

1 April 2010

His Eminence
Cardinal George Pell
Archbishop of Sydney
St Marys Cathedral House
St Marys Road,
Sydney NSW 2000

Your Eminence,

Re: Canonisation of Mary MacKillop

It is with great pleasure that I extend to you on behalf of the Australian Jewish community heartiest congratulations on the recent announcement by the Vatican of the impending canonisation of Mary MacKillop, which will make her Australia's first Roman Catholic saint.

By all accounts Mary MacKillop was a remarkable person who dedicated her life to education and helping people in small towns during the austere times of the late nineteenth century. Her elevation to sainthood is of great religious significance to Australian Roman Catholics and it is a source of joy to all Australians that her selfless work for the disadvantaged has been given international recognition.

It is of more than historical interest that Mary MacKillop, and the Adelaide convent of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart which she founded and led, enjoyed a close and supportive relationship with the Adelaide Jewish community, headed at that time by Emanuel Solomon. This was a friendship forged in adversity when Mary and the sisters in her charge were without a home and the Jewish community came to her assistance. It was a fitting prelude to what is today a warm and constructive relationship between Australian Jewry and Australia's Catholic community.

Please convey my best wishes to all the people within the Catholic Church who were involved in the canonisation process.

Yours sincerely

Robert Goot AM SC
President