

MEDIA RELEASE

St Mary of The Cross MacKillop - the Patron Saint for Australian Catenians

The Australian National Council of The Catenian Association and the Sisters of St Joseph today announce that St Mary of The Cross MacKillop will become The Catenians' Patron Saint for Australia on 8 August 2020, the Solemnity of the Saint.

The Catenian Association is an international fraternity of Catholic laymen. Founded in Manchester in 1908, it was established in Australia in 1971 and now has approximately 900 Australian members.

Speaking from the Mary MacKillop Chapel North Sydney following a Mass to celebrate St. Mary MacKillop's feast day, the Association's Australian National President, George Kazs, said that following the beatification of Mary MacKillop in 1995, Australian Catenians have adopted the practice of seeking her intercession at the commencement of meetings and when new members joins the fraternity.

Since then, Sisters of the Congregation through their generous support have enriched the spiritual life of Catenians through encountering the charism of St Mary MacKillop - her faith in a loving and provident God, her uniquely Australian response to God's call to provide for those in need, her respect for the dignity of all and her affection for her Sisters and for those she served.

These encounters have opened Catenians to the possibility that life as a Catenian can be lived with a uniquely Australian spirituality within an international context. That, like St Mary MacKillop, a Catenian can be truly Australian and strive to be genuinely holy, he said.

Through her example of prayerful and attentively listening for the movement of the Holy Spirit, Australian Catenians have discerned that an Australian expression of Catenian spirituality is a spirituality of interdependence, one lived through faith, friendship, respect and service. A spirituality that reflects the charism of St Mary MacKillop.

The Association wished to acknowledge that the Australian expression of Catenian spirituality reflects the charism of St Mary MacKillop by adopting her as its Patron Saint for Australia and requested the Congregation to support it in making this acknowledgment.

The Congregation has agreed to support the Association in acknowledging its adoption of St Mary of The Cross MacKillop as its patron Saint for Australia by its representatives joining with members of the Association in a ritual of adoption held at the Saint's tomb during the celebration of a Mass of her Solemnity on 27 July 2020 and by joining with the Association in announcing its adoption of the Saint as its Patron Saint for Australia.

Speaking after the Mass Sister Monica Cavanagh rsj, the Congregational Leader of the Sisters of St Joseph, said that the Sisters are delighted to share this occasion with the Catenians. She went on to observe that from the earliest days of the Institute Mary MacKillop recognized the importance of establishing partnerships with people who supported her work and mission. Mary MacKillop's way of

living the gospel in our Australian context aligns closely with values at the heart of what it means to be a Catenian. Her practical down to earth spirituality has much to offer the work of the Catenians in Australia today.

ENDS

July 28, 2020

(503 words)

Enquiries:

Catenians: George Kzs, Australian National President, anc.president@thecatenians.org.au
www.thecatenians.org.au

Sisters of Saint Joseph: Kathleen Norman, Kathleen.Norman@sosj.org.au
www.sosj.org.au/