to leave Adelaide, travelled to Sydney
1884	April 13	Bishop Reynolds tried to coerce Sisters remaining in Adelaide to become a diocesan group under his control
1885	October	Advised by Cardinal Moran that her election in 1881 was invalid; Mother Bernard Walsh appointed Superior-General[32]
1888	July 25	Official approval received from Rome for the Sisters of St Joseph to be recognised with central government as desired by Mary; Mother Bernard Walsh confirmed in office for next 10 years
1889	December 16	Elected as Assistant General to Mother Bernard in Third General Chapter
1896	March	Fourth General Chapter[33]

[30] The term 'Chapter' refers to the general meeting of the Sisters of St Joseph to decide upon the policy, goals and directions of the organisation. According to the Constitution of the group, these Chapters are held every six years. Elections are held at this time for the person who will lead the group – this role was known as Superior General and person was called 'Mother' instead of 'Sister'.

[31] The usual length of appointment as Superior-General was twelve years – two terms of six years. By this time Mary MacKillop had been in this role for fifteen years. Bishop Reynolds and Father Tappeiner SJ who were both present at this election of 1881 overruled her objections. Their reason was that her appointment should be counted only from the time that the Constitutions had been adopted six years beforehand (Gardiner 1989a, p 881).

[32] Her letter to the Sisters dated 16 November 1885 conveyed the news about the appointment of Mother Bernard. She wrote: 'Rome, in its wisdom, rules that the last election was invalid, and some of you will remember that I thought so too, though another ruled otherwise'.

[33] No election held as Mother Bernard had already been confirmed in office for ten years.

	July	Travelled to visit Sisters in South Australia and New Zealand
1897	December 8	Mother Bernard Walsh confirmed in office until 1902[34]
1898	August 7	Mother Bernard died suddenly
	August 19	Returned from New Zealand
1899	January 6	Elected Superior-General in Fifth General Chapter
1901	April	First edition of the *Garland of St Joseph* magazine published
1902	January 23	Travelled to New Zealand when seriously ill to visit Rotorua Springs with Annie as companion
	May 11	Suffered a stroke
	December 14	Returned to Sydney
1905	March 19	Re-elected as Superior-General at the Sixth General Chapter[35]
1909	August 8	Died in Sydney

While the scope of this thesis precluded a detailed examination of many aspects of her life, there were two areas which I have considered as having significance for later sections of this study: Mary MacKillop's ability as a leader and her relationship to Church authorities. These provide key contextual material for the emergence of MMPM.

6.2.4 Ability as a leader

Within her own family, Mary was the acknowledged leader: her sister, Annie recalled that the family considered Bayview House in Portland as Mary's house since it was due to her work as a teacher that they were able to live there. Mary was fifteen when Peter, the youngest in the family was born, and to him she was an authority figure. In 1877, he wrote to her, begging her to arrange that he did not have to return to school at Sevenhill (Sisters of St Joseph 1983). As a governess, she had an unmistakeable authority with those in her charge. One of her charges recalled

[34] Cardinal Moran used 'powers of discretion' bestowed on him by Roman authorities (see Thorpe 1994, p 186).

[35] This was despite her frailty and poor health. Gardiner (1993b, p 474) suggested that the overwhelming reason was that 'the foundress' spirit ... was valued above all'.

later, 'you could not face Cousin Mary with your work badly done – she would give you a look you could never forget' (Sister of Saint Joseph 1916, p 4).

Within the Sisters of St Joseph, Mary was a charismatic leader who could inspire others in times of great difficulty. The qualities which stand out can be summarised under three headings:

- Vision
- View of people
- Management practices

6.2.4.1 VISION

Mary MacKillop's vision was to provide education to the children of the poor, especially those in rural areas. Her interest in this cause could be traced back to her father's passion for the provision of education for those in outback areas of Australia. Gardiner noted that during one of his unsuccessful political campaigns, Alexander had canvassed on the issue of 'the provision of money for schools in remote and isolated areas, an issue that would not have escaped the notice of his eleven year old daughter' (1989a, p 71). This memory, along with her interest in the early Celtic missionaries, helped to focus her dream into a reality. The summary prepared by Mary in Rome for presentation to Pope Pius IX in 1873 outlined her vision, noting the priority which was to be given to 'visiting the sick, the hospitals, gaols, receiving orphans and destitute poor, and in reclaiming penitents'. After commencing at Penola, she attracted others of like mind. They moved to Adelaide and from there to other parts of South Australia; then to Queensland and New South Wales. By 1873, there were 130 sisters working in these three states. Between 1875-1881, she revised the Rules for the new group of sisters and summarised the vision in the language of the day as follows:

> This Institute[36] has been established under the name and patronage of the glorious Patriarch St Joseph, who is the most perfect model and most powerful patron of a Christian education. The Sisters of the Institute must above all endeavour to imitate their great Patron in his virtues, and to aim at that religious perfection to which the mercy of God calls them, so that they should neglect no degree of sanctity to which his grace may lead them. They must attain this great end not merely by working for themselves, but principally by working for their neighbour, and in a special manner for poor children, and such persons as are more destitute of spiritual help and are in greater danger of losing their souls. To educate young children, especially those of poor parents, to teach them the knowledge of God, and to lead them into the way of salvation, to assist any person who may be in spiritual destitution, as far as is compatible with their state in life, such is the holy end of our Institute (Sisters of St Joseph 1982).

Mary believed in regular communication of her vision to others. Throughout her life, she was a prolific letter-writer and many of these letters have survived to be kept in the Josephite Archives. There are 106 general circulars which she wrote to be sent around to all convents throughout Australia and New Zealand (MacKillop 1976). In the days before photocopiers and when most letters were handwritten, this was a very labour intensive task. It was only towards the end of her life that she used a typewriter for her correspondence and this was after she had written for some time with her left hand following her stroke in 1902. In the circulars, she always gave spiritual guidance to the sisters, many of whom had had little formal or religious education before they joined the group. She also included practical advice such as how purchases were to be made and accounted for (23/3/1878), outlined how the elections would be held to select those to go to the General Chapter (11/12/1880) and covered travel details such as the arrangement of buses to meet trains (27/11/1881). Many of her thoughts from these circulars were reproduced as maxims and printed on notice boards for the further edification of the sisters or the students in their schools.

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[36] Mary used the term 'Institute' to refer to the group she had founded in conjunction with Julian Tenison Woods. There were slight variations in the official title during the early years: eg the letter from Cardinal Simeoni to Mary of 21 April 1874 spoke of Mary being 'Superioress of the Sisters of St Joseph in Australia'. Mary often used 'Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart', the Decree from Rome in 1888 used the full title of 'Sisters of St Joseph of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus'. The form used by Mary MacKillop, 'Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart' is the one which has continued in use today.

As the number of sisters grew, Mary put in place many organisational details to unite the group and develop a sense of identity. These ranged from the timetable for the day in each convent, the methods to be used in training the novices, the role of religious superiors to the many practical details about schools. Correspondence between Mary and Julian (13/5/1867) showed some of the school structures which Mary set in place: they included selection of monitors, guidelines for the movement of children, the keeping of school rolls and the curriculum.[37] She was realistic about the difficulties faced by those who worked in the schools: 'the ignorance of parents is often a heavy cross; it is hard to please them, impossible to satisfy them' (Sisters of St Joseph 1982, p 25).

Mary MacKillop believed in making her vision visible. The sisters wore a religious dress based on ideas of Julian and other priests of the time. Mary seemed inclined to follow the idea from St Vincent de Paul that the only veil needed was 'modesty' but noted 'the Dean's idea that nuns look so nice in veils, or rather, that the veil is more nun-like' and so opted for traditional religious garb (Julian to Mary 21/5/1867, Mary to Julian 2/6/1867).

From the first school in Penola, Mary had named all such works to be under the patronage of St Joseph, who was a special role model for her. To her he displayed all the qualities of her vision for holiness and so his example was constantly quoted in her letters and in practical ways. Statues of this saint were placed in all schools and the annual feast day of 19 March each year was a day of special celebration and one for which she usually tried to write a special circular admonishing the sisters to imitate his virtues of humility, poverty, obedience and practical charity (eg Circular of 19/3/1893). By 1906 when Mary was unable to write at any length to the sisters, she was able to set up another structure of communication to continue her vision and devotion to this saint – the monthly magazine, *The Garland of St Joseph*. Her Circular letter (1/4/1906) announced this event and her hopes for this new means of communication:

[37] Foale (1989, pp 199-201) provided an example of the early syllabus and timetable used in Josephite schools.

> I specially recommend to you "The Garland of St Joseph". I hope you will do all you can to promote its circulation by forming circles for its distribution amongst your friends and school children. Remember it has been one of my dearest wishes to have a little periodical in honour of our Holy Patron, and by its means to keep the spirit of unity and emulation amongst our schools and children.

In order to achieve her vision of providing education and assistance to those in need, Mary proposed to organise her group in a radically different way from that which would have been more familiar to the Irish bishops. Instead of the group being directly accountable to the local bishop of the diocese, she wanted a form of central government in which there would be one Superior General to whom all the sisters were responsible, no matter where they worked.[38] As noted by Foale (1989, p 125), the early rules drawn up by Mary and Julian did contain some ambiguities which were left in, as both understood the intention behind the words. This caused problems when others tried to interpret these rules and the matter of central government was the area that caused many difficulties for Mary. It had been at the heart of issues leading up to her excommunication in September 1871. It was this question, along with the matter of the debts incurred by the sisters in their work and the suggestion of her intemperance, which led to her dismissal from the Adelaide Archdiocese by Bishop Reynolds in November 1883.

Her letters around this time reflected the anguish she experienced: 'between one thing and another, I am nearly crushed' (to Monica Phillips 1/8/1883). In writing to Monsignor Kirby and Cardinal Simeoni in Rome about these events (7/12/1883), Mary took great care to excuse the Bishop and remarked that she did not want any of the information she provided 'to be used in any way against the Bishop'. The injustice of the verbal and written instructions from Bishop Reynolds that Mary was to leave Adelaide had such an effect upon her that she admitted in a letter to Mechtilde Woods (10/12/1883) that she was having recurring nightmares about the

[38] This structure and the way that Mary MacKillop would send out small groups of Sisters to live and work amongst the poor was worked out in conjunction with Julian Tenison Woods who had been impressed by a Congregation of women religious he had seen in France, the Sisters of St Joseph of Puy (Press 1994). The growth in the numbers of groups of women religious who established a centralised form of government up to the time of Pope Leo XXIII has been traced by Callahan (1948).

Bishop. Despite her personal suffering, Mary remained a leader who was discreet, circumspect and loyal to the authority of the church, even though she knew this authority was being abused. She notified the sisters (15/11/1883) that 'circumstances call me to Sydney' and did not go into details except to say that 'there is more I would like to tell you, but for the interest of charity and peace 'tis better not'. To Bishop Reynolds she wrote (16/11/1883), 'the instructions in your last letter surprised me but I submit. All is, I hope for the best. At least I know you so intend it'.

6.2.4.2 VIEW OF PEOPLE

Despite all that happened to her, Mary always tried to believe in the innate goodness of people and to think charitably of them. Even when Bishop Reynolds was dying in June 1893, she wrote from Sydney to another sister, Annette Henschke, 'I have had a lot of Masses said for him and you may be sure many prayers and Holy Communions offered. Sometimes I thought of writing to him but fear I might do more harm than good by doing so' (3/6/1893).

Mary disagreed about many issues with Julian Tenison Woods, the priest who was so instrumental in the early days in establishing the Sisters of St Joseph. While both were visionaries, she combined her vision with pragmatism. The difference in their approach was particularly evident over the sisters who were reputed to be having visions (letter from Mary 11/10/1871) and on some of the more practical matters of community living as evidenced in Mary's reflections (1873) on the Rules written by Julian in 1867. Their correspondence, however, indicated the deep friendship and respect which existed between them in the early years: letters in 1862 showed him as writing to 'My Dear Mary' and signing himself 'Julian Edmund Woods'. As time went by, the greetings became more formal – 'My dear Father Woods' (28/8/1864) to 'My dear Father (11/10/1871). The closing of her letters was also indicative: she used 'Yours very affectionately' writing from Portland (28/8/1864), 'Your fond child' (26/5/1870) and just after her excommunication, 'Your affectionate child in JMJ' (11/10/1871) and then a few days later, 'Your humble child in JMJ' (14/10/1871). When Fr Woods was dying in Sydney, Mary visited him several times. Her Circular after his death in 1889 (MacKillop 1976, p 142) reminded the

sisters that 'he dearly loved the Institute'. She had admitted too in a letter to Sr Bonaventure Mahony, her regret at the way their paths had separated: 'the Bishop is kind, Father Tappeiner is also kind, but for all that they are not FD,[39] (11/4/1876). Mary wrote a biography of him, completing it by dictation after her stroke. It was a tribute to a man who was an educator, a scientist and a mentor for many years (MacKillop 1903).

In her account of the History of the Congregation, Mary clearly stated that her vision for schools was that 'all children attending them (would be) treated alike'. She recounted the story of how this was tested in one of the early Adelaide schools when the wife of the Governor, Sir Dominic Daly, asked that her grandson be given special seating and attention. This was, in Mary's own words, 'respectfully but firmly refused on the plea that the school was for the poorer class, not for the upper ranks' (MacKillop 1900).

Mary was egalitarian within the group she founded as well as in her approach to those being educated. She wrote in the Rules that, 'all must remember that there are no grades or distinctions in the Institute of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart'. All were expected to share in the household tasks, no matter what their situation had been before entering the Sisters of St Joseph (Sisters of St Joseph 1982, pp 28-30).

While her vision caused her to have high expectations of others, she nevertheless was concerned for the trivia of people's lives. The letters preserved show many examples of this: writing to Julian from Brisbane she mentioned that two of the sisters 'had their likenesses taken for their parents who are leaving Queensland and going to New Zealand' (13/9/1870). On many occasions, she showed her awareness of the specific ailments of individuals, such as Sr Teresa's lumbago (18/9/1870) and Sr Bernardine's rheumatism (29/8/1883). She took time to write letters of condolence such as that sent to Sr Raymond in New Zealand upon the death of her father (23/8/1896). Many others could be cited in a similar vein showing that Mary knew every sister as an individual and cared for her. She continued to share her vision with them in a very personal way through her letters and to encourage them in their

[39] FD stood for Father Director and was another of her early terms for Julian.

individual circumstances. This had a lasting impact on those who knew her: during the initial meetings held in 1925-26 to commence the canonisation process, three of those who entered the Josephites in 1869[40] were interrogated about their memories of her.

> What emerged clearly as their most vivid personal memory of the Foundress was her kindness. She was thoughtful about the needs of others, gentle and humble when she had to admonish her Sisters, and her respect, compassion, and love towards the people the Sisters were helping were impressions that did not fade with time. (Gardiner 1989b, p 236)

Mary's family responsibilities as well as her own nature meant that she had a maturity beyond her years. She could stand her ground over matters of principle and was not afraid to go to the highest authority in Rome to present her case. When those within the Catholic Church rejected her through the excommunication of 1871, she was able to accept help from the wider community in a gracious manner. It was a tribute to her general acceptance that she was offered practical assistance in the form of accommodation by Emmanuel Solomon, the Jew who had been supportive since 1869: she wrote to Julian 'Mr Solomon has given the house rent free for as long as we may require it' (26/10/1871). The Jesuit priests at Norwood also stood by Mary during this difficult time and Mary acknowledged this in her comment to Julian that 'nothing can exceed the kindness of the Jesuit Fathers. Indeed I fear that they may get themselves into trouble through this' (11/10/71).

Mary MacKillop's 'Observations on the Rule of 1873' (Sisters of St Joseph 1980) showed that schools were established which would provide Catholic education and shelter the students from 'the danger to their faith to which so many were exposed'. Despite the often insular attitude of the time, Mary was not afraid to look beyond Catholics for her own friends. One of these was Joanna Barr-Smith, a wealthy Anglican woman who assisted in many practical ways such as providing a large donation of two thousand pounds towards the building of the Kensington Convent. The depth of this friendship was shown in the letter of Mary to Sr Annette Henschke (21/4/1896): 'Let me know how Mrs Barr-Smith is later. I cannot write to her today,

[40] These were Mother Lawrence O'Brien, Srs Casimir Meskil and Mechtilde Woods.

but never forget her at Mass and Holy Communion'. She also made mention of her in later letters that same year which would indicate she had enjoyed renewing the acquaintance of her friend (3/10/1896, 9/12/1896).

6.2.4.3 MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

While Mary MacKillop did not use the same words, her management practices are recognised today by such writers as Peters (1985) who wrote at length on the importance of the 'Care of Customers', the need for 'Constant Innovation' and above all, a vision of Leadership with a base of what is termed 'MBWA – Managing By Wandering Around'. Her attitude to people would equate to the customer element and her innovative practices such as the way she trained teachers and then sent out small groups of two or three sisters to remote parts of the country to provide schools were quite radical for the day. It is in the base element, the 'MBWA', that Mary MacKillop excelled.

Throughout her life, Mary travelled long distances by various means to establish schools and other institutions and then continued to visit and encourage those who were in the field. A broad outline of some of her travels was adapted from Thorpe (1994, pp 205-210):

1869	December 8	Left Adelaide with three other sisters to start schools in Queensland
	December 31	Arrived in Brisbane
1871	March	Left Brisbane to return to Adelaide
	May/June	Visited Convents throughout South Australia
1873	September 22	Departed for Europe and time in Rome
1875	January 4	Arrived back in Adelaide
	April 27	Travelled to Queensland
	July	Visited Bathurst on return journey to Adelaide
	September	Returned to Adelaide
1876	January 13	Went to Bathurst

	February 17	Returned to Adelaide
1878	April-June	Travelled around convents in Queensland
1879	March	Visited Sydney from Queensland
1881	June	Returned to Adelaide
1883	November 11	Expelled from Adelaide – travelled to Sydney
1889	October	Visited convents in Victoria
1892		Spent time in Melbourne
1894	January	Travelled to New Zealand
1895	March	Returned to Sydney
1896-97		Visited convents in South Australia
1898		Visited convents in New Zealand
1904		Visited convents in South Australia and Victoria

Whilst details of some of these travels are sketchy, Mary's letters give an indication of the distances covered. She was certainly a visible leader who kept up face-to-face contact as far as possible. In her last visitation of country convents in South Australia, for example in 1896, a close examination of the addresses and contents of letters written in October of that year showed the following movements for 10 days:[41] 19th Jamestown; 20th Gladstone; 21st Caltowie by way of Port Pirie; 22nd Pekina; 23rd Petersburg (Peterborough); 24-25th The Burra; 26th Clare; 27th Sevenhill and then home to Adelaide on 28th. Although there were some trains, most of her travels around this area were by horse and cart and she took the opportunity to exercise her skills with horses - 'was driven yesterday to see Sr Raymond's mother who was so pleased – drove myself with Sr de Sales over there today' (19/10/1896). It was a punishing schedule for someone who had serious health problems, although she did promise her friend, Annette Henschke, 'I won't try too much at a time and

[41] I have estimated that she would have travelled at least 470 kilometres during these 10 days. The distance from Gladstone to Caltowie via Port Pirie would have been an arduous journey of some 95 kilometres. Roads in and out of Pekina even today are very rough and unsealed: they would have been even worse in 1896.

will have some nice changes of scene ... you know that pleasant excitement keeps me up'. Not all of these travels were so pleasant and in the same letter she admitted, 'I confess that I dread Caltowie, Jamestown and Gladstone, and will make those visits as short as I can' (24/9/1896). These were private confessions to a trusted friend.

6.2.5 Relationship to Church authorities

Mary's close association with Julian Tenison Woods as a mentor was the commencement of her long association with the clergy of the Catholic Church. In a more general way, reverence and respect for those ordained priests were hallmarks of Mary MacKillop's life. She enshrined her beliefs in the Rules of the Congregation:

> Let the Sisters show the greatest respect and reverence towards their Pastor, bearing humiliations and corrections with religious patience. If they cannot comply with his wishes, let them give their reasons with humility. If they doubt whether it be lawful for them to do what the Pastor desires, they must not refuse until they get instructions from their superiors (Sisters of St Joseph 1982, p 21).

She put this ideal into practice herself throughout her life and, as recalled by Mother Lawrence in the investigations of 1925-26, Mary's attitude towards priests was one of her most outstanding characteristics. She went to great lengths to help priests who were in difficulty or disgrace and in one instance sold her watch to buy an outfit for Fr O'Sullivan, one of the priests who had treated her unjustly during the Adelaide Commission of 1883 (Gardiner 1989a, p 37; 1989b, p 237).

Factors beyond her control affected many of Mary's relationships with Bishops. Those appointed to Adelaide were absent for long periods from the diocese. For the thirteen years after Bishop Murphy died, 1859-1872, Bishops Geoghegan and Sheil between them were only present in the diocese for a total of four years and ten months. Overwork, lack of real ability, difficulties in communication and lack of resources all compounded the situation. The brothers, Matthew and James Quinn, Bishops of Bathurst and Brisbane respectively, were strongly influenced by their cousin, Paul Cullen, Archbishop of Dublin after thirty years in Rome. To them, the role of a bishop was to build a Roman church in Australia but at the same time to maintain their individual authority and power base. This tradition was summed up

by Molony (1969, p 4) when he recounted the comment made by an Apostolic Visitor sent by Pope Leo XIII to Ireland. When asked for his comments on the bishops he found there, the reply was, 'I met no bishops in Ireland, Your Holiness, I met eighteen popes instead'. Mary MacKillop had come to a similar opinion as her comments about Dr Moran, newly appointed Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney, show: 'if it should happen that His Grace should hold the same view as most of the Irish Bishops I have known, he will not from inclination be a friend to our Constitutions' (To Dr Campbell in Rome 30/3/1884). She was referring to the issue of central government versus diocesan control of the Josephites.

Mary was a charismatic leader and a woman trying to begin a very different type of religious order: one that was very different from the style known by Irish bishops and which they feared as a threat to their authority. As a result, it was inevitable that Mary MacKillop would encounter difficulties with these bishops. In spite of everything, she maintained her respect for their office and would not allow any criticism to be voiced amongst the sisters but at the same time, did not back down from her principles in the face of extraordinary pressure. In writing to Matthew Quinn after the difficulties in Bathurst, she said: 'it is far from my intention to blame anyone. All mean well, only where there were two such opposite opinions, the only way to preserve the peace of the weaker party was quietly to retire (11/2/1876). She concluded the letter by saying that she would 'never forget to have all our Sisters pray according to your intentions for your diocese'. In describing the Bathurst difficulties over the issues of central government to Monsignor Kirby, she had written just the day before, 'it is only those Bishops who are not themselves Religious who are so much opposed to these things' (10/1/1876).

In the earlier incidents of 1871 when she was excommunicated, Mary tried to excuse the actions of Bishop Sheil: 'the poor Bishop says one thing and is again contradicted by the priests... What he says to one Sister he contradicts to another... I really think he forgets one moment what he has just said a little before' (To Julian 21/10/1871). The same letter also recorded her opinion of those priests whom she considered supportive at that stage – 'of the Irish priests, you may, I think, rely on Fr Reynolds and Kennedy (Kadina) and on all the foreign ones'. This latter reference would be to

the Jesuit priests from Austria, as well as several Dutch ones. Reynolds and Kennedy, however, did not remain supporters: the former expelled Mary from Adelaide in 1883 after conducting a formal enquiry (in which Kennedy took part) which he implied had been authorised by Rome.[42] In writing to one of the sisters whom Bishop Reynolds wished to interrogate, she wrote: 'as the Bishop is acting under instructions from the Holy See, I must ask you to come' (1/8/1883). To Mary MacKillop, allegiance to the wishes of the Pope was paramount. In announcing to her mother that she was going to Rome in 1873, she wrote, 'I am going to our common Father, the highest we have got here on earth' (12/4/1873).

As with Bishop Sheil and the two Bishops Quinn, Mary sought to make excuses for Bishop Reynolds. In writing from Sydney to the sisters in Adelaide, she was careful to be factual: 'letters have come for me today from Rome stating that no orders had been given from there about the Visitation'. At the same time she stressed, 'excuse the Bishop in what you write' (24/3/1884). To another sister she wrote that Bishop Reynolds 'was over-persuaded by others, meant well, but went the wrong way about it' (16/4/1884).

Despite the difference of opinion with some Bishops, Mary was wise enough to develop a strong network of priests and clergy on whom she could rely. A contemporary of her father, Dr Grant, was a staunch ally in Rome – 'he remembered Papa at once,' she wrote to her mother (3/6/1873). Monsignor Kirby, Dr Campbell and Cardinal Simeoni were the recipients of many of her letters for advice and guidance; she developed a strong relationship with Archbishop Vaughan of Sydney and Bishop Torreggiani of Armidale. After her expulsion from Adelaide in 1883, she wrote to Sr Mechtilde that this latter bishop 'calls these crosses Roman cement .... hard on us at the time but binding the work more and more to Rome which understands their value and knows how to judge them' (10/12/1883).

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[42] In actual fact, the enquiry was not authorised by Rome as was clearly established by Cardinal Moran in his report of 1885. Bishop Sheil's insistence that the sisters who gave evidence at this enquiry take a formal oath was a breach of the civil law and Moran noted that 'if the matter had been brought before a civil court, the bishop would have incurred a very heavy penalty'. Moran's report was included in the *Positio* in the original Italian because of the sensitivity of its contents. At my request, Fr Paul Gardiner translated this into English – the first time that this had been done. He provided his translation to me for this thesis and I have included it as Appendix 2.

6.2.6 Identification as an Australian

In attitude, actions and words, Mary MacKillop identified herself as an Australian, yet one very proud of her Scottish heritage. Before the Federation of Australia, all colonies were separate entities and yet, she could see the wisdom of having a mobile missionary force capable of going beyond state boundaries. She had a broad vision ahead of her time and she used central government as the way to make this possible. Her sisters would be under the authority of one Superior-General so that decisions could be made with the total picture in view. To her the various states were not separate British colonies, but integral parts of a new country she claimed in total.

As early as 1869, Mary left Adelaide for Queensland taking a group of sisters to establish a foundation there. They travelled at the invitation of Archbishop James Quinn of Brisbane who was very keen for Mary to begin Catholic Schools in his diocese yet offered no practical assistance by way of fares for them to make the journey from Adelaide. Their journey by sea was a long one via Melbourne and Sydney and, in each place, they had to beg for the money required for the next stage of the journey. Through practical experience, Mary became aware of the sheer size of the continent and the difficulty of travelling between colonies: it took more than three weeks from 8-31 December to reach their destination of Brisbane.

Her reflections on this journey, and on other events which occurred as she tried to make her vision a reality, were written up whilst she was in London in October 1873 awaiting the decision of Roman authorities on the Rule of the Sisters of St Joseph. In a paper called, 'Necessity for the Institute,' written as supplementary material for those in Rome, she gave an analysis of the sociocultural context of the time (Sisters of St Joseph 1984 pp 73-82). She described how the poor were mostly from the British Isles and widely scattered throughout the land. The vast distances, lack of clergy and the need to work hard to eke out an existence meant that many had little knowledge of their religion. The percentage of Catholics in the population was small and so there were many cases where Catholics had married Protestants or those of no faith. Intemperance was a serious evil, contributing further to the poverty of many families. Mary noted that, 'Australia is in every way a dangerous place for Catholics'.

She stressed the importance of an understanding of the situation because those considering the Rule would then 'the more readily realize the peculiar nature of the Sisters' vocation, the extreme necessity for such a work'. She hoped that the background she presented would enable the readers to see that 'what would seem out of place in Europe is still the very reverse in most parts of Australia'. In a strong statement of her ethnic identity as well as her purpose, she wrote:

> It is an Australian who writes this, one brought up in the midst of the many evils she tries to describe, and who has over and over again heard pious priests and zealous Bishops sadly deplore a state of things which they could not remedy.

This was written some twenty-eight years before the Commonwealth of Australian came into being: she had the foresight to realise that survival in this vast land required a united approach such as could be given through the central government of her new group of Sisters.[43] Once the Commonwealth became a reality, she took the unusual step of sending a circular to the Sisters reminding them of their civic duty. She wrote that 'it is a duty on all of us to vote, and for this reason all must have their names on the Electoral Rolls where they are placed'. She suggested that advice should be sought from 'some leading man in whom you have confidence, or from the priest,' but noted that voting should be secret. In advising them to vote for a candidate 'most friendly to the Church and Religion,' she shrewdly noted that, 'every so-called Catholic is not the best man' (16/7/1903). Apart from the fact that this was one of the few occasions when Mary made reference to current events, this letter was also one of those she wrote under great difficulty with her left hand, following her stroke. She considered the responsibilities of Australian citizenship serious enough to warrant such an effort.

6.2.7 Death and burial

The record contained in the *Positio* (Gardiner 1989b, Chapter 38B) provided a very factual account of the final days of Mary MacKillop. By January 1909, her health had deteriorated so much that she needed constant nursing care in the convent infirmary. The stroke she had suffered in 1902 had led to paralysis of her right side

[43] Her inclusion on the South Australian float for the Federation Parade in Sydney in January 2001 was a recognition by the wider Australian community of her vision for a united Australia.

and evidence from one of her nurses would indicate that she also suffered 'something like gangrene' in her leg which required constant dressing. Mary herself described the intensity of the physical pain as being like a severe toothache throughout her body; yet those who nursed her remembered her as 'heroically patient'. The sisters visited her frequently, although perhaps at times they may not have done this as much as Mary would have liked. In her last typewritten letter (12/1/1909), she wrote in a circular: 'Today I have been much better than usual and have been all the morning waiting, but very few came. Even in my chair I can give you my blessing which I do with all my heart, and ask your prayers'.

Cardinal Moran and his secretary, Dr O'Haran were frequent visitors to Mary MacKillop with their last visit being made on Tuesday 4 August. Many of the sisters were present and recorded his comments on leaving the convent that day:

> Her death will bring many blessings, not only on yourselves, your Congregation, but on the whole Australian Church. ....I consider I have this day assisted at the death-bed of a saint.

The priests from the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and Jesuit communities were constant visitors, watching throughout the night by her bedside with the sisters. Her death was a very public affair.

From the time of her death, Mary MacKillop was treated as though she were a saint. Many sought to make relics by placing religious items on Mary MacKillop's body, which was laid out in the Chapel. Others, including children from nearby schools, visited and remembered their impressions many years later, one reporting that she first thought of becoming a Josephite after this event. The funeral Mass at the nearby parish church was so crowded that even her sister, Annie, could not get a seat. When she was buried at the Gore Hill cemetery, people took soil from the grave as relics.

In 1914 a Memorial Chapel was built at the Mount Street convent. Mary MacKillop's body was exhumed and reburied on 27 January in a place of honour near the sanctuary. Joanna Barr-Smith, who had written to Mary in 1907 that she was proud to 'look back on nearly forty years of unbroken friendship,' made a final gift of the marble slab covering the coffin.

6.3 THE PREFERRED NAME

During her lifetime, Mary's own identification of herself can be traced in the names she used. The early letters between herself and Julian Tenison Woods show that it was from early 1867 that she began to change her name to reflect her new reality. The letter of 19/9/1866 from Julian was addressed to 'My dear Miss MacKillop' but by February 1867 he was writing to 'My dear Sister Mary'. In a letter a month earlier (30/1/1867) to Rose Cunningham, one of the women who joined Mary in the early days, she had signed herself as 'Mary, Sister of St Joseph'. This was the title she continued to use until April 1868 when the address on Julian's letter was changed to 'Sister Mary of the Cross'. It was as 'Mary of the Cross' that she signed her letters from then on. In keeping with the custom of the time for those identifying themselves as Religious, Mary did not use her surname from this time, except for civil matters such as her wills (2/4/1879, 25/8/1899) and on title deeds, such as those for Kensington convent in 1876 (see Foale 1989, p 150).

6.4 PROGRESSION TOWARDS CANONISATION

The impression that Mary MacKillop deserved special honour by the Church was deepened over the coming years. People came to pray at her tomb, relics were sought and responses to prayers for her intercession were reported from all around Australia. An outline of the steps taken in her path to canonisation was adapted from the formal documents prepared for Rome (Gardiner 1989b, Introduction B). Since all such documents are prepared in Latin, the official name for each stage was given in that language.

- In 1925 Mother Laurence[44] had preliminary discussions with the Apostolic Delegate, Monsignor Cattaneo about the introduction of her Cause for Canonisation. The first step had to be a diocesan investigation, a Commission of Enquiry, and this was authorised by Dr Kelly, the Archbishop of Sydney.

[44] She was elected to lead the Josephites in 1919 and had been one of Mary MacKillop's early companions from 1869.

- A formal start to the proceedings was made on 30 November 1925 but ceased on 1 March 1926 after eight sessions when it was realised that some of the necessary formalities had not been completed.
- 19 April 1926 marked the beginning of what was known as *Perquisitio Scriptorum*. Mary MacKillop now had the official title of 'Servant of God'. Official decrees were sent out from the Archbishop of Sydney asking that all letters and documents written by Mary MacKillop were to be sent to Sydney for examination to see whether they could be considered to be the work of a holy person. As she had been such a prodigious correspondent, this produced a great deal of papers to be checked.
- Around this time, Fr George O'Neill, a Jesuit, had been working on a biography of Mary MacKillop. His research produced some gossip about Mary MacKillop's use of brandy for medicinal purposes and he sent a letter on 28 July 1926 to the Commission about this matter.[45] After careful interrogation of witnesses, Dr (later Cardinal) Norman Gilroy, acting as Notary for the Commission, was satisfied that this accusation could not be sustained and so the investigation continued, gathering data from interviews with those who had known and worked with Mary MacKillop.
- On 11 March 1929, three documents were found in the Sydney Archdiocesan archives which also made reference to the question of intemperance. The documents, which had been sent to Cardinal Moran in 1884 were signed by two who had at one time been supportive: Bishop Reynolds and Fr Kennedy, as well as Archdeacon Russell. They alleged that the Adelaide Commission of 1883 into the Sisters of St Joseph had 'revealed this weakness'. As these were official documents of condemnation, they needed to be refuted by equally strong documentary evidence that Cardinal Moran had investigated this report and found in favour of Mary MacKillop. No evidence was available and so the Commission of Enquiry was suspended on 28 September 1931.

[45] The suggestions of O'Neill's historical inaccuracies and ability to sensationalise material have been referred to in the Literature Review of Chapter 2.

- By 1951, there was still interest in the wider Australian community for some official recognition of Mary MacKillop's holiness. The former Notary of the Commission of Enquiry was now Cardinal Gilroy, Archbishop of Sydney. He authorised the resumption of the process on 25 April 1951. Another biography of Mary MacKillop was in preparation by Fr Osmund Thorpe, a Passionist priest. His research found the missing report from Cardinal Moran, completely exonerating Mary's use of alcohol. The report had identified that some of the actions of Bishop Reynolds were not only scandalous, but also illegal, and so Moran had recommended that his summary be kept in Rome separate from other documents about the Adelaide church.[46] With the additional clarification provided and after further investigations and interviews, this first stage of the introduction of the Cause was completed on 15 November 1951.

- The final part of this process was that of *super non cultu* to ensure that no premature honour had been given to Mary MacKillop. This involved a careful checking of the chapel, the burial site and its inscription, the convent at North Sydney where she died and any other areas where unofficial honour might have been shown through adornment of flowers, candles or artwork. Cardinal Gilroy himself conducted this stage of the enquiry from 23-29 November 1951. Reports on all details of the Sydney investigations were then signed, sealed and forwarded to Rome.

- Consideration of this material began in Rome on 19 January 1952 and on 19 July of the same year, the *Nihil Obstat* was issued declaring that there was no reason why the Cause for Canonisation should not continue. The Decree *Super Scriptis* approving all of Mary MacKillop's writings as being those of a person of holiness was given on 2 April 1954.

- Cardinal Gilroy then initiated an additional Process throughout Australia to gain evidence from those still alive who had firsthand information about Mary MacKillop. These sessions were opened in Sydney on 21 May 1959;

[46] See Appendix 2

there were sessions in Brisbane from 22-23 July that year before a hearing in Adelaide from 12-14 May 1961. This Process was completed on 24 October 1961 and the results forwarded to Rome for due consideration by the various sections of the Vatican.

- When Pope Paul VI came to Sydney in 1970, he visited the Chapel at Mount Street and spent some time praying at the tomb of Mary MacKillop. On his return to Rome, he asked for her case to be considered as soon as possible by the relevant Vatican authorities.

- Meetings in Rome on 1 February 1973 moved the process a step further and an announcement was read at the Mass for Religious during the International Eucharistic Congress in Melbourne from 18-25 February 1973 declaring that 'the Cause of the Beatification of the Servant of God, Mary of the Cross MacKillop' could be introduced.

- Before any further developments could occur, a detailed report of all aspects of Mary MacKillop's life and work – the *Positio* - had to be prepared for consideration by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. While this was in progress, Pope John Paul II visited Australia in November 1986, prayed at the tomb of Mary MacKillop and personally interested himself in the fact that Australia did not have a local saint.

- The *Positio* was completed in 1989 and was considered by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints on 15 November 1991. It moved through various levels of this Congregation with a favourable verdict each time and on 13 June 1992, the papal decree was issued that Mary MacKillop had lived a life of heroic virtue. This meant that she could now be given the title, 'Venerable Mary MacKillop'.

- Information about a miracle believed to be obtained through her intercession was submitted, and this was approved on 6 July 1993. Mary MacKillop was now eligible for beatification.

- On Thursday 19 January 1995, Pope John Paul II made a brief detour from his trip to the Philippines to beatify Mary MacKillop at a ceremony in

Sydney. This means that she can be venerated as a saint in the country in which she worked and which sponsored her Cause.

Before Mary MacKillop can be canonised, an additional miracle needs to be authenticated in Rome as being the result of prayers for Mary MacKillop's intercession. With canonisation, the term 'Saint' could be applied and Mary MacKillop officially recognised and honoured throughout the world.

6.5 CONCLUSIONS

The Mary MacKillop of History was a woman who maintained strong family ties throughout her life. She was realistic about their shortcomings, acted in loco parentis to her siblings on many occasions and was prepared to accept the responsibility to provide the basic necessities of food and shelter for the family.

From her father, Alexander, she obtained most of her schooling, a respect for the ordained clergy and a network of influential contacts from his days in a Roman seminary. She also learnt from his love of debating; his espousal of the cause of education for those in rural Australia and his willingness to stand by a principle. Her mother assisted in much of her spiritual development: she provided Mary with a model of fortitude, a deep sense of Celtic spirituality and an example of trust in the Providence of God.

From both of her Scottish immigrant parents, and her maternal grandfather, Mary learnt a love for her Celtic heritage. She experienced a profound sense of her ethnic identity when visiting the Highlands of Scotland but at the same time, she was aware that she was an Australian, affected by the climate, the geography and the sheer size of this land. Her identification as an Australian rather than a member of one of the separate British colonies then in existence marked her as a person of broad vision, able to see the larger picture and to plan for that.

Her vision was first and foremost for education of those least able to afford it – or to access it because of isolation in rural areas. While she was able to develop this dream in the initial stages with another unique individual, Julian Tenison Woods, she was prepared to maintain her independence and to hold out for the ideal of a congregation of sisters under the authority of one elected from among the group as

leader. This brought her into conflict with many of the priests and bishops of her day who reflected the Irish tradition, influenced as it was by the appointment of so many related to and/or recommended by the Irish bishop with a thoroughly Romanised background, Paul Cullen. Other bishops from outside this group also had difficulties on occasion, as Mary MacKillop tried to initiate a group of religious women which was not only very different from anything they had ever experienced but also threatened their power base.

Throughout her life, Mary MacKillop wrote more than 1300 letters which have survived. She felt more comfortable writing her feelings than verbalising them. I have read almost all of her letters and referred to many in this chapter. They reveal her as possessing a reflective nature, deep spirituality and at the same time, an awareness of her humanity. She experienced loneliness, desolation, and disappointment in the weaknesses of others, yet she was never embittered or swayed from her vision. Above all, she identified herself as someone set apart by calling herself 'Mary of the Cross' and renouncing her family name, although not her heritage, nor her responsibility for her family.

Mary MacKillop was a woman loyal to her friends, sensitive to the needs of others, an adventurous traveller and above all a charismatic Australian leader. The possibility of her becoming a formally recognised saint was recognised and her Cause for Canonisation has moved through the various stages of the Catholic Church process.

