

THE KNIGHT OF THE *Immaculata*

E-PUBLICATION OF THE MILITIA OF THE IMMACULATA, USA

THE MOTHER OF THE LORD, "CAUSE OF OUR JOY"

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THE HOLIEST WEEK

by Ronald L. Rodrigues, MI National President



Dear Knights of the Immaculata, Maria! The most sacred week in the liturgical year, Holy Week, begins with the commemoration of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Holy Week draws large crowds and many countries have different traditions, from special services in memory of the Lord's Passion, floats, sculptures or live enactments of Christ's life, His arrest and crucifixion. The live stations of the cross are always worth watching. The Passion of Christ is the basis and foundation for our faith.

In Seville, Spain, since the 16th century, each of the 115-plus churches has a brotherhood, (Hermandad), associated with it. They organize and make a pilgrimage through the city carrying large "pasos," extravagant floats, that are carried in a procession, led by "Nazarenos" (crucifers and cross bearers), called penitents. Some are over 300 years old. They are an artistic representation of some part of the story of the passion, images of some passage of the Bible, either of Jesus or Mary. The floats are carried on the shoulders of up to 66 men, "Costaleros," named because of the white protective garment they wear on their heads. They are bearing the weight of their sins and doing penance. They can't see out from the float and therefore they listen to the command of the "Capataz" as they process through the narrow streets at night to the Cathedral before returning home to their local

parish church just before dawn. The floats can weigh up to seven thousand pounds and take up to 12 hours to reach the Cathedral and return home. It is a spectacle worth seeing.

This is an important time for all Christians throughout the world. The Church celebrates Holy Week honoring four special events of Christ's Passion: His entrance into Jerusalem, where palm branches were laid down on the path he traveled; the Last Supper on Holy Thursday followed by His arrest; His crucifixion on Good Friday, and Holy Saturday when His body was in the tomb.

Palm Sunday recalls when Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, riding a donkey and all the people placed palm branches along His path, a sign of respect and paying Him homage. They praised Him as He entered. This was a customary practice for people that were highly respected. During Holy Week, we have the shortest and our most important liturgical time of the Church, the Easter Triduum, from the evening of Holy Thursday to the evening of Easter Sunday. Though three days, they are liturgically one day unfolding for us the unity of Christ's Paschal Mystery.

On **Holy Thursday**, we celebrate the Last Supper, the Institution of the Holy Eucharist, where Jesus consecrated bread and wine. The washing of the feet is reenacted during the Mass of the Lord's Supper and Holy Oils are blessed during the Mass.

On **Good Friday** we remember Jesus's arrest, trial, crucifixion,

death and burial. This is a very dark day and a time to recall the suffering Jesus Christ endured for our sins. There is no Mass and no celebration of the Eucharist on Good Friday. Holy Communion is distributed using the Sacred Hosts consecrated on Holy Thursday. The church bells are silent and the altar left bare. This marks the end of the Lent season and takes us to the Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord on Saturday evening, the Easter Vigil, when we celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord.

Holy Saturday remembers the day Jesus spent in the grave resting, from the ninth hour, 3 pm, on Good Friday until just before dawn on Sunday morning. The Easter Vigil takes place after sunset because the new liturgical day begins at sunset. The vigil begins outside the church, where an Easter fire is lit and the Paschal candle is blessed and lit. The Paschal candle will be used during the Easter season and also during baptisms and funerals. It is a reminder that Christ is our life and light. The water of the baptismal font is blessed. On Good Friday and Holy Saturday many churches cover the statues and cross with purple or black cloth. Holy water is removed from the church and the bells remain silent until the Gloria at Easter Vigil.

Easter Sunday is the beginning of the season of Eastertide, with the first week being Easter week. The resurrection is the basis for our faith. Without the Resurrection, the Christian faith is nothing but a false ideology and all in vain. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

showed His divinity and His conquering of death offers us our own resurrection and eternal life with Christ.

Mary, the first creature to share fully in His Resurrection, was to be assumed into Heaven while the good thief was promised eternal life with Christ. "He replied to him, 'Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise'" (Lk 23:43). The gospel would be meaningless if not for the Resurrection, "For, if

you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9). Forgiveness of sins would be hopeless if Jesus had not risen on Easter morning, "and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain; you are still in your sins" (1 Cor 15:17). Christ's Resurrection is the center of our faith, "But now Christ has been risen from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen

asleep." (1 Cor 15:20).

Let us rejoice, dear Knights, because our devotion and love of Mary lead us to fully participate in His Resurrection!

"Jesus has risen, He has risen indeed!"

Ronald L. Rodrigues
MI National President

"I see Mary everywhere and difficulties nowhere."
St. Maximilian Kolbe

THE MOTHER OF THE LORD, "CAUSE OF OUR JOY"

FROM THE MARIAN CATECHESSES OF POPE ST. JOHN PAUL II

After Jesus had been laid in the tomb, Mary "alone remains to keep alive the flame of faith, preparing to receive the joyful and astonishing announcement of the Resurrection" (Address at the General Audience, 3 April 1996; *L'Osservatore Romano* English edition, 10 April 1996, p. 7). The expectation felt on Holy Saturday is one of the loftiest moments of faith for the Mother of the Lord: in the darkness that envelops the world, she entrusts herself fully to the God of life, and thinking back to the words of her Son, she hopes in the fulfilment of the divine promises. The Gospels mention various appearances of the risen Christ, but not a meeting between Jesus and His Mother. This silence must not lead to the conclusion that after the Resurrection Christ did not appear to Mary; rather it invites us to seek the reasons why the Evangelists made such a choice. How could Mary not be among those who met the risen

Lord? One the supposition of an "omission," this silence could be attributed to the fact that what is necessary for our saving knowledge was entrusted to the word of those "chosen by God as witnesses" (Acts 10:41), that is, the Apostles, who gave their testimony of the Lord Jesus' Resurrection "with great power" (cf. Acts 4:33). Before appearing to them, the Risen One had appeared to several faithful women because of their ecclesial function: "Go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me" (Mt 28: 10). If the authors of the New Testament do not speak of the Mother's encounter with her risen Son, this can perhaps be attributed to the fact that such a witness would have been considered too biased by those who denied the Lord's Resurrection, and therefore not worthy of belief.

