

*For Immediate Release*

## **Mary of the Cross Stamped Saint**

Australia Post will recognise the canonisation of Australia's first saint - Blessed Mary MacKillop - by releasing a new commemorative stamp series on October 18. After her canonisation, Mary MacKillop will be officially known as Saint Mary of the Cross (MacKillop).

"The canonisation of Blessed Mary MacKillop will be celebrated around the world with services, vigils and pilgrimages. Australia Post will mark the occasion and recognise the selfless acts of this inspirational heroine in its own way with a special stamp issue. This is truly history in the making and we're certain that these stamps will be treasured by Australians for years to come," said Noel Leahy, Australia Post Philatelic Group Manager.

Mary MacKillop was born in 1842 in Fitzroy, Melbourne to Scottish parents. From an early age Mary had wanted to be a nun. At just 24 years old she co-founded the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart School in South Australia and in doing so she made a commitment to live in poverty and dedicate her life to educating poor children.

Although at times she was a controversial figure, having been excommunicated from the church, only to have it reversed, Mary MacKillop completed the final tasks required for Sainthood when her second miracle from beyond the grave was confirmed by Pope Benedict XVI in December 2009.

Talks initially began in 1972 to have her beatified and canonised, but it wasn't until 19 January 1995 that she was formally beatified. In February 2010, Pope Benedict XVI announced that her canonisation ceremony would take place at the Vatican on October 17, 2010. Services across Australia will also celebrate the occasion.

The new stamps will feature a photograph of Mary MacKillop taken during the 1890s, used with the permission of the Trustees of the Sisters of St Joseph.

The Mary MacKillop stamp series has been designed by Adam Crapp from Australia Post Design Studio who also designed the Mary MacKillop prepaid envelope released in April 2010.



The stamps will be available for purchase from October 18 at all participating Australia Post retail outlets while stocks last. They will also be available from the online shop. To find out more or to order from the Mary MacKillop stamp series, go to [auspost.com.au/stamps](http://auspost.com.au/stamps)

**For further information, or for high res images of the stamps, please contact:**

Elizabeth Coad 02 9331 6611 or 0404 644 848  
Lisa Kinahan 02 9331 6611 or 0416 363 202

**For any out-of-hours media enquiries please use the mobile numbers provided.**