In the next five chapters, I have examined how the Australian print media have interacted with the Mary MacKillop of History to form the new cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media. Chapter 7 will trace this interaction in its earliest stages from the time of Mary MacKillop's death in 1909 until her body was relocated to the Memorial Chapel in North Sydney in 1914.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE MARY MACKILLOP OF THE PRINT MEDIA 1909-1914

7.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I have examined print media examples which appeared in the five years after Mary MacKillop's death. Journalists interacted with the Mary MacKillop of History and the new cultural artefact began to emerge. Before presenting an analysis of texts, I have defined the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media and given some justification for the selection and division of articles examined.

Media texts were divided into three groups: examples from each group were considered as text to identify what was represented and what identity was created. The discourse practice sought evidence of editorial influence and intertextual chains. The major discussion involved sociocultural practice though looking at links with the wider social context (situational factors); the underlying ideology and links to other institutions (institutional factors) and finally through an identification of the interpretative activity expected of the audience as values were reflected and promoted (societal factors).

7.1 DEFINITION OF THE MARY MACKILLOP OF THE PRINT MEDIA

The Mary MacKillop of History was part of the everyday reality for many in the time immediately following her death. To those who had known her personally, memories were clear about the facts of her life and work. The things she used in her daily life were still evident. As a significant Australian formally linked to a religious institution, she was also part of the sacred canopy, the symbolic universe providing meaning about ultimate realities: her death was a reminder that there was a deeper meaning to life.

Upon her death, the print media began a process leading to the emergence of a new religious symbol system. In their 'search for ultimate, consistent patterns of mythic meaning and the integration of the "unexplainable" into the commonsense cultural consensus' (White 1997, p 47), the print media began a dialectical process. They

reported the news or information about the death and burial of Mary MacKillop but they also began to create news as they reflected on her role and relevance to Australian society. This new creation became an external reality quite apart from the Mary MacKillop of History: it was a symbol that could be 'externalised' as it was discussed. It then became 'objectified' and was no longer the creation of one person, but rather a reflection of a new reality 'out there' for all to see. I have used the term the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media to describe this new reality as it then became available for 'internalisation' by individuals (both journalists and readers) as part of their own meaning systems. MMPM began to develop a 'plausibility system' as it began to be articulated by an increased number of persons and in new situations. In this way, it continued to emerge as a cultural artefact for Australia (Wuthnow 1992, p 20).

7.2 SELECTION OF TEXTS

The selection of texts for analysis in these early years was limited by their availability: some were sourced from the archives of the Sisters of St Joseph and others from libraries. Many of these latter were still in their original form as bound collections of newspapers and were in an extremely fragile state, making reading difficult. A further level of difficulty was encountered by the layout used in newspapers of the time: text size was small, articles were run together in columns without any identifying headline and by-lines were seldom used, making it difficult to trace sources or common reporting.

News reports about the death and burial of Mary MacKillop in 1909 were divided into two groups to see whether or not there was any difference between them: Group A comprised the reports from the daily newspapers whilst Group B contained examples found in the Catholic press. All media texts studied from 1914 newspapers were considered together in Group C because of the size of the sample available.

7.3 GROUP A - 1909 DAILY MEDIA EXAMPLES

The death of Mary MacKillop was initially reported in *The Sydney Morning Herald* and the Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, as well as *The Advertiser* in Adelaide on the day

after her death. Her death and articles about her were then mentioned on several other occasions by a variety of newspapers as the following list shows:

Date	Newspaper	Contents
10 August 1909	The Sydney Morning Herald Late Edition	Death Notice mentioned in Summary of news on page 1
10 August 1909	The Sydney Morning Herald Late Edition	Obituary Notice – page 6
10 August 1909	The Sydney Morning Herald Late Edition	News item – 'Sisters of St Joseph - Death of the Founder' page 6
10 August 1909	The Advertiser	Inclusion in general news report – fact of death and brief summary of the beginnings of her work in South Australia
10 August 1909	The Daily Telegraph	News article – 'Death of Mother Mary of the Cross' - page 4
14 August 1909	The Sydney Morning Herald	Paragraph on page 11 in section headed, 'The Churches' - very similar to parts of longer article in *The Catholic Press* 12 Aug 1909
16 August 1909	Truth	Article and poem; biographic details

The Sydney Morning Herald had been founded by John Fairfax and modelled on the London *Times* (Henningham 1993, p 61). In the late edition of Tuesday, 10 August 1909, it carried the following information on Page 1 in the left hand column headed 'Summary:'

> Mother Mary of the Cross, foundress of the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, died on Sunday.

This item of three lines was featured about half way down the page, sandwiched between a report of the discovery of the body of a Captain Boyer found washed ashore in suspicious circumstances (three paragraphs totalling nine lines), and a three line report about the Budget to be presented the following Thursday.

Page 6 of the same edition included a listing in the obituary column:

> MacKillop – August 8, at the St Joseph's Convent, Mount-street, North Sydney, Mother Mary of the Cross, foundress of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, aged 67 years. Requiescat in pace.

While this would have been a paid announcement, it was significant. Checks with the Congregational archives in both Sydney and Adelaide show that it was not the usual practice to place these death notices in the secular press. The use of her surname was also unusual for members of religious congregations. The identity presented was beginning to change from MMH.

On the same page, under the heading 'Personal', there was a longer article headed, 'Sisters of St Joseph – Death of the Founder'. This was in the second column from the right, lower section and was about a quarter of the column in length. The writer used the religious name, Mother Mary of the Cross, and presented her as 'founder and first superior' of the group she founded. Mary MacKillop's family was identified: 'her father, the late Mr Alexander M'Killop[47] (sic) was a member of a well-known Highland family' while her mother (whose name was not given) was mentioned as being lost in a shipwreck of 1886. The report summarised the beginning of Mary MacKillop's work in Penola where she met the 'bush missionary', Fr Woods. The growth and spread of the group of sisters she founded was outlined and mention was made of the visit to Rome in 1873 to seek approval for the 'rule of her institute'.

The report was in narrative style; it reflected an understanding of the institutional nature of the Catholic Church as it noted that this rule 'was not accepted by the Bishops of Bathurst and Queensland' resulting in the formation of 'a separate community under the guidance of Bishop Quinn'. Developments within NSW were given coverage: invitations from Archbishop Vaughan in Sydney and Dr Torreggiani, Bishop of Armidale, were mentioned as the reason for the move by the Sisters of St Joseph to these areas. Mention was also made of the Roman decree in 1888 authorising 'the Institute to be erected into a congregation'.

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[47] The variety of spellings for the family name was mentioned in Chapter 2. 'McKillop', 'M'Killop' and 'MacKillop' were all used for various branches of the family but the latter form is now accepted as one which Mary herself used and signed as her name.

While the report described many aspects of the group of the Sisters of St Joseph, the main emphasis was on Mary MacKillop as the founder of this group. This was highlighted in the subtitle of the article – 'Death of the Founder' and the conclusion to the piece announced that the funeral would take place that same day. The writer would not then have been influenced by the funeral tributes and comments when emphasising aspects of Mary MacKillop's personality. The article can therefore be interpreted as an indication of the creation of an identity: the beginning of a new cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media. Mention was made of the fact that Mary MacKillop lived for some years at the mother house in Sydney which was described as 'one of the finest in Australia'. The implication was that such a person deserved a residence of some stature. The factual nature of the article was varied to a commentary approach in the final section:

> During the long and painful years that concluded her life she never ceased to evince the liveliest interest in the welfare of her congregation. She has recorded of her work that she regularly visited every convent of her order, with the exception of a few later established and knew personally every sister.

These sentences conveyed the impression that despite great difficulties caused by her illness, Mary MacKillop remained focussed on her life's work and took a personal interest in people and places linked to this. The values of steadfastness, fortitude and a visionary leadership could be identified.

The Adelaide *Advertiser* of this same date, Tuesday 10 August, 1909 had a different tone to the Sydney paper. It identified a 'Miss Mary Agnes MacKillop',[48] as the 'Mother-general of the congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph in South Australia' who had died the previous Sunday and also added 'Miss Mackillop' in brackets after using the name of 'Sister Mary of the Cross'. The writer obviously presumed the audience of the paper did not have the context or framework to know the person mentioned without linking her to the conventional mode of naming unmarried women. The percentage of Catholics in Adelaide and South Australia was less than that of NSW and this could account for the presumption. Another explanation could

[48] Her baptismal name was Maria Helen but she was always known as Mary. Agnes was the name she chose as a Confirmation name.

be the fact that Mary MacKillop had not lived permanently in South Australia since 1883, apart from brief visits in 1896 and 1904 and so the audience was presumed not to be familiar with her.

The content of the article was again in narrative style and covered similar ground to the Sydney article, describing the development of her work in Penola and then noting her move to Adelaide. The establishment of a convent in Grote Street and a school in St Francis Xavier's Hall, Wakefield Street, received a mention. The spread of the group she founded, her trip to Rome and her visits to other countries were all covered. While mention was made of Mary MacKillop's death occurring in Sydney, the writer made no reference to the fact that this had become the main base for the Sisters of St Joseph and that Mary MacKillop had lived there for some years before she died.

Despite the parochial nature of the report, it did provide further evidence of an interpretation by the print media of the characteristics of Mary MacKillop. She was shown as being marked for greatness from an early age:

> She received a superior education which, combined with her qualities of mind and heart, eminently fitted her for the great work which she was afterwards called upon to undertake.

In describing the visit to Rome, the reporter noted that 'the venerable Pius IX encouraged the youthful foundress to go on with her great work'. The sentiments expressed in the final section of this piece were very similar to those of *The Sydney Morning Herald* article of the same day:

> Her failing health, however, did not prevent her from watching to the end with maternal solicitude over the institute which she had governed with patient love for over 40 years.

The reference here was more to the institution of the Sisters of St Joseph rather than to the individuals within it and it was not technically correct: Mary MacKillop was not in charge of the group for almost thirteen years from 1885 to 1898 when Mother Bernard Walsh was appointed Superior-General by Cardinal Moran. During this time she continued to offer guidance through her personal contact, circulars and letters.

Mary MacKillop's influence on the wider society was also alluded to in the final sentence when mention was made that those who mourned her included 'hundreds of Sisters whom she has left to perpetuate her work' as well as the 'large circle of other friends throughout Australia'. She was seen as a person of influence and one who would be remembered.

Another newspaper which provided a report on Mary MacKillop's death was the Sydney *Daily Telegraph*. This was a daily paper, based on the British populist press. According to Henningham (1993, p 61), such papers were aimed at the increasing numbers of the literate middle class. The story was featured on Page 4 under the headline, 'Death of Mother Mary of the Cross'. It began with an opinion about her role in Australian society:

> By the death of Mother Mary of the Cross at St Joseph's Convent, North Sydney on Sunday morning the Catholic Church in Australia lost one of its most unselfish workers whose life was a continual endeavor(sic) to do good to her fellow men and women.

The article did contain several factual errors which had been carefully marked on the archival copy.[49] These included the fact that her parents, both mentioned by name and ancestry, were said to have married in Scotland before deciding to come to Australia.[50]

A comparison between this article and the *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) 'Death of a Founder' article printed on the same date revealed too many similarities for mere coincidence. Some of these are shown below:

[49] The Sydney archives of the Sisters of St Joseph

[50] As mentioned in Chapter 6, although both her parents came from the Lochaber area of the Highlands, they did not marry until they travelled separately to Australia. They married in 1841.

The Daily Telegraph – **Death of Mother Mary of the Cross**	*The Sydney Morning Herald* – **Death of the Founder**
Referring to Fr Woods – '..to the young girl he confided his ambitions and found a ready sympathiser. It was in 1866 that Mother Mary, aided by two or three companions, began the work of opening a school'.	'To the young girl, as she was then, he often spoke of the necessity for a school in his district, and finally, in 1866, in a stable at Penola, she and two or three companions opened one'.
'In 1867 the novitiate of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart was established in Adelaide, and on August 15 of the same year the foundress made her religious profession; five years later the institute numbered 120 members'.	'In 1867 the novitiate was established in Adelaide, and in August of that year Mother Mary made her religious profession. The institute, though begun under lowly conditions, and with no resources behind it, spread rapidly. Five years later there were 120 members'.
'It was while on a visit to New Zealand in May of 1902, that Mother Mary was stricken with her severe, and, as it turned out, fatal illness'.	'While on a visit to New Zealand in 1902 Mother Mary was stricken with her severe illness'.
'...during her long and painful illness she never ceased to evince the liveliest interest in all matters concerning the welfare of the Congregation, which she had so much at heart'.	'During the long and painful years that concluded her life she never ceased to evince the liveliest interest in the welfare of her congregation'.

The article was again reproduced in almost its totality in the Melbourne Catholic weekly, *The Advocate* of 21/9/1909. It was likely that both Sydney newspapers used the same Press Release or source (unnamed) to obtain their story. These parallels and adaptations provided an example of what Fairclough (1995b, p 77) termed 'intertextual chains' as the text was subject to editorial emphasis and selection.

The *Telegraph* report contained an additional paragraph at the end regarding the death. It noted the number of 'friends, sisters, and prelates' who visited her in her final days and made particular mention of the Archbishop of Sydney: 'Cardinal Moran was a visitor when her bed of suffering was fast becoming a bed of death'. Mary MacKillop's links to the institutional structures of the Catholic Church were further strengthened by mentions of the various priests who came to pray with her during her final hours. The article ended on a similar note to the SMH one with the

announcement that the funeral Mass would be celebrated that morning at 10.30 in the Jesuit parish Church at Ridge Street North Sydney. The celebrant was to be Cardinal Moran. As noted in the previous chapter, the Cardinal made the arrangements for this funeral time and place with little if any consultation with the Sisters of St Joseph. It was as though he recognised that more would wish to pay their respects than would fit in the small Chapel at the Mount Street North Sydney convent: his comments after he left Mary MacKillop's death bed[51] would indicate that he considered she deserved to be considered for sainthood.

On the Saturday after the funeral (14/9/1909), *The Sydney Morning Herald* included another mention of Mary MacKillop in the column headed 'The Churches' on page 11. The paragraph was made up of sections taken from two articles in *The Catholic Press* published two days before. The first few sentences were taken from the lead article of four pages (Pages 5-8), including photos, summarising the life of Mary MacKillop:

> Mother Mary of the Cross, who died last Sunday morning after eight years' illness was a charming personality – to know her was to love her, revere, and trust her. There was no weakness in her character, and even as a little child she exhibited that firmness and strength of will which were so characteristic of her. Her friends seemed to turn instinctively to her in every difficulty. Her readiness to help others, the quiet way she had of scattering little kindnesses, of easing the burdens that pressed too heavily, of cheering and consoling those in sorrow, all of which made her such a favourite in the home circle and amidst her friends and companions, accompanied her into her convent home where she was ever the prop, the mainstay, the consoler of her Sisters.

The choice of this section was an example of an intertextual chain: the content of another writer had been selected by an editor and reproduced in a different context, thus producing another layer of meaning to the text. The second part of the SMH article was taken from a small piece on Page 20 of *The Catholic Press*. This was a brief paragraph on the page headed, 'All About People' and subtitled, 'Tittle Tattle'. The sentences chosen for the SMH article were as follows:

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[51] As reported by witnesses to his final visit to Mary MacKillop, Cardinal Moran made the remark, 'I consider I have this day assisted at the death-bed of a saint'.

> She had a peculiar compassion for those sufferers "who had seen better days". Often, she knew, they suffered in silence rather than make known their poverty; but Mother Mary would contrive to help them with such tender delicacy of feeling that even the most sensitive could hardly realise that they were accepting a favour at her hands.

The choice of these sentences and their link to the paragraph from the larger article provided a further example of the development of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media: from the vast amount of material available in the Catholic paper, the editors of the daily newspaper selected two brief sections which highlighted qualities about Mary MacKillop rather than biographic details. They chose to stress one of the traditional hagiographic themes of the 'wise-child' (Elliott 1987, p 215) and then highlighted the values which they considered important: the popular leader, the strong character who helped 'the battlers' in a way that respected their feelings and gave them dignity. These were obviously considered more important that any mention of her excommunication or difficulties experienced throughout her life.

The final example of media texts to be considered in the Group A selection was from the Sydney paper, *Truth*, founded by John Norton and not to be confused with the later Melbourne weekly of the same name started by Mark Day. The article was published on 16 August 1909 and began with adulation for Mary MacKillop.

> Among the noble women who devote their lives to the promotion of piety and religious instruction of the young, none was more highly respected and more deeply loved than Mother Mary of the Cross, the first Superioress of the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart. This unselfish, good and revered woman passed away last Sunday morning and, thereby, the community lost one whom no community can easily afford to lose, for her life had been spent in doing all in her power, which was not little, to increase the happiness and spiritual health of all those with whom she, and the many excellent women of whom she was the Superioress, came in contact, during the course of their indefatigable and unremitting efforts.

As in the previous example, the journalist stressed the strong leader, the commitment to helping others and the popularity of Mary MacKillop as a person.

The archival copy held in Sydney of this article was marked to show it contained some errors of fact: her parents were said to have married in Scotland, the family was said to have lived in Sydney and then, 'when her school-days were finished, the

family decided to leave Sydney in order that they might take up their residence in the country'. The reporter identified this country home as Portland, Victoria[52].

Traditional hagiographic themes could also be traced in this article: Mary met a significant person, 'Fr Julian E Tennison (sic) Woods,' a man of vision whose dreams Mary was able to share and then 'translate ... into actual facts'. The significant journeys were mentioned, especially that to Rome where another significant person Pope Pius IX 'gave his approval to the rules of the Institute'. Links to the institution of the Catholic Church were stressed through reference to the priests who visited her in her final days, as well as 'the benignant presence' of Cardinal Moran at her 'bed of death'.

There had obviously been a positive relationship between the editor of this paper and the Sisters of St Joseph since the article concluded with a poem sent in as an example of their esteem and respect for her. The poem had been sent to Mary MacKillop for her feast day on 14 September and included such sentiments as:

> Today in each far distant convent,
> Now scattered north, south, west, and east,
> Is heard the glad song of rejoicing,
> For 'tis our own dear Mother's Feast.

While these lines may not have rated highly as poetry, they did serve to reinforce the view that Mary MacKillop was someone who was loved and highly regarded by those in the group she started.

7.4 GROUP B - 1909 CATHOLIC MEDIA EXAMPLES

The second group of newspaper texts to be considered were from the Catholic newspapers of the time. These were aimed at a different and smaller audience than the daily press examined above and presumed that the audience was familiar with many aspects of the Catholic religion. Texts selected for analysis were as follows:

[52] Mary in fact spent most of her youth in Melbourne and went from there to Portland.

Date	Newspaper	Contents
12 August 1909	The Catholic Press	Feature article of three full pages (5-8) with photos; page 17 full text of Cardinal Moran's sermon at the funeral Mass; pages 20-21 brief mention on 'All About People' section; page 24 further comment and tributes.
13 August 1909	The Southern Cross	Report headed, 'Death of Mother Mary of the Cross' – biography and tribute page 535
14 August 1909	The Advocate	Tribute to Mary MacKillop – heading – A Remarkable Woman - Scottish and Irish connections mentioned
19 August 1909	The Freeman's Journal	Commentary and tribute – 'The Late Mother Mary' page 37
21 August 1909	The Advocate	Supplementary information following obituary previous week. Reprint of article from SMH and Daily Telegraph of 10/8/1909.
26 August 1909	The Catholic Press	Tributes – Poem 'In Memoriam', another headed 'Mother Mary'; also two sections in 'Chats in the Home Circle with Women' page 7
10 September 1909	The Southern Cross	Report on Month's Mind – Solemn and Impressive Ceremony – panegyric of Fr O'Dowling SJ included verbatim page 594

The Catholic Press and *The Freeman's Journal* were both NSW publications; *The Southern Cross* was printed in Adelaide for distribution throughout SA whilst *The Advocate* was the Catholic newspaper for Victoria. All were published weekly and were available for purchase at church doors on Sundays. Thus their audience was, in the main, committed Catholics who attended Church regularly, although others who saw such newspapers in Catholic homes may have read these publications.

The edition of *The Catholic Press* (12/9/1909) published immediately after Mary MacKillop's death was the main coverage given this event by Catholic print media. The lead story from pages 5-8 began with the details of her death and those members

of the clergy who had visited her. Cardinal Moran's attentions were noted: 'His Eminence was always a kind father to the community, and Mother Mary looked upon him as such'. Mention was also made of the effect the Cardinal's comments had on those sisters he addressed after his final visit – 'the scene was so affecting that it will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it'.

The article continued with a detailed biographical sketch of Mary MacKillop and then of her initial work in Penola where she commenced a school in a stable with several companions. Links were made to the frameworks familiar to Catholics:

> This was a wild idea – no doubt as wild as St Francis of Assisium's (sic) love of poverty; rash as St Vincent de Paul's confidence in Providence.

As in the secular dailies, there was no mention of Mary's excommunication in 1871, although a general description of difficulties in Adelaide around this time was given and mention made of 'a well-known Jewish family in Adelaide who gave temporary shelter to the homeless nuns'. This was the Solomon family. Mary's travels overseas, her visit to the Pope and her time visiting holy places were covered in detail, using long extracts from her letters. The spread of the Sisters of St Joseph throughout Australia and New Zealand was described and also illustrated with photos of major buildings such as the convents at Mount Street North Sydney, Kensington SA, Newmarket NZ and an orphanage in Surrey Hills Victoria. While there were large photos of Fr Woods and Pope Pius IX, there were none of Mary MacKillop.

One of the paragraph headings in this long article was 'Mother Mary's great work for Australia' and links were again made with frames of reference (the everyday reality) familiar to Catholics:

> Deeds speak more strongly than words, and we have only to look at the many works of charity and education carried out by Mother Mary and her devoted Sisters to conclude that they are doing in this new land what St Vincent de Paul and his companions so successfully achieved in the old world.

Emphasis was given to Mary's charity, her love for her sisters, her loyalty to her friends and to the Catholic Church.

The second major article in this edition of *The Catholic Press* was on page 17. Almost a whole page was devoted to a report on, 'The Late Mother Mary of the

Cross' subtitled 'The Obsequies'. A detailed description was given of the procession of the hearse from the convent in Mount Street up the hill to the Church at Ridge Street. Every member of the clergy who was present – some fifty in number – was named but no individual Sisters of St Joseph were identified. The report only mentioned that 'nearly 200 Sisters of St Joseph' from all over Australia attended the funeral Mass.

The bulk of the article contained an adaptation of Cardinal Moran's panegyric. Couched in the language of the day, it covered three points:

> The first was her heroic devotedness in the service of God, the second her special apostolate as foundress of the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph, and the third the singular blessings conferred on the Australian Church through that apostolate.

It was noted that amongst the chief mourners was 'Mother Mary's sister, Miss Annie McKillop (sic)'. In actual fact, Annie was not able to find a seat in the packed church but was able to attend the burial.

The final paragraph of this report was significant as it mentioned that Mary MacKillop's remains would only remain for a short time in the Gore Hill cemetery 'as it is the intention of the Sisters to inter them in the chapel, soon to be erected at their Mother House'. Catholics would be expected to understand that such a move was an indication of Mary MacKillop's sanctity. As the building of a chapel as a memorial to someone could not be considered without formal approval from Church authorities, this was one of the first indications that Mary was being seen as a possible saint.

The three short paragraphs on page 20 - 'All About People – Tittle Tattle,' include an expression of thanks from the Sisters of St Joseph to the doctors 'who were unremitting in their attendance on Mother Mary during her illness of nearly eight years'. Clergy and friends who visited her were acknowledged: the clergy by name and the rest included in the general comment that 'many of Mother Mary's old friends also visited her during her last illness'. The final paragraph contained the sentences used by *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 12/9/1909 referring to Mary MacKillop's assistance to those 'who had seen better days' as well as an

acknowledgement of her 'unselfishness, sympathy, and untiring charity in its widest sense'.

The final coverage in this edition was on page 24 where a two column story was entitled 'Mother Mary'. To the writer of this piece her death was 'of more than ordinary importance' and, in fact, could be considered 'a great event in the history of the Catholic Church in Australasia'. The reason given was that,

> ... the life-work of this noble nun is interwoven with the Catholic and social life of this country, and no human mind can form an estimate of its beneficent and holy influence. Mother Mary was an Australian born and bred, and for that reason her labours belong peculiarly to the young Australian nation.

While much of the rest of this article chronicled the spread of the Sisters of St Joseph and their work with the poor in small country towns with no resident priest, it concluded that such work was evidence that while Mary MacKillop might be dead, 'her spirit lives on'. The writer again linked into Catholic culture familiar to the audience:

> ... in history she will be revered like Nano Nagle, Mary Francis Aikenhead, Catherine McAuley[53], and other foundresses of religious sisterhoods that have conferred inestimable blessings on humanity.

The report of Mary MacKillop's death in the South Australian paper, *The Southern Cross*, showed links to the story reported in *The Advertiser* on 10/9/1909. It was obviously from the same source as it repeated her name as 'Miss Mary Agnes MacKillop' and was word for word the same for much of the article. The article did contain a photo of Mary MacKillop and concluded with a summary of her character as follows:

[53] Nano Nagle started the Presentation Sisters, Mary Francis Aikenhead the Sisters of Charity and Catherine McAuley the Sisters of Mercy. All of these groups were working in Sydney at the time of Mary MacKillop's funeral.

> It was impossible to know Mother Mary without appreciating the whole-souled generosity of her nature, and the depth of her charitable spirit, ever quick to see the good qualities in others, or to relieve distress of every kind. Her personality, even more than her rare and persuasive eloquence, tended to console and strengthen all who sought her counsel in the trials and sorrows of life. With a loving mother's heart, she had a kind word, an encouraging smile for all.

The coverage by the Victorian paper, *The Advocate* (14/8/09) tapped into the Catholic context of the time and familiar frames of reference by noting that the life of Mary MacKillop 'reads like the biography of some founder of a religious congregation in the Middle Ages'. The writer pointed out her birthplace as being 'among ourselves in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy,' and continued to develop the local connection by reminding readers of her parents, in particular her father, 'a Catholic Highlander from Scotland, (who) assisted at the first Mass celebrated in this city'. Readers were reminded too that Mary MacKillop was baptised in the Melbourne church of St Francis. While acknowledging the Scots connection through her parents, this article also made an explicit link to an Irish connection and to an Irish group of religious, the Christian Brothers, who were seen to be 'in almost every State, working side by side' with 'the Australian Sisters of St Joseph'. Suggesting that 'both those Orders of religious owe their origin to Waterford, in Ireland', further developed the connection. The founder of the Christian Brothers was a Waterford merchant, while Julian Tenison Woods was said to have come from a Waterford family.

The second Catholic weekly newspaper in Sydney at the time of Mary MacKillop's death was *The Freeman's Journal* and this carried an article headed 'The late Mother Mary' subtitled 'Foundress of the Sisters of St Joseph' in the edition of 19 August. The column long piece was featured on Page 37. The style of the report was such that it may have been from an oration during a formal ceremony or liturgy: the language was colourful and designed to inspire emotion in the audience. The author stated that, 'her demise leaves a blank – a great irretrievable blank – in the national life of Australasia' and then continued with the sentiment that 'her life's labour stands as the noblest record of an Australian woman'.

In contrast to many of the other articles examined, this one did not go into biographic details, other than to note that Mary MacKillop began her work 'in a little stable at Penola, South Australia, in the year 1866 – an Annus Mirabilis for Australasia'. The writer then continued to outline the social context of the time, noting that 'society was a nebulous mass, undefined and undefinable,' no doubt referring to the separate Australian colonies and all the difficulties of those who had come to make a new home in this land. Mary MacKillop was singled out for praise,

> ... because the Order which she establishes, apart from its sweet religious aspect, is essentially a democratic institution, designed to meet the wants of a rising democratic community.

I interpreted these sentiments to refer to the central government which Mary MacKillop struggled for so long to make the main structure of her organisation. To be able to see the wisdom of this at a time when the colonies were so disparate was recognised as a mark of genius:

> ... only a few great souls saw the faint streaks of the dawn before the sunrise; and among those great souls Mother Mary of the Cross must be classed.

The work amongst the poor and underprivileged – the battlers – was acknowledged and the key values to be praised were identified:

> She worked with enthusiasm and inspired confidence in others, but her enthusiasm was controlled by a well-balanced mind illuminated with heavenly wisdom.

The most important thing about this article was the way that it identified Mary MacKillop as a unique Australian individual who recognised the needs of the time and met them in an appropriate manner, despite many difficulties. With the continuation of her work, the opinion was given that 'every new institution is a new symbol of the saintly renown of Mother Mary'. The article did not refer back to other Catholic cultural frameworks of religious Congregations in Europe, but rather praised Mary MacKillop for the way that she created an institution appropriate for Australia.

Other written tributes to Mary MacKillop were published in *The Catholic Press* of 26 August on the page headed, 'Chats in the Home Circle with Women'. A poem, 'In Memoriam' noted her Scots heritage and implied that the continuation of her work

was a 'living monument'. Another longer piece, written by 'one who knew Mother Mary' listed the characteristics which were admired: her face was marked by 'an expression of singular sweetness and intelligence', she had a natural dignity, was able to adapt herself to any person or situation and could inspire respect and devotion in others. The long journeys, the fluent speech, her loyalty and complete integrity were all praised: 'charity was her characteristic virtue'.

The Southern Cross (10/9/1909) article about the 'Month's Mind[54] at Norwood', contained similarities to other South Australian reports in *The Advertiser* (10/9/1909) and an earlier edition of the same paper (13/8/1909). The event reported upon, the solemn Mass a month after Mary MacKillop's death, occurred on 'Tuesday morning last' which would have been 6 September. The panegyric on this occasion was preached by 'Father Dowling SJ' and his text was reprinted verbatim. It covered biographic details about Mary MacKillop as well as many links between her and the local community. The word 'excommunication' was not used – it was merely noted that the sisters 'were disbanded, their convent taken from them, and Mother Mary put under ban'. When these bans were lifted, the speaker pointed out that it was 'in this church, and before that altar, Mother Mary and her Sisters began their noble and holy work once more'.

A comparison of one section of the panegyric with a part of *The Advertiser* article of 10/8/1909 and *The Southern Cross* of 13/8/1909 provided an example of an intertextual chain:

[54] The thirtieth day after death

The Advertiser 10 August 1909	*The Southern Cross* 13 August 1909	*The Southern Cross* 10 Sept 1909
On June 24 of the following year the first community of the Sisters of St Joseph was established in Adelaide, Miss Mackillop being named the superior. The convent was a five-roomed cottage in Grote Street, which had been provided for the little community by Miss McMullen, who immediately became a member of the devoted band. Shortly afterwards a school was opened at St Francis Xavier's Hall, in Wakefield street, with an attendance of between 200 and 300 children. Candidates for admission to the sisterhood (sic) presented themselves in ever increasing numbers.	On June 24 of the following year the first Community of the Sisters of St Joseph was established in Adelaide, Miss Mackillop being named Superior under the title of Sister Mary of the Cross. Their convent was a small five-roomed cottage, which had been provided for the little community by Miss McMullen, who immediately became a member of the devoted band. Shortly afterwards, on the Feast of the Visitation, a school was opened at St Francis Xavier's Hall, with an attendance of between 200 and 300 children. Candidates for admission to the new Sisterhood presented themselves in ever-increasing numbers.	It was on June 24 of that year (1867) the first Community of the Sisters of St Joseph was established in Adelaide. Miss Mackillop was named superior, under the title of Sister Mary of the Cross. A small five-roomed cottage was given by Miss MacMullen[55] to the little community for their convent. She immediately became a member of that devoted band. Soon afterwards, on the Feast of the Visitation, a school was opened in St Francis Xavier's Hall, Adelaide, with an attendance of 200 to 300 children. Candidates for admission to the new Sisterhood came in ever-increasing numbers.

These similarities could mean that the 'Father Dowling SJ' may have been the source for the original article in *The Advertiser* and that he incorporated these thoughts into the larger speech presented a month after Mary MacKillop's death.

Another example of an intertextual chain could be found in *The Southern Cross* 10/9/1909. Reference was made in the panegyric to the words spoken at the funeral Mass for Mary MacKillop the month before. 'Father Dowling' was reported as follows:

> Cardinal Moran said Mother Mary had accomplished more than many of the saints, and left more followers in her footsteps.

The actual text of Cardinal Moran's speech, as reported in *The Catholic Press* of 12/8/1908 read slightly differently:

[55] The discrepancy in the spelling of this surname by the two newspapers was an indication of the lack of consistency at that time for surnames which contained Mc or Mac.

> .... very few of the founders of the more ancient religious Orders during their lifetime could say they had a thousand followers rendering service to God....

Even a month after her death, the notion of sainthood was being applied to Mary MacKillop and reported in the print media.

Before completing this examination of Group B texts, I have made brief comments about two editions of the monthly magazine, *The Garland of St Joseph*, published by the Sisters of St Joseph in Sydney and circulated to all convents and schools run by the Sisters at that time.

1 September 1909	Black bordered article 'Death of Mother Mary of the Cross – Foundress of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart' Pages 265-272
1 October 1909	'Mother Mary of the Cross – Month's Mind at Mount St Convent' two page article

The September edition, despite its headline, did not give any details about Mary MacKillop's death apart from the sentence, 'on Sunday August 8th, with the peace and calm that must follow such a life, came the end of her long and patiently-borne sufferings'. The remainder of the eight page article, apart from a photograph of Mary MacKillop, consisted of Cardinal Moran's panegyric at her funeral. The October edition was a reprint of the sermon preached at the Month's Mind Mass at the Mount Street Chapel. While the term 'saint' was not used, the summary of her life's work was concluded with the summary of her virtues and a belief in her sanctity:

> Mother Mary of the Cross was to all an example of patience, a model of zeal, a true Apostle. She instructed others unto justice. They who instruct others unto justice shall shine as stars in heaven for all eternity.

7.5 GROUP C - 1914 REPORTS

The completion of the memorial chapel and the subsequent removal of Mary MacKillop's remains from the Gore Hill Cemetery to a place of honour were the cause of the next public mention of Mary MacKillop in the print media. Examples to be discussed from this period were as follows:

Date	Newspaper	Contents
1 January 1914	The Catholic Press	Full page article page 24 'Mother Mary of the Cross Honoured by her Spiritual Daughters – The Memorial Chapel'
30 January 1914	The Daily Telegraph	Brief article 'Sisters of St Joseph – The late Mother Mary' – report on who was present when Mary MacKillop's body was re-interred in the new chapel
5 February 1914	The Catholic Press	Full page article 'Translating the Remains of Mother Mary to the Memorial Chapel – The Archbishop's Panegyric'
March 1914	The Garland of St Joseph	Pages 85-88 - Article reprinted from *The Catholic Press*

Five years after her death, Mary MacKillop was still being spoken of in glowing terms by the print media. In the first example cited above, the completed chapel was described as 'a worthy monument to the stupendous life-work of a singularly gifted and admirable woman, both from a material and spiritual standpoint'. While part of the article paid tribute to those women who continued the work started by Mary MacKillop, the anonymous writer recognised the link: 'By some mysterious agency they seem to have imbibed the spirit of their foundress with the rules of her community, and to have infused it into all their work'. Mary MacKillop was recognised as 'an Australian' and a précis of her life was given. While the early difficulties faced by Mary MacKillop were alluded to, the term 'excommunication' was not used.

In the Christian cult of the saints, there is significance in the burial site of a holy person being in a place of worship. The fact that the chapel at North Sydney was 'completed to the memory of this indomitable woman' was a strong indication of the official Catholic Church view that Mary MacKillop was a very significant Christian. In his comments (*The Catholic Press* 5/2/1914) when her remains were re-interred in a special place within the Chapel, Archbishop Michael Kelly, the Archbishop of Sydney reminded the congregation of this link:

> ...we have also come here in memory of her whose mortal remains lie before us, meeting as the early Christians did in the Catacombs when they gave solemn sepulture to the relics of the martyrs. Mother Mary is not entitled to the martyr's palm by the shedding of her blood, but she is entitled to the aurelea sanctis (sic), because of her life spent in the service of Australia. And, therefore, as the early Christians consigned the body of an Agnes, a Lucy, an Agatha, and especially a Cecilia to a consecrated and hallowed spot in the church, we are now consigning the remains of the foundress of the Sisters of St Joseph to a final resting-placed in this memorial chapel.

While the *Catholic Press* had an audience limited to Sydney and adjacent parts of NSW, the Sisters of St Joseph ensured that the Archbishop's words were conveyed to a wider audience as they reprinted the complete article, incorporating the Archbishop's panegyric, into the March 1914 edition of *The Garland of St Joseph*. The Catholic audience would have understood the allusions to the cult of martyrs. These publications illustrate another significant development in the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media.

As far as I have been able to establish, the only secular newspaper that gave coverage to the memorial chapel and the relocation of Mary MacKillop's remains was the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* of 30/1/1914. A brief narrative described the event, named the clergy attending but also mentioned as being present 'Mother Baptista (present head of the order)'. The long panegyric was given a succinct summary:

> Archbishop Kelly delivered an address, in which he referred to the life and work of the late Mother Mary; her great ability, her devotion to the work she had been called upon to do, and the splendid results she had achieved.

7.6 CONCLUSIONS

Journalists in both the secular and religious press in Australia writing of the Mary MacKillop of History immediately after her death had begun to externalise the reality they both reported and constructed.

There were no significant differences between Group A and Group B texts: in fact, there was substantial evidence that information had been shared between both the secular and religious press. The examples used in this chapter display intertextual chains as some reports were repeated, edited and reused in different publications.

The fact that individual reporters were not given by-lines at this time did make it difficult to trace any individuals who might have been significant in the presentations about Mary MacKillop.

Texts reporting her death in 1909 were mainly factual, focussing on her family background, the beginnings of her work and its spread throughout Australia and New Zealand, and then her final illness and death. A narrative style was used and some minor errors of fact could be identified. There were a few instances of commentary or interpretation about the place of Mary MacKillop in Australian history. Many of the major sermons used on the occasions of her funeral were printed verbatim in the Catholic press for a wide audience.

The identity emerging from the selected texts – the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media – was objectified as a strong leader of a group of women: women whom she knew through personal contact and regular visits, despite the difficulties of distance or her own illness. MMPM was a woman of influence because of her organisation and her legacy to Australia was in the work her group continued. She was reported as a friendly, dignified person who could relate to individuals at all levels of society from the Pope and the Governor of South Australia to those who had fallen on hard times. With the latter, she was recognised as having great compassion and respect for their dignity. Reports indicated that she was a woman of integrity who had achieved her goals, despite serious opposition from within the Catholic Church.

There are some indications that MMPM was considered to be a significant person: the mere fact that as a woman and a religious she merited media cover was itself an indication of her status at a time when women were not recognised as individuals in most reporting of Catholic Church events. Some hagiographic themes could be traced: the wise child destined for a life of great import; the meeting with significant persons; the journeys; the successful achievement of a vision despite overwhelming odds. MMPM was seen as someone meriting a fine residence as well as a funeral which was almost a state occasion.

The Catholic print media used a style indicating the relationship presumed with the audience. The reports linked into familiar Catholic cultural frameworks such as comparisons with other saints, especially those who had founded religious orders.

The relationship between Mary MacKillop and the institution of the Catholic Church was shown to be amicable at the end of her life, in contrast to difficulties of earlier days. The numbers of bishops and priests who visited her in her final days or participated in some way in her funeral or burial rites (and thus were publicly identified in newspaper reports) were quite significant. The way that her funeral became a church event organised by Cardinal Moran, rather than by the Sisters of St Joseph and the announcement of a memorial chapel in which she would be re-interred were public signs of official church recognition for the growing cult and belief in Mary MacKillop's sanctity.

Despite the sentiments expressed at the funeral, and because of the usual Catholic Church practice of leaving time before initiating any formal investigation, by 1914 there had not been any official steps taken towards the canonisation of Mary MacKillop. Texts examined in Group C continued many of the themes about MMPM already outlined, although the panegyric of Archbishop Kelly highlighted the theme of the holy dead, the significance of a burial site within the church and the beginning of a shrine: all of which would have been very much a part of the everyday reality for the Catholics of the day.

A notable omission from all reports identified for this period of time was any mention of the word, 'excommunication' to describe the ban placed on Mary MacKillop during her early difficulties with Church authorities. It was almost as if it was recognised that this extreme penalty had been a serious error of judgement. The fact that many of those close to the scene were still alive to remember both the pain and the guilt of this event may have affected the reporting by the Catholic print media. It was also possible that, as they grappled with the emerging cultural artefact, journalists tried to link their construction of a possible saint into a symbolic universe of the traditional knowledge about saints. Those well-known saints who were part of this frame of reference had not received such a severe penalty from the institution that honoured them.