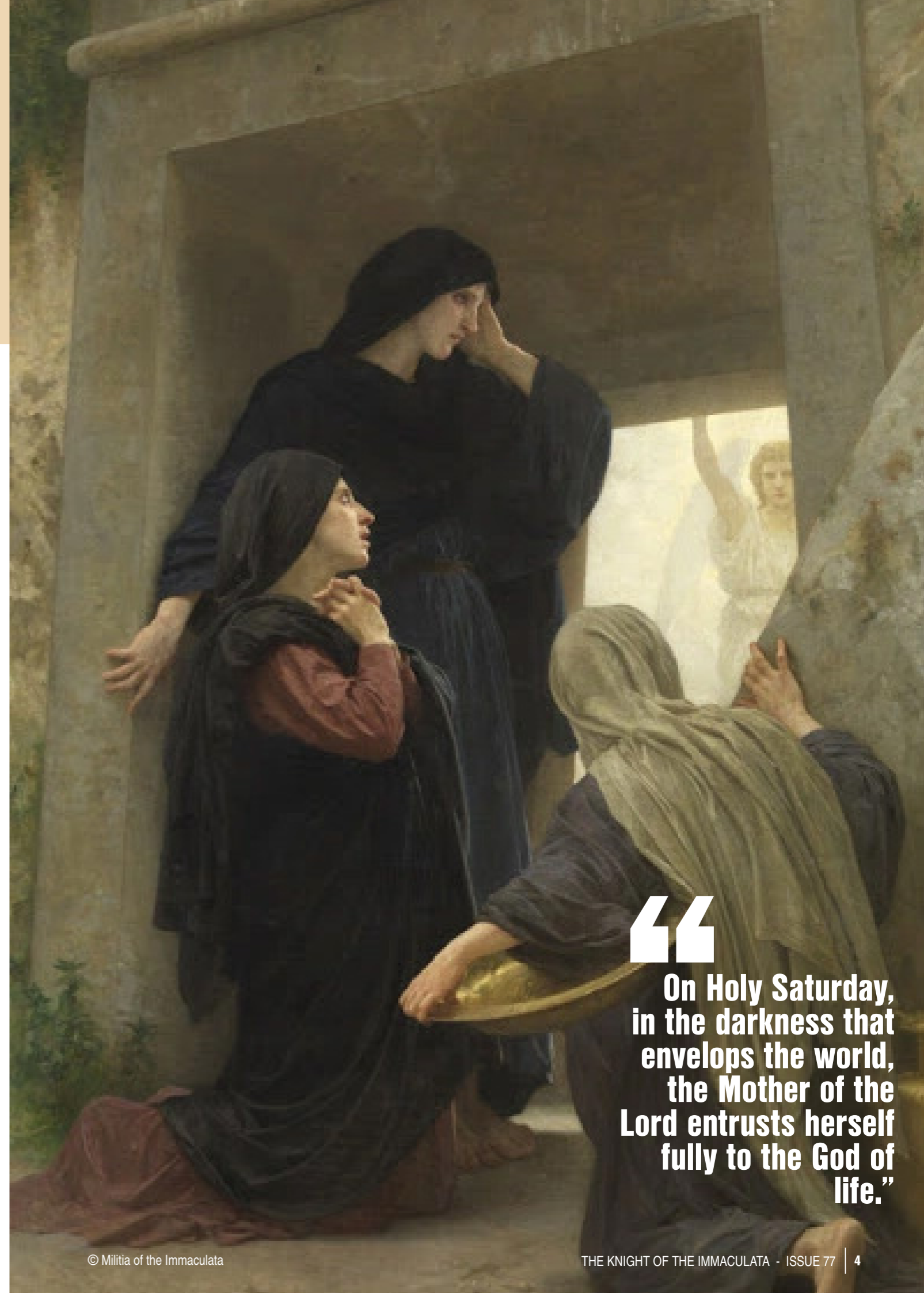
Furthermore, the Gospels report a small number of appearances by the risen Jesus and certainly not

a complete summary of all that happened during the 40 days after Easter. St. Paul recalls that He appeared "to more than 500 brethren at one time" (1 Cor 15:6). How do we explain the fact that an exceptional event known to so many is not mentioned by the Evangelists? It is an obvious sign that other appearances of the Risen One were not recorded, although they were among the well-known events that occurred.

How could the Blessed Virgin, present in the first community of disciples (cf. Acts 1: 14), be excluded from those who met her divine Son after He had risen from the dead?

WAS SHE THE FIRST TO MEET HIM?

