

- For this reason, on October 16, 1917, he founded the Militia of the Immaculata (MI), a Marian association whose core spirituality is total consecration to Our Lady. Each of us may be consecrated to the Immaculata so as to be led by her along the journey of life. To be consecrated to Our Lady means to welcome the gift of Jesus Himself from the Cross (cf. Jn 19:26), to look at her in order to imitate her and to have recourse to her in our striving for holiness. It means to offer to her our actions, prayers, sacrifices and sorrows, so that she may use them for our salvation and for that of our brethren. Entrusting ourselves completely to the Immaculata we also find a powerful help against the temptations we all face each day and enjoy her maternal support in giving witness to the Faith in the world.

- Fr. Kolbe wanted the Miraculous Medal to be the sign of MI total consecration to Mary and he added a special invocation to the original ejaculatory prayer.

- If you love the Immaculate Virgin and trust in her powerful intercession, then,

- ✓ *Wear or carry always the Medal* as a reminder to live in the Grace of God and enjoy the protection of the Immaculata.

- ✓ *Recite each day the Miraculous Medal prayer*, as edited by St. Maximilian Kolbe: “O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all those who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of Holy Church and all those recommended to you.”

- ✓ *Spread the Medal around you*. Offer it especially to the sick and the afflicted.

If you wish to grow in your consecration to the Immaculata and to learn more about how to live it, please contact



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THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL



Receive this medal with faith and wear it with love.

MILITIA OF THE IMMACULATA



STORY OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL

The event took place on November 27, 1830, in Paris. The Most Holy Virgin appeared to Sister Catherine Labouré, a member of the Daughters of Charity, founded by St. Vincent de Paul. Our Lady was standing, dressed in dawn-white silk, her feet on a small globe; from her extended hands rays of light issued forth. “This globe,” the Virgin explained to Sister Catherine, “stands for the entire world and every single soul.”

The brilliant rays “are the symbol of the graces that I bestow on all those who ask for them.” Then the Most Blessed Virgin was surrounded by some kind of oval frame, on which appeared the following inscription in letters of gold: **“O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.”**

Sister Catherine heard a voice saying to her: “Have a medal struck according to this model. All those who wear it will receive great graces, especially if they wear it around their necks. I shall bestow many graces on those who will wear it with faith.” At that point, the image turned over and on the other side Sister Catherine saw the letter M, in the center of which stood a cross. Below the monogram of the Most Blessed Virgin there were two Hearts: the Heart of Jesus surrounded by a crown of thorns and the Heart of Mary pierced by a sword; twelve stars surrounded the centerpiece.

Sister Catherine Labouré was born in 1806 and died in 1876. She was canonized by Pope Pius XII in 1947.



GRACES

The medal was struck, not without many obstacles, and spread throughout the world. So many marvels and good things happened that the people began to call it, the “Miraculous Medal.” One of the most notable wonders was the instantaneous and unexpected conversion of Alphonse Ratisbonne, a nonbelieving Jew. He reluctantly agreed to wear the medal to make a friend happy. As he visited the Roman church of Sant’Andrea delle Fratte, the Virgin appeared to him: “*Stately, bright, full of majesty and kindness, as depicted on my medal. An irresistible force drove me toward her. The Most Holy Virgin with her hand beckoned me to kneel. She never spoke to me at all, but I understood everything.*” It was January 20, 1842. He became a Catholic and eventually a priest and a fervent apostle.



LOURDES AND THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL

The Miraculous Medal is now universally known, but many overlook that the appearances of Our Lady in Paris, in the Rue du Bac chapel, prepared for the great Lourdes events. Saint Bernadette, who wore the Miraculous Medal, declared, “*The Lady of the grotto appeared to me as in the Miraculous Medal.*”

- As Lourdes is a continual source of graces so, too, the Miraculous Medal is the instrument of Our Lady’s constant love toward sinners and troubled persons.
- Contemplating the Medal, Christians will be able to find in it a summary of Catholic doctrine about the providential role of Our Lady in the plan of salvation, especially her universal mediation.



ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE AND THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL

- St. Maximilian Kolbe, a contemporary saint, Marian apostle and martyr, was very attentive to the apparitions of Our Lady to St. Catherine Labouré. Through the light of the Holy Spirit, he understood each of the elements of the Medal. He was also deeply touched by the conversion of Alphonse Ratisbonne, which became a confirmation of the Marian mission to which he felt called.
- As he witnessed a deluge of evil, Fr. Kolbe wrote: “*There are still many souls astray, deceived, seduced, unhappy, enslaved by the devil, who cry out and are not even able to recognize their misery. To offer our hand to these souls, to be a guide to many, many souls and lead them all to God through our Immaculate Queen, is a beautiful mission for which it is worthwhile to live, suffer, work and even die.*”