A common theme throughout the reports examined was the recognition of MMPM as an important Australian. She was viewed as one who had a vision of the country as one nation before Federation and who developed a unique model to meet the needs

of people nationwide, not restricted to one area under a single bishop. There was a stress on her being Australian born and bred and on the fact that she was egalitarian in her approach to helping all individuals in society. This merited respect from the daily press, overriding any religious bigotry or factionalism.

As the years passed, there were occasional mentions in the daily press but the development of MMPM took its next major turn in the ten years from 1985 to 1995 when Max Harris began writing about Mary MacKillop.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FROM 1985 TO 1995 – THE INFLUENCE OF MAX HARRIS

8.0 INTRODUCTION

From 1914 until 1985, there were intermittent press reports featuring Mary MacKillop. The centenary of the Sisters of St Joseph in 1966 led to some coverage about her – eg 'The saint from Penola' in the Adelaide *News* (Miles 1966), or 'She started something' in the *Sunday Mail* (Broomhead 1966), but most reports were merely descriptive accounts of various religious and civic celebrations, with an occasional mention of Mary MacKillop – there was a 'Pageant to mark centenary' on the Norwood Oval (The Advertiser 1966), or the Premier of South Australia attended a garden party at Peterborough (Sunday Mail 1966). The announcement in 1973 that Mary MacKillop was declared a 'Servant of God' and that the process for her beatification could move a step closer led to a front page report in the Adelaide afternoon daily: 'SA Nun may be a Saint' (The News 1973). There was not, however, any significant period of time where major changes could be traced in the development of the new cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media (MMPM).

For this reason, I chose the decade from 1985 to 1995 as the next phase of study. The construction of a new cultural reality was dependent in its form and content on the individuals and groups holding the constructions. My focus in this chapter was to examine the contribution of one individual journalist, Max Harris. The role played by the personality of reporters or commentators in sociocultural change can be significant, according to Fairclough (1995b, p 51). Through projecting themselves 'as inhabiting the same common-sense world as their audiences', they are able to construct a relationship with the readers and so influence the construction of new or changed identities.

Existing frameworks of knowledge both for Max Harris and for the wider society were considered, as well as the social context of his role as a significant South Australian identity involved in the re-telling of a story so as to both develop and

strengthen the identity of the group. Along with information about Harris, I have summarised the stages through which the formal processes leading to Mary MacKillop's beatification had passed by this time.

Between 1985 until his death in 1995 just a week before Mary MacKillop's beatification, Max Harris wrote six significant columns about Mary MacKillop. These have been analysed to determine what reality they present, the relationship developed between the writer and audience, and the purpose of the writing. Harris had obtained a copy of the *Positio* from the Sisters of St Joseph and this, along with other biographies, influenced his work.[56]

The final section of this chapter examined the influence of this writer in the eyes of his peers and attempted to show how his influence on MMPM caused it to become part of the wider body of knowledge held by society. From the texts discussed, I have identified cultural themes and built up further evidence about the emergence of MMPM.

8.1 SOME BACKGROUND

While further contextual material has been provided as part of the discussion of the selected texts, a few general comments will help in setting the scene both for this period of time and for the development of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media as a new cultural artefact for Australia.

[56] Harris had established strong contact with the Sisters of St Joseph at Kensington SA, especially with archival staff as he sought first hand information about Mary MacKillop. After his death in January 1995, complications arose over the family's plans to bury him in an Anglican cemetery in the Clare Valley. A farcical situation arose where his body was taken to the small church at Penwortham. The local Anglican priest (who had no personal knowledge of Harris) refused to allow any deviation from the standard or abbreviated religious service. An impasse resulted when the family wanted to include speeches and poetry, particularly some of Harris' own work about the explorer John Ainsworth Horrocks who had built the church. Neither side would budge and so Harris' body was taken the 130 km back to Adelaide and cremated (Lloyd 1995b).

The Sisters of St Joseph offered a solution: in August that year a private family ceremony was held and Harris' ashes were placed in MacKillop Park, adjacent to the Kensington Convent. The Catholic Archbishop Leonard Faulkner attended and offered a blessing and prayer. I was amongst the many Josephites who attended (see also Holden 1995).

8.1.1 Print media developments

In the intervening years from 1914 to 1985, there were massive changes in the ownership of Australia's capital city and national daily newspapers. In 1923 there were 26 papers owned by 21 different individuals or companies. By December 1986 this had changed to 19 newspapers shared between three companies: News Corporation (Murdoch) owned six, Fairfax five, and Herald and Weekly Times (HWT) the remaining eight (Chadwick 1989, pp 247-249). Changes in legislation to place limits on cross-ownership of media led to dominance of the print media by Rupert Murdoch's company. As Chadwick (1989, p xv) noted in an examination of Australian media in the eighties, by late 1988 News Corporation owned nine of the remaining 17 major daily newspapers which gave him 62% of the total circulation in Australia. This figure had changed to seven out of 13 by 1991, with Murdoch's company controlling 66% of circulation, Fairfax's three companies with 22% and the remaining two reached 12% of the population in Perth and Canberra. The *West Australian* had been sold on a public float in 1991 whilst Kerry Stokes owned the *Canberra Times*. Henningham (1993, p 65) commented that this latter paper was still in reality 'under Murdoch influence' because of financial assistance with credit lines.

One of Rupert Murdoch's innovations was the introduction of a national daily, *The Australian*, on 15 July 1964. According to Henningham (1993, p 63), this was 'a financial drain on Murdoch for two decades' but it did provide an alternative to the provincial nature of the capital city dailies. By 1985 Rupert Murdoch had established a world-wide media empire with newspapers in London and television stations in the United States of America. To abide by US law in further TV acquisitions, he became an American citizen on 5 September 1985 with the result that the majority of Australian print media was under foreign control (Chadwick 1989, p xli).[57]

[57] Despite the worldwide expansion, the Annual General Meeting for the Company is always held in Adelaide, the place where Rupert Murdoch began his publishing life with the afternoon daily, the *News*. The most recent meeting was held on Wednesday 18 October 2000.

8.1.2 Catholic Church context

Significant events within the Catholic Church leading up to 1985 were the Second Vatican Council (from 11 October 1962 until 8 December 1965), and the release of the *Humanae Vitae* encyclical in July 1968. While initially encouraged by the Council's recognition of the role of the laity in the Church, many Catholics found it difficult, if not impossible, to accept the authoritarian nature of the decree on birth control. As a result, many of those who had been staunch and unquestioning members of the Catholic Church ceased their church attendance and active support for the organisation. The numbers of priests and religious dropped markedly and fewer young people were considering this as a career path when faced with other options in society.

Women too were questioning their relationship with the institutional church and began to formalise support groups. In her social history, Turner (1992a, pp 321-356) described how WATAC (Women and the Australian Church) was set up in 1985 to raise the consciousness of women on Christian feminist issues. This soon took on a variety of forms in the different states of Australia. When Pope John Paul II visited Sydney in 1986, 312 women paid for an advertisement entitled, 'A Protest Creed'. It was featured in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (22/11/1986) and began,

We women of the church protest that	
Women are half the human race	Yet men's experience shapes language, informs decisions, defines knowledge and interprets the divine.

During the decade from 1985-1995, Pope John Paul II became a significant figure in world politics. Since his election in 1978, he had played an active part in the overthrow of Communism in Poland through his visits in 1979 and 1983 and his support of the Solidarity Movement. Stourton (1998, p xii) noted the Pope also had some influence over events in other Communists countries: he had a meeting with

Mikhail Gorbachev, leader of the USSR in December 1989, a month after the Berlin Wall came down.

8.1.3 Process for beatification

Australia too had had direct contact with popes. One of John Paul II's predecessors, Paul VI had visited Australia in 1970 and spent some time in the Memorial Chapel at North Sydney praying at the grave of Mary MacKillop. A much more extensive papal visit occurred in 1986 when Pope John Paul II travelled to each state of Australia between 24-30 November. He too spent time praying at Mary MacKillop's tomb and made reference to her in his address to members of Religious Orders, delivered at the Sydney Opera House on 26 November. He referred to her as an 'outstanding witness' of religious life and expressed a wish that all requirements leading to her beatification would soon be completed (Goonan 1986, p 67).

As already discussed, the formal documentation of Mary MacKillop's life and work, the *Positio*, was completed in 1989 and examined by the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of the Saints. It received a favourable report from the Consultees of the group on 15 November 1991 and then from a further group of Cardinals and Bishops on 5 May 1992. Pope John Paul accepted these findings and issued the decree on 13 June 1992 that she had lived a life of heroic virtue. There was a further declaration on 6 July 1993 regarding the acceptance of a miracle believed to be obtained through her intercession, thus completing all necessary stages so that her beatification could take place at a time and place decided by the Pope and Vatican authorities (Gardiner 1993a). Whilst beatification ceremonies traditionally took place in St Peter's, Rome, precedents had already occurred when the Pope had carried out such ceremonies in other countries and it was hoped that this could also be the case with Mary MacKillop.

8.1.4 Australians of the Year

Some final background before the selected media texts are discussed comes from the Australian cultural scene. The names of those acclaimed *Australian of the Year* gave an indication of the type of contemporary hero acclaimed during this period. They included:

1985	Paul Hogan – award-winning actor
1986	Dick Smith – adventurer and philanthropist
1987	John Farnham – singer and musician
1988	Kay Cottee – solo yachtswoman
1989	Allan Border – test cricketer
1990	Fred Hollows - ophthalmologist
1991	Archbishop Peter Hollingworth – advocate for social justice
1992	Mandawuy Yunupingu – Aboriginal Ambassador
1993	No award made – award system changed
1994	Ian Kiernan – Clean up Australia campaigner
1995	Arthur Boyd – artist and benefactor

This list was adapted from the web page of the National Australia Day Council (2000). The description after each name was that which appears in this listing. Those selected reflect in some way the criteria listed for community nominations: it must be an individual who displays 'a fair go, a concern for the environment, desire for prosperity with a share for all, participation in sport, cultural diversity, the importance of strong community values'. Women do not feature highly in those selected – or in the total group recognised with this honour. Sports, the arts, a position as a public identity and interest in social and environmental issues have been acclaimed. None of this list came from a non-English speaking background, despite efforts being made during this decade to recognise multiculturalism (see Inglis 1991; Jupp 1991; Zubrzycki 1991).

8.2 WHO WAS MAX HARRIS AND WHY WAS HE INFLUENTIAL?

Against this broad framework of institutional and social frameworks, the role of Max (Maxwell Henley) Harris in the development of MMPM has been considered.

Ward (1995b) provided some biographical details. Harris was born in Adelaide in April 1921, lived for some time in Mount Gambier and was educated both there and at St Peter's College Adelaide. Whilst still at the University of Adelaide as an arts student, he began writing for literary journals, published his first book of poetry, *The*

Gift of Blood, and founded the 'controversial avant-garde art and literary magazine *Angry Penguins*'.[58] Those he invited to provide articles for this journal became known themselves as 'angry penguins'. It was in this magazine that Harris published and praised the poetry of Ern Malley – a person later revealed as fictitious and whose writings were the creation of James McAuley and Harold Stewart. The resultant furore in the literary world brought fame, as well as some recriminations for his supposed lack of editorial judgement, although history proved his judgement to be true and the literary merit of Ern Malley endures today. In later years, Harris was involved in setting up a chain of bookshops (Mary Martin), which specialised in mail orders of 'adventurous literature titles'. His publishing and editing activities continued throughout his life and would make a fascinating thesis, but it is his involvement with the print media – particularly the Murdoch press[59] - that is of interest for this study.

By his own admission (Harris 1986a, p xi), it was Rupert Murdoch 'who thought all those years ago that (he) had the makings of a reasonably endurable columnist'. From the fourth issue of *The Australian* on 18 July 1964, Harris wrote a weekly column, *Browsing* for 27 years. Several of these literary efforts are amongst those discussed in this chapter. In these articles, which he described as 'sceptical, critical, satirical and polemical, but persistently concerned for Australia and Australians,' he focussed on one main area: 'it is Australian values that obsess me' (Harris 1985b). In his musings more than 10 years before, he had examined the role of the media in the transmission of these values, focussing on his 'distaste for the ocker redivivus, the ugly Australian rampant'. A series of Harris' work on this topic had been published first in *The Australian* and later reprinted in a book entitled, *Ockers. Essays on the bad old new Australia* (Harris 1974).[60] To Harris, the media played a significant role:

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[58] The title was taken from a line in one of Harris' poems in the early forties, 'Mithridatum of Despair', referring to inebriated men in their dinner suits.

[59] By 1987 the one South Australian daily, *The Advertiser*, as well as the *Sunday Mail* were both owned by Murdoch and Harris wrote for both of these papers.

[60] Harris referred to Phillip Adams, Paul Hogan and Barry Humphries as examples of Ockers. Oxley (1979) included Max Harris along with Paul Hogan, John Singleton and Barry Humphries in his examples – he described Harris as 'a columnist crusading against the lowering of standards'.

> ...media communication must be delineated as a major force in permeating contemporary Australia not merely with ockerdom but with the implicit idea that ocker values are an acceptable and logical norm of what should be the community's intellectual and critical values.

In the same way, he realised the influence he could exert by supporting any cause through his newspaper columns and his love of controversial debate.

Another interest for Harris was feminism. In personal correspondence with me (see Harris 2000a), his daughter, Samela described her father as a 'fierce feminist' who had 'an abiding fascination for biographies of achieving women along with a sense of injustice that so many were poorly recorded or recognised'. His study contained many books on this topic. In one of his 1981 *Browsing* columns (Harris 1986a, p 12) he said of Australian literature that,

> The writing of real literature was left to the women – from Ada Cambridge, Henry Handel Richardson, Miles Franklin, Mary Gilmore, Eve Langley, Kylie Tennant, Dymphna Cusack, Katherine Susannah Prichard, Mary Durack, Judith Wright, Rosemary Dobson, Elizabeth Harrower, on and on.

Strong women, who could present their ideas about life, were to him exemplars of feminism. It was this interest, as well as his experience of living in the South East of South Australia, which first attracted him to Mary MacKillop.

His interest in her character, work and impact on the Australian community was not based on any religious affiliation. He clearly stated that he was 'an implacable agnostic' (Harris 1985b)[61] and he was not someone whose views could be traced to a narrow, evangelistic view. It is for this reason, above all, that his opinion on Mary MacKillop was seen as objective and challenging to the general public who read his newspaper articles.

Harris' personal stature as a literary scholar, his longevity as a columnist in a national Australian newspaper, as well as the content of his writings, are other reasons behind his influence regarding the development of MMPM.

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[61] One of Harris' unpublished poems given to me by his widow and included in Appendix 3 is entitled, 'Mary MacKillop's prayer for agnostics'.

8.3 TEXTS – WHAT WAS REPRESENTED AND CREATED

Mary MacKillop was the main topic of Harris' articles on six occasions as shown below:

Date	Headline	Newspaper
9 February 1985	19th century feminist set to become our first saint	Weekend Australian
1 March 1985	A saint for all Australians	The Advertiser
6 April 1985	Mother Mary the legend to succeed Ned	Weekend Australian
3 August 1991	In praise of a true Aussie saint, Vatican gong or not	Weekend Australian
11 November 1991	Saints, sinners and tourists	The Advertiser
20 January 1995	A saint in all but name	The Advertiser

He also mentioned her in a *Browsing* Column (8/2/1986) about Phillip Adams when he said 'that one day in the life of Mother Mary MacKillop was worth more than all the days of the lives of Adams or Harris' (Harris 1986b). In its 'Letter to the Editor' page, *The Advertiser* (8/6/1992) published a letter from Max Harris in which he suggested the renaming of the Adelaide Cup Day as the 'Mary MacKillop Memorial Day' (Harris 1992). His reasoning was that by doing so, South Australia could 'confirm its proprietorial rights to the first imminent saint Australia has produced'.

8.3.1 The first article – 9 February 1985

Harris' first major article (9/2/1985) was in the magazine section of the national paper, the *Weekend Australian* (Harris 1985a). This would have ensured it had a wide audience in all states of Australia.[62] It featured a large photo of Mary MacKillop as a young Sister of St Joseph and then one of the chapel in Sydney where she is buried. The commentary was a lengthy one and deserved careful attention since it marked a significant development in the perception by the Australian print media of a new cultural artefact. This work was later included in a collection entitled, *The Best of Max Harris* under the heading simply, 'Mary MacKillop' (Harris 1986a). In my comments, I have referred for convenience to page numbers in this version.

[62] Circulation figures quoted by Chadwick (1989, p 249) show that average circulation for this newspaper in 1988 was 138,000. Figures are unavailable for 1985 but probably would have been similar.

This piece reflected Harris' own lived experience. Having grown up in Mount Gambier in the South East of South Australia, he was well aware of the natural phenomena of the area – and of the aura that could pervade them. He referred to it as an 'environment ... full of mystery and myths of miracles' (p 198) citing the Blue Lake where 'annually on some specific day, or overnight, the lime-loaded waters of this famous Mount Gambier lake would turn from gloomy greyness to iridescent blue' (p 199). Other natural wonders included the extinct volcanoes of the area, the 'Tantanoola Tiger', the strange waterholes into which drays and bullocks had fallen only to be washed out '90 miles away' (p 198). The area had been rich with legendary deeds such as Adam Lindsay Gordon's spectacular leap at the Blue Lake and his ride to a shipwreck at Port McDonnell.

All of this was a background for his main focus. His lyrical and poetic style provided examples of oratory in describing the meeting between Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods: 'it was a felicitous happenstance that brought together the frenetic peripatetic enthusiasm of the English priest with the quiet grit of a mildly devout Scottish girl in a forgotten back-water like Penola' (p 197). He recognised the important role of Julian whom he described as 'the hard-riding, demonically possessed, handsomely English Catholic priest' (p 200) and thought that he 'could be said to have anticipated the ultra-modern principles of Liberation Theology, the awakening of the oppressed to their equality of human dignity' (p 202).

Harris provided an accurate account of the initial stages of Mary MacKillop's work in starting the Sisters of St Joseph and identified the radical nature of the central government she proposed. In his terms, 'The Sisters of St Joseph were to blanket the nation, to go where they were needed or called. It was to be operated on the principle of the task force'. Having a central command for all operations meant that the Sisters were outside the control of bishops -

> This notion made practical sense, but even Blind Freddy and his dog could predict that this independence from established authority could and would lead to dire conflict with the bishops and prelates – over the subject of money, property, policy and theological practice (p 202).

The financial problems that caused such difficulties to Mary MacKillop were glossed over: 'she was not terribly good with money' (p 203). In further elaboration on this point, Harris wrote,

> She ran up debts, but there was about her such an aura of warmth and comradeship that she begged alms brilliantly and attracted a disproportionate share of the charity dollar (p 203).

Those who responded to her requests for help included Emmanuel Solomon, 'founder of Adelaide's tiny Jewish community, an ex-convict, moderately affluent and lonely', and Robert and Joanna Barr Smith who 'represented the aloof pinnacle of South Australia's affluent squattocracy, the aristocrats of the Anglican laity'. Mary MacKillop was recognised 'as a one-woman ecumenical movement, ... admirable and advanced for her age' (p 204).

The episode of Mary's excommunication, not mentioned by name in examples discussed in the previous chapter, was discussed in great detail. To Harris, Mary's reaction to this event was the miracle required for her beatification. He quoted at length from one of her letters in which she described what had occurred and how she felt, ending with the line that she could not express 'the calm beautiful something that was near' (p 206). Her acceptance and resignation at this time was called,

> ... a very fine miracle which accords with what the modern dialectical agnostic would accept as mystical sublimity, and which modern Roman Catholics would interpret as 'divine favour' (p 205).

The experience of the reading of some of these letters made the editor in him remark that,

> ...a collection of Sister Mary's spiritual, earthy, practical, and hard-headed business correspondence would make a unique addition to the classic colonial literature of Australia (p 206).

Throughout this long feature article, Harris was accurate in all details, showing his careful checking of sources. His conclusions were significant: although she was 'a major force in welfare innovation, in education, and in pioneer feminism' he considered that 'sectarian ignorance, if not bias' had prevented her place in Australian history from being rightly recognised. Harris saw it as his role to right

this wrong for someone whom he thought, as a person, was possibly 'impatient, a little unbending, perversely independent, but a born stayer' (p 208).

It is interesting to note that, after this unsolicited article appeared in *The Australian*, Harris was contacted by the Josephite Congregational Leader of the day, Sr Elizabeth Murphy, and asked whether he would consider writing a biography of Mary MacKillop. His reply was to the effect that he did not see this as his forte, but rather he would continue to use his talents through his column and occasional writings to promote Mary MacKillop.[63]

8.3.2 Other 1985 articles

A key to Max Harris's success as a newspaper columnist was the relationship he established with his readers. His other two articles in 1985 about Mary MacKillop illustrated this point.

The first of these was published in *The Advertiser* on 1 March (Harris 1985c) and was aimed at the South Australian community whom Harris saw as indifferent to someone whose impending beatification, in his opinion, should be receiving much greater publicity in the state than it was. He clearly identified himself with the reader, speaking of 'our local indifference' and 'we are a small community'. As in the first article, Harris was accurate in his details, both about biographical details and, in this case, in speaking about the formal process of beatification. A possible reason for the observed indifference about Mary MacKillop was given as residual sectarianism – but this was discounted in the current 'ecumenical days' as Mary was seen as 'an ecumenical a century ahead of her time'. The example of the Penola Town Council was also cited: despite having only one Catholic member, there had been a unanimous decision to invite the Pope to visit the town to announce the formal beatification of Mary MacKillop.[64]

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[63] This information was given to me in a personal conversation with Sr Teresita Cormack, who was the Congregational archivist in Sydney at this time.

[64] O'Reilly (1985), writing in the Adelaide *News*, reported that the Premier, John Bannon, had invited the Pope to attend some of the SA Jubilee 150 celebrations in 1986. Mention was also made of the invitation by the people of Penola to the Pope to visit there. As an ecumenical dimension, the report also noted that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Runcie had also been invited. No mention was made of any other Church group leader.

The real reason for the lack of interest was traced to the size of the state and a lack of vision about the Australian identity:

> ...we are .. a pragmatic lot, with too few people aware that Australia needs an identity of the spirit as well as, if not more than, materialistic well-being.

The notion of pragmatism was taken up at length in Max's *Browsing* column in *The Australian* on 6-7 April (Harris 1985b). He described pragmatism as 'the dominant value that has characterised our society since the year dot'. This value, in his opinion, led Australians to be 'predisposed towards do-goodery, but place little value on personal goodness as an aspiration'. He saw this goodness 'as the lost Australian value' and lauded Mary MacKillop for the way that she displayed it:

> Mother Mary found that goodness can be the most effective and efficient of all forms of pragmatism. There's the paradox.
> Goodness was a means as well as an end. Goodness of being had a magnetic attraction which brought around her such massive resources of human response, that she could create an organisation which attacked an Australian brand of poverty and an Australian brand of despair and enabled her to conquer an Australian form of social rigidity which a world of BHP management executives could not hope to equal.

Mary MacKillop's greatness, as perceived by Harris, was the way that she could strive for goodness, despite the 'fearful price of personal doubt (and) physical pain'. Harris' admiration for feminist activists was reflected in this article: he commended her 'feminine grit in taking on an all-male world head-on and without compromise'. As an Australian 'symbol of the mystique of our Australianness' Harris suggested that Mary MacKillop was far more deserving of this honour than Ned Kelly or Phar Lap, who only had a surface claim to goodness by comparison. Her impact on the Australian community was summarised:

> Mary MacKillop, through achieving an inner and innate goodness the hard way, pioneered ecumenical Christianity in a sectarian age, enlightened social welfare for women in an age of savage moral philistinism, and transmitted a hope and personal pride to the rural poor in every corner of Australia.

8.3.3 1991 – two articles

Despite all the hopes expressed, Pope John Paul did not visit Penola when he came to Australia in 1986, and he did not announce her beatification. The formal *Positio* had been completed by this stage and was still under consideration by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints. Because of his interest, Harris had been given a copy of this three-volume work and his letter of thanks to the Sisters of St Joseph included his belief that 'a heightened national awareness of Mother Mary as one of the greatest Australians is a cause that we should pursue as vigorously as the move to beatification'.[65]

By August 1991, it was known that a formal decision about the *Positio* would be given in Rome on 15 November of that year. Using a humorous and satirical style, Harris published an open letter to Pope John Paul II in his column of 3-4 August in *The Weekend Australian* (Harris 1991b). He endorsed the idea contained in one of his earlier headlines (1/3/1985) that Mary MacKillop was 'a saint for all Australians'. In promoting this, he also recognised once again his position of power as a journalist in influencing opinion:

> This idea of a spiritual symbol, a historical icon[66] reflecting national aspirations beyond and above the practical and pragmatic, is one shared by a vast number of non-Catholic Australians from all walks of life. I know this because I have had the good fortune to be a regular contributor to our one and only national newspaper, and it has allowed me to raise this matter and solicit views from its readership.

He also touched on the theme of Mary MacKillop as a model of 'an Australian "goodness"; ... a nuts and bolts saint, a toiler, a battler and a sociological radical'. Once again, her referred to her as 'a pioneer feminist' who experienced opposition from many clergy who 'were, in the main, booze-addicted, small-minded, petty, disputatious, territorial and singularly lacking in grace, humility and religious inspiration'. Her excommunication 'by the pea-brained authoritarianism of an unbalanced Adelaide prelate' was again mentioned.

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[65] This was from an undated letter from Max Harris to Sr Teresita Cormack, who was now in Adelaide. Other letters also indicated a meeting between Max Harris and Paul Gardiner, the author of the *Positio*.

[66] Harris' article of 6-7 April 1985 used the spelling 'ikon' but by 1991, 'icon' was the more popular spelling and he changed to this convention.

Mary MacKillop's role as a significant educator was discussed. Many other women joined her and she helped them to become educated – 'what she taught them she then taught them to teach, and then sent them out alone in their earthly Josephite garb to the isolated outposts of education'. In the field of education, Harris considered Mary a feminist because of her practical approach to solving a problem, and the charisma of her own example:

> She insisted on her rights and the rights of women to get out and work to enlarge the decencies and enlightenments of those who knew only work, and nothing else. After all, this was 1870, a time for women to be part of the human race. Women responded to the notion of spiritual activism, and suddenly Australia had its own indigenous religious order.

Through reference to Mary's ecumenical friendships and her unique vision of 'an Australianism possessed of moral and spiritual dimensions', which could 'give the tiny nation some claim to civilised self-respect', Harris sought to be inclusive in his appeal to his readers as he wrote of Mary's legacy, 'So we outsiders have a legitimate interest in the Order of the Sisters of St Joseph. We helped to make it and shape it'.

The article ended with a plea for readers to write to the Pope at the address included by Max and ended, 'yours faithlessly I'm afraid, but respectfully, Max Harris'.[67]

Just before the announcement from Rome was due concerning the *Positio*, *The Advertiser* published two feature articles about Mary MacKillop. The first of these was entitled, 'A Saint's Progress' (Male 1991) and this was followed two days later on 11 November by Harris' column, 'Saints, sinners and tourists' (1991c). By this time, Harris had been diagnosed with terminal cancer and this was the last major piece he saw printed of his crusade for publicity about Mary MacKillop. The article was also remarkable in having some information about the writer included as an editorial testimonial at the end:

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[67] This article was referred to in a speech in the SA Parliament by John Trainer (Hansard 1991) who commented that it was by 'Max Harris, who is someone with whom I do not necessarily agree most of the time'. He applauded the way that Harris 'intensely supports the crusade for the canonisation of Mother Mary MacKillop'. The speech was a reminder to the politicians of the stage of the beatification process for Mary MacKillop - 'tomorrow a committee of theologians will gather at the Vatican to consider the life, work and virtue of an Australian nun, Mary MacKillop'.

> Max Harris is a South Australian, better known outside the State and overseas as a writer on the Australian identity. His Weekend Australian feature has commanded a vast national readership for 27 continuous years, a national record.

Three large photos accompanied his writings – one of Mary MacKillop as a young person,[68] another of the stained glass window of her at Penola and one of children playing at Penola with the description, '...this town is destined to become our national capital of the spirit life and higher aspirations of the Australian pysche (sic)'. Harris repeated many of his earlier themes – the lack of recognition by South Australians of a great person, Mary's role as a 'pioneer feminist', her ecumenical connections and the way her work was being continued by those in the organisation she founded. The contribution by Julian Tenison Woods was not mentioned and, in contrast to the first piece discussed, this time it was Mary who was given credit for 'putting liberation theology into practice a century before the term had been invented'. Harris remained convinced that Mary MacKillop had something to offer in the quest for an Australian identity:

> ... we are battling to define and sustain a sense of national identity. In the Siberia of the suburbs we are in constant doubt as to who we are or what we want to make of our humanity. We need icons, desperately. Mary MacKillop provides them.

The substance of this article had been sent to several television stations (Harris 1991a) earlier in September – Harris had described it as 'rich copy for the purposes of your programme, and a sitter for overseas syndication'.

8.3.4 Final efforts – 1992 and 1995

His final illness prevented Harris from any further large-scale writing about Mary MacKillop, although he did manage a *Letter to the Editor* in 1992 (Harris 1992) which again repeated some of the ideas presented in the article just discussed. He called on the South Australian community to support the notion that the public holiday celebrated for Adelaide Cup Day should be renamed the 'Mary MacKillop

[68] This has subsequently been proved to be that of a close MacKillop relative, not of Mary as was first thought (Whittaker 1998).

Memorial Day'. Rather than celebrating a 'gambling-led recovery from our fiscal recklessness,' such a gesture would remind the community that,

> ...SA has a landscape of the spirit and, deep in the heart of very many people of no particular religious values, a feeling exists that we should celebrate the best in ourselves. Nobility has a place in our scheme of things.

To Harris, Mary MacKillop was 'the historical icon for such sentiments'. He recognised that such an icon or symbol confronted Australians with an authority of its own: it had become 'objectified'. He could write about it, using his talents, to assist in the symbol becoming 'internalised' and so becoming part of both individual and the community identity. His articulation of MMPM helped to maintain and extend the 'plausibility structures' which kept the symbol in place (Wuthnow 1992, p 20).

This was illustrated by a repetition of many of his beliefs about her relevance as a model for goodness, the value he believed so essential in the Australian identity:

> Indeed, she represents the unquestionable pioneer spirit of feminism in colonial Australia; the ecumenical sanity that took us a further century to achieve; and the barefoot educational pioneering out of which poverty could be overcome as the inevitable heritage of the disadvantaged. This slip of a girl was our greatest citizen.

Just before his death on 13 January 1995, Harris completed a final article about Mary MacKillop, 'A saint in all but name' (Harris 1995). This was published in *The Advertiser* a week later (20/1/1995) and was introduced with the following subheading:

> It is ironic that on the day poet, writer and publisher Max Harris was cremated, Mother Mary MacKillop was beatified by Pope John Paul II. Harris was a long-time admirer and student of Mary MacKillop. This eulogy was one of the last articles he wrote before his death last week.

Harris rejoiced that Mary MacKillop was now recognised as 'the "saint" for all Australians, not merely Catholics or Christians'. He again stressed her example of ecumenism, feminism and goodness, 'a harmony of spirituality and true temporal grit'. His own joy when the formal processes were completed in Rome prior to Mary's beatification was celebrated: 'it was a wonderful day for me!'

The article was in many ways a personal testimony by Harris about his own spiritual journey as he described how journalists, '(especially its egocentric agnostics) were creating moods of mediocrity, vacuity, aimlessness of the mind and heart'. Heroes existed – yet he did not mention any of those recognised as an Australian of the Year during this decade. Instead, he named some as 'Bannon, Mawson, McDouall Stuart, Don Bradman' - and then these are dismissed: 'all brave models, but spiritual? Scarcely! Their forte was bravery beyond the confines of reason'. He continued, 'Then Mary MacKillop came into recent view – a woman, a Catholic and relatively unknown'. Harris concluded with the reflection that she was now numbered amongst his special saints who included 'St Francis of Assisi and William Blake'.

> Through such models, the purpose of life can be defined. The purpose of life is a kind of loving – and a defiance of hating.
> It is that kind of self-questioning which asks whether you have realised the best in yourself, or live in self-delusion. Mary MacKillop operated differently. She combined a search for the wellbeing of an isolated and desolate colonial Australia, along with a belief that each soul unconsciously aspires to a richer and better selfhood.
> ...I invite you to join my joy at the arrival of an image of an Australian quality of goodness.
> ...I believe we need a saint. We need hope. We need ideals for ourselves. Mary MacKillop is where we can look to find the best in ourselves.

Before his death, Harris also wrote several poems about Mary MacKillop. These have not yet been published in any collections of his works, but were made available to me by his family for this thesis (Harris 2000b). I have included this poetry as Appendix 3.

8.4 RECOGNITION OF HIS INFLUENCE

Max Harris was a colourful character who was held in high esteem by his peers. In the year before his death, Peter Goers (1994) wrote a one-page feature article in the Adelaide *Sunday Mail* (16/1/1994) entitled, 'Mr Adelaide' to summarise Harris' various works, achievements and characteristics. Amongst all his accomplishments, Goers noted that Harris was 'an agnostic who has been the most influential lay champion of Mary MacKillop's imminent canonisation'. Whilst he may not have been technically correct in talking of canonisation instead of beatification, Goers

(himself a columnist of some note in Adelaide) had no doubt that Harris' role in promoting Mary MacKillop was every bit as important as his other achievements.

The influence exerted by Harris was the subject of a column in *The Advertiser* later that same year (Baker 1994). The headline summarised the thrust of the article: 'Huge impact of the Max factor'. The writer, Tony Baker, argued that Max Harris deserved consideration for the title of 'the most influential South Australian of our era'. His achievements as 'poet, publisher, polemicist and bookseller' were enumerated, but special attention was given to his work as a newspaper columnist where he 'was an irreverent stirrer who had enormous influence'. Whilst he did not mention Harris' link with Mary MacKillop, Baker concluded with the thought that no matter what Harris did, he was a very significant South Australian:

> The most influential people are those who at the time, or towards the end of the day, can be said to have helped mould their times.

After his death, he was the subject of two Letters to the Editor – one each in *The Advertiser* (McMahon 1995), and *The Australian* (Casey 1995). In both cases, the writers highlighted Harris' interest in Mary MacKillop and, in the former case, noted,

> It was sad you did not live to see Mary MacKillop's great day but is it fanciful to think she wanted you to share it with her?

At his own wake, his family too remembered the connection with Mary MacKillop and a toast was given to her beatification (Lawnham 1995).

Ward (1995a), writing in *The Australian*, produced a whole article on the appreciation of the Sisters of St Joseph for the work that Max Harris did in his promotion of Mary MacKillop. He chose to quote at length from Sr Catherine Clark, the South Australian Provincial of the Sisters of St Joseph:

> I think that before Max there was a lot focussed on just that Mary was religious, and sometimes that in its narrowest sense....what Max focussed on was human goodness, which obviously I can't separate from religiousness and spirituality, but he put the focus on this woman whose sheer human goodness made her an 'icon' for Australia.

He also cited the comment of Sr Teresita Cormack that 'it was he who really kept Mary before the general reading public'.

An indication of the way that Harris had affected the construction of knowledge in the wider community was shown in an article published in *The Advertiser* on 21 January 1995 (Lloyd 1995a). This piece of writing was a report on the visit to Sydney by the Microsoft founder, Bill Gates, which had occurred in the same week that the Pope came to beatify Mary MacKillop. Paul Lloyd, a columnist and senior writer, used a parody which began,

> Microsoft chairman Bill Gates physically visited Australia this week to beatify the late poet Max Harris, at an intimate, calvados-sodden-ceremony at Sydney Randwick Racecourse.[69]

The choice of a style of writing in which parallels could be drawn between the institutions of the Catholic Church/Microsoft Corporation; Mary MacKillop/Max Harris and the Pope/Bill Gates, presumed that the audience had a frame of reference to accompany such allusions. The link between Max Harris and Mary MacKillop was considered part of the everyday reality for the newspaper audience. Other aspects of Harris' life and labours were worked into the report. It also referred to current events such as the war in Chechnya and the protest by women outside the Sydney Catholic Cathedral, and then concluded with another direct reference to aspects of sainthood:

> ...members of Microsoft, disturbed that their church won't accept the ordination of women into the mysteries of VisBasiC +++ tran (sic) programming languages, are now praying to the Blessed Max for a miracle. We'll make the old penguin a saint yet!

There was obviously a presumption that so much information had been given in the recent press about Mary MacKillop and the process leading to her beatification, that readers of the article would understand the reference to another miracle being needed before a person given the title 'Blessed' would become 'Saint'.

8.5 CONCLUSIONS – WHAT IDENTITY HAS BEEN CREATED?

Up until the time of Max Harris, MMPM had been evident but had lacked a focus. It was a symbol that was beginning to emerge but it was Harris who gave it a new direction. In his writings he referred to her as 'Mother Mary MacKillop', and

[69] One of Max Harris' favourite drinks was apple brandy - Calvados (Lawnham 1995).

'Mother Mary' in recognition of her role. For the most part, he used 'Mary MacKillop' and did not use her religious title of 'Mary of the Cross'. He recognised that he was dealing with a new reality which needed to be identified separately.

Although he maintained that he was an agnostic, Harris' support through his columns for the beatification and recognition by Australians was really a personal crusade in the final years of his life.

From his study of Mary MacKillop – and it was extensive enough to include the three volumes of the *Positio* produced for the consideration of Vatican authorities – his version of MMPM focussed on a few major cultural themes which he thought were relevant to the Australian society.

- She was an educator who used creative methods and structures to meet the unique needs of Australia, especially in rural areas.
- She was a model of ecumenism before the word was known: she was not afraid to befriend, seek assistance from and offer help to those who were non-Catholic or who had no religious allegiance.
- She could be called a feminist – a strong woman who was not afraid to confront a male-dominated society and church, one who held firm to her beliefs, despite the extreme opposition she faced.
- Above all, she was a model of goodness, the virtue considered so essential in the Australian identity. She displayed this in a unique way through her pragmatic approach to all areas of her life and work.

As he was a recognised author with high status within the state and national scene, Harris was able to exert some influence over his newspaper audience. He was a writer who could be recognised as a 'reliable source' (Fairclough 1995a, p 62) Harris did not hide the fact that he was trying to influence his audience: from his position of power, he sought to provide legitimation for his views about Mary MacKillop. He knew and recognised the role the media could play in this process and believed along with Bouma (1992, pp 7-26, 144-146) that the example of saints could reinforce group identity.

This was clearly evident in an extract from his unpublished poetry entitled, *Winter – Sydney – 1993,* printed in full in Appendix 3*:*

> In my head I hear a voice, and feel a loving,
> And from my head I must reply. It is God
> I hear, and His love I feel. But the voice.
> Is that of our blessed and sanctified Mary MacKillop.
>
> What she says is itself not new. The simplicity
> Of God and earthly goodness, is not easy in the finding
> And doing. But Mary sets out the path
> It is akin to her own path and pain.
> Australia has a Saint, and a Saint for all of us,
> And if we listen, we are lifted up, and this despite
> Our spiritual dedications being not hers, but kith and kin.
> If we live close to her life, we all become godly,
>
> And our imperfections become even as those
> That allowed to the Saints, the Prophets, or the common man.
> Great goodness is not perfection. We learn from Saints
> This is so. Mary's life is the comfort we had to invent.

This final sentence was significant: Harris recognised Mary MacKillop as a sacred symbol, one which 'guarantees the continued meaningfulness of the humanly constructed reality and wards off the invasions of chaotic meaningless' (Wuthnow 1992, p 43). He used his talents to continue to 'invent' MMPM and thus could be described as one of the most significant factors influencing the development of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media in the ten years leading up to her beatification. It was not just what he said but because of who he was that his opinion reached a wide audience.

The way that his influence was recognised and extended will be the subject of the next chapter as I consider examples of the editorials and other selected texts which focussed on the beatification of Mary MacKillop in January 1995.

CHAPTER NINE

THE BEATIFICATION EVENT – JANUARY 1995

9.0 INTRODUCTION

The visit by Pope John Paul II to Australia from 18-20 January 1995 was a well-publicised event. Newspapers throughout the country gave extensive coverage to his tour, his role and to many issues causing controversy within the Catholic Church, such as his refusal even to discuss the possible ordination of women. It was the Pope who scored most of the headlines for the week – the Sydney *Daily Telegraph Mirror* published three editions on Thursday 19th and Friday 20th January to provide maximum coverage. Page one banners were focussed on the Pope: 'Our welcome to a friend', 'Pope's joy', 'Pope a man of the people', 'Path of glory', 'Love, faith and hope – Pope's farewell'. The only exception to this was one on the day after the beatification ceremony, although the Pope still rated a mention: 'Blessed Mary – Pope beatifies Mother MacKillop' (Telegraph Mirror special magazine 1995). On this day *The Australian* had the headline, 'A Nation Consecrated' (Simper and McNicoll 1995), while the Adelaide *Advertiser* banner read, 'Hail Blessed Mary – 250,000 see 'a true child of her time' beatified' (1995c).