Indeed, it is legitimate to think that the Mother was probably the first person to whom the risen



“
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“
**Bathed in the
 glory of the
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 Blessed Virgin
 Mary anticipates
 the Church’s
 splendor.”**

Jesus appeared. Could not Mary’s absence from the group of women who went to the tomb at dawn (cf. Mk 16: 1; Mt 28: 1) indicate that she had already met Jesus? This inference would also be confirmed by the fact that the first witnesses of the Resurrection, by Jesus’ will, were the women who had remained faithful at the foot of the Cross and therefore were more steadfast in faith. Indeed, the Risen One entrusts to one of them, Mary Magdalene, the message to be passed on to the Apostles (cf. Jn 20:17-18). Perhaps, this fact too allows us to think that Jesus showed Himself first to His Mother, who had been the most faithful and had kept her faith intact when put to the test. Lastly, the unique and special character of the Blessed Virgin’s presence at Calvary and her perfect union with the Son in His suffering on the Cross seem to postulate a very particular sharing on her part in the mystery of the Resurrection.

A fifth-century author, Sedulius, maintains that in the splendor of His risen life Christ first showed Himself to His Mother. In fact, she,

who at the Annunciation was the way He entered the world, was called to spread the marvelous news of the Resurrection in order to become the herald of His glorious coming. Thus, bathed in the glory of the Risen One, she anticipates the Church’s splendor (cf. Sedulius, *Paschale carmen*, 5, 357-364, CSEL 10,140f).

It seems reasonable to think that Mary, as the image and model of the Church which waits for the Risen One and meets Him in the group of disciples during His Easter appearances, had had a personal contact with her risen Son, so that she too could delight in the fullness of paschal joy.

CAUSE OF JOY FOR ALL

Present at Calvary on Good Friday (cf. Jn 19:25) and in the Upper Room on Pentecost (cf. Acts 1:14), the Blessed Virgin too was probably a privileged witness of Christ’s Resurrection, completing in this way her participation in all the essential moments of the paschal mystery. Welcoming the risen Jesus, Mary is also a sign and an anticipation of humanity, which hopes to achieve its fulfilment through the resurrection of the dead.

In the Easter season, the Christian community addresses the Mother of the Lord and invites her to rejoice: “Regina Caeli, laetare. Alleluia!” “Queen of heaven, rejoice. Alleluia!” Thus, it recalls Mary’s joy at Jesus’ Resurrection, prolonging in time the “rejoice” that the Angel addressed to her at the Annunciation, so that she might become a cause of “great joy” for all people.

Pope St. John Paul II
 General Audience of May 21, 1997.



QUEEN OF HEAVEN, REJOICE!

Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia,
 - The Son Whom you were privileged to bear,
 alleluia,

Has risen as He said, alleluia.

- Pray to God for us, alleluia.

Rejoice and be glad, Virgin Mary, alleluia,

- For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia.

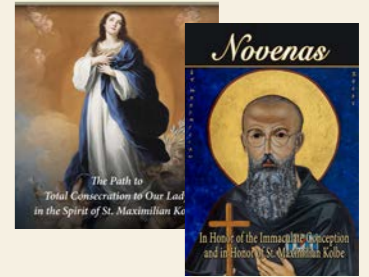
Let us pray:

O God, by the Resurrection of Your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, You brought joy to the world. Grant that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may attain the joy of eternal life.

Amen.

Invite Friends to Be
 Consecrated to Our Lady!

BEHOLD YOUR
 MOTHER!



This beautiful 56-page booklet and its **No-venas** companion may be used individually or as a group activity (in a home or parish setting, for example), or as a series of classes led by a facilitator, or during a day of preparation for MI consecration to Our Lady. If you can offer a series of meetings, you can read each chapter with the group and invite the participants to reflect and comment on it. Alternatively, you can invite them to read each chapter beforehand and come together for discussion.

Many people have expressed the desire to promote total consecration to Mary in their parish and local area. **Behold Your Mother!** offers you an effective tool for making that possible!

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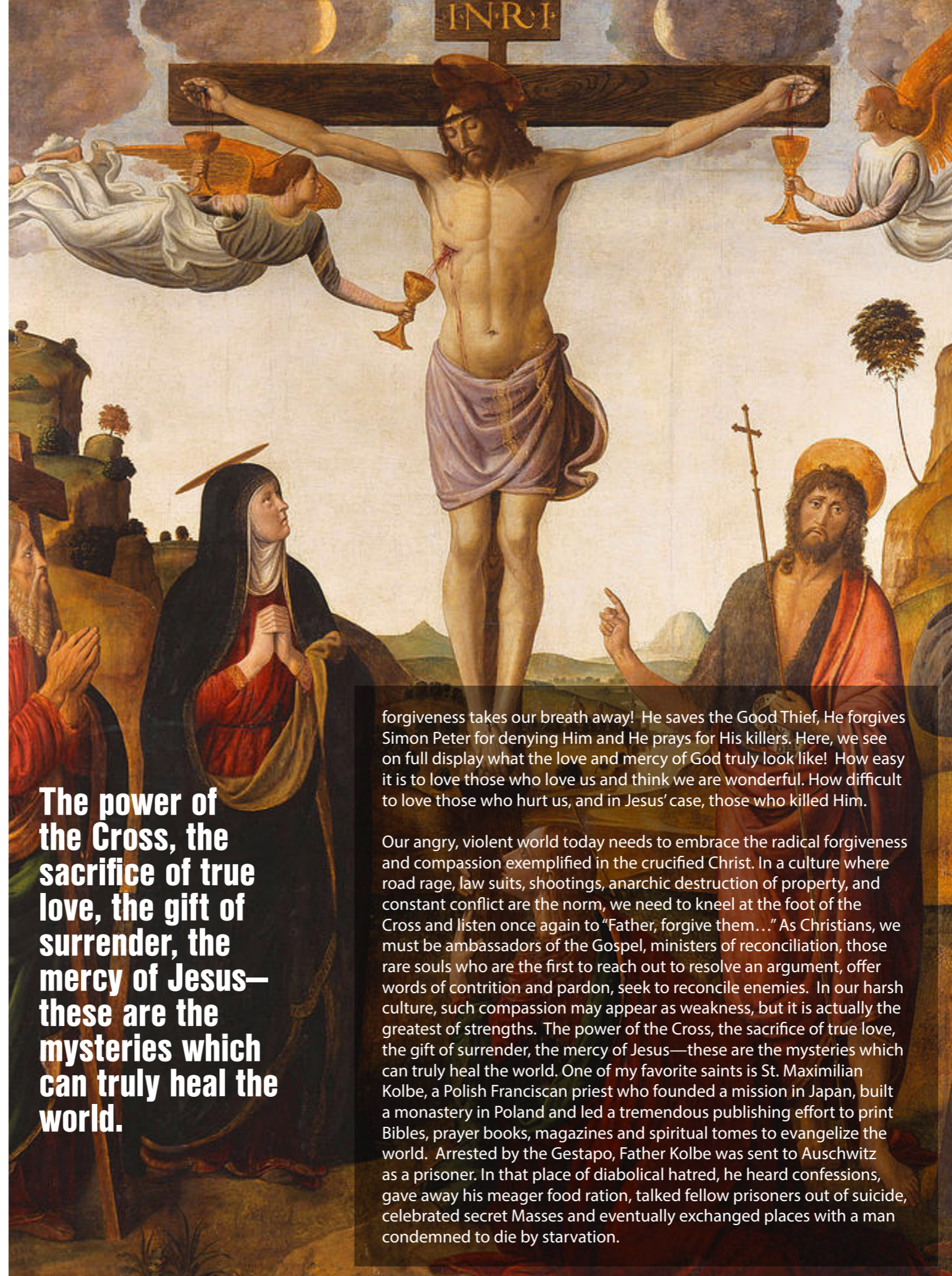
RADIATING MERCY THIS EASTER

