



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Saint Mary MacKillop's Feast Day on 8 August to become a Solemnity Media Release April 12, 2011

Australia's first Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop has been honoured like no other Australian with her feast day now named as a solemnity.

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has approved a request from the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference that the liturgical observance of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop be raised from a "feast" to a "solemnity."

Each year on the 8th of August the "feast day" of Mary MacKillop has traditionally been marked in parishes and a special Mass is often said, particularly in places where the Sisters of Saint Joseph have a presence.

A solemnity will mean that the Mass of the day will include a first reading as well as the second reading. It will also include the Gospel, the Gloria and the recitation of the Creed.

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President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Archbishop Philip Wilson said that this honour is a recognition that the story of and devotion to St Mary MacKillop has a prominent place in the Catholic community in Australia.

"As Australia's first Saint it is fitting that the liturgy of the Church in Australia on her feast day should reflect that by having the highest liturgical rank", he said.

"Many of the Bishops of Australia and 8,000 of the faithful went to Rome last year, and many more celebrated in locations around Australia the Canonisation of our first Saint"

"For All Australians, whether Catholic or not, Mary MacKillop is seen as a woman of heroic virtue, and this goes a little further toward honouring her great example."

It is expected that on 8 August this year, parishes around Australia will celebrate with special Masses to mark the occasion.

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