

FaithAustralia

local books on faith and theology

Judith M. Steer rsj. ***Mary MacKillop: Touching Our Lives***. Revised Edition. Strathfield: St Pauls Publications, 2008, 80 pages. ISBN 9781921472046.

Mary MacKillop: Touching Our Lives is a concise and easy to read book which reflects on the life of Mary MacKillop and how this life impacts people today. This revised edition of Steer's 1996 work begins with a quote from Pope Benedict XVI when he was in Sydney last year, in which he praises Mary MacKillop, and puts her work in the wider context of the Church as a whole. This is a very appropriate beginning, immediately enlightening the reader to the larger significance of Mary MacKillop and her life and work.

This 80 page book in no way attempts to be a detailed biography of Mary MacKillop. Instead, Steer seeks to show the reader how MacKillop's actions and attitudes can speak to lives today. Breaking the book into topical headings, Steer collects examples from MacKillop's life to demonstrate her points. Of particular interest is Steer's exploration of three rites of passage – birth, death and creative action – to demonstrate Mary MacKillop's gifts of faith, hope and love.

Because the book is topical rather than chronological, at times it may feel that events jump forward and backwards. However, this style meets Steer's overall purpose, and the time line at the end of the book is helpful for putting events in a chronological context.

Because of its brevity and ease of reading, *Mary MacKillop: Touching Our Lives* makes the life and impact of Mary MacKillop accessible to a range of readers. Steer's use of topical headings enables her to carry her points clearly, and the plethora of life examples effectively demonstrate how MacKillop can speak to readers today.

Review by Heidi Wright

Order from your local religious book centre

Or direct from St Pauls Publications, 35 Meredith St, Strathfield 2135
To order by phone: 02 93943400

Or to order over the net

http://www.stpauls.com.au/publications/catalog/product_info.php?cPath=22&products_id=MARMACTOU