BY MOST REV. DONALD J. HYING,
BISHOP OF MADISON

The Lord preached many words throughout His public ministry to great effect on hillsides, in synagogues and marketplaces, and in people's homes. His message from the Cross, as He was dying, spending His Precious Blood for us, remain as an enduring testimony to His love and compassion, the summation of His entire preaching. In Luke's Gospel, we hear: "When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified Him and the criminals there, one on His right, the other on His left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they do not know what they do." (Luke 23: 33-34) The Lord preached forgiveness and love of enemies throughout His life. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commands us to love our enemies and to pray for our persecutors. The Gospels narrate how often Christ forgave sinners and reconciled those estranged from God and the community. Pardon and mercy are the hallmarks of the Lord's life and ministry. This theme reaches its dramatic climax when the Jesus is crucified on Golgotha. Those who had tortured Him and were now killing Him were also jeering and taunting Him. "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself." In the face of such hatred and evil, the Lord asks His Father to pardon His killers, even making excuses for them in their ignorance and denial of His true identity. This level of



They crucified Him and the criminals there...Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, they do not know what they do.'"
(Lk 23:33-34)



The power of the Cross, the sacrifice of true love, the gift of surrender, the mercy of Jesus—these are the mysteries which can truly heal the world.

forgiveness takes our breath away! He saves the Good Thief, He forgives Simon Peter for denying Him and He prays for His killers. Here, we see on full display what the love and mercy of God truly look like! How easy it is to love those who love us and think we are wonderful. How difficult to love those who hurt us, and in Jesus' case, those who killed Him.

Our angry, violent world today needs to embrace the radical forgiveness and compassion exemplified in the crucified Christ. In a culture where road rage, law suits, shootings, anarchic destruction of property, and constant conflict are the norm, we need to kneel at the foot of the Cross and listen once again to "Father, forgive them..." As Christians, we must be ambassadors of the Gospel, ministers of reconciliation, those rare souls who are the first to reach out to resolve an argument, offer words of contrition and pardon, seek to reconcile enemies. In our harsh culture, such compassion may appear as weakness, but it is actually the greatest of strengths. The power of the Cross, the sacrifice of true love, the gift of surrender, the mercy of Jesus—these are the mysteries which can truly heal the world. One of my favorite saints is St. Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Franciscan priest who founded a mission in Japan, built a monastery in Poland and led a tremendous publishing effort to print Bibles, prayer books, magazines and spiritual tomes to evangelize the world. Arrested by the Gestapo, Father Kolbe was sent to Auschwitz as a prisoner. In that place of diabolical hatred, he heard confessions, gave away his meager food ration, talked fellow prisoners out of suicide, celebrated secret Masses and eventually exchanged places with a man condemned to die by starvation.



10th NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS

**July 17-21, 2024
Indianapolis, Indiana**

"An encounter with the living Jesus Christ renewing our Church and sending us on mission for the life of the world"

The 10th National Eucharistic Congress in 2024 will be a pivotal, unifying, and transformative moment for the Church in the United States. Sign up for updates. Plan to attend and witness the Holy Spirit do something amazing!

Will You Be There?

REGISTRATION IS OPEN

<https://www.eucharisticcongress.org/register>



“**Only by letting in the love of Christ, can we experience that radiant mercy which the Lord bids us to share generously with everyone.**”

Father Kolbe and nine other men were placed in an underground cell without food or water. In those horrible circumstances, prisoners often lost their senses, howling, screaming and cursing before they died. Out of Kolbe's cell came singing, praying and laughter. When the Nazi guards came in to look in on them, Father Kolbe would tell them that the men loved them and were praying for them. This extraordinary love and mercy spooked the guards. They could handle hatred and violence. They could not understand forgiveness and goodness. Saint Maximilian was the final man to die in the cell, shot with a dose of carbolic acid to end his life on August 14th, 1941, the vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin

Mary, to whom he was so passionately devoted.