While the print media did give wide exposure to the reason for the Pope's visit, the beatification of Mary MacKillop, there seemed to be some unease about what to print. The Pope and his travels were easier territory for the journalists who were described by one of their peers as 'veteran hangers-on, they do popes, presidents and royals' (Fraser 1995). A construction already existed for the leader of the Catholic Church: he was the continuation of a long line of leaders, there were formal links to an institution and he was a charismatic leader in his own right. Seven pages of the *Telegraph Mirror* souvenir magazine were solely about the pope's life, visits to other countries and interventions in international politics.[70] There was a presumption that

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[70] The media also seemed more comfortable in presenting stereotypes of visual images. In the many photos featured in stories throughout the week, especially in the Sydney papers, there was a preponderance of religious sisters wearing the traditional garb and veil. The fact that this was not the norm for the Sisters of St Joseph, who had a vested interest in the week's main story, was not recognised by the editors.

the audiences for the various newspapers would have frames of reference already in place to process information of this nature.

In their attempt to handle this new construction of an Australian saint, the various newspapers gave biographical details of Mary and her family, described aspects of the process of saint making and commented on her relevance to Australian society. As the beatification process was an unprecedented event, journalists seemed unsure about what to report. Most of the articles published in the week of the papal visit were descriptive of the ceremonies, extracts from papal speeches and human interest type stories such as 'Miracle woman stays a mystery' (The Daily Telegraph Mirror 1995c) and 'Joy among nuns' (McGeough 1995). As the main cause for the events of the week, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media (MMPM) was, for a few days at least, amongst the main news items in the country – and even received some overseas publicity.[71]

Writers such as McGirr (1995) and Hutch (1996) have considered some aspects of the print media coverage of these few days. The former focussed mainly on the media's attention to the Pope: he was seen to be 'a hero of the Murdoch press' because of the possibilities he provided for increased sales. The group 'offered free posters one day and commemorative medallions the next'. In his analysis of the way that journalists reported on what he termed implicit and explicit religion, Hutch used as examples three different articles found in newspapers and magazines in January 1995. Neither of these pieces took as its main aim an exploration of the way that the print media presented Mary MacKillop.

In tracing the emergence of MMPM in this *Timeslice*, I selected three major areas for study in this chapter. Firstly, I considered a range of editorials, which mentioned Mary MacKillop. Each was examined to see what was represented and what identity was constructed. The second section of the chapter focussed on the way that MMPM was reflected in 1995 society as shown in the speeches made by the Prime Minister,

[71] I have obtained copies of reports in two English and one Scottish newspaper - (Milliken 1995; Scottish Catholic Observer 1995; Toal 1995). The Scottish paper gave a three-page spread about the work of Paul Gardiner in the preparation of the *Positio*; a detailed biography of Mary MacKillop and interviews with her distant relatives. The short report by Toal gave some biographical details and mentioned the connection with Roybridge in Scotland whilst the Milliken article focussed on the possible dissent caused by the Pope's 'stand on women and birth control'.

Paul Keating and other Australian politicians. These would have been written by political speechwriters (journalists) and so could be seen as a reflection of the way that Mary MacKillop was viewed by mainstream media. To conclude the chapter, I identified other heroes (from Australia and elsewhere), with whom journalists writing around January 1995 compared Mary MacKillop.

9.1 EDITORIALS

As background to this chapter, I studied newspapers that were available in Sydney during the days of the Pope's visit, as well as those accessible in other states of Australia. Much of the coverage was narrative and the Pope's speeches were given almost verbatim publication, at least in the Sydney papers. In order to follow up the way that texts 'can provide particularly good indicators of social change' (Fairclough 1992b), I analysed twelve editorials from all states and territories of Australia. Eleven of these were printed in the week or so surrounding the beatification event; one (from the Queensland *Courier Mail*) was from the previous February. This paper did not devote any editorial space in January 1995 to either the Pope or Mary MacKillop and so the piece from the previous year was selected for comparison with those produced at the time of the papal visit.

Editorials can be viewed as a particular category of newspaper text. Their aim is to present an authoritative viewpoint to a particular type of audience with whom some relationship is presumed. As a 'discourse of institutional power', the editorial can assist in both the construction and legitimation of authority: both for the newspaper itself and for other institutions within society (see Fowler 1991, pp 208-221).

The twelve editorials chosen for this study can be divided into two groups – the first six have Mary MacKillop as the main focus while the remainder gave more emphasis to the Pope. The editorials with their headlines were as follows:

Date	Newspaper	State	Headline
18 Feb 1994	Courier Mail*(CM)	Qld	Honourable – a life of faith and feistyness
11 Jan 1995	The Catholic Weekly (CW)	NSW	MacKillop: a woman of inspiration
15 Jan 1995	Sunday Herald Sun*(SHS)	Vic	Victoria's Saint

Date	Newspaper	State	Headline
18 Jan 1995	The Daily Telegraph Mirror* (DTM)	NSW	Mary, a woman of strength
20 Jan 1995	The Advertiser* (ADV)	SA	A great yet humble Australian
20 Jan 1995	The Daily Telegraph Mirror* (DTM)	NSW	Virtue has a reward for us all
17 Jan 1995	The Age (Age)	Vic	Saints and Popes
18 Jan 1995	The West Australian (WAU)	WA	Pope's visit marked by paradox
19 Jan 1995	The Sydney Morning Herald (SMH)	NSW	The Pope in Australia
19 Jan 1995	Northern Territory News*(NTN)	NT	No shades of grey
20 Jan 1995	The Hobart Mercury* (HM)	Tas	Women and John Paul II
21 Jan 1995	The Canberra Times (CT)	ACT	Pope's gestures to his critics

The asterisk indicates the papers owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation. Other owners are the Fairfax group with *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald,* whilst others own the ACT and WA titles and the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney owns *The Catholic Weekly*. While writing about religious affairs is not given high priority by the daily press, there is some institutional support for religion. According to Henningham (1994), the Murdoch press has a greater proportion of Catholic staff than other papers; the Fairfax group has a history of support for Protestant Christianity and both Rupert Murdoch and Conrad Black (owner of Fairfax) are converts to Catholicism.

Against this background, I considered what was represented in the texts and what identities were created. It was possible to identify five themes about Mary MacKillop which emerged strongly in the editorials:

- Relevance to all Australian – the universal dimension
- Her goodness
- A readiness to confront authority in pursuit of a vision
- Feminist model

- Her saintliness

Each of these can be substantiated from the editorials and some links could be traced to the influence of Max Harris, whose work was described in the previous chapter.

9.1.1 Relevance to all Australians – the universal dimension

This was the most prominent theme stressed by editorial writers in slightly different ways in ten of the editorials. The earliest example from Queensland (CM 18/2/94) stated:

> Mary MacKillop's living message – to those of her faith and to all who know of her life – is as vibrant and vital today as when it was being enunciated a century or more ago.

The first of the News Corporation pieces in New South Wales (DTM 18/3/95) ended with the thought that the Pope's example and message had relevance to all: no mention is made of Mary MacKillop's wider appeal. This was addressed, however, in the editorial two days later from the same press (DTM 20/1/95):

> ...the ceremony of Mary MacKillop's beatification transcended ecclesiastical considerations. Even those committed to other faiths and those who admit no religious conviction acknowledged her worldly life of service and courage.

The other NSW paper (SMH 19/1/95) took as its main subject the Pope and the recent controversy about the place of women in the Catholic Church. It did acknowledge the fact that he had come to Australia to honour Mary MacKillop as a 'more relevant and accessible' role model was 'a matter of pride for all Australians'.

The perspective taken in South Australia (ADV 20/1/95) was that while the concept of sainthood could be a barrier to those not of the Catholic faith, and at the same time 'a traditional source of comfort, consolation and hope for millions' who identify themselves as Catholics, Mary MacKillop transcended these divisions and all could feel 'a sense of Australian pride and late 20th century relevance' in her beatification. The paper continued that 'in the jargon of today she is a marvellous role model for Catholic and non-Catholic alike'. The point was further reinforced in the final sentence when it was stated that she was 'an Australian universally seen as at once great and humble'.

In Victoria (SHS 15/1/95) it was noted that 'all Australia has reason to be proud' of Mary MacKillop who was described as 'heroic, stoic and a woman far ahead of her time'. The paper then went on to recall the traditional Sydney-Melbourne rivalry:

> Though the Pope will stop off only in Sydney, it is in Melbourne, her birthplace, and in Victoria, where so many of her achievements were made and recognised, that spirits will soar highest.

The headline for this editorial also reflected parochial pride as it announced, 'Victoria's Saint'.

The Northern Territory paper (NTN 19/1/95) did not give a great deal of coverage to the Papal tour or to Mary MacKillop. This editorial focussed mainly on the role of the Pope in maintaining the integrity of the Catholic Church against 'reformers'. It did recognise that Mary MacKillop as a member of this institution was 'an extraordinary Australian woman' and that 'you don't have to believe in miracles to appreciate the works of Mary MacKillop, Australia's first saint'.

Pope John Paul II was the main subject of the Western Australian editorial but it did make some mention of Mary's universal appeal:

> The beatification of Australia's own Mother Mary MacKillop makes his visit a specially joyous occasion for Catholics. And many non-Catholics will take pride in the elevation of this quintessential Aussie battler to the exalted ranks of the sanctified.

The only editorial selected from a Catholic publication (CW 11/1/95) began with a rather extravagant claim –

> If all the words spoken concerning Mary MacKillop and her Beatification were put together they would far exceed the contents of the Bible.

The writer then asked the rhetorical question, 'what does it mean to us, to our nation?' The conclusion presented was that Mary MacKillop's example 'should reach out to all of us, Catholic or not, believer or not' as she was a 'woman of heroic virtue' who was 'such an inspiration to us all'.

Mary MacKillop as someone who had universal appeal, a model of ecumenism before the word was known, was a strong theme promoted by Max Harris. It was his belief that this aspect of her personality made her both relevant and attractive to all

Australians. It would seem that the editors of the majority of Australian daily newspapers agreed with him.

9.1.2 Her goodness

Another of the characteristics that Harris identified in Mary MacKillop was what he termed her 'goodness' and this too was reflected in many of the editorials analysed. For Max Harris, 'goodness' was an all-encompassing word which described her 'inner and innate' integrity; it was a 'means as well as an end' in the achievement of her goal of assisting others. Her pragmatic approach to all situations was the practical expression of this goodness (Harris 1985b).

Harris' influence was particularly evident in the South Australian paper (ADV 20/1/95), which included a mention of him in the editorial: it acknowledged Harris as 'one of her early champions for recognition'. An explanation was given that the 'goodness' recognised in Mary MacKillop was in the definition used by Harris. It was 'not of the marzipan sentimentality kind,' but rather a greatness that came from the way she faced and overcame opposition in her determination to assist those in need.

The *Age* (1995) echoed a similar theme, although 'goodness' was not used. It described Mary MacKillop as a 'woman of exemplary virtue' who had 'a strong practical streak'. The other Victorian editorial spoke of Mary MacKillop's continued influence as it stated that, 'charitable causes still flow from her goodness and spirit of justice' (Sun Herald Sun 1995).

In Tasmania, the editor stated that, 'in any company, Mary MacKillop would be ranked as an outstanding and good person for the work she did to help the underprivileged' (Hobart Mercury 1995).

To *The Catholic Weekly* (1995a), there was no doubt that 'goodness' was a key quality:

> What was Mary's secret? Perhaps it was the ability to always see the good in others, no matter how harsh their words, how unfeeling their actions....
> Her simple goodness, sweetness of nature, clarity of purpose, merciful and forgiving nature should reach out to all of us, Catholic or not, believer or not.

To reinforce the point even further, this editorial urged readers to recognise and utilise 'the generous goodness that is untapped in us' as a way of imitating Mary MacKillop.

The two *Daily Telegraph Mirror* examples (1995b; 1995d) paid tribute to Mary's 'earthly qualities of kindness, of tenderness and selflessness in abundance' as well as to the way that 'she taught by example the greatest Christian virtues of forgiveness, of compassion, of truth and love'.

Kindness was the virtue highlighted most in the *Northern Territory News* (1995):

> ...what comes through in her life is an important word
> which might have lost significance in more modern days but
> shouldn't have.
> The word is kindness.

In Queensland (Courier Mail 1994), 'Mary MacKillop's living message' was summarised as, 'Remember the meek'.

While the words may have varied slightly, there was unanimity amongst all editors that Mary MacKillop had a special type of 'goodness' which impelled her to reach out to help others in many practical ways. Such a virtue was deemed to be worthy of both admiration and emulation by the audience.

9.1.3 A readiness to confront authority in pursuit of a vision

In ten of the editorials, a focus was given to Mary's readiness to confront Catholic Church authorities in the pursuit of her vision. *The Canberra Times* (1995) made no mention of it as it focussed on the Pope as a world leader. The second of *The Daily Telegraph Mirror* pieces (1995d) also made no mention, but it had made a reference in its column two days before (1995b):

> ...hers was no meek or subservient ministry dominated by
> the imposing machinery of the Catholic Church. She was
> prepared to fight the bureaucracy of the establishment, and
> for her determination to do God's will as it was revealed to
> her, she was not without enemies.

Other papers used slightly different wording to cover the same point: she was 'a strong willed and assertive woman who was not afraid to stand up to the conservative ecclesiastical authorities of her day' (The Age 1995) and she 'was neither fearful of

the church's hierarchy nor easily swayed from her mission on behalf of the unfortunate' (Sun Herald Sun 1995).

Two editors used the term 'rebel' in discussing this aspect of Mary MacKillop's character. According to the *Hobart Mercury* (1995), she 'stood up to the church hierarchy and rebelled against being dictated to by the bishops'. *The Courier Mail* (1994) used the theme of 'rebel' throughout as it developed the theme that 'Mary MacKillop was a rebel in her earthly life'. It traced this to her role as 'a social activist' and then gave modern parallels of unnamed individuals in Latin America who 'would instantly understand her multiple dilemmas and the call to confront hierarchies'. The editorial continued that 'the Church has always produced rebels' and then noted the way that such rebels can arouse admiration from the general public: 'Who is a rebel to a hierarchy.... is often a heroine to those below the high table'.

In its analysis, *The Age* continued to explore reasons why Mary MacKillop came into confrontation with authorities and concluded that,

> It was her insistence that the church should be more responsive to the needs of battler communities in both city and country that drew the ire of some priests and members of the hierarchy.

The way that the editorials described Mary's stance was further developed in the notion of her as a feminist model.

9.1.4 Feminist model

The implicit message underlying the stance taken against misguided authority was that Mary MacKillop was someone who could be a role model for feminism – feminism of the type outlined by Max Harris. She was not someone who took on a life path out of any dislike of men: rather, she was a strong woman who stood up for the rights of others, those who needed an advocate against unjust or unresponsive institutional structures which usually happened to be male-dominated. As *The Age* (1995) put it, 'in her championing of the cause of the down-trodden and the disadvantaged in both city and country, she is an important role model'.

The message was made more explicit in several of the editorials. In its discussion of the way Mary MacKillop coped with the opposition she experienced, *The Advertiser* (1995b) wrote,

> The Catholic Church may prefer a slightly different interpretation but many will see her in a quasi-feminist context, having to battle male prejudice and conservatism and doing so, moreover, within the parameters of a male power hierarchy. She defied hidebound male authority. She did so because she and the women of the order she founded wanted recognition for their work among children, orphans very much among them, and other women who needed refuge.

This editorial, along with several of the others, linked into the cultural context of the time with the recent Vatican declaration that the question of the ordination of women could not be discussed and many women protesting outside St Mary's Cathedral during the Pope's visit there. The point was clearly stated in the *Hobart Mercury* (1995) as it developed the notion that Mary MacKillop could be considered a rebel. It followed up the description of her opposition to bishops with the prediction that, if she were alive today, 'she would have become a leader of those women who believe that the priesthood should not be the exclusive domain of men'.

While disagreeing with this last point – 'Mother Mary's 19th century idealism might have found the idea of women priests too exotic' - *The West Australian* (1995) did note a certain irony in the whole beatification event:

> Mother Mary herself might be wryly amused at her exaltation by the successors of a male hierarchy which treated her so badly during her life.....
> In standing up to them, with the ultimate support of Rome, she establishes herself as an early role model for Catholic women.
> She might find further irony in her beatification by a pope who has not shown any interest in expanding the role of women in the male-dominated church.

The idea of Mary MacKillop as a feminist model will be examined further in the next chapter as it was a topic featured in many of the political cartoons that appeared around January 1995.

9.1.5 Her saintliness

In this final section of the analysis of editorials featuring Mary MacKillop, I have summarised the knowledge displayed about the notion of sainthood and the process of saint making. This provided evidence of the knowledge or the frames of reference that were presumed amongst the audience for the newspapers.

There were three clear instances of an understanding of beatification as a level of official sanctity. It was described in the *Courier Mail* (1994) as 'the penultimate step towards sainthood' while the *Hobart Mercury* (1995) wrote that, 'The Pope is in Australia to beatify Mary MacKillop. The next step by the church usually is canonisation – sainthood'. One of *The Daily Telegraph Mirror* (1995d) columns gave a more comprehensive outline:

> What are the hallmarks of holiness? By what qualities is a person made saintly?
> In the liturgy of the Catholic Church, saintliness is a condition to which all may aspire, and all may achieve given the divine guidance of the holy spirit (sic). Those who are prepared to heed the word of the Lord, those who are prepared to undertake a life of service to those in spiritual and physical need may be admitted to the fellowship of God, to the blessings of the holy Trinity and to eternal grace in heaven.
> And those who attain pure affinity with the will of God may achieve special blessedness. Those of greatest devotion may win God's particular benediction. In the canon of the Catholic faith, one such is Mary MacKillop, whose beatification was accomplished yesterday by the Holy Father Pope John Paul II.

This same paper noted that 'saintliness has a colloquial as well as a pious dimension' and suggested that, in this definition, the Pope could also be considered a saint.

Four papers referred to the fact that miracles were an essential component of saint-making in the Catholic Church. During the Pope's visit, Sydney experienced torrential rain but while this was an inconvenience for some of the arranged events, it marked the break of a long drought in New South Wales. In one of his final comments before he left Australia, the Pope referred to this rain as 'the first gift of the new Blessed Mary MacKillop' (Coomber 1995). *The Canberra Times* (1995) reflected its understanding that a further miracle was required before canonisation when it concluded its editorial with the words, 'if Mary MacKillop brought the rain,

as the Pope suggested, then may she soon be canonised'. The whole question of miracles was recognised by the Adelaide *Advertiser* (1995b) as one which 'causes considerable uneasiness' to non-Catholics while *The Sydney Morning Herald* (1995) noted that 'the requirement for miracles ... has begun to be questioned by many Catholics'. This paper also saw that the Pope's own ethnic identity as well as his role were reasons for his creation of numerous saints:

> ...because of his Polish background, he has sought, as one means of regenerating the Church, to re-emphasise the importance of saints, as role models for a world sadly in need of them.

The Darwin editorial was dismissive of miracles, declaring that 'you don't have to believe in miracles to appreciate the works of Mary MacKillop, Australia's first saint' (Northern Territory News 1995).

Instances could also be identified where editors displayed knowledge of other aspects of formal sainthood. The Victorian *Sun Herald Sun* (1995) referred to the cult of saints when it described how 'schools bear her name, charitable causes still flow from goodness and spirit of justice'. The way that Mary's body was touched after her death 'with sacred objects in recognition of the special reverence with which she was endowed' and how 'at her funeral service, the faithful took up handfuls of earth from her burial place' was a reference to the relics of saints (The Daily Telegraph Mirror 1995b).

The desire for symbols and stories to remember Mary MacKillop was mentioned too in *The Catholic Weekly* (1995a) and some warning given about the new cultural artefact of MMPM being developed. While 'the rush of public enthusiasm, the films, plays, books and memorabilia may dim the memory of Mary MacKillop,' it was recognised that 'it is part of human nature to acquire symbols, so it will not be surprising if there is a roaring trade in Mary artefacts, Penola wine etc'.

9.1.6 What identity is constructed?

These twelve editorials in which Mary MacKillop was mentioned can be taken as examples of the way that the Australian society has tried to categorise and build an identity. Such a process, according to Fairclough (1992a, p 168) is a 'fundamental

aspect of how (societies) work, how power relations are imposed and exercised, how societies are reproduced and changed'.

Mary MacKillop was recognised by the Catholic Church as an individual formally linked to the institution and working within it for the common good. It was within this wider institution that she founded the Sisters of St Joseph to carry on her work. It was this group that sponsored her process for beatification, with some assistance from the Catholic Church at large. Until the announcement that the Pope would visit Australia to beatify her, Mary MacKillop was 'owned' by these sections of the Australian society. With the impending Papal visit, the issue became one for the whole society. The Pope was recognised as a Head of State and was afforded all the official pomp, ceremony and protocol demanded of such an occasion.

The extensive print media coverage, and especially these editorials, marked a new stage in the development of Mary MacKillop as a cultural icon for Australia. In all of the editorials except one, she was referred to simply as 'Mary MacKillop' with the presumption that this was recognisable to the audience. The West Australian was the only paper not to use this title but used 'Mother Mary MacKillop' and 'Mother Mary' in its column. This latter name was the one preferred and used by Mary herself, as well as her formal religious name of 'Mary of the Cross' which was not used in any editorial. Three of the papers (SMH, SHS, ADV) made explicit reference to her role as the founder of the Sisters of St Joseph, while this was implied in *The Catholic Weekly*.

By January 1995, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media was public property in the sense that she had become a prominent news item in all major daily newspapers throughout the country. Those charged with editorial responsibility in these papers used their position to reproduce, restructure and challenge the existing understanding of what had become a cultural artefact. They presented her as someone relevant to all Australians, a role model because of her goodness and her readiness to confront unjust authority in her goal of providing education and practical assistance to many in both city and country. The themes of mateship, egalitarianism, commitment to others and a battler can be recognised. She was seen as a strong woman, one whose achievements should be recognised by the total community of Australians: she was a

feminist in the best sense of the word. Although originally 'owned' by her followers and the Catholic Church, Mary MacKillop was now linked to 'that part of culture that persuasively presents a plausible myth of the ordering of existence' (Clark and Hoover 1997). The public spectacle of the beatification ceremony provided an example of what White (1997, p 52) would term 'ritual occasions for ecstatic experience of the transcendent, the creation of a liminal space apart from everyday life'. Knowledge about Mary MacKillop had achieved the status of 'common sense'; it was now part of the 'taken for granted reality' for all Australians (see Berger and Luckmann 1967, p 163; Fairclough 1992a, p 87).

9.2 POLITICAL SPEECHES – EVIDENCE OF A CULTURAL ICON

As an example of the way that Mary MacKillop as a cultural icon had been 'adopted' by sections of the wider Australian community by 1995 and to demonstrate how the identity constructed by the print media had taken hold, I have studied the speeches made by the Prime Minister during the week of the beatification. A month after this event when the Commonwealth Parliament resumed in Canberra, many politicians took the opportunity to speak in support of motions about Mary MacKillop. These speeches, and those made by the Prime Minister during the Papal Visit, have not been examined in any other research to date about Mary MacKillop.

As Prime Minister, Paul Keating made a formal welcome and farewell to the Pope on behalf of the people of Australia (1995a; 1995b). While the speeches did have the aim of expounding on Labor Party policies and achievements, the themes identified in the editorials can be clearly traced. Mary MacKillop's relevance to all Australians was noted – 'she spoke to all Australians and she spoke for the kind of tolerant and diverse society we aspire to today. She readily crossed denominational boundaries'. Reference was made to key qualities such as 'her goodness, her heroic virtue, her dedication to the poorest of the poor'. She was seen as 'this great Australian woman' and a model for other unsung heroines: 'women as much as men pioneered this country, but their contribution has not always been truly acknowledged'. Max Harris would have resonated with this statement in his definition of feminists. The way that Mary MacKillop confronted unjust authority was referred to obliquely in a reference to her 'unconquerable courage which she brought to the task of seeing justice done'.

As Prime Minister, Paul Keating introduced a motion to Parliament during its next sitting on 2 February 1995 (Hansard 1995, p 357). He moved:

> That this House:
>
> 1) Acknowledges the Beatification by His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, of Mother Mary MacKillop, founder of Australia's first religious order, the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph.
>
> 2) Recognises the contribution to the people and society of Australia by Blessed Mary MacKillop and the beneficent and enduring work of the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph.

In a rare display of unanimity, the leader of the Opposition, John Howard, seconded the motion. Eleven speakers gave three to five minute speeches in support of the motion which was then passed by those present.

Several days later on 6 February the Member for Hinkler, Mr Neville, put a second motion (Hansard 1995, p 451). He moved:

> That this House
>
> 1) Notes with pleasure and national pride the beatification of Blessed Mary MacKillop;
>
> 2) Acknowledges her unique contribution to the education of generations of Australian children, in particular to those in less fortunate circumstances;
>
> 3) Celebrates the social and spiritual dimensions she and her communities have added to the lives of ordinary Australians, especially in rural and remote areas;
>
> 4) Commends her as a role model of vision, determination and feminine achievement; and
>
> 5) Joins in congratulating the Josephite Sisters in Australia and beyond our shores at a time of great pride for their communities.

This motion also received bipartisan support and was spoken to by ten speakers, two of whom had already spoken in the previous session.

From the speeches in both sittings, the qualities recognised in Mary MacKillop included 'the simple Christian virtues of commitment, service, humility and great courage' (Howard); 'a battler' (Crawford); 'goodness, vision and ability to command loyalty' (Neville); 'larrikinism,... kindness, care and compassion' (Crosio); 'a very

practical sincere, religious woman...a first class politician (who) would be in this place if she were still alive' (Nehl). Her role as an educator received high praise with many politicians describing their own education in schools run by the Sisters of St Joseph – or schools in their current electorates which continued the tradition begun by Mary MacKillop. Her role as a feminist model was mentioned by many – eg Mary MacKillop's role in a patriarchal church have made her a heroine to modern Australian feminists' (Vaile).

While there was some recognition of the spiritual dimension to her life, it was as an outstanding model of an Australian citizen that Mary MacKillop drew most praise from the politicians –

> Mary MacKillop was, in many ways, a pioneer of the Australian character. She was an underdog, often the ultimate underdog, and as such can be considered one of the ultimate Australians. She set an example for Australians regardless of race or religious beliefs. She is indeed the epitome of everything Australia stands for (Vaile).
>
> As we move towards our next century of federation, perhaps we should look to seeing Mary MacKillop as a paradigm of an Australian. Her ingenuity, determination, intelligence, and plain stubborn courage are Australian values that are accessible to all Australians, whether Catholic or not (Easson).

There was a suggestion from this latter speaker that Mary MacKillop should be featured on an Australian coin so that 'every contemporary Australian (can) see a great Australian woman every day'.

Several of the speakers were able to quote from the letters of Mary MacKillop (eg Cameron) and Bronwyn Bishop was proud to declare her connection by describing how she was asked to launch the official biography of Mary MacKillop prepared by Paul Gardiner.

There was some evidence that politicians recognised the connection between saints and miracles: the Member for Wannon, Mr Hawker, was very proud of the fact that Portland was in his electorate. He went to great lengths to describe Mary's connection with the town and then added,

> At the Siesta Motel in Portland, the original well beside Mary MacKillop's house has been excavated and restored, and we have yet to find whether this is Australia's Lourdes and a testing place for miracles.

The Leader of the National Party, Tim Fischer had a more humorous approach to this question when he described an instance of 'the extent to which Mary MacKillop has arrived in the psyche of all Australians'. It was an observation he had made recently:

> ...at the recent cricket match at the Adelaide oval a banner was unfurled which said, 'Gatting's 100, Mary MacKillop's 2nd miracle'. That was a deserving accolade in all the circumstances. It was worthy to the extent to which the message of Mary MacKillop has penetrated.

He concluded that if Mary MacKillop had been really involved in the exercise, 'she would have been on the side of the Aussies, not on the side of the English.'

While these speeches did not receive coverage in the print media, they can be taken as examples of the way Mary MacKillop had entered the popular consciousness of the time so that, in the words of White (1997, p 40), there is 'a continual mutual affirmation in which the sacred evokes the secular and the secular evokes the sacred'. The choice of words by many of those who spoke in Federal parliament reflected the themes associated with the Australian identity: a battler who helped the battlers, all the best elements of mateship, an underdog in her relationship to the church hierarchy but not cowed by them. She was recognised and presented as a suitable model of all that was best in the Australian character.

9.3 COMPARISONS WITH OTHER HEROES AND SAINTS

This dynamic relationship between sacred and secular can also be demonstrated by a consideration of those with whom Mary MacKillop was compared. From some of Max Harris' writings, as well as those of others writing around January 1995, I have identified seven other individuals whom Mary MacKillop was linked to in some comparative way by journalists. These were: William Bligh, Caroline Chisholm, 'Weary' Dunlop, John Flynn, Fred Hollows, Ned Kelly and Mother Teresa.

One of the editorials already discussed contained the following analogy with William Bligh:

> Nothing deterred her from pursuing her vision. Like marooned Captain Bligh facing starvation with his shipmates after the mutiny on the Bounty she kept her eye on the star, her faith in God's plan. And like Bligh she arrived safely in port, somewhat battered by the experience but still full of hope (The Catholic Weekly 1995a).

While the parallels with other aspects of Bligh's character may not be appropriate, a comparison can be made with Mary MacKillop's vision and her single-mindedness.

In his first article featuring Mary MacKillop, Max Harris (1986a, p 208) made comparisons with Caroline Chisholm and stated as a question,

> ...whether a major force in welfare innovation, in education, and in pioneer feminism, has been overlooked by the history books as a consequence of sectarian ignorance, if not bias. After all, Caroline Chisholm is a name known to most Australians, if only because her features stare sternly out at us from the face of a bank-note. Does the work of Mother Mary fall short of stern old Caroline?

To Max, even though Caroline was a great humanitarian, Mary MacKillop's work and legacy had a far greater impact upon Australia.

In writing his article entitled, 'The Last Hero and the First Saint,' Davison (1995) drew some comparisons between 'Weary' Dunlop and Mary MacKillop. He considered that both had attained hero status because of their 'cheer squads' – the POWs for Dunlop and the Josephites for MacKillop. With the passing of time, both acquired wider loyalties from a larger circle of admirers and have developed into cultural artefacts:

> ... under the influence of their enthusiastic worshippers, the historical individual may be transformed almost unrecognisably. The lead we take from their lives may be quite different from the lead they gave. What makes them heroes and saints is not the unambiguous message we take from their lives, but the multiplicity of lessons we may read into them. They are a focus for our sense of identity, more than patterns for our lives.

In an editorial some months before this article was published, *The Advertiser* (1995e) had considered 'Weary' Dunlop amongst a group of heroes given State funerals. It highlighted his 'impatience with authority' and the way he confronted his Japanese military captors without fear for his own safety but for the good of others – another quality with which he could be compared with Mary MacKillop.

In his parliamentary speech about Mary MacKillop, Tim Fischer made a link between Mary MacKillop and 'the Reverend John Flynn, the famous "Flynn of the Inland," and all religious leaders who over the years have helped Australia and the wellbeing of Australians' (Hansard 1995, p 359). In this comparison, those who help others for some spiritual dimension, not just merely for altruistic reasons are especially deserving of praise.

When the impending visit by the Pope for the beatification of Mary MacKillop was announced, the Brisbane *Courier Mail* interviewed the Australian tour organiser, Fr Anthony Doherty. In his comments, he was quoted as saying that,

> ...he had been struck by the similarity between Mary MacKillop and eye surgeon and humanitarian the late Fred Hollows.
> "She had all the energy, the cutting through of nonsense, the sense of Australia as a country, the sensitivity towards people who are broken, that we've seen from Fred Hollows. She was a very gutsy woman" (Meryment 1994).

Mary as a practical, courageous woman with genuine respect for all individuals can be seen in this example.

According to a report in the *Herald Sun* (1995), Archbishop Frank Little of Melbourne made a comparison between Mary MacKillop and Ned Kelly in his homily at the special Mass to mark the beatification. According to him, 'she and Ned Kelly were Australia's two great legends who inspired similar feelings of national identity.' The Archbishop was reported as saying that both of these famous Australians had 'so captured the popular imagination that their words and actions are assimilated into our cultural heritage'.

In the *Salesian Bulletin* (1994), a suggestion was made that,

> We need more like Mary MacKillop, who with her indomitable spirit and empowering love, will tackle the problems of the 'New Bush'. Let us have a new proverb, not 'as game as Ned Kelly' but as 'willing and determined as Mary MacKillop.'

One of Max Harris' *Browsing* columns was headed, 'Mother Mary the legend to succeed Ned' (Harris 1985b).

Perhaps the keyword in this comparison was 'legend': stories about Ned Kelly have become part of Australian folklore. Mary MacKillop could be seen as a more positive role model of someone who took a stance against authority, acted courageously and inspired well-deserved loyalty amongst her followers.

In a discussion of the variety of plays, films and other marketing devices used to publicise Mary MacKillop, a comparison was made with Mother Teresa:

> Mary is often likened to Mother Teresa, who's legit now but she had a hell of a rough time when she started out. There are a lot of parallels – she (Mother Teresa) had to go over the heads of the church hierarchy straight to the Pope. Once she had his sanction she was fine – and that also happened to Mary. She must have been phenomenally strong mentally, one of those people who, if she were here today, would have been in the newspapers and on television – you'd know about her (Safe 1994, p 16).

Mary MacKillop as a feminist in the terms used by Max Harris can be seen in this comparison – she too was a strong, determined woman, not afraid to take a public stand for her principles.

The desire by journalists to compare Mary MacKillop with other heroes can be understood as part of the media's role in the development of personal and communal identities. The famous persons referred to were presumed to be a part of the everyday reality of the newspaper audience: they were within the frame of reference which could be extended. By comparing and contrasting Mary MacKillop with known realities, the media were able to continue to construct new symbols of the sacred: in this case, a further development of MMPM (see White 1997, pp 48-51).

9.4 CONCLUSIONS

January 1995 marked a critical point in the development of the cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media. Although the national daily press did seem more comfortable in reporting on the known territory of the pope, they made a major effort to present the new entity. Mary's life, work and legacy were given extensive coverage in all national daily press throughout the country and reference was made to her in twelve editorials of such papers. Those responsible for the editorial comment highlighted many of the points already identified by Max Harris in his writings over

the previous ten-year period. MMPM was seen as a relevant role model for all Australians not just because she was egalitarian in her dealings with people but also because her message was considered appropriate to Australians of all religious persuasions – or none. Mary's goodness was the key quality emphasised: the virtue took many expressions and included her integrity, practical approach to problems, genuine kindness and her ability to inspire others to share in and continue her work. It was this aspect of MMPM that was the focus for political speeches just after the beatification: many politicians echoed the sentiments described in the popular press.

Journalists in January 1995 considered that Mary's basic goodness made her a strong woman, able to face unjust or ill-advised authority when necessary for the good of her work. This meant that MMPM was at times identified as a model for feminists in the meaning of 'feminism' as Max Harris used it. Some journalists attempted to predict she would have been a rebel if alive today and experiencing the debate over the ordination of women. The implication seemed to be that this was the only course open to a feminist.

Throughout the editorials, political speeches and comparisons with known Australian heroes, there were many echoes of the themes I have identified as being central to the Australian identity: she was identified as an Australian, one who battled throughout her life and who, despite great obstacles, did not give in. The use of such terms as 'rebel' and 'larrikin' as well as the mention of the way that she stood up to the church hierarchy and received an extreme and unjustified penalty, made her admirable in the eyes of Australians who have sympathy for those with a creative approach to authority. Her goodness, in the variety of ways that it was described, linked into the various dimensions of mateship, egalitarianism, courage and commitment. As a model for feminists, a strong woman, she was recognised and even adopted as an example by those seeking structural reform within the Catholic Church. While she was seen as a secular saint because of all these qualities, at the same time, there was a recognition of something more – her saintliness. The efforts of print media journalists to apply all the formal dimensions of sainthood, such as miracles, to a person viewed in an Australian context, led to further developments in MMPM.

Comparison with other Australian heroes was used by some journalists to assist the audience in locating Mary MacKillop within a familiar context. In her rejoinder to Davison's article about a comparison with 'Weary' Dunlop, Martyr (1996) identified the danger in removing Mary from her own context and then replacing this with 'a manufactured and modernised one'. This new identity, according to Martyr, was symbolised by the fact that Mary MacKillop was referred to only occasionally by her religious name, Mother Mary of the Cross. Once she assumed this, her surname was rarely used. It was under this name that she was located in history and stood out as a hero because of her 'holiness'. The prevalence in newspaper reports of the new name and the prominence given to the surname of MacKillop marked a further stage in the development of the cultural icon for Australia, MMPM.

Another significant step in this evolution was the way that this artefact was featured in a number of political cartoons throughout the country. This will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER TEN

POLITICAL CARTOONS FEATURING MARY MACKILLOP

10.0 INTRODUCTION

From Australian newspapers appearing since the time of the beatification in January 1995, I found almost 30 political cartoons which either featured or referred to Mary MacKillop.[72] Many of these were stimulated by the event and focus on Mary MacKillop herself or the Pope during his visit to Australia. Others, including some more recent examples, featured the Pope and the Catholic Church as an institution. Several cartoonists have provided multiple examples, such as Michael Atchison in the Adelaide *Advertiser* with six and Peter MacMullin in *The Australian* with four. The cartoons selected for analysis in this chapter reflect the work of thirteen of Australia's political cartoonists who have used Mary MacKillop and/or the Pope as the subject of their work. The fact that the national daily newspapers, as well as the dailies in all states and territories (except the Northern Territory), have treated the figure of Mary MacKillop in this way was an indication that from January 1995, there has been a significant shift in the way that the Print Media have viewed Mary MacKillop.

Before presenting my analysis of these cartoons, I have provided some information about political cartoons as a discrete media and then made a connection between media discourse theory and the purpose of political cartoons. I have not covered other incidental graphic depictions of Mary MacKillop which sometimes appeared as space fillers to accompany news reports about her or the beatification. While these do reflect other graphic interpretations of Mary MacKillop, I have selected political cartoons as the text to be considered in this study. The major part of this chapter has applied some of the ideas of Fairclough (1992a; 1992b; 1995a; 1995b) to many of the cartoons that appeared in the week of the beatification, as well as at other times.

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[72] I have used these some of these cartoons as the basis for a previously published paper (McCreanor 1998; 1999). I also made a presentation displaying many of them at the Third International Conference on Media, Religion and Culture in Edinburgh, 1999. The notion of a saint being the subject of political cartoons in daily newspapers was seen as unique and one which had not been observed or studied in other countries.

They served to highlight those aspects of the cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media, which were being supported and extended in this new stage.

10.1 POLITICAL CARTOONS AS MEDIA

10.1.1 Definition

Political cartoons have been described as 'one of the sharpest and most effective forms of commentary' (Crabb 1999). They focus on stereotypes, poke fun at the establishment and provide a humorous perspective on what can otherwise be serious issues. In the opinion of one who has often been the subject of this humour, Alexander Downer: 'Australia is incredibly well-served by its political cartoonists'. He added further that, 'I don't know any country which has as good a range of cartoonists' (quoted in Crabb 1999). One South Australian cartoonist, Michael Atchison, acknowledged that political cartoons would always offend: 'there are no sacred or taboo subjects'. People (especially those who are the subject of the cartoons) can take offence because 'the cartoon has been interpreted either wrongly or according to the reader's own hang-ups or prejudices' (Atchison 1999).

Usually these cartoons are located on the editorial page of the newspaper where they may supplement editorial opinion or reflect the cartoonist's perception of topical events. As a specific category of the print media, they have not been the subject of extensive research: the work by Press (1981) provided a comprehensive coverage of the subject while the recently published book by Turner (2000) is a summary of interviews with 21 of Australia's cartoonists.

