

When everything seems to fail...

“For more than a year after that first meeting, the MI made no progress. In fact, all kinds of setbacks piled up, to the point that members were uncomfortable even mentioning it among themselves. One of them even tried to convince the others that the MI was something useless.

“It was then that, with wonderful signs of election, the Immaculata summoned to her side Fr. Antoni Głowiński, and ten days later, Br. Antonio Mansi, both victims of the Spanish flu. As for me, the condition of my lungs got worse: every time I coughed, I spat blood. *That is when it all started to change.* Having been excused from school, I took the opportunity to copy out the ‘Program of MI’ and gave it to the Most Rev. Fr. General, in order to obtain his blessing in writing. ‘If there were at least 12 of you...,’ said the Most Rev. Fr. General. He wrote his blessing and voiced his desire (I believe on that very occasion) that the MI should be propagated among our youth. Membership started to increase, and has increased more and more ever since.” (KW 1278)

St. Maximilian himself continued to recall the first steps of the Movement that later would spread rapidly throughout Poland and in other nations. But now he speaks of the time of gestation, the time during which the grain of wheat has to die in order to become a full kernel and eventually bread (cf. Jn 12:12-26). Maximilian helps us to recognize the Gospel logic at work. For more than one year the MI had not seen any progress, while difficulties and setbacks attempted to extinguish enthusiasm. Everything seemed to fail. The death of two of the young co-founders and the worsening of Maximilian’s TB, however, marked *the beginning of change.*

The MI began to flourish precisely thanks to this paschal journey of suffering and death, which gave rise to an increasingly numerous response from people who chose to embrace its ideal of total dedication to Our Lady as instruments of love in her immaculate hands.

During the past 100 years of life and mission, the MI has experienced many times this paschal journey of passion, death and resurrection in the footsteps of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the lives of St. Maximilian and other MI members as well as in various realities around the world. It is actually a good sign!

“Nothing great comes without pain in God’s works. And could there ever be too great a sacrifice, when it comes to the Immaculata? We are consecrated to her not only in theory, but actually, and in practice. And until we grow tired in our fight to conquer the world for the Immaculata, suffering will not cease to come upon us. And the more strenuously we struggle, the heavier and more numerous will be the suffering that befalls us. But only until our death. Then there will be the resurrection. And even if (but that is impossible) the Immaculata were to give us no reward for this, yet we would still consecrate ourselves to her with fervor and enthusiasm throughout our entire lives. For we do not consecrate ourselves in view of a reward, but solely for her.” (KW 631).

Let us be encouraged by this supernatural perspective in order to spend ourselves generously for this great ideal!

ADP