This holy season, we can go to confession, pardon a grievance, reach out to an estranged relative or friend, find ways to radiate peace and forgiveness to others, not respond with a harsh word, and try to live in harmony and love with all people. In very small ways, we can be agents of Christ's healing in the world, to help Him put the broken pieces of humanity back together. Our society bleeds and hurts with so much violence and anger. Only by letting in the love of Christ, can we experience that radiant mercy which the Lord bids us to share generously with everyone, starting with our families, friends and coworkers. Love as the Lord loves and you will become a saint!



Eucharistic Revival Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the gift of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who promised to stay with us always, until the end of the age.

Reawaken our wonder at His presence in the Most Holy Eucharist.

May our hearts burn within us as He opens the Scriptures and breaks the Bread.

Give us the eyes of faith to recognize His presence in our brothers and sisters, especially in the face of the poor and the suffering.

Nourished by the Eucharist, send us forth to walk faithfully as missionary disciples, proclaiming the Gospel to every heart and extending Your kingdom to every land.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

by Most Reverend José H. Gomez Archbishop of Los Angeles

Celebrate Divine Mercy

To fittingly observe the Feast of Mercy, we should:

1. **Celebrate** the Feast on the Sunday after Easter (or its Vigil).
2. Sincerely **repent** of all our sins.
3. Place our complete **trust** in Jesus.
4. **Go to Confession**, preferably before the Feast.
5. **Receive Holy Communion** on the day of the Feast (or its Vigil).
6. **Venerate** the Image of The Divine Mercy.
7. **Be merciful to others**, through our actions, words, and prayers on their behalf.

To receive the Extraordinary Graces of this Feast, the only condition is to receive Holy Communion worthily on Divine Mercy Sunday (or the Vigil celebration) by making a good confession beforehand and staying in the state of grace and trusting in His Divine Mercy. A Plenary Indulgence can be obtained by fulfilling the usual conditions.



“LET LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME”

It's no secret that bringing young children to church can be challenging. St. Mary's Parish in Blacksburg, Virginia, is aiming to help young families overcome obstacles by making Eucharistic adoration accessible for even its youngest parishioners.

On Saturday mornings, the parish hosts a monthly half-hour of adoration specifically for families of young children, after which the families spend time together on a local playground. With Gospel readings, reflections, songs and crayons, the event offers a space where noise is okay, but prayer is

still central. They always incorporate at least one traditional element of adoration, like singing the Tantum Ergo or reciting the Divine Praises at the end.

The parents who started it believe that the children's adoration program could be replicated at other parishes, as long as there are a few families willing to commit to participating and permission from the pastor. The most important thing is that little kids get to see Jesus!

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS WONDERFUL INITIATIVE AND TAKE INSPIRATION ON HOW TO BRING IT TO YOUR PARISH!

<https://www.pillaratholic.com/childrens-adoration-offers-young-families-a-chance-for-prayer-community/>

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SHARE THE MI SOME MORE "HOW TO" TIPS

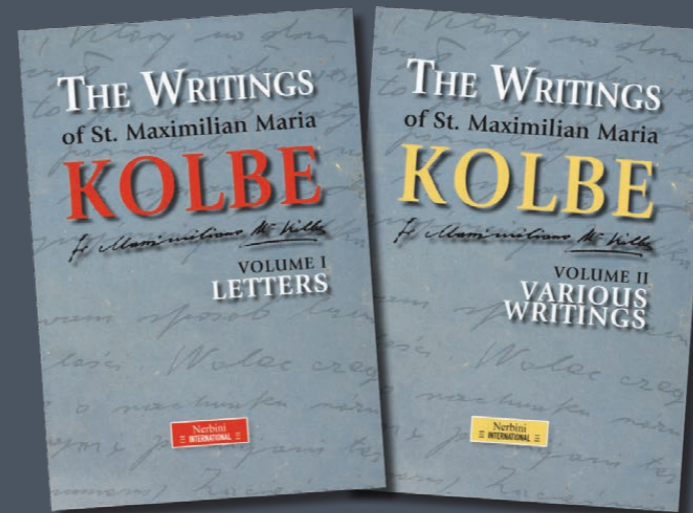


Here are some more suggestions on how to share your love for Our Lady and to invite family and friends to be part of our MI Family.

- **Pay attention to the persons you meet:** listen with an open heart, especially if they share their concerns and sufferings. Don't be too quick to give advice. We are just to be an open road to His Heart for them. He is the One who can satisfy every need.
- **Tell your story:** virtually nothing is more effective than the simple authentic testimony of one's personal experience of Our Lady's maternal presence and guidance.
- **Invite questions:** sometimes people have unspoken questions about the Faith or devotion to Our Lady. A friendly conversation often can help to shed light.

"Repetita iuvant" - Repeating does good! So, reconsider the following tips from last month:

- **Wear and carry the Miraculous Medal:** you will be surprised how many opportunities you will have to start a conversation.
- **Wear an MI T-shirt:** it will spark a question or two...!
- **Keep MI introductory brochures in your purse or in your car:** do not hesitate to share one with a friend asking the simple question: "Have you ever heard of St. Maximilian Kolbe and his Militia of the Immaculata movement?"
- **Approach your pastor and ask permission to post MI literature at your church, to submit a column on your parish bulletin, to show the MI FILM or to host an informative meeting about Marian consecration:** keep in mind that the MI Film is a powerful way to introduce the MI to people! The MI National Center is more than happy to send you a supply of brochures and sample bulletin articles.
- **MI speakers are available** to travel and to assist you in planning and giving an MI presentation. Write to find out more: MINational@MissionImmaculata.com
- **Volunteer to represent the MI at Catholic events in your area:** Find out if they allow you to have a booth or a table. Contact MI National for a supply of MI literature. There might be other MI members in your area who could help. Reach out and share the gift you have received!