In the opinion of Press, the political cartoon is meant to save time for the reader by directing attention to what is seen as important. In addition, it offers a judgment on politics and world events, aiming particularly at the leaders responsible for the maintenance of structures. The brief line drawings are meant to highlight what is significant, whilst relying on humour to act as a sugar coating for a message. The artistry should not be what Press terms 'correspondence school art' (p 18) but he noted that 'artistic excellence is only secondary to a cartoon's main purpose'; it should not get in the way of the main idea. This main idea must be presented in a way that is believable to the audience because it 'presents an underlying truth – one

more true than the facts themselves' (p 19). Cartoons that lack this basic integrity are rejected by the audience and rarely remembered.

In seeking to reduce the message to its simplest form of a visual comment, the cartoonist can rely solely on art without using any words.



Figure 1: Warren - *The Daily Telegraph Mirror* 19 January 1995

In this cartoon by Warren (1995), for example, no words are used – or needed – to present the message. The arrival of the Pope on Australian soil was seen as significant news. Instead of the usual receiving line of political figures, the person whom he had come to honour welcomed him. The presentation of Mary MacKillop as an ethereal floating figure, portrayed with the traditional saint's halo, identify her as a woman of status as well as someone with a link to the supernatural.

The combination of humour with artistic talent enables a message to be 'sugar-coated' so that the point is easily taken. Cartoonists can make use of 'relatively subtle cues and hints as signals of what they think, and thus sometimes (they) say what others dare not' (Press 1981, p 52). An example of this is the following cartoon (Leak 1995) touching on the issue of the ordination of women, a topic of great discussion around the time of the beatification of Mary MacKillop -



Figure 2: Leak - *The Weekend Australian* 21-22 January 1995

There are a multiplicity of cues to indicate Leak's opinion: the corpulent Vatican officials wearing different hats to indicate their varying ranks within the Catholic Church bureaucracy; they are old men, well fed and located in the comfortable setting of the Vatican with its peaceful garden scene outside. The display of the Pope's duty free shopping, the sharing of holiday snaps and the koala souvenir are all meant to satirise the Papal visit.

The cartoon also served to illustrate what Press (1981, p 62) identified as the three elements of political cartoons:

> One is the picture of reality that artists present to us as the essence of truth. They are showing what is happening to their cherished community. A second is a message, sometimes very sketchily implied, as to what they recommend ought to be done on behalf of the deserving. Finally, through artistic technique and allegorical imagery, the artist creates a mood telling us how we should feel over what is happening.

He also described these three aspects as 'cognitive, normative and affective'. While a cartoon of its very nature is open to a variety of interpretations according to the audience receiving it, one possible scenario could be as follows: the reality presented in the Figure 2 example was that the Pope could declare a woman a saint but not ordain her a priest. The images of the participants were distorted to hammer home

this point. The recommendation could be that the relative merits of the two states made it essential to redress the question of the ordination of women. Satire and humour were used to encourage the audience to laugh both at and with the Pope.

Cartoonists manipulate these three elements to stress a particular point of view. Calling attention to a particular situation 'is an important selective function of the cartoonist critic' (p 64). Behind the interpretation of the situation, Press noted, 'is the hint of the community the cartoonist cherishes'. The moral message of a cartoon is usually linked to a concern for this 'cherished community' (p 65). In a democratic society such as Australia, this community can be the wider populace who observed the beatification ceremony with all its pomp and ceremony as well as those within the Catholic Church who celebrated the honour accorded to Mary MacKillop. The political cartoons, which are the focus of this chapter, reflected the musings of journalists about someone who had been seen as a hero in both the sacred and secular societies.

10.1.2 Whose purposes are served

Depending on the purpose of the cartoonist, there can be three types of political cartoons, according to Press (pp 75-78), adapted from the work of the historian, W A Coupe: descriptive, laughing satirical and destructive satirical. Press added a fourth type: what he termed 'the glorifying'.

Descriptive

This is used when the cartoonist wishes to support 'status quo viewpoints' or to illustrate a current event: they are moments of light entertainment for the 'cherished community'. The cartoon showed in Figure 1 could fall into this category as it illustrated the arrival of the Pope for a unique Australian event.

Descriptive cartoons can contain elements of fatalism if the situation is unable to be changed but where the endurance of it can be assisted by a good dose of humour. MacMullin (1995a) portrayed the Pope chatting to a family after his arrival in Australia -



Figure 3: MacMullin - *The Australian* 19 January 1995

In this type of cartoon, the artist was acting somewhat like the court jester of old, employed by institutions in power but encouraged to make people laugh about their lot in life or the foibles of their leaders. In the words of Atchison (2000a, p 152),

> We are the court jesters of society. However, having said that, it should be noted that the medieval jester played an important role and often had licence to make comments which, from other mouths, would have had serious consequences. The jester was, and the cartoonist is, a sort of political safety valve.

Laughing satirical

Within a democracy, most cartoons are of this type: they aim to reform what is perceived as unjust structures or to criticise leaders in the hope of some change for the betterment of the community and the common good. 'They are a corrective in keeping politicians honest without chastising them severely' (Press 1981, p 75).

While the majority of the cartoons collected for this chapter are of this kind, one is included here (Alston 1995b). It illustrates the laughing satirical type in a comprehensive manner because of the way it included politicians from both sides of the political spectrum -



Figure 4: Alston - *The West Australian* 20 January 1995

At this time, the Labor Party was in government and Paul Keating, the figure on the left, was shown praying for a miracle from Mary MacKillop. The opinion polls were indicating his party would have some difficulty in winning the next election. The right section of the cartoon depicted Alexander Downer, who had just toppled John Hewson in a leadership spill for the Liberals.

Destructive satirical

I did not find any destructive satirical cartoons in my investigation. According to Press (1981, p 76), this type is meant 'to be cruel and to hurt... there is little or no hope for redemption for the society ... the hate shines through'. The fact that this style was not used to depict Mary MacKillop or anything related to her beatification could be interpreted as an implicit recognition by journalists that MMPM is a symbol of hope for the community: she was able to deflect all hatred or cruelty.

The Glorifying

These are the complete opposite of the destructive satirical and were particularly relevant for my study. In Press' terminology (p 77), these cartoons make 'a god of their subject' and he cited as examples 'war-time pictures of Edith Cavell-type nurses'. Despite the difficulties of their roles, these nurses were admired for their attitudes of commitment and unselfishness along with their bravery. For what they did and the way they did it, such individuals were given a persona of sanctity.

The cartoon shown in Figure 1 would fall into this category, as could the following (Kev 1995a) –

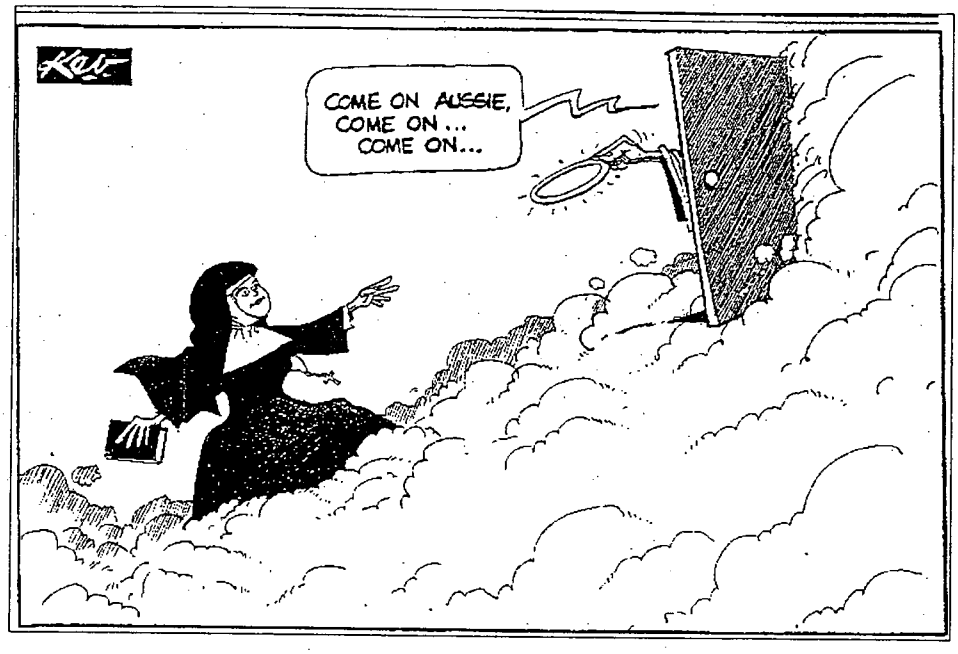

Figure 5: Kev - *The Mercury* 19 January 1995

Mary MacKillop was shown here as being in personal contact with the Deity (or St Peter): there was no criticism of her but recognition of a hero. More will be said of this cartoon later.

10.1.3 Applying media discourse to cartoons

In applying the work of Fairclough (1992b; 1995a; 1995b) to a study of political cartoons, there were three levels of meaning to be considered: the ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings. The first of these referred to the world represented by the artist: the reality created. There were two sub-functions in the interpersonal strand: these related to the way that the cartoon could be viewed in 'the constitution of personal and social identities' as well as in the construction of relationships with the audience (1995a, p 133).

It was the third level of meaning – the textual – that I focussed on, in order to draw some conclusions about the way the cartoonists assisted in the creation of the new cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media. This level incorporated the 'distribution of given versus new and foregrounded versus backgrounded

information': in other words, the knowledge presumed in the audience and the new knowledge presented. All of this was considered as a form of sociocultural practice to include the situational, institutional and societal factors operating at the time of the creation of the cartoon.

In presenting a particular version of reality and in helping to develop relationships and identities, political cartoonists relied for their impact on the use of various artistic techniques which linked into the context of the day. These were described by Press (1981, pp 70-71) as the setting, the characters, the situation and the imagery used. While there was some overlap between these elements, I have provided examples where one aspect was particularly utilised, although generally the cartoons relied on several or even all of these components. A more detailed analysis of many of the cartoons cited has been provided later in this chapter.

Setting

The location chosen for a cartoon can be significant, although in others such as that shown in Figure 3, it may not even be obvious. The following cartoon (Atchison 1995c) relied heavily for its message on the setting chosen.



Figure 6: Atchison - *The Advertiser* 20 January 1995

The siting of the cartoon in a formal church or cathedral setting immediately confirmed the link in the mind of the artist between Mary MacKillop (obviously the statue on the pedestal) and an established institution. The dark pillars which predominated the right hand side of the cartoon and were also featured on the left

hand side suggested that this institution was solid and a continuation of past times when such buildings were the norm. Inclusion of the Pope as well as a statue of Mary MacKillop indicated that the Catholic Church was the institution.

Characters and Caricature

Physical features or some personal foible of public figures are often used in political cartoons to caricature individuals. They can also be featured in the cartoon in various costumes to highlight a message or there can be a contrast between the individuals included to make a particular point. Cues such as hats worn, or some feature of dress to indicate the comic or ridiculous nature of the situation, are also used. Figure 2 is reliant on caricature for its message, and in Figure 6, the Pope and the Prime Minister, Paul Keating are caricatured. The following example (Atchison 1995d) contains a wide variety of caricatures, all based on a parody of Mary MacKillop as an Australian saint –



Figure 7: Atchison - *The Advertiser* 21 January 1995[73]

Appearing as it did in the week of Mary MacKillop's beatification when the newspapers had given broad coverage to various aspects of sainthood and saint-making, this cartoon indicated the way that Mary MacKillop stimulated the popular imagination about many politicians who were in the news at the time of the

[73] Michael Atchison presented the original of this cartoon to me after a discussion of this thesis.

beatification. In the guise of potential saints, they were offered for the Pope's consideration. Paul Keating's gruff exterior and penchant for Italian tailor made suits was ridiculed by presenting him in the traditional habit of a religious sister. Alexander Downer's difficult struggle to hold onto the Liberal leadership was likened to the martyrdom of a saint through multiple stabbings. John Howard was shown as one of those waiting in the wings, hoping to resume this leadership. His physical size was caricatured, as well as his prominent smile and teeth. The Federal Sports Minister, Ros Kelly was satirised about her use of a whiteboard which had featured strongly in a recent scandal about the allocation of sporting grants. Christopher Skase, one time millionaire media mogul and then a fugitive from justice in extradition-free Majorca was linked to the traditional patron of travellers, St Christopher, while the audience was reminded of the vulgar comment of the previous Prime Minister, Bob Hawke to a pensioner, for which he received a great deal of criticism and loss of face.

The Pope's reaction to the suggested saints was summarised by the comment of the dog, a feature of Atchison's cartoons: 'Don't ring us, we'll ring you'.

The Situation

The choice of a situation provides many opportunities for the cartoonist to hint both at the message as well as helping to set the mood for the emotional acceptance of this point. Historical events, the depiction of violent action or even the treatment of taboo subjects can be included.

An interesting example of the use of a situation was shown in the following example (Leahy 1995a) –



Figure 8: Leahy - *The Courier Mail* 21 January 1995

This cartoon featured the heavy rain which came during the week of the Beatification of Mary MacKillop and which broke a long drought in many parts of Queensland and New South Wales. In his final comments at Sydney airport before his departure from Australia, Pope John Paul said, 'Yesterday without rain. Today rain, rain, rain. The first gift of the new blessed Mary MacKillop' (The Advertiser 1995a).

Imagery Used

The final, and perhaps the most important element in the composition of a cartoon is the imagery chosen by the artist. Stereotypes are often used to strengthen an image and give a strong hint of the major message. The way that ordinary citizens are portrayed, as well as their leaders, can also be a significant indication of democratic free speech. In the opinion of Press (1981, p 71), 'it is such pictorial stereotyping that gives tone to a society, and in this process cartoonists excel; their cues can rarely be matched by verbal descriptions'. In his reflections on Australian cartoonists, Adams (2000b, p 3) supported this view and extended it to include the cartoonist's skill with captions: 'cartoonists, not content with employing pictures worth a thousand words, write words that are worth a thousand pictures'.

Press also made the point that the presentation of dignified and positive images was a sign that the artist (and the newspaper) was supportive of the subject or message of

the cartoon (p 74). This was an important point for my study since I did not find any negative images used in the depiction of Mary MacKillop – see Figures 1 and 5. The majority of the cartoons referred to her by name or she is identified from the setting or situation, rather than being presented as a human character. Pope John Paul II was caricatured but always in a reverent, albeit humorous manner, as, for example in Figure 2. A contrast in the imagery used for politicians was shown by the following example (Kev 1995b) –



Figure 9: Kev - *The Mercury* 20 January 1995

The Pope was shown as a strong person, well in command of the situation. Paul Keating, on the other hand, was drawn in a much more negative manner: a revolutionary leader of a banana republic with the physical characteristic of his five-o'clock shadow overemphasised.

10.2 ANALYSIS OF EXAMPLES

Using the framework of political cartoons as the specific text and interpreting the various elements within these texts from the vantage of media discourse, I have now considered in more detail the cartoons already presented, as well as a number of others on similar themes. As can be seen from the following list, the beatification of Mary MacKillop by Pope John Paul II in January 1995 was the situation featured in a wide range of newspaper political cartoons across Australia.

Date	Newspaper	Artist
10/01/95	*The Advertiser*	Atchison
17/01/95	*The Australian*	MacMullin
17/01/95	*The Age*	Tanner
18/01/95	*The West Australian*	Alston
18/01/95	*The Age*	Leunig
18/01/95	*The Australian*	MacMullin
19/01/95	*The Advertiser*	Atchison
19/01/95	*The Mercury*	Kev
19/01/95	*The Courier Mail*	Leahy
19/01/95	*The Australian*	MacMullin
19/01/95	*The Australian*	MacMullin
19/01/95	*The Sydney Morning Herald*	Moir
19/01/95	*The Canberra Times*	Sharpe
19/01/95	*The Daily Telegraph Mirror*	Warren
20/01/95	*The West Australian*	Alston
20/01/95	*The Advertiser*	Atchison
20/01/95	*The Mercury*	Kev
20/01/95	*Herald Sun*	Knight
20/01/95	*The Australian*	MacMullin
20/01/95	*Daily Telegraph Mirror*	Warren
21/01/95	*The West Australian*	Alston
21/01/95	*The Advertiser*	Atchison
21/01/95	*Herald Sun*	Knight
21/01/95	*Herald Sun*	Knight
21/01/95	*The Brisbane Courier Mail*	Leahy
21/01/95	*The Weekend Australian*	Leak
21/01/95	*The Weekend Australian*	MacMullin
28/01/95	*The Advertiser*	Atchison
13/05/97	*The Advertiser*	Atchison

10.2.1 The world presented

An indication of the way that boundaries had shifted in the public perception was shown by the cartoon settings, situations and characters all based upon the Catholic Church's decision to honour Mary MacKillop. Originally she had been of interest to a smaller section of the Australian community: this was not just Catholics, but many others who had perhaps attended Catholic schools or come into contact with her in some way as did Max Harris. With the Papal visit being a state occasion, the event and the person behind it became owned as it were by the wider society. The crossing and extension of the boundary between knowledge about Mary MacKillop held by one section of the community and that provided to the wider society marked a critical stage in social and cultural change (see Fairclough 1992a, p 96).

The political cartoons have both ideational and interpersonal functions: they draw upon a particular representation of social reality that commenced after the death of Mary MacKillop in 1909. This reality, or world view, can be traced from the time of Max Harris to the journalists writing both commentary and descriptive articles during the days of the beatification events. Australian cartoonists are generally free of editorial censorship (see Turner 2000), but by allowing such cartoons to be printed, a newspaper editor makes a relationship with the audience: there is an implicit claim to experience 'co-membership, with the audience, of the world of ordinary life and experience from which it is drawn' (Fairclough 1995b, p 70). The imagery and message of the cartoons are based on 'source events' familiar to the audience, which are then 'mediated' to the newspaper readers (p 73).

10.2.2 Presumed knowledge

In the case of the 'source events' for the cartoons chosen for this study, it was possible to identify the knowledge which the cartoonists presumed the audience would have. Three examples were featured in the days before the Papal Visit commenced.

A week beforehand, Atchison (1995a) produced the following cartoon for the Adelaide *Advertiser* –

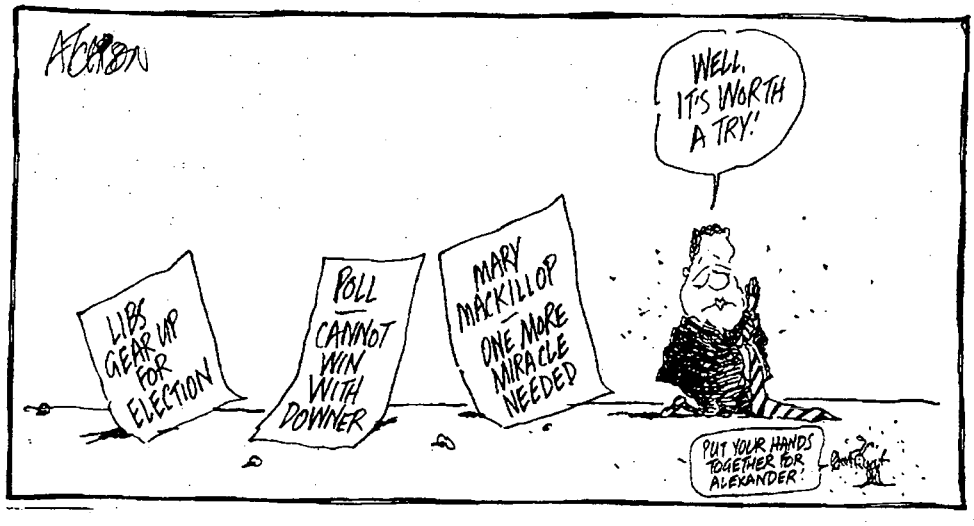

Figure 10: Atchison - *The Advertiser* 10 January 1995

Leaving aside the political situation, the audience was expected to know who Mary MacKillop was, why she was relevant at that point in time, as well as the role of miracles in the process of saint-making. The reference to miracles was very common amongst cartoonists, as shown by Figures 4, 6, 8 and 9. More examples referring to miracles have been provided in the next section.

On the day before the Pope arrived in Australia, MacMullin (1995c) made a comment on the news that a group of Queensland Police were to provide a special security detail for him.

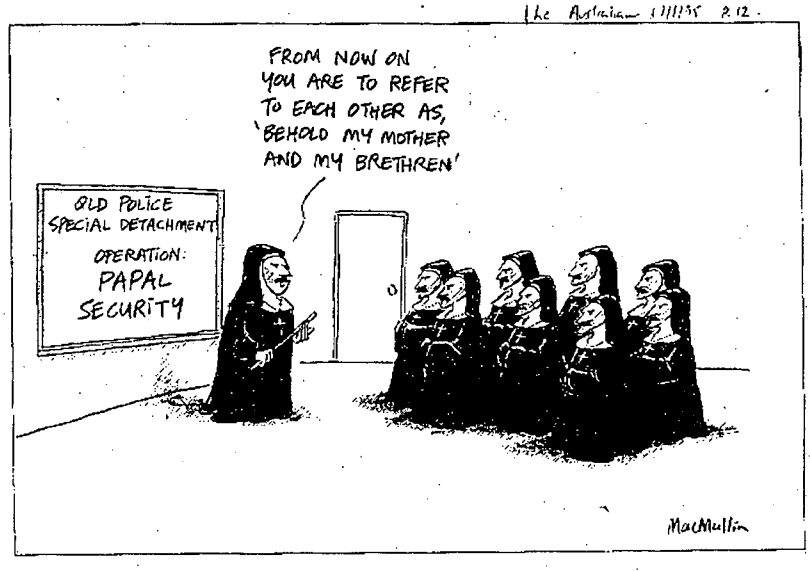

Figure 11: MacMullin - *The Australian* 17 January 1995

This cartoon was significant in the knowledge presumed about the general public who would be close to the Pope. A stereotype of a religious sister (or at least a policeman in disguise) would suggest that the audience for the cartoon should recognise the connection with the impending beatification event. There was an expectation that this would be attended by many religious sisters. The numerous other Australians attending were also expected to recognise the status of someone wearing a religious habit. The fact that the Sisters of St Joseph who had a particular interest in the events for the week did not in general wear a formal habit, was not seen as relevant by the cartoonist.

The presentation of all the police being briefed as stern faced men could also have been a jibe at the male dominated Catholic Church and a presumption that readers were aware of this fact.

Tanner (1995) chose a sporting theme for his cartoon on the same day –



Figure 12: Tanner - *The Age* 17 January 1995

While Mary MacKillop was not depicted graphically, her imminent honour by the Pope was the situation for the cartoon. As has been indicated in the previous chapter, the Victorians were very keen to claim links with Mary MacKillop because of her birth in Melbourne, even though she did not live there for any great length of time as an adult. There is presumed knowledge about the Catholic Church as an institution: the imagery of an old cleric wearing the flowing cassock and biretta of a bygone age standing over a cowering boy, suggest power and domination. The mood conveyed by these last two cartoons was sombre, joyless and, at least in Tanner's case, could reflect his own upbringing where his 'mother was a Catholic but absolutely despised the Church' while his 'father was a bigoted Protestant but not a church-goer' (Tanner 2000, p 52).

The Pope arrived in Sydney on the evening of Wednesday 18 January and three of the national dailies used his welcome at the airport by the Prime Minister as the

situation for their cartoon that day. Atchison (1995b) in his descriptive type cartoon made a play on words with the names of the Pope and Paul Keating.

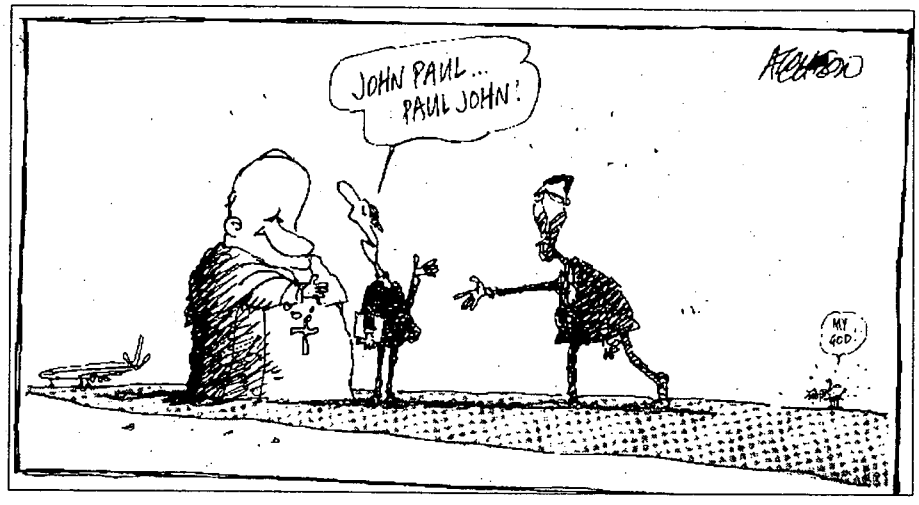

Figure 13: Atchison - *The Advertiser* 18 January 1995

MacMullin (1995d) used the situation to include a political message:

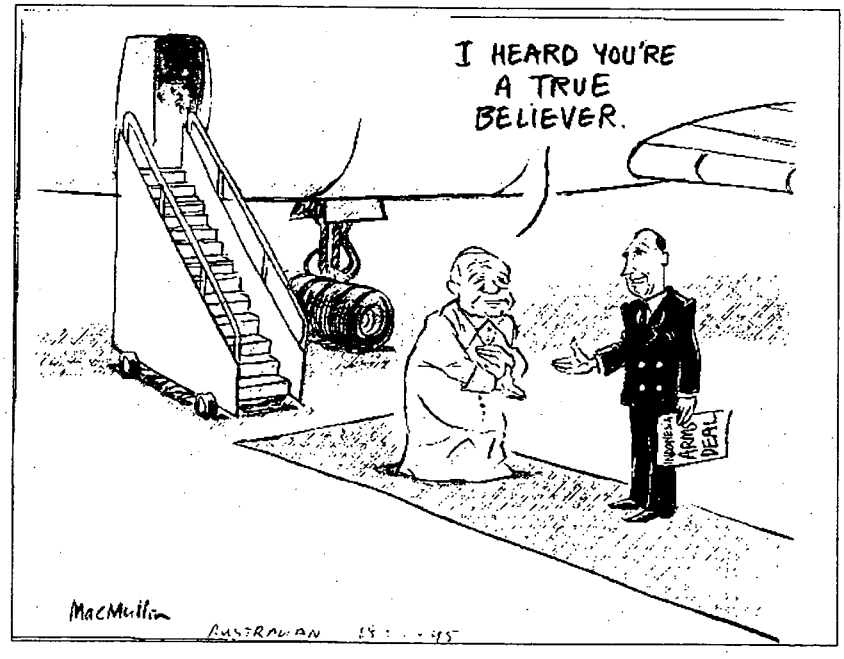

Figure 14: MacMullin - *The Australian* 18 January 1995

The view in Western Australia was more comprehensive. There were many characters in this laughing satirical type by Alston (1995a) -

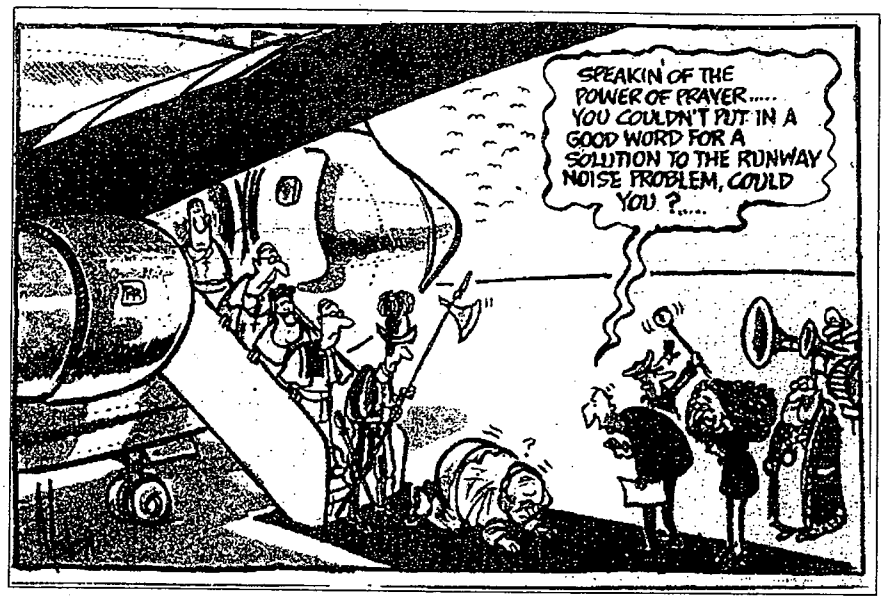

Figure 15: Alston - *The West Australian* 18 January 1995

The cartoonist presumed that readers were familiar with the Pope's custom of kissing the tarmac on arrival in a new country. The papal entourage was depicted as including a Swiss Guard in traditional costume with halberd, along with various other clerics. The Pope's role as a person associated with a large institution that had a long history was stressed. The belief that the Pope was someone with influence beyond the human sphere was shown by the Prime Minister's comment.

While it was Pope John Paul II who was the main subject of these three cartoons, the situation which led to their development was the fact that someone of such importance would come to Australia to honour Mary MacKillop.

On this same day, Leunig (1995) took a singular approach, preferring to concentrate on saints in general, rather than Mary MacKillop in particular. When interviewed for a recent book (2000), he discussed the fact that he is completely deaf in his right ear and that this had 'probably made me more solitary, and given (him) an internal reflective stance on life'. This different standpoint is shown in the following -

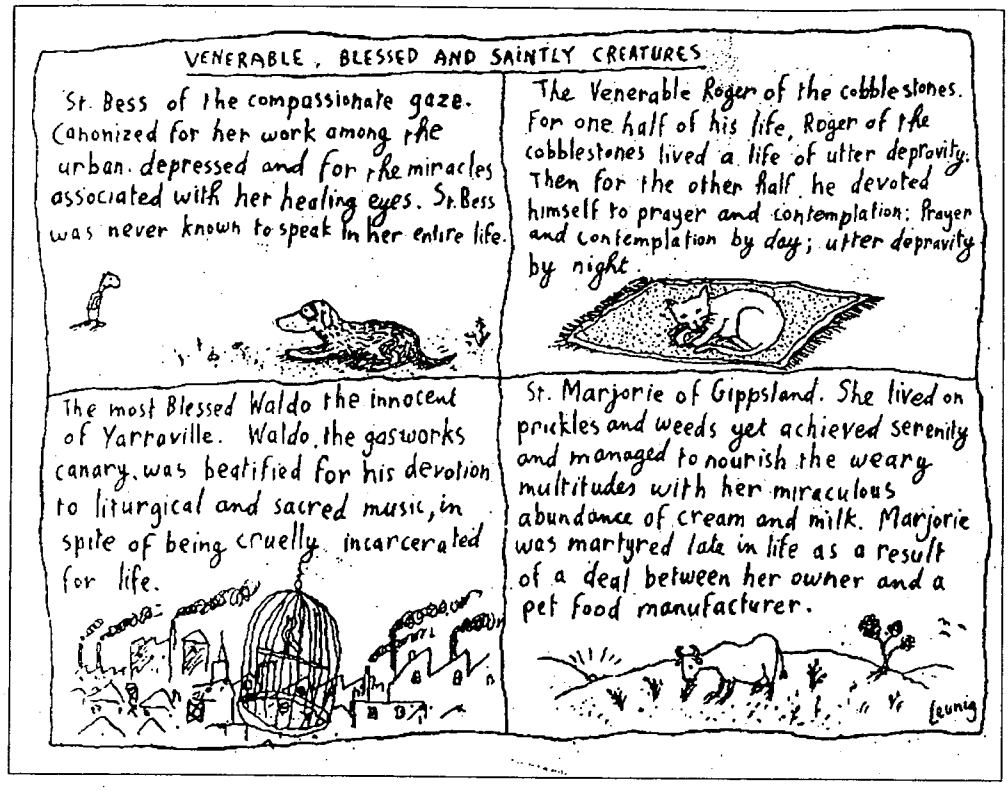

Figure 16: Leunig - *The Age* 18 January 1995

The allocation of different grades of sainthood to animals in this cartoon was a presumption that the newspaper audience would understand such a reference after all the recent publicity on the subject. Through his choice of a completely different imagery to other cartoonists, Leunig (2000) used the situation of Mary MacKillop's beatification to emphasise his own philosophy:

> *The Age* has a tradition of respecting and defending the cartoonist. The court jester thing. I can be psychological, spiritual, religious. This is odd, because cartoonists are meant to be sceptical and rock the boat like crazy – I want to find how I can steady the boat. There is such an upheaval that people are very unstable, and I feel that by reinforcing certain values I might make a good contribution. It's an innocent desire to want all to be well.

In this instance, Leunig was also suggesting that suffering was an essential component of any life recognised as worthy of sainthood.

Thursday 19 January was the busiest day in the Pope's schedule as it was the only full day he spent in Australia. He had a comprehensive programme of official meetings and visits before the formal ceremony of the beatification late in the

afternoon at Randwick Racecourse. Some newspapers such as *The Daily Telegraph Mirror* (Warren Brown 1995) shown in Figure 1, or *The Mercury* (Kev 1995a) in Figure 5 presented glorifying types of cartoons about Mary MacKillop. Mary MacKillop was someone who would be recognised by the audience without being named: she was a popular hero (the sporting connection) as well as a transcendent being who had gone beyond her human condition (the ethereal figure without legs).

One of the Pope's meetings that day was an invitation only event in St Mary's Cathedral with all Sisters of St Joseph and close friends. There had been some publicity about planned demonstrations outside this venue by supporters of the ordination of women, a topic the Pope had recently declared could not even be discussed. Both *The Canberra Times* (Sharpe 1995) and *The Courier Mail* (Leahy 1995b) focussed on this situation.

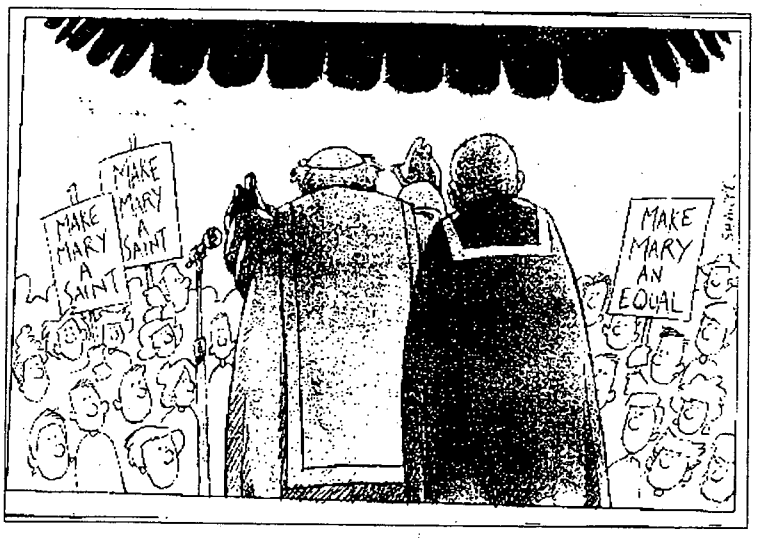

Figure 17: Sharpe - *The Canberra Times* 19 January 1995



Figure 18: Leahy - *The Courier Mail* 19 January 1995

These cartoonists had presumed that the debate over women's ordination was of interest to the general public and that those engaged in such debate were not going to be silenced. More will be said about these two cartoons in the next section when I consider Mary MacKillop as a model for feminists.

Moir (1995) in *The Sydney Morning Herald* took a different angle on what he considered to be the most topical situation for a cartoon. Bill Gates, Chairman of the Microsoft Company was also visiting Sydney on this day.

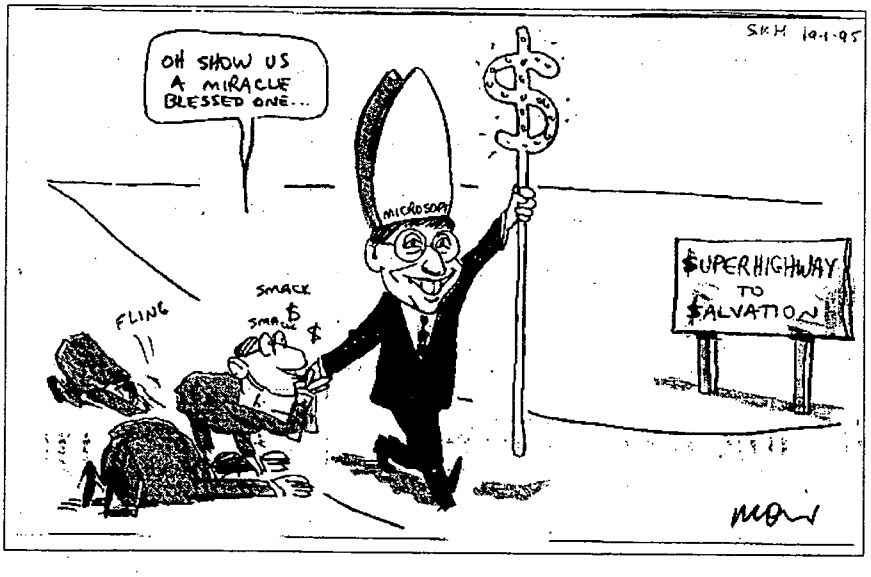

Figure 19: Moir - *The Sydney Morning Herald* 19 January 1995

Using imagery akin to that used by Lloyd (1995a) and considered in Chapter 8, Moir caricatured Gates in the style of the Pope, using the almighty dollar as the guide to salvation along the superhighway. The audience was expected to make this parallel, using pre-existing knowledge about the symbols of the Pope's office as Bishop of Rome: his mitre and crosier. The mention of miracles was also significant and reflected the many news items about the need for proven miracles before a person could be beatified or canonised. While Mary MacKillop was not featured in this cartoon, it was her beatification that was the stimulus and situation for the subject matter.

On Friday 20 January, the Pope departed Australia about 9 am. There were no formal engagements that day apart from the farewell at the airport. In the cartoons, several newspapers continued to explore the miracle theme – eg Alston (1995b) Figure 4; Atchison (1995c) in Figure 6 and Kev (1995b) in Figure 9. The first two of these identify Mary MacKillop as someone to be prayed to for a miracle whilst the one by Kev has the Pope declaring that 'We are always on the lookout for miracles, Mr Keating'. This comment could also link into the presumption that the newspaper audience were aware of the way that this pope has canonised more saints than all of his predecessors combined. Each of these saints required miracles.

Australia's political cartoonists reflected the context of the day when they drew sketches which included, referred to or were in some way connected to Mary MacKillop and her beatification. The use of a religious situation can be fraught with danger to cartoonists. As Warren Brown (2000) noted in an interview, 'Religion can be a powder keg' and he, along with others such as Knight (2000b) have received negative responses and criticism from Catholics when they have used religious themes or included the Pope in their cartoons. In a democratic country where free speech is prized by cartoonists, the fact that so many of them chose to run sketches on this theme was an indication that this was a situation that deserved some consideration. From the examples given, it was possible to summarise the knowledge that some or all cartoonists presumed their audience would possess. The Catholic Church was presented as an institution with a long history: one where men have the dominant role. The Pope as leader of this group was a person with status:

Australia was honoured by his visit. Mary MacKillop was linked to this institution by the Pope's decision to grant her an official honour when he bestowed the title of 'Blessed' upon her. This was seen as the penultimate rung on the path to sainthood. To receive this accolade and to progress on to the final stage of being declared 'Saint,' a person must be prepared to endure suffering and to provide miracles for the faithful who seek her intercession.

The way that the cartoonists presume knowledge in an audience assists in setting up a relationship with them. Within this audience, engagement with the text will vary: for Moir (2000), the cartoon is 'there to state a point of view, and as long as the reader sees it in a fresh way each time, the point can be virtually the same. It's up to the reader whether to agree or disagree'.

10.2.3 The identity created

Against the background of cartoons as media text and recognising both their world view and the knowledge they presumed their audiences to possess, it was possible to recognise an identity of Mary MacKillop created by the cartoonists. This marked the taking of the cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media to a new stage of development. What the artist intended and what I have interpreted with my own frames of reference and background knowledge may vary, but I would argue that these cartoons present Mary MacKillop as a model of goodness and someone to inspire feminists. She can be linked to heroes, has supernatural connections and can provide a challenge to both Church and State. Many of the cartoons highlight several of these themes but I have used a few specific examples to stress each characteristic.

10.2.3.1 A MODEL OF GOODNESS

This element is shown particularly by the cartoons of Warren (1995) and Kev (1995a), which are repeated here after already being referred to in Figures 1 and 5.

