Significant Dates in the Life & Sainthood of Mary MacKillop

1842 Mary Helen MacKillop born in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, Melbourne on 15 January to Flora (nee MacDonald) and Alexander MacKillop. Baptised on 28 January in St Francis' Church, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne.

1860 Governess to Cameron children (cousins) at Penola Homestead, South Australia. Meets local parish priest, Fr Julian Tenison Woods, for the first time.

1862 Mary resides at Portland, Victoria, and continues governess work.

1863 Applies for her first formal teaching position at Portland's Catholic Denominational School in October. Renews acquaintance with Fr Julian, who visits Portland – not far from his huge parish over 56,000 square kilometres.

1864 In order to supplement her income, Mary establishes the Bay View House Seminary for Young Ladies on 3 January, offering board and instruction in a range of subjects, with her sisters Maggie and Lexie acting as supervisors.

1865 Fr Julian asks Mary and her sister Annie to take charge of the new Catholic School at Penola in September.

1866 Mary and Lexie move to Penola in January to help Fr Julian establish a school based on 'purely Catholic principles'.

St Joseph's School (The Stable School) opens on 19 March, St Joseph's Day. Mary wears a plain black dress to signify her dedication to do God's work.

1867 Mary leaves Penola for Adelaide with Sister Rose Cunningham on 21 June. Opens the first convent-cottage in Grote Street, Adelaide. Begins teaching in St Francis Xavier Hall School; takes religious vows on 15 August.

1870 Troubles in Adelaide during Mary's absence in Queensland. Visionaries encouraged by Fr Julian. Opposition of some priests.

1871 127 Sisters and 34 schools in South Australia. Growing tension in Adelaide between Bishop Laurence Sheil, Fr Julian and some priests about the running of the Order. On 3 February the clergy present a submission to the bishop highly critical of the Sisters and Fr Julian. Mary writes to the Bishop on 10 September explaining her position. Mary excommunicated and 47 Sisters expelled by Bishop Laurence Sheil in Adelaide on 22 September.

1872 Bishop Sheil, very ill, removes the excommunication on 23 February and expresses sorrow for being misled by bad advisers. Sisters restored to their habits on 19 March. Episcopal investigation into affairs in Adelaide (June), Mary and Sisters vindicated and Fr Julian advised to relinquish the direction of the Sisters.

1873 Mary travels to Rome on 28 March to seek approval of the Rule written by Fr Julian. This was to establish secure foundations for the Congregation. Personal audience with Pope Pius IX in June. The Pope approves the Rule.

1875 Constitution of the Institute of St Joseph accepted by First General Chapter and Mary elected Mother General on 19 March.

1881 In May, a larger building was purchased by the Sisters in Cumberland Street, The Rocks, Sydney, for 'The Providence' and was a temporary Novitiate.

1882 Mary visits Sydney for six months from December.

1883 Commission of Enquiry appointed by Bishop Reynolds in Adelaide to investigate the Institute in South Australia on 10 July. The Bishop writes a highly critical letter, expelling Mary from Adelaide on 13 November. Mary arrives in Sydney and stays at the Providence, Cumberland Street, The Rocks.

1884 Dean Kenny, retired priest of North Sydney, offered his home, 'Alma Cottage', near Mount Street to Mary to be used as a Novitiate. New Novitiate opens on 19 March.

1885 Cardinal Moran returns with the news on 11 November that Mary is to step down as Mother General. Mother Bernard appointed Superior General.

1886 Death of Mary's mother, Flora, on 30 May. Flora drowned when the Ly-ee-Moon ship was wrecked off Eden on the NSW South Coast.

1888 Decree from Rome constitutes the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart as an approved Regular Congregation with Mother House in North Sydney. Diocesan congregations to be distinct from the other and to make some alterations to their habit and their Rule.

1889 Fr Julian died in Sydney on 7 October.

1898 Mary elected Superior General after the death of Mother Bernard on 6 January.

1909 Mary died 8 August in Alma Cottage, Mount Street, North Sydney. Requiem Mass celebrated at St Mary's Parish Church, North Sydney on 11 August, buried at Gore Hill cemetery.

1913 Building of the Mary MacKillop Memorial Chapel. First Mass celebrated in Chapel on 8 December.

1914 Mary's remains transferred from Gore Hill cemetery to the Memorial Chapel on 28 January. Mary's remains re-interred in the Tomb on 29 January.

1995 Pope John Paul II declares Mary a Saint in Australia at a Beatification Celebration at Randwick in Sydney on 19 January. Mary named 'Blessed Mary MacKillop'.

2010 Pope Benedict XVI declares Mary a Saint in the Universal Church at a Canonisation Celebration in Rome on 17 October. Mary named 'St Mary of the Cross MacKillop'- Australia's first Saint.