VOLUME I: *LETTERS* • VOLUME II: *VARIOUS WRITINGS*

The Definitive English Edition!

The Martyr of Charity, St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe (1894-1941), before his death in the Auschwitz concentration camp, had a full and fruitful life. The Polish-born Franciscan Friar had spent the previous twenty-three years as a priest, evangelizer, media mogul, social commentator, missionary and religious reformer. His life's work cut short at age 47, St. Kolbe nonetheless left behind an impressive body of writings. In the 1950s the English-speaking world first began reading bits and pieces of those writings translated from the original Polish, Italian and Latin. Now devotees and scholars alike can find the entire wide-ranging array of those writings collected together in a two-volume compendium, published by Nerbini International.



At long last the complete works of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe in English: accurate, readable and with explanatory introduction and footnotes. Both scholars and general readers will find this edition of the Writings of St. Maximilian Kolbe an inspiring practical aid for learning what this Franciscan saint has contributed to the study of Mariology and living the consecration to Mary's Immaculate Heart. May the translators' work contribute to a renewal of Kolbean studies in the English speaking world.

— Fr. Peter D. Fehlner, OFM Conv.

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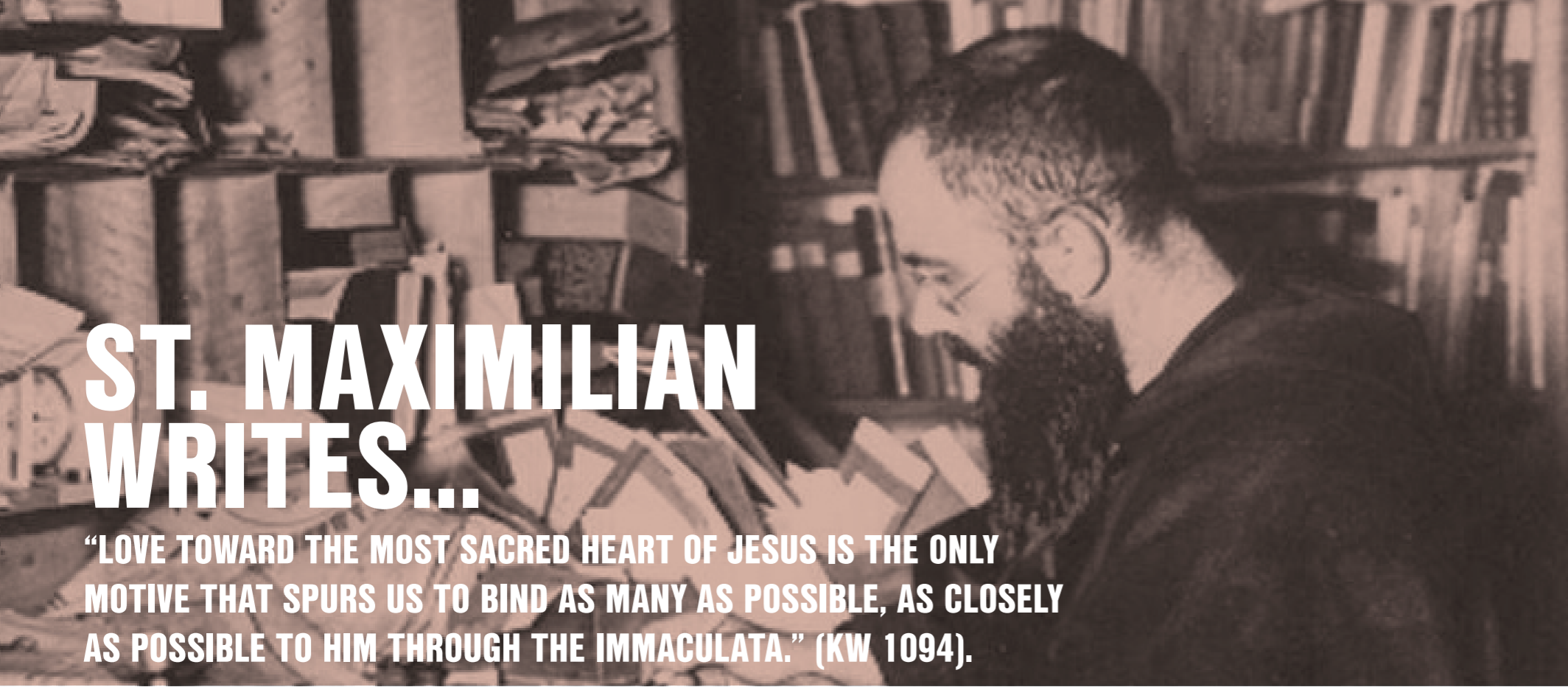
This important short film beautifully and eloquently captures the essence of the MI: total consecration to the Immaculata in the evangelical spirit of St. Maximilian Kolbe.

**"Simply excellent!"
"Inspirational!"**

Share the link
<https://militiaoftheimmaculata.com/mi-movie/>
with your family and friends and promote the new film by posting on your favorite social media platform!

*Let's reach
as many people
as possible
to win the world for Christ through
the Immaculata!*





ST. MAXIMILIAN WRITES...

“LOVE TOWARD THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS IS THE ONLY MOTIVE THAT SPURS US TO BIND AS MANY AS POSSIBLE, AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE TO HIM THROUGH THE IMMACULATA.” (KW 1094).