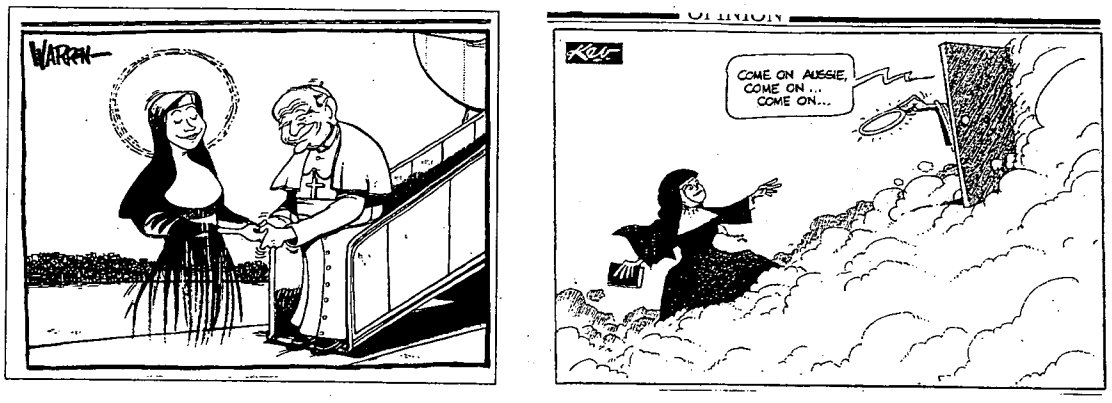

Figure 20: Mary MacKillop – the model of goodness

In both of these examples, the imagery used to present Mary MacKillop was a positive stereotype of a nun.[74] Warren presented Mary as a demure, disembodied being, perhaps someone now deemed too good for this world. She was shown with a halo, traditionally used throughout history by artists to depict sanctity. Her eyes were downcast, her smile both self satisfied and enigmatic. The choice of the setting - Mary MacKillop as the sole figure in the welcoming party for the Pope, a Head of State – was an indication that she rated amongst the highest dignitaries in the land. The fact that she was not accompanied by any political figures could be interpreted as a sign that she was considered to be a far more worthy representative of the Australian people (shown as an anonymous mass with symbolic placards) than many of those in public office. Her goodness was recognised, rewarded and should be emulated.

The cartoon by Kev had a heavenly setting: Mary MacKillop was making her way through clouds to a beckoning hand holding out a halo. The situation linked into the honour of her beatification as well as the traditional January Test cricket season. Mary's face was shown as strong and determined: her gaze was firmly fixed on her goal. She was also depicted holding a book which could be a bible, prayer book, or even a diary or journal. This could be in recognition of her vast written legacy

[74] In both headdress and guimpe, Warren was closer to the Josephite version of the religious habit than Kev. This was probably reflective of the greater amount of publicity about Mary MacKillop (and the Sisters of St Joseph) in Sydney than in Hobart.

through correspondence and visitation throughout Australia and New Zealand. Inclusion of this symbol could allude to her faithfulness to her religious devotions and to her loyalty to her friends. Mary was the central character in the sketch: she was not caricatured but shown in a positive light. No other person was identified: it was if the artist was declaring that this was the day to honour this one person. The inclusion of the popular cricket chant of the day from a disembodied voice showed the cartoonist viewed Mary MacKillop as a good person to be identified and saluted by all Australians.

In all other cartoons where Mary MacKillop was featured by depiction, name or reference, it was always in a positive sense. There was harmony between the drawing techniques used and the content of the cartoon. 'The combination of imagery and artistic technique creates an emotional mood that gives a cartoonist's message its real impact and power' (Press 1981, p 75). The universally positive treatment by all Australian cartoonists would support the view that the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media was seen as a model of goodness.

10.2.3.2 A FEMINIST

Another very strong image presented by the cartoonists was that of a model for the feminist viewpoint. Mary MacKillop was seen as a feminist by many of the cartoonists using the situation of the number of protestors on the question of the ordination of women. Moir (2000) summarised the way he selected the topic for his cartoons as follows: 'my themes are usually something currently on the public mind. I usually look at a contradiction between a theme and an event'. Other cartoonists agreed with him and recognised the disparity between the Pope's edict that the ordination of women not be discussed and the strong community feeling about the matter. Mary MacKillop was brought into the debate because of her conflict with ecclesiastical authorities: she was seen as a role model by some because of the way she stood up for her beliefs against bishops.

Many of the cartoons already presented focus on this situation.



Figure 21: Feminist images - 1

In this cartoon by Leak (1995), and already referred to in Figure 2, the comment made by the Pope is significant: 'Honestly, the way they carried on, you'd swear I'd made her a priest!!' Many levels of interpretation are possible for this cartoon. On the surface, it could be seen as merely a humorous reference to the huge crowds and great publicity that the Pope received during his trip to Sydney. The comment at a deeper level could refer to the controversial stance by the Catholic Church regarding the ordination of women. This issue was made the butt of a joke amongst the group of men. To those with the power, the topic had one meaning. To a group of women, however, it could be taken as an indication that the official church displayed a serious lack of sensitivity or understanding of the depth of feeling on this subject.

The fact that the images of men portrayed are corpulent senior citizens with bulbous noses was also an interesting indication of the perception of upper echelons of the Catholic Church in Rome. This cartoon was a lampooning by the media of male domination in the Catholic Church as well as the unreality of Church authorities. The fact that the Pope could proclaim Mary MacKillop a saint but not ordain her a priest was held up to ridicule. As the underdog in this situation, Mary was feted as a hero and role model to the newspaper audience.

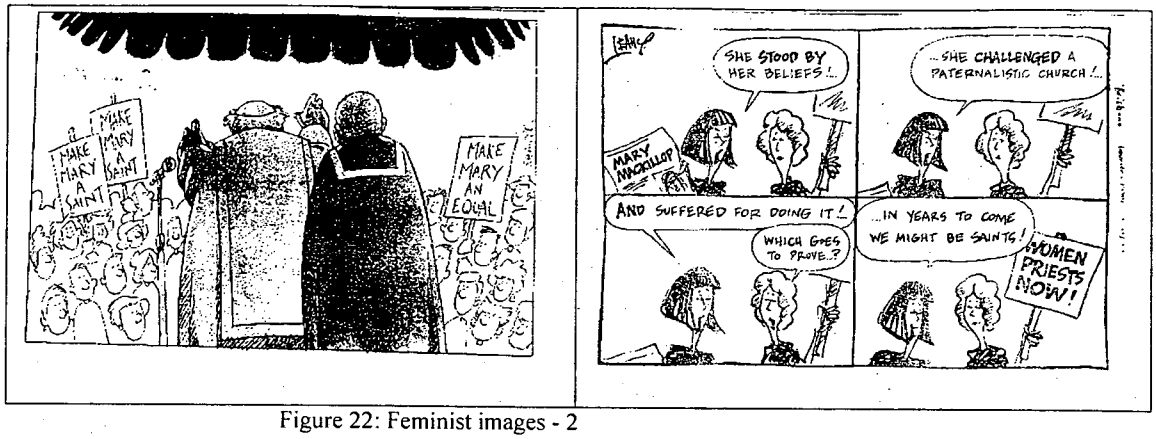

Figure 22: Feminist images - 2

These cartoons by Sharpe (1995), already shown in Figure 17, and Leahy (1995b) in Figure 18 are on the same theme. Sharpe, in *The Canberra Times*, chose as the setting for the cartoon the Pope and another large male attendant facing the congregation at the beatification ceremony. The frilled edge of the covering and their position looking down on the people suggest they were on a raised dais. The two placards - 'Make Mary a Saint' - were a reminder that Mary MacKillop still had another step to achieve before being granted full sainthood by the Catholic Church. The third placard – 'Make Mary an Equal' – echoed the views of many who used the Papal visit as an opportunity to present their case for the ordination of women.

The Courier Mail cartoonist, Leahy used a comic strip style to present more information about why Mary MacKillop could be seen as a model for the feminist stance on the question of ordination. Her name was given on the newspaper being read by one of the female characters in the sketch so there could be no doubt of the topical context. Three comments were made about Mary MacKillop: 'She stood by her beliefs! She challenged a paternalistic church! And suffered for doing it!' The hitherto anonymous placard was revealed in the final frame as 'Women Priests Now!' to accompany the punch line for the cartoon: 'Which goes to prove?' 'In years to come, we might be saints!' There was an identification between the women presented in the cartoon and Mary MacKillop: she was seen as someone to be admired and a person who could give inspiration. The emotional tone of the cartoon imagery was that of support for and solidarity with the women protesting in this manner. By his own admission, Leahy (2000) is a 'lapsed Catholic' who recognises

that any reference to the Pope is likely to cause offence to some members of the community. While he received an 'official letter of appreciation' from the Vatican for a cartoon he did after the sudden death of Pope John Paul 1, he doubted that his 'cartoons of the present Pope's arch-conservatism are so well received'. Once again, Mary MacKillop was presented as the underdog deserving of praise and admiration: she emerged in a positive light in contrast to the Catholic Church as an institution out of touch with popular opinion.

MacMullin (1995b) in *The Australian* also presented a cartoon of a more complex nature.

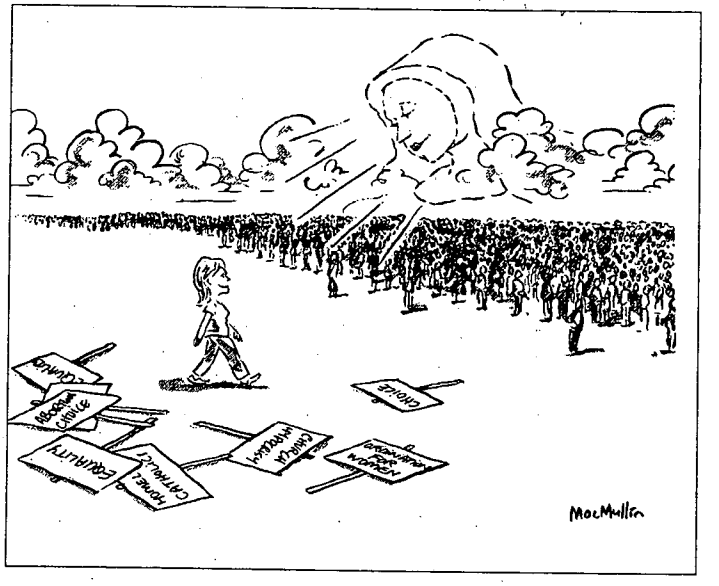

Figure 23: MacMullin *The Australian* 20 January 1995

On the previous day, besides the actual beatification ceremony at Randwick Racecourse, the Pope had met with about 2,000 people, mostly religious women, in St Mary's Cathedral. This was a ticket only occasion to join with Pope John Paul II for a private time of prayer. In his talk to the congregation, the Pope focussed on the dignity and mission of women. He stressed the importance of Mary, the Mother of God being seen as a role model and insisted that equality of persons within the Catholic Church meant complementarity. Without actually saying so, the Pope seemed to be implying that this meant that women and men had different roles within the Church. Outside the cathedral, a group of women protested about the stance by

the Catholic Church over the ordination of women, in defiance of the edict from the Vatican that the question was closed.

The characters in the cartoon illustrate the point of the cartoon: Mary MacKillop was identified with the deity and saints by being depicted in the clouds smiling down upon the earth. Her image was large, dominant and positive, although the facial expression was somewhat wistful, perhaps with a wry grin of support. The only other identifiable person was a female casually dressed in slacks walking away from an assortment of protest placards. The anonymous crowd were indistinct but very numerous. The fact that they were presented as visually on the side of the heavenly Mary MacKillop could indicate the number of people who had already been inspired by her in some way.

As no words were used in this cartoon, it was open to a wide variety of interpretations, depending on the existing frames of reference for the reader. The fact that the woman was walking towards the vision of the saint could mean that she represented a modern woman: one attracted to the vision. While she was aware of the signs and their messages - *Choice, Ordination for Women, Equality, Abortion Choice, Church Hypocrisy, Homeless Catholics* - this woman was not linked to their controversy but walked away from the placards towards the heavenly vision. Alternatively, it could mean that the woman, inspired by Mary MacKillop, had taken on all the causes listed on the placards, and was walking forward to action.

From a feminist perspective, the cartoon could indicate that women of the day could identify with Mary MacKillop and gain inspiration from her as a role model. The confident stride of the woman and the smile on her face could assist this interpretation. Women who were aspiring for a more active role in the Catholic Church could gain support from the emotional content.

10.2.3.3 THE LINK TO HEROES

Several cartoonists chose settings where links were made between Mary MacKillop and sporting heroes. One, which utilised this theme, was that by Kev (1995a) which was shown in Figures 5 and 20, and is shown again for convenience below:

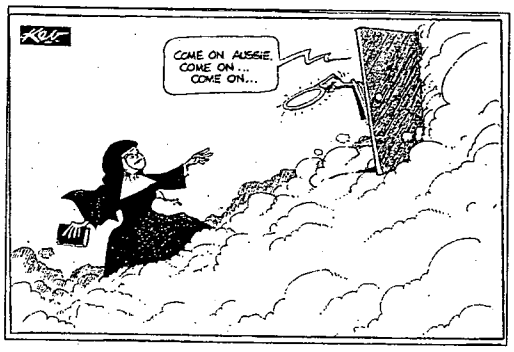

Figure 24: The link to heroes

The use of the cricket chant, 'Come on Aussie, Come on.. Come on.'. was a suggestion that Australians could see in Mary MacKillop a person to be admired and perhaps hero-worshipped. In a sense, she too had become a sporting hero.

Two other cartoons, both from the Sydney *Herald Sun*, used the beatification ceremony as the setting for the cartoon. The first of these by Knight (1995) also picked up on the cricket theme:



Figure 25: Knight – *Herald Sun* 20 January 1995

The setting for this cartoon was the special stand constructed at Randwick Racecourse for the beatification ceremony. Mary MacKillop's picture was enthroned: it was a similar style to the large one unrolled during the ceremony. All other characters were male. The Pope and the bishop speaking with him were

caricatured: the Pope in a pose suggesting he could have been dozing while both he and the bishop have out of proportion noses. The two cricketers waiting in the wings were more positive character representations: AB (Allan Border) and The Don (Sir Donald Bradman. Both of these were widely recognised within Australia as heroes to the sports loving community. As widely regarded secular saints, these two, according to Knight, may have been deserving of the formal honour of institutional sainthood. This cartoon could also be taken to strengthen Mary MacKillop's universal appeal: she was just as popular and well recognised as the two well-known cricketers.

On the next day, Knight (2000a) continued the sporting theme with his choice of setting –



Figure 26: Knight – *Herald Sun* 21 January 1995

Although Mary MacKillop was not mentioned in this cartoon, there were visual and contextual links. This time it was the Pope who was presented as a sporting hero. The setting for the beatification ceremony was again used. The only reason the Pope was in Australia travelling in his Popemobile (moving at speed like a racing car) was because of the honour recently paid her. The large chair shown in reverse on the stage was the same chair used in the previous day's cartoon. Once again, the Pope was caricatured with a prominent nose and chin and sipping on a water bottle, similar to one used by professional cyclists. He seemed to be pleased to leave, judging by

the caption below him, and by his use of the nearest exit to the stage. The main comment suggested the Pope's departure was a cause for celebration: hats were thrown in the air. The general public in the foreground, outside the main event, did seem to be supportive of the Pope, as indicated by their facial expressions and comment. Knight (2000b) has admitted receiving criticism from Catholics for the way he has presented the Pope in his laughing satirical style cartoons: 'I was not brought up with religion, and haven't anything against worship, but Catholics swore that I was some sort of emissary from the devil'.

The continuation of the theme from the previous day as well as the lack of any negative comment about Mary MacKillop were an indication of the support for Mary MacKillop as a hero to the Australian public.

Such an image was obviously one which Atchison (1997) reflected upon as he produced the following cartoon in May 1997 –



Figure 27: Atchison *The Advertiser* 13 May 1997

This cartoon was an interesting one as it appeared on the day of the Federal Budget. As far as I have established, there had been no cartoon mentioning Mary MacKillop since those from 1995. The situation illustrated was a purely political one in which the Prime Minister, John Howard and the Treasurer, Peter Costello, prepared to present the Federal Budget. The scene was set in a costume shop as the two characters tried to find clothing appropriate to the occasion.

The inclusion of the two politicians and the hoarding announcing Budget Night, link this cartoon to politics and behaviour in this arena. The multitude of costumes

discarded, or still awaiting usage, indicated the many faces of those who choose public office. The Treasurer was depicted as wearing a dress (habit) similar to Mary MacKillop and the helmet of Attila the Hun: he was cross dressing, as indicated by the dog's comment on the confusion of roles adopted on occasion by politicians.

By linking Mary MacKillop to the image to be used when presenting the Federal Budget, it could be implied that the economic message to be delivered could benefit by alliance with someone who had been publicly recognised as a person who always thought of doing good for others.

The emergence of Mary MacKillop in a political cartoon after such a long delay was another stage in the development of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media. In a discussion with the artist about this cartoon (Atchison 2000b), he indicated that he presumed that the audience would recognise the reference to her as a model of goodness, in juxtaposition to Attila the Hun, a figure to be feared. In this sense, Mary MacKillop was presented as a figure acceptable to the broad range of the Australian public: someone who could make palatable an unpleasant economic event.

10.2.3.4 A MIRACLE WORKER – THE SUPERNATURAL CONNECTION

As already indicated, many of the cartoons referring to Mary MacKillop use the theme of miracles.

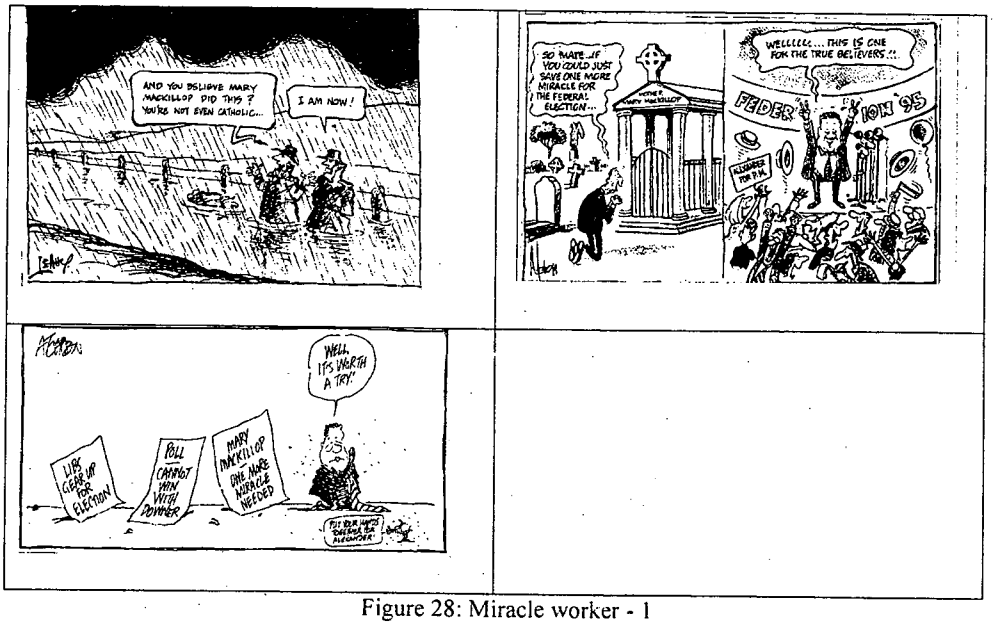

Figure 28: Miracle worker - 1

Leahy (1995a), (left) whose cartoon about Mary MacKillop and miracles was also shown in Figure 8, explored the connection between being a Catholic and belief in the end of the drought as a miracle provided by Mary MacKillop.

In the repeat of Figure 4, shown centre, Alston (1995b) had a supplicant Paul Keating praying fervently at the tomb of Mary MacKillop. He addressed her as 'Mate,' perhaps to stress the relationship with her or in an effort to ingratiate himself with someone with more power and influence than he possessed. Alexander Downer, on the other hand, was shown as already celebrating a miracle.

This situation had also been used by Atchison (1995a), repeated above (right) from Figure 10. In this case, it was Alexander Downer who was on his knees praying for a miracle through the intercession of Mary MacKillop. Still on the political theme, Atchison (1995e) appeared to provide a follow up on the Liberal leadership struggle in his cartoon nearly three weeks later –

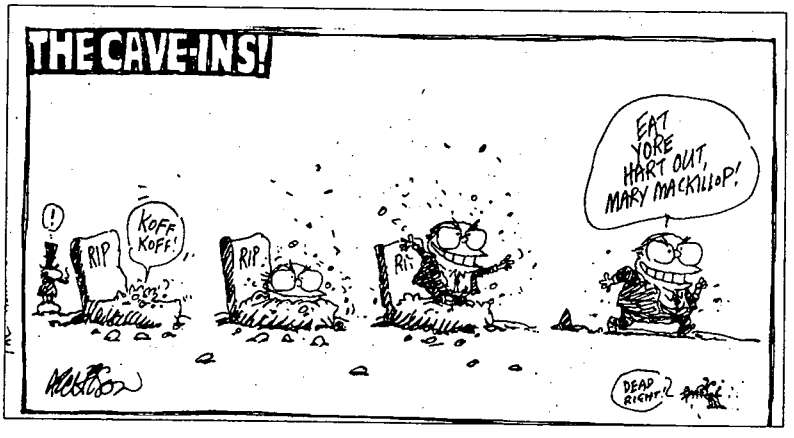

Figure 29: Atchison – *The Advertiser* 28 January 1995

By this time, John Howard had toppled Alexander Downer from the leadership of the Liberal Party, seemingly without any divine intervention. Once again, there was a presumption that the newspaper audience would make the link that the reference was to a miraculous event. John Howard had, in fact been referred to as 'St John the Hopeful! Waiting for the Resurrekshun (sic)' in an earlier Atchison cartoon (1995d) shown in Figure 7. In the example above, he was presented as outdoing Mary MacKillop by rising from the dead.



Figure 30: Miracle worker - 2

Atchison also referred to miracles during the week of the beatification as shown in the above, repeated from Figure 6 (1995d). This cartoon had several layers of meaning.

The Pope's reference to miracles linked into the process by which Mary MacKillop in this case had been given the honour of beatification by the Pope. There had been many articles in the media around this date referring to this feature of the Catholic Church's method for selecting saints and to the story of an unnamed woman whose cure from a terminal illness had been attributed to the intercession of Mary MacKillop and declared a miracle.

The comment by the dog using the word *contrary* was significant, linking back to the nursery rhyme of *Mary, Mary quite contrary*. In her lifetime, Mary MacKillop had a difficult relationship at times with various Church leaders, particularly bishops. It would be easy for a reader of the cartoon to imagine this word being used by them and to recall the difficulties faced in such a heroic way by Mary MacKillop. As a result of her fortitude, she was recognised with a unique honour for an Australian. At another level, the word could be taken in a present context to imply that Paul Keating should not rely too heavily on divine intervention to solve his economic problems. This viewpoint would also be reinforced by the words of the Pope.

This cartoon could promote two contrasting notions: firstly, it could refer to the power of prayer and the importance of the supernatural dimension to life. A second interpretation could be a stress on self-reliance and a rejection of the need for spiritual assistance. Mary MacKillop could be seen to be promoted by the media as someone who maintained a link to spiritual values despite great odds. At the same time, she was not over-reliant upon God to solve her problems but was active in pursuing all possible solutions, no matter what the personal cost. The Australian battler could be recognised in this interpretation.

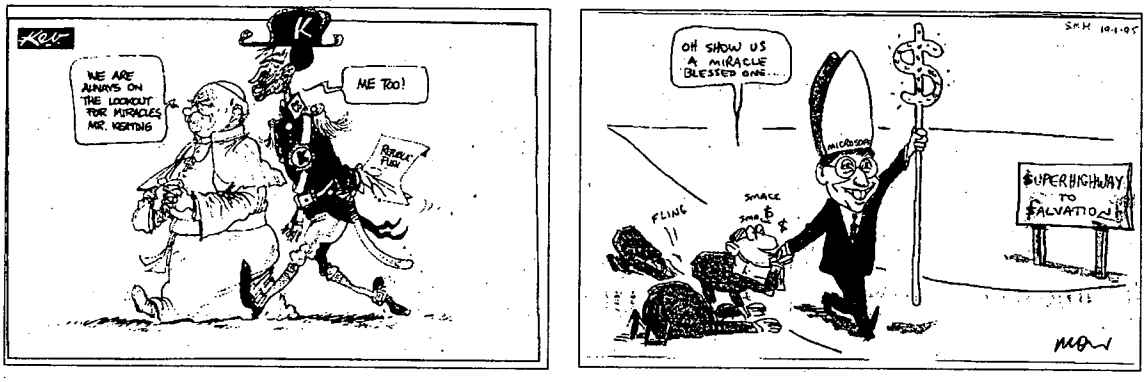

Figure 31: Miracle worker - 3

Miracles were also mentioned in cartoons such as those above, repeated from Figure 9 (Kev 1995b) and Figure 19 (Moir 1995). It was the publicity about her beatification that led to the press interest in the whole question of the supernatural dimension. Many had been caught up in the events of the week either personally in Sydney or vicariously through the media and had observed the recent days as 'ritual occasions for ecstatic experience of the transcendent' (White 1997, p 52). The discussion about miracles gave legitimation to the continued hope in and some links to an ultimate reality.

10.2.3.5 CHALLENGE TO INSTITUTIONS – CHURCH AND STATE

Some of the cartoons already referred to could also be interpreted as Mary MacKillop being presented as an integrity check for those holding institutional power in either Church or State.

In his own reflection on his work, Leak (2000) summarised the approach he used in his cartoon of 21-22 January (1995):

> Australian cartooning is vibrant, unpretentious and socially relevant ... There's an irreverent attitude amongst Australian cartoonists, and a kind of larrikin spirit appropriate to visual satire. Like it or not, it's our proudest and most robust artistic tradition.



Figure 32: Challenge to institutions

The power of the Vatican bureaucracy dominated the cartoon through the prominent figures of the Roman clerics and the Pope. The distant view of St Peter's Cathedral through the window was a link to a long tradition of organised religion. Without her name being mentioned, Mary MacKillop was again the subject for the cartoon. The message of the cartoon could be a challenge to those in this institutional enclave to be more objective and to perhaps measure themselves and their versions of reality against the recently promoted person of Mary MacKillop.

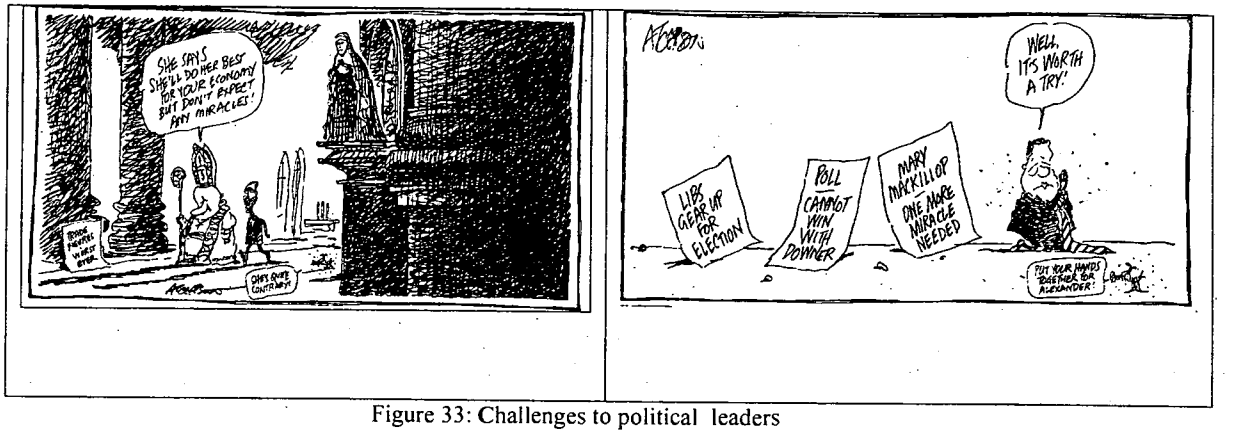

Figure 33: Challenges to political leaders

These two cartoons by Atchison – repeated from Figure 6 (1995c) and Figure 10 (1995a) - presented challenges to those leading the Labor and Liberal parties in January 1995. Each was seeking miraculous intervention and assistance for their problems of the economy or leadership. By the use of imagery whereby Keating and Downer were linked to Mary MacKillop, the audience could also be forced to engage in some comparisons because of all the recent publicity she had received.

10.3 CONCLUSIONS

January 1995 marked a high point in the treatment of Mary MacKillop by the Print Media. Her beatification by the Pope as well as comments on her life, work and process leading to sainthood made front-page news in the daily press across Australia.

Thirteen of Australia's political cartoonists chose to use this situation as the theme for their cartoons around this time, and at a later date in one instance. The knowledge about what had become the cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media, had crossed another boundary to be featured so strongly in this significant body of text. As they explored the topic, the artists presented Mary MacKillop in a universally positive way in both the descriptive and the laughing satirical type of cartoons. There were presumptions made about the knowledge the general public already possessed about her, and the context of the Catholic Church as background.

In their presentations, the cartoonists established relationships with their audiences by their reference to current happenings and political events. The caricatures, stereotypes and satire provided the sugar coating for their message. Several examples were found where Mary MacKillop was the focus in a glorifying type cartoon. In others, while the main point was to criticise those in public office, the identity they created about Mary MacKillop could be traced as an implicit undercurrent.

Common themes, which had been developed by Max Harris (see Chapter 8) and taken up in the editorials (Chapter 9), can be identified in this new body of text. The Mary MacKillop of the Print Media was recognised as a good person, someone whose integrity and holiness could be a challenge to those holding high office in both the Catholic Church and in civil society. She was presented as a model for feminists in the definition used by Harris: a strong woman, able to stand up for her beliefs against unjust male dominated structures. Links were made with other Australian heroes, especially the sporting type. The notion of miracles as an essential element in the saint-making process of the Catholic Church was treated with amusement and even some cynicism by cartoonists but this issue did allow them to remind their audiences of links to the supernatural and some ultimate reality.

While the main focus of the cartoons was the institutional and societal context for the beatification of Mary MacKillop (eg the Atchison sketches), there were clear reflections of the themes central to the Australian identity. The attitude to authority was obvious in the cartoons of Sharpe (Figure 17) and Leahy (Figure 18) whilst admiration for a life of courage and commitment was shown in the works of Warren and Kev (Figure 20). A dominating image was of her as a strong woman and a model for feminists: Leak (Figure 21) captured this in a powerful manner, as did MacMullin (Figure 23). The mere fact, however, that so many political cartoons could be found featuring Mary MacKillop and the events surrounding the time of her beatification was itself an indication that the new icon was an accepted part of Australian culture. It could be used as a source of ironic humour in manner so loved by Australians. This, apart from the illustration of any one theme, showed that

MMPM had reached a new stage, and was beginning to develop an identity quite separate from MMH.

Within a week or so of her beatification, Mary MacKillop of the Print Media had returned to a much lower profile in the daily newspapers. The development of this cultural icon in the five years after the Pope's visit will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

POST BEATIFICATION – 1995-2000

11.0 INTRODUCTION

Before January 1995, journalists such as Max Harris engaged with the Mary MacKillop of History to explore the question of who she was, why she deserved formal recognition by the Catholic Church and what such recognition meant in itself as well as for the Australian society as a whole. The icon which he helped to develop, MMPM, reached a high point in 1995 with the announcement of the visit by Pope John Paul II for the beatification of Mary MacKillop. This was a pivotal event in terms of print media coverage: those involved in the production of editorials and political cartoons were stimulated to develop new relationships with their audiences and to continue to construct the emerging cultural artefact. The events of 18-20 January were 'intense moments of cultural revitalization and confrontation between sacred and secular' (White 1997, p 50) as journalists continued to interact with MMH.

Following on from this time, in the five years between the beatification and the writing of this thesis, MMPM has become part of what Hoover (1997, p 285) has termed 'a postmodern moment'. While his comments were based on the North American experience, similar observations can be made about the Australian scene. The focus in religion for many Australians 'has shifted from belonging to meaning' (p 294). Individuals seek to construct an identity which incorporates some supernatural dimension by making selections from the general pool of knowledge available in the market place. MMPM, as an example of the continuing symbiotic relationship between print media journalists and MMH, is part of the material available for selection and appropriation.

Those within the Catholic Church with significant links to the Mary MacKillop of History have continued to safeguard the traditional boundaries given to formally recognised saints: sacred images, religious rituals, sacred times (Crotty 1995). These

are the natural expressions of religion and could be expected to be associated with the Mary MacKillop of History.

Keeping in mind the term of 'sacred canopy' which Berger (1969b, p 25) used for religion, the first part of this chapter has examined various newspaper articles under the heading of 'Sacred Control'. The Catholic Church as a whole, and various sections within it such as the Sisters of St Joseph, individual dioceses or parishes, seek to 'provide legitimation and meaning in a distinctly "sacred" mode, ... they offer claims about the nature of ultimate reality as such' (Wuthnow 1992, p 18). In this chapter, I am tracing the way that the formal 'symbolic universes' associated with saints have been continued: either as a deliberate course of action or through being externalised by the general public and linked in to previous knowledge about saints. There are boundaries within the institution as well as boundaries without in the general community which seek to maintain the limits around MMH.

In the second section I have traced the parallel development of Mary MacKillop of the Print Media in the public forum to demonstrate how she is now part of the taken for granted knowledge of society. This has occurred as certain of the phenomena associated with traditional saints have been adopted and adapted by journalists. In a pluralistic society such as Australia, MMPM has become part of the 'symbolic universes' from which individuals can choose in order 'to cope with the broad questions of meaning and purpose' (Wuthnow 1992, p 24).

I am not attempting to provide a definitive study of the Mary MacKillop phenomenon across all aspects of the Australian society. Efforts by the Sisters of St Joseph, for example, to keep the story of Mary MacKillop alive in the hagiographic sense could be a thesis in its own right. At times, some of these efforts have been reported in the media and so have been referred to in this chapter. My focus, however, has been on examples from the print media which highlight the way that a new cultural artefact, MMPM, has developed in the five years since the beatification event by the continued appropriation of elements usually associated with traditional religious saints. Interwoven with this appropriation has been the continued reflection of various themes related to the Australian identity.

11.1 SACRED CONTROL

The Catholic Church in Australia has incorporated Mary MacKillop into its traditional collection of saints. As shown in Appendix 1, there are a number of educational facilities, churches, and other Catholic social welfare institutions bearing her name or with some reference to her. She has become associated with sacred spaces and this has been recognised in various news reports.

One of the churches in Queensland was described as 'New saint's first church' in *The Catholic Leader* (1995b) and the opening paragraph of the story referred to it as 'the first new church to be completed in Australia bearing the name of Blessed Mary MacKillop'. The architect for the project tried to incorporate qualities of the patron into the design: 'strong, down-to-earth, honest and unpretentious, open and hospitable'.

Four purpose built interpretive centres have been built (or set up) as museums of her life and work.[75] The most extensive of these was opened in North Sydney in time for the beatification. An article in the Travel section of *The Advertiser* (Shrimpton 1995) reported:

> Through the miracle of modern technology, Mary MacKillop describes the early years of her path to sainthood at the North Sydney museum named in her honor (sic), one of Australia's newest tourist attractions.

In a critique of this venture, Gilligan (1995) remarked that 'historical accuracy sometimes gets lost among the gimmickry and gadgetry'. The influence of a television script writer/producer, Tony Sattler was criticised for producing 'just a stage set' rather than a museum in the accepted sense of the word as 'there is no distinction between what is real and what is replicated'. The lack of security for the exhibits was noted: 'Don't be surprised if Mary's pocket watch is pocketed by a tourist or relic-seeking spiritualist'. These were prophetic words as *The Advertiser* (2000e) reported the theft of various items from this museum 'including a fob watch

[75] For a time, there was a centre in Melbourne known as the Mary MacKillop Pilgrimage Centre adjacent to Mary's birthplace but this was in rented accommodation and has since closed. The building was sold in 2000 and bought by the Melbourne Catholic Archdiocese. It has been developed into a 'support, counselling and referral centre for drug users and their families' and named 'Mary of the Cross Centre' (Hedge 2000).

that belonged to the woman destined to become Australia's first saint'. Follow up items in *The Catholic Weekly* (2000a; McAloon 2000b) over subsequent months noted that one of the missing items, a brass crucifix, had been anonymously returned to the museum but that other items, including the 'silver pocket watch given by the dying Mary MacKillop to her nurse' were still missing.

This interpretive centre, along with those purpose built in Penola and Kensington in South Australia as well a refurbished building in Annerley, Queensland have become the focus for many of the pilgrimages to be referred to later in this chapter. In my comments, I have not focussed on this latter centre as it is more of a constructed artefact: Mary MacKillop did not live there as she did at the other three places.

The fact that Mary MacKillop's name has been extensively applied within Catholic circles, along with the official museums set up in her honour, are a tribute to the Mary MacKillop of History: reports in the press about these, or other officially authorised aspects of her cult, mark a further stage in the development of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media.

To illustrate this progression of the cultural artefact, I have focussed on the way that the traditional Catholic trappings of sainthood – feast day celebrations, holy images, the use of shrines, relics and pilgrimages – have been developed around Mary MacKillop and how such events have been reported by the Australian print media.

11.1.1 Celebration of feast days

In line with the common custom for saints named by the Catholic Church, Mary MacKillop was given a formal feast day on the anniversary of her death, 8 August. This became a sacred time and was the focus for many special religious rituals. In an article in *The Catholic Weekly*, Gawler (1995) presented a summary of events organised across the country to mark the first celebration of this occasion. There were five Masses at the Memorial Chapel in North Sydney and special church services were organised for Penola, Adelaide, Melbourne, Rockhampton and Manjimup. The bells of St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney tolled 'the MacKillop peal, specially composed for Mary's beatification'. Other celebrations listed included a re-enactment by Cloncurry school students of the 1866 classroom as outlined by

Mary MacKillop, a Mary MacKillop Happy Hour for staff at a Townsville school and a MacKillop evening at Chinchilla 'featuring Penola Soup and Chinchilla Slices'. A shrine was blessed at Manjimup, a portrait hung in Rockhampton, a special talk given in the CWA Hall at Penola and a Gala Concert held in the Dallas Brooks Hall Melbourne.

While about two columns of the full page article was devoted to the descriptions of these events, the remainder of the page was taken up with a photo of the billboard in Sydney, advertising the recently opened Mary MacKillop Place. The mainly textual message on this hoarding was as follows:

> Last Sunday we took the kids to Mary MacKillop Place instead of the footy. They weren't thrilled with the change of plans until we told them the story of Australia's first saint was (sic) a really interesting 2 hours.
> The kids wanted to know what position she played.
> You don't have to be a footy freak, just a proud Aussie Saint supporter.

The editorial staff's uncertainty in how to present information about a feast day seemed reflected in other items chosen for inclusion on this page. A central frame in the report was a recipe for 'Saintly Citrus Crosses' which were recommended for consumption on the special day. The remainder of the space was devoted to an advertisement for jewellery: a 9 ct gold Mary MacKillop medallion for $79. The advertising blurb explained:

> Inspired by the goodness of this truly remarkable Australian woman, the Medallion is fashioned in 9 ct Gold and will act as a permanent reminder of Mary MacKillop's love for all people.

It was significant that the advertisers chose to highlight the quality of 'goodness', adopting the theme commenced by Max Harris and then continued through editorials and political cartoons.

In a later edition of the same paper, Baxter (1995) gave a summary of the day's celebrations at the North Sydney chapel and museum. He described those who came as 'the sort of people Mary MacKillop loved,' estimating that 'at least 5000 people attended the MacKillop Masses during the day'. An incident was cited about a woman who, when asked if she would like to write a petition to the saint, explained

that she could not write in English. 'Another explained to her that Mary is in heaven. They speak all languages there'.

The report in *The Advertiser* (1995d) around this same time noted that,

> Yesterday's date took on new significance for the Catholic Church in Australia, with the inaugural Feast Day of Mary MacKillop.

It reminded the audience that beatification was 'the first step towards canonisation' and that, 'Under Catholic ecclesiastical law, a Feast Day is annually celebrated for the church's saints'. This small quarter column article estimated there had been 300 people at one of the Masses celebrated the previous day in the Mary MacKillop Chapel in North Sydney.

