

# Humility

An inner meaning to the Christmas story is that greatness is born in humility, disadvantage can be an advantage and inspiration may spring from the most unpromising circumstances. In the poverty of the manger, St Joseph walked with God enfleshed as a baby, totally dependent, weak and limited.



The inherited value of humility and littleness survived through the centuries as one of the Institutions most basic characteristics. Managing ambiguity between truth and a cultural mis-interpretation of humility often produced difficulties, however. To be assertive and to say things as they are while trying to maintain an environment of dialogue and respect takes both courage and confidence. St Mary MacKillop encouraged her Sisters to take on whatever position or responsibility was called for in the service of others: 'In imitation then, of our great Patron,...let us avoid excusing ourselves from any office on the plea of our unworthiness.' Truth is found in humility and humility in truth.

In the role-modeling of St Mary MacKillop and the heritage from Fr Julian Tenison Woods with his outstanding work in scientific fields the Sisters in Whanganui have been pro-active in finding new and simple ways to express the Gospel and be the face of Godde among people. In the past 30 years rediscovering the leadership exercised by the women in Scripture and the early Church, promoting inclusive language and celebrating meaningful liturgies

has meant that what was implicit has become explicit. A present challenge is to continue to explore ways that the divine feminine finds expression in their efforts to protect, repair and positively develop the environment. In a spirit of humility, giftedness within the community is accepted with honesty and directed to areas of need. This spirit extends to recognizing and supporting the gifts of others wherever the Sisters find themselves.

- Have you noticed humility in a person you admire?
- Are you accepting of your own giftedness with the humility which leads you to use these gifts for others?

*What we learn as humans, as humus,  
in humility and with humour,  
is that all is grace.*