That is the ultimate goal we strive to achieve. It is stated explicitly also in the act of consecration to the Blessed Immaculate Virgin, which conveys the essence of the Militia of the Immaculata. In it we address the Immaculata with this petition: *“If it pleases you, use all that I am and have without reserve, wholly to accomplish what was said of you: ‘She will crush your head,’ and ‘You alone have destroyed all heresies in the whole world.’ Let me be a fit instrument in your immaculate and merciful hands for introducing and increasing your glory to the maximum in all the many strayed and indifferent souls, and thus help extend as far as possible the blessed kingdom of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.”* But why through the Immaculata? *“For wherever you enter,” we add, “you obtain the grace of conversion and*

growth in holiness.” And how does such power come to her? *“Since it is through your hands that all graces come to us from the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,”* we conclude. Yes, because, humanly speaking, the Divine Heart is like the heart of a good father. If a child is guilty of something, the father must punish him. Justice, or rather the father’s love for the child, calls for that, lest the child underestimate his own mistake. Nevertheless, the father would not really want to cause pain to his child, even though the child deserves it, and would like to find any legitimate reason not to inflict punishment. Forgiveness without an adequate reason would be tantamount to encouraging impudence in his guilty child. Yet the father would want someone to intercede in favor of his child and thereby mete out justice as well as affectionate love. Well, the Divine

“**The more a soul is disfigured by sin, the more divine mercy, which the Immaculata embodies, manifests itself.”**

Heart of Jesus, burning with love for us, who are guilty, has found to this end a means most worthy of divine wisdom. He gives to us His own dear and beloved Mother as mother and protectress, the holiest creature among saints and angels, to whom nothing can be denied, because she is the worthiest and the most beloved of all mothers. In addition, He has given her a most magnanimous heart, so much so that she could never fail to spot even the smallest teardrop on earth or neglect to worry about the salvation and sanctification of every man. *There lies a bridge to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.* What about the one who falls into sin, sinks into vice, scorns divine graces, disregards the good example of others, slights healthy inspirations, and makes himself unworthy to receive more graces? Should he perhaps despair? Never!

For he has a Mother given to him by God, a mother who watches his every action, every word, and every thought with a benevolent heart. She is not concerned with whether or not he is worthy of the grace of mercy. She just is the Mother of mercy, so she rushes to aid, even if she is not invoked, wherever misery of souls is most severe. Indeed, the more a soul is disfigured by sin, the more Divine Mercy—which the Immaculata in fact embodies—manifests itself. *We therefore strive to give the Immaculata complete sway over every soul.* For if she only manages to enter a soul—even though that soul is still wretched or debased into sin and vice—she cannot possibly allow it to be lost. Rather, she swiftly obtains the grace of enlightenment for its intelligence, and the grace of strength for its will, so that the soul may repent and rise up again. *“Through Mary*

Immaculate to Jesus”: that is our watchword. ... When He appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, Jesus pointed to the person who was probably the first to raise an altar to the Immaculata in Italy (Rovigo), a person whose spiritual children have celebrated, proclaimed, and defended the privilege of the Immaculate Conception ever since the beginning of their Order: Jesus pointed to St. Francis, and said: *“Here is the saint closest to my divine Heart.”* Yes, the more you spread veneration and love for the Immaculata, the more souls you win over to her, and, through her, to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, who loved us unto death on the cross. You also give proof of *utmost* love, because it is an active love toward that Most Sacred Heart, and thus unite yourself to Him to the highest degree.

Rycerz Niepokalanej

“With patience I can do all things in Him who strengthens me [Phil 4:13] through the dear hands of the Immaculata... I can even become a saint. Courage, then, and go forward in patience and loving faith.” (KW 987)

“As a convert to Catholicism, I haven’t understood Mary’s role in my life as a Catholic. Through the daily emails I receive from the MI, I have come to know and love our Mother. I pray I will continue to grow and understand how she helps us on our journey and how to truly honor her in a way that pleases Jesus.” - A Subscriber

Maximilianus M. Kolbe



POSSIBLE REASONS AND TIMING FOR THE FALL

BY RICHARD O'DONNELL, MI MEMBER

Did you ever wonder why and when some angels fell from heaven? St. Maximilian Kolbe did. He pondered aspects of these questions in a draft for a book that he was not able to finish, due to his imprisonment in Auschwitz (KW1311). Let's consider St. Maximilian's thoughts and some other possible answers to these questions. From Genesis 1:31, "God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good." We know that everything He made was good, including all of the rational creatures he created: angels and men. We also know that at the present time, some angels are evil and are called devils. The first pope, St. Peter, warned all men about devils in his first letter, 1 Peter 5:8-9, "Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for [someone] to devour. Resist him, steadfast in faith, knowing that your fellow believers throughout the world undergo the same sufferings." Genesis does not record that God warned the first two humans in a similar way. Perhaps God did give such a warning and, for some reason, it was not written in scripture. Or, maybe God did not give such a warning because it was not appropriate,

“
Who had goods that made some angels sad? St. Maximilian Kolbe had an extremely insightful answer to this question.”

because no angel had yet turned away from God at the time when humans were newly created. Scripture tells us why some devils sinned in Wisdom 2:23-24, "for God formed us to be imperishable; the image of his own nature He made us. But by the envy of the devil, death entered the world, and they who are allied with him experience it." The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) in section 2539 informs us that envy refers to sadness at the sight of another's goods and the immoderate desire to acquire them for oneself, even unjustly. The question arises: who had goods that made some angels so sad? St. Maximilian Kolbe had an extremely insightful answer to this in *KW* 1311. Let's look at what he wrote.