Celebration of this feast day has continued to be significant for Catholics, especially at the North Sydney venue: in August 2000 it was reported that, 'dozens of people were turned away from the 1 pm service at which Cardinal Clancy was principal celebrant' (The Catholic Weekly 2000). The theme for this latest celebration was described as 'a vision of togetherness' to mark 'Australia's multicultural history and respect for the dignity of others'.

11.1.2 Sacred images

Since her beatification, there has been a burgeoning of images of Mary MacKillop, most of which have been officially endorsed by the Sisters of St Joseph. Not all have received attention in the press, being disseminated instead through traditional holy cards, and used on souvenirs, calendars and other merchandise.

One very striking representation can be found in the newly refurbished St Stephen's Chapel adjacent to the Catholic Cathedral in Brisbane. The very large work was sculptured from the trunk of a 100-year-old camphor laurel tree and dominates an area set aside as a shrine to Mary MacKillop. In a report in *The Courier Mail*, (Petersen 1999) this representation of Mary MacKillop was described as 'a disturbingly powerful, dynamic figure' with a face which 'tells of her warmth and compassion for those in need'.

The impact of this image was noted in a 'Letter to the Editor' (Twyford 2000) published by *The Catholic Leader* (5/11/2000):

> I would like to congratulate the artist, John Elliott, on his magnificent interpretation of Mary MacKillop, to be found in St Stephen's Chapel.
> I find it extraordinarily moving. He has "caught" her faith, courage and determination and made what would only otherwise be a memory, present to us today.

One of the panels surrounding the statue contained a reference to Mary MacKillop's letter-writing prowess. Letters also featured in the hand of another wooden sculpture of Mary MacKillop by Ainslie Pyne in Adelaide (Read 1995). This work had commenced in 1993 and an earlier report (The Sunday Mail 1993) included a comment from the artist:

> Mary MacKillop was quite a prolific letter writer and communicator in setting up her teaching orders, writing letters between states...
> I will feature her holding a letter of good news.

The work had been completed just prior to the beatification and was displayed as part of the shine in the Chapel at Kensington.

Mary MacKillop's role in teaching colonial children was the focus of a more recent sculpture in Western Australia where the artist, Gerry Darwin used his three grandchildren as models of those taught by Mary MacKillop. This statue was 'on display at the Mary MacKillop Community Centre in Ballajura' and the report included that the sculpture 'was sponsored by the Federation Community Projects fund' (WA Examiner 2000). Mary MacKillop as an individual Australian was obviously considered significant enough to warrant such sponsorship.

St Mary's Cathedral in Sale, Victoria has a specially commissioned bronze sculpture with a face of Mary MacKillop which was 'deliberately tilted to enhance a sense of loving, endearment and humbleness' (The Catholic Weekly 1995d). She was also featured along with Saints Augustine, Monica and Nicholas in a series of stained glass windows in St Kieran's Church, Manly Vale NSW (The Catholic Weekly 1995e). Stained glass windows presenting her in a variety of situations have been placed in various Victorian schools and churches such as those at Numurkah, Newport, Sydenham and Sunbury. These have been designed by a Josephite, Therese Quinn. Another of these designs from St Ignatius Church Richmond, shown on the cover of the Jesuit Bulletin (1994) features Mary MacKillop as a young

woman standing with two children, a girl holding Mary's hand and a boy standing in front in a football uniform, holding an Australian Rules football. In a personal communication, Quinn (2000) shared with me that this window has been reproduced in a Victorian VCE chemistry book[76] to illustrate how glass can be coloured. The caption in this usage reads: 'a stained glass window in a Melbourne church. Note the football guernsey'.

In a different style, but one which reflected the universal appeal of this saint, several paintings of Mary MacKillop were created by the artist, Michael Galovic in the style usually associated with Byzantine religion: 'the idea was to create a new icon maintaining the iconographic procedure and approach, yet keeping some resemblance with Mary as we know her from photos' (The Catholic Weekly 1995b). One of these icons has been placed in the Immaculate Conception Church in Unanderra, NSW. Others were featured in an exhibition in Adelaide in 1995 and were reviewed by Ioannou (1995) as follows:

> This depiction of Australia's likely first saint is an area where Eastern traditions of icon painting can be melded with more contemporary techniques to produce a distinctly Antipodean imagery. *Mary-Enthroned* in a pose of mother superior, uses egg tempura, gold leaf and embossing to paint the saint's robes in a realistic manner not generally employed in traditional icons.

A more traditional painting was hung in the parish church at Hindmarsh SA as a link with one of the first Josephite schools in nearly Brompton, started by Mary MacKillop in 1867. The report of this artwork noted the cultural context:

> The portrait will be at home inside a church which reserves pride of place for the saints loved by the migrant communities who have made their new homes in the parish through the years.

The traditional saints, in this instance included St Eufemia of Calcedon, Saints Cosmos and Damian and Santa Maria di Ansio, all treasured patrons of local immigrant groups who used the feastdays to celebrate their ethnic identities as well as religious events. The introduction of Mary MacKillop into this context could be seen as an attempt by formal elements within the Catholic Church to adapt her to the

[76] Nelson Chemistry V C E Units 3 and 4, Nelson Thomson Learning, Victoria 3205, Published 2000, p 472

traditional place of saints in European culture. The fact that she is accepted by the locals along with their time-honoured patrons, can be taken as a further indication of the universal acceptance of the new cultural icon. She has become a sacred person.

11.1.3 Shrines

In keeping with Catholic tradition, the main shrine (or sacred place) in honour of Mary MacKillop is her burial site in the Memorial Chapel North Sydney. Just prior to the beatification, this building had undergone extensive renovations and Mary MacKillop's body had been re-interred in a separate section specially designed to allow easier access for pilgrims. This tomb is a focal point for visitors and pilgrims, especially on the eighth of each month when special Masses are held in the chapel. The annual commemoration of her official feast day on 8 August leads to an increased number of visitors, many of whom bring flowers. A report on the 1997 occasion, for example, contained a photograph entitled, 'Blessed Mary's tomb overflows with flowers' (The Catholic Weekly 2000).

The other authorised shrines for Mary MacKillop are those associated with the interpretive centres at Penola, Kensington, and to a lesser extent, at Annerley. Some churches throughout the country have some holy image which is the focus for reverence and devotion: these could be termed minor shrines and place Mary MacKillop in a similar capacity to other saints reverenced in this manner. One of these, already referred to, is located in St Stephen's Chapel in Brisbane: in his announcement about this proposed shrine, Archbishop John Bathersby referred to it as 'a prayer place – a shrine for Mary MacKillop' (The Catholic Leader 1995a). When the shrine was finished with Mary MacKillop taking pride of place, the local history was stressed in a report in the Brisbane daily press (Petersen 1999):

> With sweet irony it will be near the throne of Brisbane's first Catholic bishop, James Quinn, who banished the feisty lady from the diocese following arguments over church rules.
> It was here that this tough, pioneering woman, who shared the life of the poor and the itinerant, offering special care to destitute women and children, worshipped for the eighteen months she spent in Queensland.

Both the Kensington and North Sydney shrines were completed in 1995 and the interest aroused by the recent beatification was reflected in press reports. *The*

Catholic Weekly (1995c), for example, devoted a whole issue a month after the beatification to a special colour souvenir edition entitled, 'Mary's Special Place in our Nation'. This contained photos and descriptions of many of the exhibits in the North Sydney interpretive centre which was described as 'Sydney's shrine to a great Australian achiever'. There was no distinction made between the burial site as a shrine and the exhibition as a whole, perhaps indicating that the halo effect from all the recent beatification events was sufficient in the minds of the journalists at least to describe the whole place as a shrine.

It is interesting to compare this with the situation some three years later. A major building project was completed at the Penola shrine in 1998 and the print media reports of this event highlight another stage in MMPM.

Although Mary MacKillop only lived at Penola from 1860 to 1861 when she was governess to her Cameron cousins at Penola Station, and then from January 1866 until June 1867 when she started the Sisters of St Joseph, the people of Penola and surrounding districts have always retained both pride and reverence in their links with her. The focus as a shrine/museum for many years had been what was known as The Woods MacKillop Schoolhouse, set up to keep alive the memory of both Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods. This area had been renovated in 1989 as a focus for the increasing interest in Mary MacKillop and by 1995, an estimated 26,000 had visited the building. Volunteers staffed the centre and, in a report of the local paper (The Penola Pennant 1998), one described the impact on those who had visited the Schoolhouse:

> Many people are so overcome by the site, and it's amazing how many people detour off the main highway from Melbourne to Adelaide just to walk through this special place.
> I remember one woman walked in, stood for a moment, then turned to me and said 'I feel goosebumpy all over, I've waited so long to get here'.

This report included the observations that, 'so compelling is the life of Mary MacKillop and so strong is the faith she attracts' that many volunteers were travelling from Mount Gambier, Naracoorte and Kingston to help: this would involve

round trips of between 100-200 kilometres. The universal appeal which Mary MacKillop continued to exert was noted as well:

> An interesting and gratifying consideration is that some volunteers are not of the Catholic faith, but still choose to share in the work.

These volunteers received an accolade in another Adelaide column a year later when Turner (1999) wrote:

> In Penola, earnest volunteers have resurrected Mary. She is a celebrity, drawing tourist buses from all corners of the country.
> Now with the rank of blessed, she is on the eve of becoming Australia's first saint. For the sake of the toiling army of volunteers, I hope it happens while they are still around to enjoy it.

With the added crowds attracted after the beatification, the facilities at Penola were insufficient to cater for the demand of tourists and pilgrims. The Archdiocese of Adelaide sponsored a major upgrade of the total site and, in conjunction with the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, organised a design competition. From the 73 submissions received, the winner was an Adelaide architectural firm, Michael Fielder Architects. The finished result made a clear distinction between the Shrine, which was located within the Church, and the new Interpretive Centre which was built to complement the Schoolhouse. The architect (Fielder 1998) described the shrine as follows:

> The Mary MacKillop shrine has been positioned at the North End of Saint Joseph's Church to participate in the public space. This shrine is to contribute and enhance Mary MacKillop's presence beyond the Chapel. The construction of the Shrine reflects the construction of the heritage houses in Petticoat Lane, with timber rafters and battens supporting timber shingles. This method was adopted for the shrine in a more inclined angle, with the timber shingles replaced with glass 'shingles' fixed with pins and silicone. Blue glass was selected for the glass 'shingles' which is reminiscent of the colour blue embroidered on the Habit of the Sisters of St Joseph. Lighting under an internal Pool of Contemplation will shimmer light upward to allow the shrine to glow at night, like the candle flicker of the Sacristy lamp. The continual light will contribute positively to the memory of Mary MacKillop.

This description was repeated almost verbatim in *The Penola Pennant* (27/5/98) and then referred to again in the special insert, 'Mary MacKillop Interpretive Centre Opening' published by *The Naracoorte Herald* (4/6/98). This latter paper also noted that the incorporation of a separate shrine into the project had been a strong push by the architect:

> The schoolhouse committee was a little reluctant to have a separate shrine, feeling the schoolhouse itself was a shrine, and suggested a niche in the church for people to contemplate Mary MacKillop....
> Mr Fielder persevered and gained agreement in the end.

11.1.4 Pilgrims and pilgrimages

Reports on this Penola shrine also provide an insight into the way that the print media have reflected the emerging notion of pilgrimage associated with Mary MacKillop. This is another of the traditional religious practices which merges sacred time and space with religious rituals.

The term had been used in the Catholic press in advertisements and descriptions of tours organised to places associated with Mary MacKillop (see The Catholic Weekly 1997). This described a 'one-of-a-kind tour' which was a 'Pilgrimage' commencing 'at her shrine in Sydney' and then to 'her birthplace in Melbourne' before 'finishing up in Adelaide'. No mention was made of Penola being included in this trip. An advertisement in the same paper described this as a 'Pilgrimage in the footsteps of Mary MacKillop'.

The souvenir insert from the local paper (The Naracoorte Herald 1998) contained all the speeches made on the occasion of the Blessing and Opening of the new facilities at Penola. The remarks by Claire Larkin, Chairman of the Woods-MacKillop Schoolhouse Committee; Archbishop Leonard Faulkner, Archbishop of Adelaide and Sr Giovanni Farquer, Congregational Leader of the Sisters of St Joseph, were reprinted in full. None of these persons used the word 'pilgrim' or 'pilgrimage' in referring to the many visitors to the site.[77] On the other hand, the politicians (whose

[77] The postcard size brochures advertising this newly extended site make no reference to the word 'pilgrim' or 'pilgrimages'. A recent newsletter (Woods-MacKillop Schoolhouse 2000) does make reference to pilgrimages in one section devoted to Jubilee 2000 entitled 'A great jubilee year of pilgrimages'. It

speeches would have been written by journalists) did. The Federal Member present was Ian McLachlan and in his comments he noted that 'the centre expects to receive 25,000 pilgrims and visitors from around Australia and overseas every year'. As part of the official ceremonies, a message was read from the Prime Minister, John Howard. This used similar wording, again making the distinction between 'pilgrims and visitors (who) will see the Schoolhouse'. The Prime Minister's comments also included a tribute to Mary MacKillop: it noted that she was 'an extraordinary woman by any standards, whose indomitable spirit is as inspirational and relevant today as it was 130 years ago'. She was described as 'one of the nation's greatest historical figures'.

Ward (1998), writing in *The Weekend Australian* (20/6/98) used the term, 'pilgrims,' although in a more cynical vein when he wrote about Penola,

> South Australian Tourism Commission studies have noted the increasing stream of pilgrims to the schoolhouse sacred site, neighbouring Joseph's Church (sic) and nearby listed cottages in Petticoat Lane, and has been more than happy to open its coffers to help.[78]

The fact that the interest in Mary MacKillop had many secular as well as spiritual advantages had also been picked up in an article by Monk (1998) entitled, 'Pride of Penola a blessing in disguise' when it described how the 'thousands of people (who) have made the pilgrimage' to Penola have created 'a mini-tourism boom,' so much so that 'one is hard-pressed to find a vacant shop in the town'. Max Harris' daughter, Arts Editor for *The Advertiser*, Samela Harris, echoed this view when she wrote that the new Interpretive Centre with its 'tourism and/or pilgrim focus' was a boon to Penola. She paid tribute to Mary MacKillop for this unplanned result: 'as

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mentioned the many ethnic groups who had been represented in 'pilgrimages to Mary MacKillop Penola Centre this year' and invited readers to 'pray for all pilgrims'.

[78] The SA Government through SA Tourism Commission contributed $70,000 towards the total project cost of $1 million. In 1993 the government had engaged consultants to look at the impact of the proposed beatification on the state of SA. Representatives of Government agencies, the Catholic Church, Sisters of St Joseph and volunteers from Penola met and eventually produced a two volume report: 'State Strategy to promote and interpret the Life and Achievements of Mary MacKillop' and 'Site Development Options for Mary MacKillop Sites in South Australia'. This report identified Penola as a 'Category A MacKillop site' in 1993 and recommended an upgrade of the tourist facilities there (Donovan & Associates 1993; Donovan & Associates and The Marketing Centre 1993).

she improved the lot of poor children and disadvantaged young women, so is Mary MacKillop now helping the lot of the South Australian economy' (Harris 1998).

In North Sydney, the whole complex associated with Mary MacKillop is now termed 'Mary MacKillop Place'. In advertisements, this has been referred to as 'A Place of Pilgrimage' (Catholic Outlook 1999) and while readers are invited to 'visit our extraordinary museum and the tomb of Australia's first saint,' the term 'shrine' is not used.[79]

11.1.5 Relics – sacred objects

While the issue of relics was prominent in the time immediately following Mary MacKillop's death, there has not been such an interest by the print media in more recent days.

Renovations to the Memorial Chapel at North Sydney prior to the beatification included the transfer of Mary MacKillop's body from a place on the left hand side of the chapel to a more prominent position on the right in an alcove to allow more room for those who wished to pray at her tomb. The re-interment had taken place on Monday 20 December 1993 and, during this process, remnants of an old cedar coffin that had 'fallen away from the inner lining of lead' were gathered. These were identified as 'secondary relics' in the newsletter of the funeral directors responsible for this task (Harris 1994). Some of this cedar was used in a South Australian church in May 1995. In a report headed 'MacKillop relics placed in Albert Park church,' the writer noted that the inclusion of the relics of saints in the altar of a Catholic Church 'continues a tradition of celebrating Mass over the place of interment of martyrs or relics of the saints' (SA Catholic 1995). In the renovation of St Stephen's Chapel in Brisbane, relics of this cedar coffin were also placed near the statue of Mary MacKillop erected as a shrine.

In their continued reporting of human interest stories following the beatification, the West Australian Catholic newspaper, *The Record*, ran a one page article with photos

[79] A brochure put out by Mary MacKillop Place does make a mention when describing the Chapel that 'Mary MacKillop, Australia's first saint, is enshrined here. The Mary MacKillop Memorial Chapel has become a place of pilgrimage for many thousands of people'.

in a February edition about a man who had been present during the re-interment of Mary MacKillop's body to its new position in the Memorial Chapel (1995). While the word 'relic' was not actually used in this story, the fact that the story was considered newsworthy and that hitherto unpublished photos taken by the man of the remains of the cedar coffin were given such prominence was an indication of a presumption that the audience were meant to make this connection.

In contrast to the spiritual significance of relics, one Adelaide journalist used reference to relics for a more mercenary angle. The columnist had just returned from a trip to Italy and had visited many churches where the relics of saints were on display. He wrote:

> It never occurred to me until I went to Italy that what Adelaide needs to put itself on the tourist map are some genuine saintly relics.
>
> As you know, we in SA have certain links with the Blessed Mary MacKillop and that is all well and good but she is, however, buried in Sydney and it is her bones we need to get our hands on.

The article then continued to describe the fairly gruesome relics the author saw in Italian churches and concluded that 'cunning ingenuity' was required today to obtain 'some suitable bones to attract the tourist hordes' (Ryan 1997). This article was also interesting in the way that it presumed knowledge by the audience and tried to establish a relationship with them: 'as you know' referring to Mary MacKillop. The context of this newspaper was significant: it circulated in suburbs with high proportions of families from Italian background. Many such families could be presumed to be familiar with the veneration of relics because of their cultural heritage. There was obviously another presumption by the journalist that, over and above this group, the general newspaper audience had been sufficiently educated about aspects of sainthood to make the connection with Mary MacKillop.

11.1.6 Other print material from Catholic sources

Some examples can be found within recent Catholic print media which reflect the continued reflection upon Mary MacKillop, but at the same time, are attempts to control or influence the development of MMPM. Two examples make comment on the media approach to the beatification.

In an article in early 1995, Barrett (1995) described how 'the media coverage accorded to Mary MacKillop in recent months had fluctuated between the banal and the beautiful'. In his opinion, 'the most appreciative, awed, challenging statement' came from Max Harris 'litterateur and self-styled agnostic'. He summarised Harris' viewpoint:

> Australia desperately needs an icon, a national model, a patriot who inspires. "An *icon* is essential to any culture unless that culture is dying or dead." In the past we have had our off-beat heroes but – Harris says – now "we are more and more desperate for something which is slightly better than Phar Lap and slightly more salubrious than Ned Kelly."

Barrett identified Mary MacKillop as this new icon for Australia, as from the date of her official beatification. His question then related to what long term impact this would have on Australian society:

> Will there be a nation-wide response to her such as Max Harris has envisaged? ...will we remember that we have hitched our country's wagon to a new star?

He concluded that, while Australia may have 'advanced to the position where the icon is in place,' there is still the 'need of a second Max Harris-type miracle'.

In his reflection on media attention given Mary MacKillop at the time of the beatification, the Bishop of Parramatta, Kevin Manning (1999) noted that many journalists had been,

> ... captivated by her life and sanctity, but with some exaggeration. She was severally promoted as the ultimate feminist, radical underdog, and anti-authority.

This 'silly typecasting' meant that Mary MacKillop was presented as a 'symbol of complaints, hurts, frustrations, easily seized upon by pressure groups and disaffected individuals'. In Manning's opinion, 'that image does her a grave injustice'. He referred to her extensive writing which showed 'little evidence of feeling victimised or rejected'. Her stance was consistently the opposite:

> She exuded a serenity, confidence, courage and determination derived from a conviction that she was right in what she did because she was doing God's will. She was beatified, not because she was a rebellious social reformer, but because she lived a life of heroic virtue.

The basis of her life, according to Manning, was Mary's sense of the presence of God whose 'presence was not a fearful one, but a consciousness of goodness and love'. Mary's awareness of God's goodness and her own reflection of this goodness seem to be the key characteristics identified about Mary MacKillop in much of the print media.

11.2 THE SECULAR MARKETPLACE OF RELIGIOUS CHOICE

While elements within the Catholic Church could be seen as maintaining the traditional ideological stance towards saints, the secular society viewed Mary MacKillop as 'public property' to be used in a variety of ways. She had become what Bennett and Lawrence termed a 'news icon' (1995, p 20).

11.2.1 The news icon

This term was used to describe 'an image that lived beyond its originating event by being introduced into a variety of subsequent news contexts'. Coverage of the beatification event in January 1995 was part of the ongoing news story about Mary MacKillop. The print media saturation at this time, especially as represented by editorials and political cartoons, marked a significant turning point: it was a 'decisive moment' (p 24) so that, as a news icon, MMPM entered 'the narrative streams of subsequent, disparate, and often unconnected events' (p 23). In this manner, it has played a part in social change, especially in the perception of the Australian identity.

One illustration of this was provided by the comments of an Adelaide journalist (Turner 1999) describing his impressions of the renovated Penola centre:

> But I am a closet fan of the Blessed Mary operation at Penola. It remains in good taste. We have been spared the bizarre, the full-frontal cheapness that engulfs sacred sites in other countries that should know better.
> Blessed Mary, with her almost larrikin ways, is reassuringly Australian.

This extract was from a longer column headed, 'March is Blessed Mary's month' and was focussed on plans at Penola for a re-creation of the first Josephite school with descendants of the original students taught by Mary MacKillop. The article appeared in *The Advertiser* on 7 August 1999, the day before Mary MacKillop's feastday and was another indication of the way that journalists in the secular press

have accepted the fact that MMPM is a news icon, one to be used in the exploration of what it means to be an Australian.

In the five years since she was beatified, Mary MacKillop has been mentioned in a variety of contexts in Australian newspapers. Examples of these, especially from those available in South Australia, will now be presented.

11.2.2 Continued interest in miracles

Many journalists displayed an awareness that a second miracle was required before Mary MacKillop could be given the title 'Saint'. The fact that this would mean she could be honoured throughout the world, not just in the countries where she had worked was a distinction not readily understood by some.

In a cynical and at times vitriolic column in the South Australian weekend newspaper in April 1995, Goers (1995) used the topic of miracles to attract attention to his views on Mary MacKillop. His heading was designed to be controversial: 'Mary, our lay-by saint' and then the sub-title, 'But, bless me, it's a miracle we're bothering'. While attacking Mary for her 'very boring life; a comfortable life of contemplation and reflection', he also revealed his ignorance of the Catholic Church's process for making saints. Although he recognised that 'Mary MacKillop's canonisation swings on a second miracle' he erroneously concluded that,

> Ironically, even if Mary MacKillop becomes a saint, she will only be a local saint and not venerated anywhere else but Australia. She will never be a cosmic or universal saint.

He then went on to state the crux of his argument: 'Why should Australia settle for a second-class saint?' In a peculiarly backhanded sort of way, Goers would seem to be suggesting that Australians could honour her without reference to an outdated and irrelevant system: no 'Roman seal of sanctity and approval' was needed to celebrate someone whom he did admit to be 'selfless in her desire to achieve good works'. His fear was that canonisation would be a retrograde step: 'the quickest way to make an historical figure completely irrelevant is to make them a saint' and then asked, after citing the names of various little known saints, 'do we really want Mary MacKillop to become as irrelevant as all those saints and many more?' Goers would seem to be applying the opinion of Bennett and Lawrence (1995) that,

> As they are publicized, news icons may become focal points of public discussion. They do not so much cause change as focus attention upon political, social, and cultural changes, tensions, and contradictions. In the process of working these out, significant cultural changes can sometimes occur.

To Goers, while the Mary MacKillop of History may have seemed dull and boring, the new cultural artefact, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media could be one which was not reliant upon the institution of the Catholic Church for its continued definition. It was an Australian icon by popular acclaim, even though some, such as himself, may not have agreed with the notion.

The more usual approach to miraculous cures was also not forgotten by the Australian press. In March 1995 *The Australasian Post* ran an article entitled, 'Marvellous Monique – Is she Mary MacKillop's Second Miracle?' (Olszewski 1995). This was the story of a painter who prayed 'that his daughter's child would not be born with massive disabilities, or be stillborn as doctors had predicted'. While the baby was a Down's syndrome child, her handicap was not as severe as had been expected and so the painter felt that his prayers were answered.

The *New Idea* magazine in one of its 1997 issues covered the story of a woman claiming that the improvement in her failing eyesight was due to a miracle: 'I know Mary MacKillop has truly blessed me by giving my vision back'. The article reminded readers of the miracle which had been accepted by the Vatican before the beatification, thus tapping into knowledge which was presumed in the audience. Some of the technical details of the canonisation process were not quite understood by the writer: Fr Paul Gardiner was referred to as 'the postulant for the Cause of Mary MacKillop' rather than the postulator (Ward 1997).

Not long after this, another report was published in the Adelaide *Sunday Mail* (29/3/98) concerning a boy who appeared to have recovered from a brain tumour after 'prayers for nine days in Mary MacKillop's chapel'. The story covered the extent of the boy's illness and made mention of the process which could be used to verify the miracle. While it was reported that 'the Sisters of St Joseph are convinced Mary MacKillop played a significant role in David's recovery, the article reflected their hesitancy in any declaration of miraculous intervention:

> Sister Burgess said it was a combination of the doctor's work and prayer which saved David.
> "Our prayers were answered," she said. But she could only call the blessing a "favor," rather than a miracle.
> (The Sunday Mail 1998).

This story was also covered in the Brisbane *Sunday Herald Sun* (Banks 1998). This article included quite a detailed account of the process necessary before the boy's cure could be accepted as a miracle: it included setting up 'a special church tribunal,' collecting evidence 'and witnesses are questioned under oath in a court of inquiry'. The opinion of medical experts has to be sought before the whole summary is 'sent to Rome and examined by medical and legal boards, before it is forwarded to a group of five medical experts'. The critical test is to 'examine the link between prayer and the patient's recovery'.

Mary MacKillop and miracles were not just confined to Australia: a 1998 report in the Adelaide *Advertiser* described how the small town of Roybridge in the Scottish Highlands was 'invoking Mary MacKillop's name' to save their school from closure. The connection was stated: 'her parents, who met and married in Australia after emigrating from Scotland with their parents in 1838 came from the village, about 100 km north-west of Edinburgh'. The local parish priest was quoted as mentioning the strong link between Australians who came 'on organised tours of places linked with Mary MacKillop' and noted that the threatened school was built five years after Mary MacKillop visited the area in 1873 (Manly 1998). Scottish newspapers reporting on the same event spoke of the Highland Council being 'bombarded with letters from Down Under, protesting at the slur on the memory of the Blessed Mary MacKillop' (Hunter 1998).

11.2.2.1 THE YANKALILLA SAGA

An interesting example of the way that miracles have been linked with MMPM as a news icon was an event in the small South Australian town of Yankalilla where there was a reputed vision of the Virgin Mary in what could pass for salt damp on the wall of the Anglican Christ Church. The phenomenon, which had first appeared some 18 months beforehand, received wide publicity in *The Advertiser* in July 1996. The resident priest, Fr Andrew Nutter, (who since changed his name to Notere) was not slow to mention the link with Mary MacKillop's early school in the area. He

consistently maintained that the picture on the church wall could be the 'third miracle' needed for her to become a saint (Maguire 1996). The Religious Affairs writer for this paper also quoted the Rev Nutter's reference to Mary MacKillop:

> "If the Mother of God was to appear in South Australia, this is the sort of place she would choose," he said, pointing to Yankalilla's rural setting, its closeness to Adelaide and a local connection to the Blessed Mary MacKillop.
> Yankalilla is the sight (sic) of the first Josephite school founded outside Adelaide after Sister MacKillop, who has been beatified by the Catholic Church, returned to the city from Penola in 1867.

The reporter then noted that, 'while it is almost certain she (Mary MacKillop) spent time in the area, there is no record of her attending the Anglican Church'. One of the reports by Donovan & Associates (1993), commissioned by the South Australian Tourism Commission in association with the Sisters of St Joseph SA had identified Yankalilla as a 'Category D site,[80] with the comment that, 'The sisters lived in three houses in the town, only the third remains'.

Based on the reputed 'miracle' on the wall of the Anglican Church, a cult had emerged with many of the traditional elements of holy places where visions have been seen. By December 1996, Fr Nutter had commenced selling holy water from a bore linking into 'an underground stream just behind the apparition of the Virgin Mary'. This was described at length in a four page report in the Adelaide weekend section of *The Advertiser* and again mention was made of the link to Mary MacKillop's early school house and the need for another miracle for her canonisation (Lloyd 1996).

Further links between the 'miracle or mould' (Maguire 1996) and Mary MacKillop were made when this alleged school house came onto the property market some months later.[81] It had been auctioned on 12 October 1996 after being advertised as

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[80] These are defined as 'Those sites associated with schools, convents, and other works founded while Mary MacKillop was working in South Australia and which illustrate the work and the development of the Institute'. This group of sites included the Catholic schools at Thebarton and Hectorville as well as early convents in places such as Navan where 'three gum trees mark the site of the convent and school' and towns such as Pekina, Gladstone, Caltowie and Jamestown where the original school and convent remain. Category D sites are linked more to the early followers of Mary MacKillop than to any work that she carried out on the site. While she may have visited the areas, she did not work in any of them for long periods of time, if at all.

[81] The property had been offered to the Sisters of St Joseph SA at a highly inflated price but was declined.

'Mary MacKillop's school house' (Hooker 1996). The advertisement had also stressed, 'If you love Mary MacKillop, you will just love this cottage'. A report the following year described how 'the former Mary MacKillop schoolhouse at Yankalilla (was) being converted to accommodation for pilgrims visiting the Shrine of Our Lady of Yankalilla'. Readers were reminded in the words the journalist had used the previous year, but with a closer eye to spelling, that the building was 'the site of the first school established outside Adelaide by the Blessed Mary MacKillop'. The report continued that the renovated building would 'include a chapel...so pilgrims can pray where Mary MacKillop taught' (Smart 1996). The venue was well established by 1998 when the rector was threatening to resign over parish opposition to the shrine. A report on this incident made mention that 'the town's former Mary MacKillop schoolhouse' was being used to accommodate pilgrims (Starick 1998).

By 1998 the link with Mary MacKillop had become well-established, a part of the general frame of reference that journalists had when considering the alleged miraculous vision at Yankalilla: the report of a possible miracle cure which had been attributed to Mary MacKillop – 'David saved by our saint to be' – had an interesting footnote. It mentioned biographical details of Mary MacKillop and then continued that 'one of her schoolhouses was at Penola, in the South East; the other is at Yankalilla, south of Adelaide which is being converted into a shrine for pilgrims visiting the shrine of Our Lady of Yankalilla' (The Sunday Mail 1998). Further legitimation to the recent Yankalilla events was given by the writer's juxtaposition of the two towns.

11.2.3 Desire for identification

There have been cases amongst Australians more prominent than the Reverend Nutter who have sought identification with Mary MacKillop and the group she founded. After his departure from politics, Paul Keating withdrew from public life for a time. A report in *The Sydney Morning Herald* in February 1997 noted that the former Prime Minister whom it described as being 'born, bred and schooled by the Josephites, ... chose the launch of the book *Mary MacKillop's Sisters*, by Anne Henderson to make a rare public appearance' (Pitt 1997). While he did not make a

comment on Mary MacKillop, he paid tribute to her legacy which he had experienced through those who had followed her:

> The whole ethos of a fair go or our sense of social justice and social inclusion have come in some important way from these teachings and this work.
> My own work in political life was influenced by these people in those years, it had other influences but the founding influences are always important ... a whole nation has been influenced in this way.

The book he launched was a collection of interviews with 42 Sisters of St Joseph (Henderson 1997). It was reviewed favourably (26/2/97) as 'an invaluable social and historical document and an absorbing read' by Cowell (1997) while some months later (25/3/97) it received a more negative critique from James Murray (1997) in *The Australian.* He decried the book as an example of the 'veritable industry (which) had developed over the cult of Mother Mary MacKillop – or, more properly, Blessed Mary of the Cross – since her beatification'. His distinction about the name echoed the comment in the article by Martyr (1996) that the choice of Mary's surname, rather than her religious name, was a recognition that a new cultural artefact was being described, the one which I have termed MMPM. The tone of Murray's review was set by the headline, 'Bland confessions from cloistered world' as well as the caption beneath a photograph of Mary MacKillop, 'Religious Order: Mary MacKillop's life is reduced to propaganda'. He summarised the purpose of Henderson's work as 'an attempt... to turn MacKillop into an anticipated feminist'.

The political cartoon by Atchison (1997) which appeared prior to the Federal Budget, has already been referred to in the previous chapter. The depiction of the Treasurer, Peter Costello, as dressing to appear as 'something between Attila the Hun and Mother Mary MacKillop' was a strong indication of the use of Mary MacKillop as a news icon. The choice of Mary MacKillop in this instance was not linked to any current news story but rather the result of the cartoonist's perception that she was well known enough in the newspaper audience for the point to be made: she was known as a model of goodness as opposed to the model of ruthlessness (Atchison 2000b).

The Melbourne weekend paper, the *Sunday Herald Sun* (16/8/98), considered newsworthy the fact that the entertainer, Bobby Limb had prayed at the tomb of Mary MacKillop when he was diagnosed with cancer. The headline for the article: 'It's Mother Mary's "Miracle" for Limb' linked into the presumed knowledge of the newspaper audience. While not being instantly cured, Limb 'insisted he lost his fear of the disease and had the first promising sign of a possible recovery – after he prayed at Mother Mary's tomb in North Sydney' (Koch 1998).

Mary MacKillop's name appeared in 1999 in a report about 'Housewife superstar Edna Everage' (Rodda 1999). In a story describing how she was relinquish(ing) her damehood in honor of the republican cause', Dame Edna's 'alter-ego Barry Humphries' announced that 'a "family tree" check showed she was related to Catholic pioneer, Mother Mary MacKillop'. The comment was not explained further but, as with the usage by Atchison, this does lend support to the view that Mary MacKillop's name is seen as fair game in the secular market place for the choice of religious ideas and symbols.

11.2.4 Counted amongst heroes

The enumeration of national heroes by the daily press at the time of millennium celebrations in January 2000 saw Mary MacKillop counted amongst this prestigious group. The Adelaide *Advertiser* over the two previous years had invited readers to submit names of those who should feature in the '100 Australian Heroes' feature, published in the weekend press. Mary MacKillop was amongst the first to be featured: under the headline, 'Born to be a Saint,' Turner (1998) provided a brief biography as well as details of her achievements. He noted that, 'Blessed Mary MacKillop is a one-off stand-alone, mix of all things that could be fed into any computer modelling for heroism'.

From all those nominated over two years, a reader's poll was held over two days. The result was that, while Lord Howard Florey won with more than 25 per cent of the votes,

> Mother MacKillop, who may become Australia's first saint, also polled heavily on both days to shake off a late rally from supporters of Sir Thomas Playford, the Liberal premier for 27 years (The Advertiser 2000b).

In another listing of 100 Australians who 'have made us feel good about ourselves and proud to be Australian,' *The Sunday Mail* (1999) also numbered Mary MacKillop amongst the selected group. The citation beneath her photograph read in part,

> Mother Mary MacKillop committed her life to the care and education of the poor and the schoolhouse where she once taught in Penola is now a place of pilgrimage. Beatified by the Pope during his Australian visit of 1995, she awaits the discovery of the miracle which will make her St Mary, Australia's first saint.

In a more recent feature (12/9/2000) about female pioneers in Australia, Monk (2000) profiled Mary MacKillop in the group which included Dame Nellie Melba, 'a world-renowned soprano;' Louisa Lawson, 'Australia's first publisher and a tireless campaigner for greater independence for women;' Edith Cowan, 'the first woman member of an Australian parliament;' Caroline Chisholm, who 'assisted many stranded and poor women who had immigrated to Sydney;' and Mary Reibey, a former convict and then a businesswoman who 'was active in Christian charitable works'. As with the other nominations, the description about Mary MacKillop was factual rather than interpretive: she was introduced as 'the eldest child of a large, poor family (whose) Catholic faith motivated her to help the needy from a young age'.

Some young people see Mary MacKillop as relevant to them today. In a feature article in *The Weekend Australian* (Walker 1999), several young Australians in their early twenties were asked about their role models. The Adelaide university student union president replied that,

> Aside from her parents, ... her main role model is Mary MacKillop.
> "Because she is historical, I don't have to know the ins and out of her as a person. But I like the way she was aware of the social issues of the day, the fact that she was a woman, and wasn't afraid to speak out against any kind of wrongdoing. I think this has had a profound and positive influence."

This comment is also significant since it reflected a perception of Mary MacKillop as a cultural icon, the artefact that she has become in the years since her death.

11.2.5 Connection with Real Estate

Besides the Yankalilla property, there have been other instances in South Australia where the advertisements or descriptions of houses for sale have included some reference to Mary MacKillop. Two examples were found from *The Advertiser* in 2000.

The first (8/4/2000) concerned a house in Queen Street Norwood which was a reproduction of the older style houses found in the area. It had no direct connection with Mary MacKillop or the Sisters of St Joseph. In referring to the historic features of the area, the following paragraph was included:

> Blessed Mary MacKillop (a subject of the process of being named a saint) also took refuge in rooms behind a shop on the corner of Queen St, and William St, Norwood, during the time when she was spurned by the bishop overseeing her work (The Advertiser 2000d).

The unnamed author of this piece was either not aware of the correct jargon involved (the terms canonisation and excommunication were not used although their realities were referred to) or there was an assumption made about the audience. Those reading the advertising blurb were presumed to think that some link with Mary MacKillop could be beneficial and hence a sale could result from this tenuous association.

Another slightly less tenuous link was made some months later (4/11/2000) about an historic property for sale at Kapunda. The write up commenced as follows:

> Once visited by Blessed Mary MacKillop who arrived for afternoon tea one day in 1897 Shenandoah was built as Mount Saint Rose Catholic School and Convent and includes the original school rooms.
> Unfortunately Mary was ejected that same day by the local priest who had sided with the Archbishop whom Mary had fallen foul of. Australia's only candidate for sainthood documented that she was forced to stay in a disused church instead (The Advertiser 2000c).

The *Positio* (Gardiner 1989b, pp 1265-1266) does support the assertion that Mary MacKillop did visit the house: the Dominican Sisters had offered hospitality at their St Rose's Convent until the Josephite convent was furnished. When the parish priest, Dr Frederick Byrne intervened, Mary and another sister were forced to stay in an

unfurnished house – not a 'disused church' - until neighbours came to their assistance with furniture.

In these two instances, the real estate sales persons may have been trying merely to gain some commercial benefit from the use of Mary MacKillop's name but the fact that this usage occurred is another indication of the way that she has become a 'news icon' in the sense of being a 'condensational image ... that invokes primary cultural themes' (Bennett and Lawrence 1995). The authentic link to a saint was meant to convey a positive message to potential purchasers of the properties: they would have a unique link with someone who was a famous Australian and so they would benefit from the association.

11.2.6 Other commercial connections

The question of marketing Mary MacKillop had been discussed in the press before the beatification. *The Australian Magazine*, for example, had featured an article (3/9/1994) entitled 'The Mother of all Promotions' with the subtitle, 'How Australia is marketing the sainthood of Mary MacKillop' (Safe 1994). The front cover of this insert to *The Weekend Australian* had a picture of Mary MacKillop in her habit with the words, 'Mary Mania – The Selling of a Saint' to attract attention to the story within. The author marvelled over 'the fact that an unflappable woman who died 85 years ago can inspire such interest in these hard-headed, secular times'. One of the Sisters of St Joseph who was interviewed commented about Mary MacKillop: 'I don't think goodness can get too much publicity.... Humankind has a depth that can appreciate goodness'.

In a commercial reflection on this, the article continued,

> Humankind, it must be said, can also appreciate the turning of a dollar. The Mary MacKillop phenomenon is providing an industry of its own. Here come the books – new and reissued – the feature film, the television drama, the stage plays (at least two of them), the mementos – postcards, placemats and coasters, - and tours of the essential Josephite sites.

Penola and other towns in the South Eastern corner of South Australia, along with neighbouring Victorian towns were quick to apply one of the strategies identified in

the report by Donovan & Associates (1993, p 111): under Action Plan 74 for Tourism, it read,

> To ensure that the tourism industry appreciates the unique features of the Mary MacKillop promotion and is able to maximise the economic benefits flowing from it while respecting the sensitive nature of each key site and avoiding crass promotion and commercialisation.

A story under 'Travel Notes' in The Australian Woman's Weekly' (Bowring 1995), noted that, 'Given the popular attention to the process of providing Australia with our first official saint, the incorporation of Mary MacKillop as a tourist attraction was inevitable'. The 'Mary MacKillop Tourist Drive,' as it was termed on large signposts, was described as covering the towns of Penola, Casterton, Coleraine, Hamilton, Portland, Nelson, Port MacDonnell and Mount Gambier. It was portrayed as having been 'created to allow pilgrims to trace this formative stage of the religious life of our saint'. Those who followed the marked route were encouraged to take a 'do-it-yourself approach, which allows flexibility to cope with differing levels of interest in Mary MacKillop's background'. For the vignerons of the area, there was a hope that the interest in the local celebrity would also translate into extra sales of the local wines, a fact not always realised as White (1995) noted.

A year later, a reporter with *The Advertiser*, (Koning 1996) reviewed her experience of following this Tourist Drive. She concluded that, whilst Penola and Portland 'provide brilliant insights into the background of this remarkable woman,' some of the other towns listed could be thought to be 'merely 'trying to cash in on the MacKillop phenomenon' because of their tenuous link to Mary MacKillop:

> For sure, Mary MacKillop boarded ships at Port McDonnell a few times, and she and/or her relatives may have been to towns such as Dunkeld, in Victoria, but this hardly puts them in the "sacred sites" category.

The report concluded that in some places, 'even the locals don't really know why they're listed on the drive' and suggested that those towns that were 'simply interested in the cash from potential busloads of tourists' be eliminated from the officially signage for the tour.

The opening of the Mary MacKillop Interpretive Centre at Penola in 1998 gave renewed impetus to the tourisms industry in the area. 'Pride of Penola a blessing in

disguise' was the way Monk (1998) presented a report in *The Advertiser* (19/5/98). He noted that the 'thousands of people (who) have made the pilgrimage to the town' since the beatification, had created 'a mini-tourism boost'. Another two-page spread in the same paper some months later (21/7/98) featured the main attractions of all the towns in 'our rich South-East'. This focussed on South Australian towns, and the entry for Penola made mention of it being the site where, 'in 1866, Mary MacKillop co-founded the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart'. The summary continued that 'the town is now a site of pilgrimage for those interested in Mother MacKillop'. A small head and shoulders photo of Mary MacKillop along with biographical details and a mention of the Woods-MacKillop schoolhouse were given special prominence in a full column on the right hand side of the coverage (Russo and Wakelin 1998).

Apart from this major tourist burst, another area which has received some commercial advantage from a link with Mary MacKillop has been the arts. While a movie, *Mary,* and several plays had been produced before the beatification, Adelaide's Red Shed Company commissioned one that took advantage of the euphoria after this event. Melissa Reeves wrote the musical, *Storming Heaven*, with music by Justin Posa, and the thought that it was 'yet another attempt to jump on the MacKillop bandwagon' was dismissed in the advance publicity by Nunn (1995). Reeves had heard about Mary MacKillop some two years before through a radio serialisation. She was reported to have wanted to pursue some artistic adaptation of her story as 'it's juicy stuff and her life has been so well documented and archived'. This report is interesting because of the way that it reflects recognition of Mary MacKillop as a cultural artefact, changing over time and depending upon the perception of individuals. In reflecting upon her own 'mixed feelings' about this woman, Reeves was reported as saying,

> There are so many different Mary's, (sic) in a way...
> I've got my vague impression of what she was really like from photos, and from trying to look into her head.
> I've got the Mary from when I read the letters she wrote to the sisters and Tenison Woods, and the impression of just how strong and gutsy a woman she was.
> I'm constantly amazed by her character.

The New South Wales Government also recognised the economic and political advantages to be gained from links to Mary MacKillop. The 'first of twelve new Supercat ferries' which was described as being 'part of the State Government's $100 million upgrade of Sydney's ferries' was named the *Mary MacKillop* when it was launched by the Transport Minister, Carl Scully in September 2000. He was reported as saying that it was 'an appropriate tribute to a great Australian who ... is loved and revered in this country' (Hook 2000).

11.3 Conclusions

The formal beatification of Mary MacKillop marked a critical point in the development of a new cultural artefact or icon for Australia. For those within the Catholic Church, the fact that Mary MacKillop received this honour was a legitimation to them of their belief in her message and the continued exploration of her role as a model for their own lives. For those outside this institution, the event had a number of meanings ranging from an opportunity for exploitation of a new hero to admiration of a great Australian. The print media throughout the country devoted many columns to examining these questions.

In the five years since the Pope departed Australia, leaving Blessed Mary MacKillop to be venerated by Catholics and non-Catholics, there has been a further evolution in MMPM. While the amount of coverage was substantially reduced from the week of the beatification and the time leading up to that pivotal event, it was possible to identify two distinct strands in the reporting over this period of time.

On the one hand, the Catholic Church and various agencies or sub-sections within it have asserted and encouraged the traditional boundaries of the cult of saints. They have consciously attempted to maintain the boundaries around MMH by using the traditional religious structures. An annual feast day is celebrated with due pomp and liturgical ceremony. A variety of holy images have been authorised for the veneration and edification of the faithful. Some of these have been located in shrines, the most prominent of which have been set up in locations considered as sanctified because of some direct link with Mary MacKillop during her lifetime. Pilgrims are encouraged to visit the shrines; believers are reminded to pray for

miracles; and relics are recognised, although not given a high priority by the press. At times it seems that those outside the Catholic Church are more ready to use some of the language of sainthood than are those within: this was evidenced in a close examination of the speeches at the opening of the Penola Interpretive Centre in 1998. It could also be the case that those presenting these speeches considered words such as 'pilgrims' and 'pilgrimages' to be so much a part of their taken for granted reality that they did not need to use them.

Within the general community over the five years since her beatification, Mary MacKillop has been recognised as an Australian of note, someone counted amongst heroes and praised for her humanitarian as much as for her spiritual dimension. In the print media, she has now developed into a 'news icon' reflecting her position as a cultural artefact recognised and used throughout the country in a variety of situations. Some of these could be interpreted as for personal gain or even examples of exploitation for commercial reasons as in real estate sales. In an interesting example of a reality constructed along parallel lines to the traditional story of saints and holy places, a cult which seeks to attract both interest and credibility by advertising an association with Mary MacKillop has emerged at Yankalilla South Australia.

Those involved in the production of the print media have blurred the boundaries between Mary MacKillop as a traditional saint (MMH) and the way that she is referred to in a variety of contexts (MMPM). This appropriation of aspects of religion to develop a new cultural artefact has now reached the stage where it is part of the taken for granted reality for Australians: the irony of the position of her statue in the Brisbane Catholic Cathedral adjacent to the throne of Bishop James Quinn was cited for its humour. A more recent bishop (Manning) was quoted as trying to maintain the boundaries around MMH: in the *Catholic Outlook* of August 1999, he objected to her being promoted as the Australian stereotype of 'the ultimate feminist, radical underdog, and anti-authority'. In complete contrast, and as an indication of the way that journalists had accepted MMPM, was the comment only a few months earlier by Turner (1999) that, 'Blessed Mary, with her almost larrikin ways, is reassuringly Australian'. The negative view by Goers could also be interpreted as a

sort of grudging acceptance: MMPM was now a tall poppy and, in the Australian tradition, it needed to be lopped, according to him.

By 2000, it was clear that there were two quite separate artefacts. The Mary MacKillop of History (a saint in the traditional sense) was the version which the official Catholic Church institutions were keen to maintain. The Mary MacKillop of the Print Media, as an embodiment of the way that aspects of sainthood had been applied and interpreted by journalists in a uniquely Australian manner, had continued to develop and was quite evident.

This new cultural icon of MMPM, which had evolved over ninety years, will be summarised in the final chapter.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE MARY MACKILLOP OF THE PRINT MEDIA

12.0 INTRODUCTION

The thesis has aimed to define, trace and explain the new cultural representation of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media (MMPM) from 1909 until 2000.

The Mary MacKillop of the Print Media is the result of the symbiotic relationship between Australian print media journalists and the Mary MacKillop of History. The latter cultural artefact is based on the traditional version of a saint in the Roman Catholic tradition: it has a religious context in its sacred places, rituals, pilgrimages and relics. It is conveyed through hagiographic literature and controlled by the institution of the Catholic Church, both in the official hierarchy and through the Sisters of St Joseph. The knowledge that individuals have about MMH is constructed by adding new layers to that accepted as everyday reality. As journalists and artists have engaged with MMH, they have both reported news and at the same time created it: the constructed reality resulting from the dynamic relationship between those in the print media and MMH has resulted in the creation of the new symbol I have identified as MMPM.

This reality, or 'news icon' has been the subject of an ongoing developmental process. Ongoing sales of newspapers, indicating text consumption, have given plausibility to MMPM. Those in the print media and their audiences have progressively interpreted this icon in terms of the knowledge already held as everyday reality – their frames of reference. A large portion of this study has outlined the cultural and religious contexts from which these frames of reference can be drawn.

Against this background, I have traced how MMPM has evolved over ninety years. Awareness of this new cultural artefact has changed due to societal and institutional factors operating at various stages over this period, as well as by the way that audiences have engaged with the texts. It has also been affected by the fact that, as a religious icon, MMPM taps into a level of reality beyond the ordinary realm of

existence: she is linked to the transcendent and is a reflection of the search for a higher meaning as well as an expression of hope because of the qualities recognised in her.

Within designated *Timeslices*, I examined a variety of texts from print media throughout Australia, taking examples from both the daily and the Catholic press to track the way that Mary MacKillop was presented in and by the print media. My method has used a qualitative approach to document a reality that has been interpreted through the filter of my own lived experiences. The texts studied through this method were taken from their natural context and provided both a summary of communication over time and an indicator of changes in cultural values. From the sample texts, I have drawn conclusions and extrapolated these in an application to the broader field of Australian society.

The theory underpinning this study was used to identify the factors that have influenced the development of MMPM. I used ideas from sociology of knowledge to examine the individual and communal search for meaning. This led me to consider the links between media, religion and culture. I adapted ideas from media discourse to examine the social and cultural frameworks in which texts were located. While Fairclough (1995b, p 62) focussed 'upon linguistic analysis of texts, intertextual analysis of texts, and selective sociocultural analysis,' I used this latter area in an intensive mode as the basis for my research.

The Key Questions introduced in Chapter 1 formed the framework for this final chapter. These were:

- What identity has been constructed?
- What factors influenced the evolution of the new cultural artefact of MMPM?
- What does this study say about the continuing search for an Australian identity?
- What further research is suggested as a result?

I have addressed the first two questions for each of the *Timeslices* before making links with the search for an Australian identity. Suggested areas for future research provide the final section of this thesis.

12.1 THE EARLY YEARS OF MMPM

During her lifetime, Mary MacKillop had challenged the boundaries of what was considered acceptable in society. Rather than join an existing group, she commenced an organisation to meet pressing social needs of her time, especially in the education of children from poor families. She faced both practical and moral opposition and was prepared to accept the extreme sanction of excommunication because of her belief in the righteousness of her cause. At a time when the only safe way for a woman to travel overseas was to adopt the disguise of a widow, she travelled incognito to Rome to seek the approval of the Pope for her venture. Her charisma enabled other women to join with her and, through their combined efforts, they were able to educate boys and girls so that both had a chance of some upward mobility. The social work that she initiated also played a significant part in combating difficulties experienced by many women who had travelled with their families seeking a livelihood in lonely places.

By the time of her death in 1909, she was recognised as a significant Australian woman, one who was honoured with a funeral akin to a State occasion. It was noteworthy that the arrangements for this funeral were taken over by the official Church hierarchy and many clergy were identified by name as being present at the event. It was as if they had recognised the unique qualities of MMH and wished to benefit by association as well as preserving the traditional elements of saints. This was shown by the contents of the eulogies being printed verbatim in the Catholic press and by the inclusion of many hagiographic themes in these speeches. By the time her body was re-interred in the Memorial Chapel in 1914, there was a clear comparison with institutionalised sainthood through the references to early Christian saints and the significance of their burial sites as shrines for the faithful. Catholics would have recognised these links to their existing frames of reference: the association would have enabled them to objectify the new symbol of MMPM with additional religious overtones.

In the years 1909-1914, most of the newspaper reports were factual and descriptive. These newspapers were in limited supply and availability because of their cost and the fact that literacy levels were low for many Australians. At the same time, the press had greater importance because it was the only form of mass media.

For this first period of study, MMH was very similar to MMPM. This latter icon was presented as a significant Australian woman particularly because of the contribution she made to provide education on a scale never before achieved or thought possible in rural Australia. Her identity was as a strong leader, a woman of influence who was not daunted by the misguided authority of Church leaders. The extreme sanction of excommunication placed on her by them was not referred to out of a possible deference to any living person who may have been involved or because such an event could not be linked into the usual model of holy persons. Another key quality emphasised was her egalitarian approach to others and their corresponding acceptance of her. The vision she had of an organisation designed to suit the needs of Australia as one country rather than a loosely linked group of colonies, drew comparisons with other foundresses of religious orders as well as an appreciation for the scale of the work achieved.

In these early newspaper reports, the name used in the Catholic papers generally was the religious name, 'Mother Mary of the Cross' or simply 'Mother Mary' although the South Australian papers described her as 'Miss Mackillop' (sic). In Sydney, however, where her death and burial took place, the use of the religious name showed that there was not a large gap between the two cultural artefacts of MMH and MMPM.

12.2 THE INFLUENCE OF MAX HARRIS

With the passage of time, the formal procedures leading to possible canonisation were implemented within the Catholic Church and these gave further definition to MMH. This artefact did not gain a great deal of ongoing publicity in the daily press and no significant stages in MMPM were identified until the efforts of Max Harris between 1985 and 1995. He exploited his position of power and influence as a writer commanding a large audience to share knowledge about an individual he considered

had not been sufficiently recognised by the secular society, let alone the formal religious one. His crusade for a greater awareness of Mary MacKillop's potential as a role model for all Australians was a significant turning point in the development of MMPM. Harris recognised that this was a new reality: he used the name of 'Mary MacKillop' in most of his writings, although he did occasionally refer to her as 'Mother Mary' as an indication of her links to the formal church structures.

Max Harris' writing showed an understanding of the formal process required by the Catholic Church before a person could be honoured with the title of 'Blessed' or 'Saint'. Some of the debate voiced by Max Harris in the years leading up to the beatification centred on whether the Pope would honour her during his visit to Australia in 1986. He and many other journalists influenced by him, discussed the meaning and role of miracles in this whole process. Much of his writing focussed on important stages in the life of MMH, reflecting some of the traditional hagiographic themes and language such as shrines and pilgrimages.

In his position as a social commentator and someone with a passion for exploring the Australian identity, Harris wrote of Mary MacKillop as a feminist: a strong woman who could stand against unjust structures for the common good. He stressed her role as an outstanding educator with an egalitarian approach to life. His belief in her unique qualities led him to crusade for her wider recognition as a true Australian hero to be admired by all. These sentiments were summed up in his *Mary MacKillop's Prayers for Agnostics* (see Appendix 3) when he wrote, 'Mary MacKillop can be in us, and be our earthly guide'. In another of these poems, he recognised the spiritual dimension of her identity: 'If we live close to her life, we all become godly' (Harris 2000b).

Above all, he identified her practical goodness as a key quality which resonated with the Australian virtue of pragmatism whilst at the same time, adding a spiritual dimension to it.

By 1985, the print media's influence was reduced by the rapid rise in information technology services. The daily newspapers, however, still fulfilled an important task. Through their ability to hold an important moment in a form that could be returned to for later reading, study and re-use, the printed word provided a summary with which

an audience could continue to engage. The way that some themes introduced by Max Harris could be traced in the writings of other journalists was an indication of this continued re-visiting of texts and an indication of his pivotal position in the development of MMPM. This was true in a particular way of his definition of Mary MacKillop as a feminist and a model of goodness.

12.3 THE TIME OF THE BEATIFICATION

The visit by Pope John Paul II in January 1995 for the beatification of Mary MacKillop resulted in a dramatic increase in print media coverage and MMPM reached a high point. For almost a week, this was amongst the main news stories in all capital city daily newspapers. In their reflections on the person at the heart of this event, editorials made commentaries and the themes stressed by Max Harris could be recognised: Mary MacKillop was presented as a model for all Australians; someone who crossed boundaries of class and creed and was willing to assist all.

By this time with gender equality more of a reality, the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media was considered an exemplary woman, a strong leader whose practical goodness took a variety of forms. Journalists made links between their knowledge of MMH and their everyday reality. In this way, they made parallels and comparisons with the feminist cause; called her a rebel or larrikin because of her excommunication. Some tried to imply that she would have supported the ordination of women, despite the fact that her loyalty to the institutional Church made this scenario seem unlikely.

Mary's willingness to stand up for her principles, to fight against injustice in both civil and religious circles and to persist in her vision of education for the children of the poor was interpreted by some as the actions of a rebel and by others as simply the efforts of a genuine saint. In political speeches and the comparisons with other recognised Australian heroes, Mary MacKillop's practical kindness and ability to inspire others were seen as genuine Australian characteristics. It was suggested she could be the legend to succeed Ned Kelly.

Even though the actual beatification event was held in Sydney, it became a national event through coverage in all capital city daily newspapers, being featured in so

many of their editorials as well as in speeches in Federal Parliament. Vicarious participation through the print media in all the Papal Visit events but especially the beatification ceremony at Randwick Racecourse enabled many Australians a chance to share in a liminal experience through the symbolic atmosphere created and the ritual of the experience. The fact that this was not just a Catholic occasion but one which included civic authorities, representatives of other major churches and any individual who wished to participate meant that this celebration was a chance for a major cultural shift. MMPM became a universal symbol: one that put the sacred and secular into dialogue in a unique way and was then available for adoption as part of personal and communal meaning systems.

The large-scale interaction amongst individuals involved in the beatification, as well as the numbers of those who purchased and read the many newspapers and special souvenir booklets included with them, provided a high degree of plausibility to MMPM. It was maintained and extended by the scope of those who shared this experience.

A key indicator of the fact that the print media were continuing to create a new symbol for adoption as a cultural artefact was the name used. In general, she was referred to as 'Mary MacKillop', rather than by the religious name. The print media adopted the convention which suited a more secular society.

12.4 A FOCUS IN POLITICAL CARTOONS

The next major development of MMPM was illustrated in a unique blending of a sacred symbol with secular media. Around the time of the beatification, and in one instance at a later date, Mary MacKillop was the subject of many political cartoons of the glorifying or laughing satirical type. In all instances, she was presented in a positive light as a model of goodness, a challenge to those in high office in both church and state, a strong woman and a model for feminists. To many Australian cartoonists, Mary MacKillop was increasingly recognised as both a secular hero and an officially named saint. Links were made between her and many other Australian heroes, especially the sporting types. There was recognition of the connection to the supernatural through references to miracles, although this was at times with some

wry cynicism as the desire for a miraculous solution was applied to the political context of the day.

The cartoons marked a significant stage in the development of MMPM and were an indication of the way that this new cultural artefact was becoming more accepted as part of the everyday reality for Australians. The fact that Mary MacKillop and events surrounding her beatification were the subject of so many political cartoons in major Australian newspapers was perhaps more significant that the content of the cartoons. Through an inclusion in the commentary on the institutional and societal context of the day, the political cartoonists were reflecting their presumption that MMPM was a part of the everyday reality for Australians. As an icon quite separate from MMH, it did not need an introduction or explanation.

12.5 POST BEATIFICATION – 1995-2000

By 2000, it was possible to identify two distinct identities of Mary MacKillop. MMH was being safeguarded by the institutional Church: boundaries were defined through the use of her name in an approved fashion for religious institutions as well as through the traditional identification of saints such as feast day celebrations, holy images, prayer rituals and hope for miracles.

Before January 1995, Australia had not had first hand contact with a saint and so the concept was one that journalists helped to develop. The Catholic Church in Australia has a tradition based on both the Irish and the Roman-Italian heritages. Knowledge about saints for journalists and audiences was affected by practices resulting from each of these strands. The honour given to St Patrick with its emphasis more on entertainment than religion and the processions of the statues of little known regional Italian saints, followed by festivals of ethnic identity affected the way that the notion of sainthood was perceived. Many Australians of European background found comfort in the physical trappings of saints: the candles, loud prayers, reverence at shrines, participation in pilgrimages. They expected these to be associated with Mary MacKillop and the Catholic Church as an institution has supported this expectation through its endorsement of rituals, sacred sites and sacred images.

At the same time, the print media were continuing to develop MMPM by blurring the boundaries with these traditional elements and applying them to other situations. Those without a strong religious tradition sought meaning by drawing on a variety of symbolic universes with the result being at times a fairly eclectic mix such as recipes named after Mary MacKillop, tourist drives to places with little connection to her and exploitation of an association to give credibility to observed phenomena in the church at Yankalilla. There were occasions when MMPM was presented in a crass commercialistic way selling real estate or to assist in tourism opportunities. The combination of the latter with the traditional notion of a spiritual pilgrimage to a sacred place was a clear example of the way that MMPM was now part of the secular market place of religious choice. Mary MacKillop's recognition as an Australian hero by the wider public continued through her inclusion in civic events such as a float for the Federation Parade or with her name being given to a Sydney Harbour ferry and a Federal electorate. The mention of her name in newspaper polls or lists of significant persons of the twentieth century also illustrated her relevance and acceptance as a hero without necessarily any religious connotations.

12.6 LINKS TO THE CONTINUING SEARCH FOR AN AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY

Within my definition of culture, MMPM is part of the totality of the life shared by the Australian society. In the form that I have identified, she is one of the outward expressions of the culture, a revered symbol of a reality experienced by individuals and groups. This reality encompasses values which are prized and which inspire hope for the future.

In the case of MMPM considered over the period of this study, the values recognised and promoted for emulation were those that were identified as being central to the Australian identity. The all-encompassing virtue of goodness was recognised by many journalists and traced in all *Timeslices*. It was expressed in a variety of ways: her integrity, kindness, loyalty to friends and forgiving of enemies, pragmatism in all areas as well as genuine holiness. In many of these areas, she displayed elements of the values of mateship and egalitarianism which have a long tradition in Australia. For MMH, her goodness in all its forms was recognised in the official church process when her heroic virtues were recognised.

MMPM was presented as a battler in the innovative way she organised a group of woman to provide education in many city and rural areas, despite poverty and privations. This was a strong theme in Max Harris' writings: it was echoed in the speeches in Parliament after the beatification. Her life's work required her to display exceptional courage and commitment and this too was reflected in the texts where she was linked to many heroes for purposes of comparison, or included in lists of prominent Australians. By linking into familiar cultural frames, MMPM could be objectified and internalised as part of the everyday reality.

Her attitude to authority was well documented by journalists in their construction of MMPM: as a woman conscious of her own integrity and unwilling to forgo the path she believed to be God's call, she confronted bishops, accepted unjust punishments and took her quest to the Pope himself for approval. All of these actions resonated with the Australian preference for the underdog and admiration for those confident enough not to be cowed by bureaucratic authoritarianism.

In many of the texts, but particularly the cartoons, MMPM as a feminist, meaning a strong woman, was emphasised. Some artists linked her to the question of the ordination of women: this was a reflection of the sociocultural context during the time of the beatification.

The link by the press of key values in the Australian identity to MMPM was an interesting contrast to my earlier findings in my study about ethnic identity (McCreanor 1990). Whereas the general understanding at this time was 'that nothing needed to be done to assist Anglo-Australians to develop an appropriate ethnic identity', the situation had changed in ten years. By 1995, there had been a change as shown in the recognition in most of the editorials studied that MMPM was a relevant model for all Australians. In his discussion of Mary MacKillop, whom he had referred to as 'our greatest citizen' (1992), Max Harris made the connection that she could provide the necessary spiritual dimension in the quest for an Australian identity. By 2000, her continued recognition as a significant Australian gave plausibility to MMPM as a cultural artefact. Individuals could see in her those values which linked into their everyday reality. Conversely, it also captured and reflected values esteemed in the Australian identity. MMPM became part of the

overarching framework, the symbolic universe from which meaning was obtained by individuals and groups. The interaction for meaning resulted in a continued creation of culture: MMPM was not a static entity but a dynamic organism from a symbiotic relationship between the print media and the Mary MacKillop of History.

12.7 AREAS FOR FUTURE STUDY

This thesis has defined, traced and explained the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media as a cultural artefact or icon which has evolved over ninety years. Through a study of newspaper texts, political cartoons and parliamentary speeches, I have given some explanations for the way that Mary MacKillop has continued to be a source of fascination for those within the formal church structures and for the general community.

The interplay between media, religion and culture was the background for my work. Further study could extend the boundaries so that the general public's interest in this Australian woman could be examined from other angles. Research could be done, for example, at the sites of major pilgrimage such as at North Sydney and Penola to analyse why people visit these places and what is their perception of Mary MacKillop. The impact that any media presentation of Mary MacKillop may have had on them would also be a source for study.

The beatification event was a significant national ritual with a strong religious foundation. It would be interesting to compare this event as a liminal experience to the opening and closing ceremonies of the Sydney Olympic Games. Whilst Mary MacKillop was not amongst the icons featured in this more recent event, it could be interesting to trace the way that other Australian images are taking on a pseudo-spiritual dimension. Whether this is another aspect of the continuing search for the Australian identity or simply an expression of everyday reality in a secular society could be investigated.

The role of the media in both making and breaking these sacred images could be another field of study. A variation of this approach could be an examination of the two artefacts, MMH and MMPM, as they currently exist to ensure that the version of MMH presented is not becoming too pious, nostalgic or sentimental. At the same

time, recognition of MMPM and an examination of further debate on this icon in all forms of the mass media, could aid the continued exploration of the spiritual dimension of the Australian identity.

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APPENDIX 1

BUILDINGS AND INSTITUTIONS WITH SOME REFERENCE TO MARY MACKILLOP

Education

MacKillop Campus North Sydney	NSW
Mary MacKillop Primary Penrith South	NSW
MacKillop College Bathurst	NSW
Mary MacKillop College Wakeley	NSW
Mary MacKillop Memorial Penola	SA
Mary MacKillop College Kensington	SA
MacKillop House Port Augusta	SA
Mary MacKillop Portland South	Vic
Mary MacKillop Primary Keilor Downs	Vic
Mary MacKillop Narre Warren North	Vic
MacKillop College Swan Hill	Vic
Penola Catholic College Broadmeadows	Vic
MacKillop College Werribee	Vic
Mary MacKillop College Leongatha	Vic
Mary MacKillop Catholic Ballajura	WA
MacKillop Catholic College Busselton	WA
MacKillop Catholic College Isabella Plains	ACT
MacKillop Catholic College Wanniassa	ACT
Clairvaux MacKillop College	Qld
Mary MacKillop Parish School Birkdale	Qld
Mary MacKillop Primary Mackay	Qld
MacKillop Assembly Mundingburra	Qld
MacKillop College Mornington	Tas

Churches and Parish buildings

MacKillop Parish Upper Blue Mountains	NSW
Mary MacKillop Church Keilor Downs	Vic
Blessed Mary MacKillop Ballajura	WA
MacKillop Parish Centre Ongerup	WA
MacKillop Parish Centre Bremer Bay	WA
Mary MacKillop Church Birkdale	Qld
Mary Of the Cross Chillagoe	Qld

Interpretive Centres

Mary MacKillop Place North Sydney	NSW
Mary MacKillop Centre Kensington	SA
Mary MacKillop Centre Penola	SA
Mary MacKillop Centre Annerley	Qld

Others

MacKillop House Carrington	NSW
MacKillop Rural Community Service Balranald	NSW
MacKillop Grange Retirement Village Mosman	NSW
Mary MacKillop Institute St Mary's	NSW
Mary MacKillop Park Child Care Centre St Mary's	NSW
MacKillop House of Spirituality Bellambi	NSW
Penola Hostel Hawthorn East	Vic
MacKillop Family Services Geelong	Vic
MacKillop Family Services Footscray	Vic
Mary MacKillop Nursing Home Hawthorn East	Vic
Mary MacKillop's House East Melbourne	Vic
Mary MacKillop Retreat Centre Mt Eliza	Vic
Mary of the Cross Centre Fitzroy	Vic
Penola Retreat House Safety Bay	WA
MacKillop Shrine Pugin Chapel Brisbane	Qld
MacKillop House Caboolture	Qld
Penola Nursing Home Wavell Heights	Qld
MacKwood Life Dutton Park	Qld

This is not a conclusive list but an indication of the way that Mary MacKillop has been taken as a model. There are also a number of streets, parks and memorials throughout Australia which have been named in her honour.

APPENDIX 2

TRANSLATION OF CARDINAL MORAN'S REPORT TO ROME, 7 MARCH 1885

Translation by Paul Gardiner SJ at Penola SA – 15 October 2000

The original Italian can be found in Endnote 1 of Chapter 27 of the *Positio* on Mary MacKillop, Vol. II, pp 1112-1116.

It comes from the Propaganda Archives, Oceania, *Scritture Riferite nelle Congregazioni Generali*, ad congr. gen. 4 aprile 1887.

March 7 1885,
St Mary's Presbytery, Sydney

Most Reverend Eminence,

I fear I have been tardy in informing Your Eminence about the dispute between the good Bishop of Adelaide and Sister Mary of the Cross, Superior General of the Institute of the Sisters of St Joseph. I was hoping to find an amicable solution to the problem, and now am happy to inform Your Eminence that things have calmed down. Both parties are prepared to accept whatever decision the Sacred Congregation may propose.

The Institute of the Sisters of St Joseph in question originated in the city and the diocese of Adelaide in 1866. It has no connection with other Institutes or Congregations of the same name in France and Belgium and elsewhere. Sister Mary of the Cross is their Foundress and has been their Superior General from the outset. She was born in Australia of Scottish parents and is a well-educated and very gifted woman.

The co-founder of the Institute in Adelaide, and the author of the Rule, is a priest of the diocese, the Reverend Julian Edmund Tenison Woods. He is an English convert, a very competent scientist, particularly in the fields of geology and botany, but it does not seem he is well versed in theology. For some years now he has not been exercising his sacred ministry. Under the direction of the English government he is engaged in geological research around Perak in the Malayan Peninsula and in other parts of the East. Recent gossip does him little credit, and there is reason to fear that there is some justification for it.

The Rules of the Institute were taken to Rome by Sister Mary of the Cross in 1874. she was seeking approval for them, but the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda wisely decided to set them aside and substitute another set of rules. An Instruction dated 21 April 1874 directed Sister Mary of the Cross to submit these new rules to the Bishop of Adelaide so that the sisters might observe them with his approval. A faulty interpretation of this letter of Propaganda contributed in no small measure to

the present dispute. The good Sisters imagined that it exempted them from diocesan authority and put them immediately under the authority of Propaganda.

Leaving aside matters of lesser importance, the present dispute concerns two principal points: firstly, the debts contracted by Sister Mary of the Cross; and secondly, the accusation of drinking, or drunkenness, directed against the Superior General, Sister Mary of the Cross, and other Sisters.

Before making observations on these two matters, I should like to mention that the whole problem arose in the autumn of 1883 on the occasions of a special visitation of the Institute of the Sisters of St Joseph by the Bishop of Adelaide. For serious reasons the bishop, Monsignor Reynolds, believed this visit to be necessary, but in announcing it to the Superior General and to all the nuns he said he was holding it in virtue of letter received from the Holy See: (Moran cites the English) "in virtue of our letters of instruction from the Holy See." In this, however, the Reverend Bishop was seriously mistaken. He had received no letter or instruction on this matter from the Holy See. I was at pains to question him on this precise point, and he told me that the only instruction he had was a reminder from Your Eminence when he was in Rome in 1881 to conduct Visitations of religious houses according to the prescription of Canon Law. I should add that in conducting this solemn Visitation the Reverend Bishop interrogated the Sisters under oath, believing this to be necessary because of the seriousness of the abuses and the gravity of the accusations against the Superior General that had to be investigated. Your Eminence may judge whether not this was reason enough to justify such extreme measures. But it should be borne in mind that the administration of such an oath is a breach of English law, and that is the matter had been brought before a civil court the bishop would have incurred a very heavy penalty.

I now come to the two points in dispute. Firstly:

The debts contracted by Sister Mary of the Cross.

Regarding the first point, namely the debts contracted by Sister Mary of the Cross, for which the bishop was responsible, the facts are clear. From the books of the Mother House of the Institute of St Joseph in Adelaide it appears that at the time of the Visitation in August 1883 the debts incurred in that diocese (for which the bishop was responsible) came to eleven thousand five hundred pounds sterling (£11,500) that is, about two hundred and eighty-eight thousand Italian lire (288,000).

Such a debt is always a serious matter, but it has a particular significance in the diocese of Adelaide. About twenty years ago there were serious scandals in that diocese because of debts incurred by the clergy and by some religious houses, and from that time the bishop has never been without the burden of heavy debt. An additional debt of more than eleven thousand pounds sterling (£11,000) was not at all to the good bishop's liking. It is to be noted that all these debts of Sister Mary of the Cross were incurred after her visit to Rome in 1874. Up to that time the accounts were submitted to the bishop every year, and there was a balance between income and expenses. But after that time the good sisters believed they were in part at least, exempt from the authority of the bishop, and the accounts were no longer examined.

For her part, the Superior General acknowledges that the accounts have been very badly kept and that she herself is without experience or skill in that department. But she adds that many of the houses of the Institute in the diocese of Adelaide are wretched and very poor, and that she had to send them help from time to time. On the other hand, the Reverend Bishop suspects that some part of this money was spent on the Superior General's mother and other secular relatives. It is indeed true that the mother of Sister Mary of the Cross and some other relatives have stayed in some of the Adelaide houses of the Institute, but I find nothing else that could be a basis for his suspicion. It seems to me that much money has been spent on travel. Distances are great in these colonies, and voyages in the interior are difficult. Everything is very expensive and so sometimes a lot of money is spent without being noticed.

The second point in dispute:

Accusations of drunkenness against the Superior General.

The second point in dispute is quite a serious one. It concerns accusations of drunkenness levelled at Sister Mary of the Cross and some other Sisters of the Institute.

Evidence shows that among the Sisters of St Joseph in Adelaide there has been too much fondness for brandy (a strong form of spirits) and other alcoholic drink. It is to be noted that in Australia, either because of the climate or because the people are used to it, doctors are in the habit of prescribing such alcoholic drinks, and particularly brandy, for every kind of illness, and as a result many women subject to this or that indisposition contract the bad habit of using such drinks and become tipsy. Here in Sydney the use of brandy was introduced into some religious houses some years ago and it has proved very difficult to eradicate.

With regard to Sister Mary of the Cross, she admits that for some years, on doctor's orders, she has made use of brandy and other such drinks. From the evidence of the Sisters it is clear she has had much of it. On the other hand the bishop was aware that she used such drink, and it was only shortly before the Visitation of 1883 that he called her attention to the obligation to abstain from it. But she firmly denies any drunkenness.

Some of the Sisters have given evidence that the Superior General was given to the vice of drink and that she was under the influence of brandy. But it seems to me that this evidence can easily be reconciled with what Sister Mary of the Cross herself says about the matter. She does not deny having made frequent use of brandy on doctor's orders, and she does not even deny that at times when it was of poor quality it made her ill. Observing this, the good Sisters were easily scandalised and concluded that she was given to the vice of drink, whereas she was not really drunk at all.

Many Sisters have written long letters to me stating that the Mother Superior General was not given to drunkenness, that that the accusations against her are exaggeration and calumnious. From these letter it is clear at least that the Superior General has not lost her good name among the Sisters.

Most of these letters have little bearing on the point at issue. They are written by Sisters who have not lived in the same house as the Superior General and so cannot know much about it. But some letters do have weight. They are written by sisters of proven virtue and wisdom who have had constant contact with the Superior General. These Sisters have not denied that she used brandy, but they are explicit in their denial of any drunkenness. The letters of these Sisters are enclosed.

The bishop quotes in his report the words of two doctors that are somewhat severe and harsh with regard to the Superior General. To tell the truth, the evidence of these doctors is worthless. One is dead, and I have no idea who the other might be. But doctors are in the habit of using general terms that can be interpreted as each person pleases.

Nevertheless, from the letters of the Sisters it seems that in some houses of the Institute in the diocese of Adelaide there has been a general relaxation in the observance of the rules, and that not a few Sisters have been admitted to vows in the Institute who should not have received the religious habit.

The present state of the Institute

In the diocese of Adelaide the various houses of the Institute are supported in the usual way. The bishop has taken upon himself responsibility for the debt, and through various economies and the energy of some good Sisters two thousand pounds of the big debt have already been paid. I am convinced that if the bishop and the Sisters work in harmony the whole debt will be paid off in four years.

As to what concerns Sister Mary of the Cross, the bishop of Adelaide has deprived her of all authority in his diocese. She has come here to Sydney where she continues to govern the houses of the Institute scattered throughout the archdiocese and elsewhere. The good Sisters are doing much good, and up till now I have had no reason to complain of the Superior General.

I think things could be left as they are while we wait for our National Council which will take place in a few months. On that occasion it will be necessary to come to some decision about the Institute of St Joseph.

The houses of the Institute in the diocese of Bathurst have for some time been under diocesan authority. They are independent of the Superior General and are getting on very well. The same applies to the dioceses of Maitland and Goulburn. I think the same will happen in Adelaide. Perhaps this would be the easiest and most desirable solution of the whole problem.

Meanwhile, kissing the sacred purple,
I have the honour to be Your Eminence's humble servant,

Patrick F Moran, Archbishop of Sydney.

APPENDIX 3

UNPUBLISHED POETRY BY MAX HARRIS ABOUT MARY MACKILLOP

MARY MACKILLOP'S PRAYERS FOR AGNOSTICS

Dear God, Divinity, Spiritual Presence Within Me,

Through the saintly existence of Mary MacKillop, her life and her goodness within my culture and demography, I ask her intercession to achieve the values which I believe in, and wish to aspire to after the fashion of Mother Mary, who lived and exemplified those values in your Name through her Faith.

God, give me goodness the world knows too little of

Give me the strength to fight for it and defend it;

Let it invade my thoughts and actions so that it is not as do-goodery, but as an innate force within me

Let goodness be innate, a God-given part of my consciousness, as it was for the Blessed Mary

Let goodness be innate and uncompromising in a daily world which tests it and defies it with hostility, as Mother Mary encountered and conquered it.

Let me be obedient to the higher truths as she was.

Let me be humble and proud in my doings as she was

Let my loving be as pure and unsullied as was her love,

The which was but an image of your love for your creation.

You have created the world as imperfect,

And it is a time when that imperfection is all around us.

We do not aspire to perfection. That is not the purpose of your creation.

But Mary MacKillop can be in us, and be our earthly guide.

And exercise such inter-cessionary powers as our prayers may merit.

EPISTLES TO THE SAINT MARY MACKILLOP

WINTER

PENOLA

1856

Dear and Blessed Mary,

My child has no shoes
It is dressed in rags
It is myopic just like
That little John Shaw-Nielsen
We move from slab-hut
To the draught of tents.
Father must move constantly
To wherever there is work
And bread and dripping to eat
We have heard
That this must not be so.
And it shall change
Through a compact you have made
With God. Is this so?

WINTER

SYDNEY

1993

Dear Sisters of the Order of St Joseph

My child is a child of the streets
I doubt if it wears shoes,
Worn-out sneakers perhaps.
It left in the rot of the jeans
Wearing a T-shirt of some obscenity.
It left untaught and angry.
You, the last of the best,
Have got the job in front of you.

In my head I hear a voice, and feel a loving,
And from my head I must reply. It is God
I hear, and His love I feel. But the voice.
Is that of our blessed and sanctified Mary MacKillop.

What she says is itself not new. The simplicity
Of God and earthly goodness, is not easy in the finding
And doing. But Mary sets out the path
It is akin to her own path and pain.

Australia has a Saint, and a Saint for all of us,
And if we listen, we are lifted up, and this despite
Our spiritual dedications being not hers, but kith and kin.
If we live close to her life, we all become godly,

And our imperfections become even as those
That allowed to the Saints, the Prophets, or the common man.
Great goodness is not perfection. We learn from Saints
This is so. Mary's life is the comfort we had to invent.

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