"Among the countless number of possible beings that reflect His diverse perfections, God also saw, from all eternity, a Being perfect in all respects, unsullied by stain of sin, who reflected His divine attributes in the most faithful way possible in a created being. He rejoiced at this prospect and decided, from eternity, to call such a Being into existence at a given time. After creating the angels, God willed that, in full consciousness and will, they should give proof that they would always and in everything desire to accomplish His Will. He showed them the mystery of the Incarnation, that is to say, that He would call into existence a human being, with body and soul, and that He would raise up such a creature to the dignity of Mother of God, so that she would become also their Queen and they would have to venerate her as well. Countless legions of angelic spirits joyfully greeted the One whom their Creator had decided to raise so sublimely and humbly paid homage to their Lady. Some of them, however, headed by Lucifer—forgetful of the fact that all they were and possessed they had received from God, while they alone were absolutely nothing—rebelled and refused to submit to God's Will. For they considered themselves superior to a human being covered with flesh. Such an act of veneration seemed to them a debasement of their dignity. They allowed themselves to be carried away by pride and refused to do the Will of God."

St. Maximilian's passage in *KW* 1311 makes much sense. Our Lady, who is certainly a creature, and not a divine being by nature, has goods that no other creature ever had, or ever will have. She is the Mother of God. Certainly, many saints have expounded properly regarding many of her other qualities, but it is sufficient for our purposes to consider one thing only: she is the Mother of

God. No other creature can ever exceed that amazing fact. It is quite interesting that Scripture does not name the first woman until Genesis 3:20, which was after the fall of man. Before her fall, she is merely called *woman*. When Jesus speaks to His mother Mary at Cana in the second chapter of John, He calls her *woman*. In the nineteenth chapter of John's gospel, when Jesus was on the cross, He also calls Mary *woman*. St. John, who took Mary into his home at Jesus' command, thus makes it quite clear that Jesus called Mary *woman* before the first of His signs, and with some of the last words He spoke before His death. In the beginning, and at the end, Jesus called Mary *woman*.

Using these stones from Scripture, let us build a possible structure of what may have happened in Eden. Perhaps God told His creatures that one day, the woman will be called Mother of God, Queen of the universe, and will be exalted above all angels and men. (These expressions about Mary are taken from *Lumen Gentium* No. 59 & No. 66). At the time God told His creatures this, they were all good, as He created them. Perhaps this statement caused some of the angels to be envious, and one of the angels decided to tempt the woman, as described in Genesis chapter 3. The tempter was mistaken, because the woman it saw was not the woman that God was referring to. Based on its mistake, the angel tempted the wrong woman. Once it decided to tempt the woman, the tempter earned the title of devil. Its tempting was, of course, full of lies (Genesis 3:1-5). This rightly earned the tempter the title of father of lies, as noted in John 8:44. If this possible scenario in Eden is correct, then the fall of some angels and the fall of man was essentially simultaneous. The devil was envious of the woman, and sinfully decided to tempt her to sin. She succumbed to the

temptation, and sinned by eating the forbidden fruit, and then convinced her husband to sin also. We know by faith that numerous terrible consequences arose due these sins in Eden, committed by angels and men. St. John, in the twelfth chapter of Revelation describes some consequences of the tempter's sins. In an address on December 8, 2011, Pope Benedict XVI said that, "the 'woman' of the Book of Revelation is Mary herself." Let's recall what Revelation 12:1-9,17 says came about due to the tempter's sins:

"A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was with child and wailed aloud in pain as she labored to give birth. Then another sign appeared in the sky; it was a huge red dragon... Its tail swept away a third of the stars in the sky and hurled them down to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman about to give birth, to devour her child when she gave birth. She gave birth to a son, a male child, destined to rule all the nations with an iron rod. Her child was caught up to God and his throne. The woman herself fled into the desert where she had a place prepared by God... Then war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels battled against the dragon. The dragon and its angels fought back, but they did not prevail and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The huge dragon, the ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, who deceived the whole world, was thrown down to earth, and its angels were thrown down with it. ...Then the dragon became angry

with the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring, those who keep God's commandments and bear witness to Jesus."

This passage from Revelation certainly seems to tie the devils' fall from heaven very closely to the woman. Why else would the dragon be so angry with the woman?

St. Maximilian Kolbe's comments in *KW1311* seem quite prescient. It seems that God tested the angels by means of the woman. One angel seems to have been envious of the woman, which led to its temptation of the woman it knew. This temptation, and subsequent sin, led to the fall of some angels and men. As terrible as the fall was, it did, of course, have its bright side. CCC section 412 notes that "the Exsultet sings, 'O happy fault, . . . which gained for us so great a Redeemer!'" Indeed, this ultimate victory was predicted in Genesis 3:15, as written in *Lumen Gentium* No. 55, "the woman, Mother of the Redeemer, ... is already prophetically foreshadowed in the promise of victory over the serpent which was given to our first parents after their fall into sin."

Let us sum up our thoughts. Just as Moses wrote in Deuteronomy chapter 30, all of God's rational creatures, once they reach the age of reason, have free will and must make a choice whether to obey God or not. This is a test we all must take to achieve eternal happiness in heaven. We know that angels were tested in some way and some failed the test, due to envy. The first and last books of the bible, Genesis and Revelation, both associate the angel's test



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**Then the dragon became angry with the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offsprings.”
Rev. 12:17**

with the woman. Satan tempted the woman in Genesis. Satan was angry with the woman in Revelation, and a war broke out in heaven as a result. It's hard to see why Satan would be envious of Eve. In *Lumen Gentium*, the Church solemnly proclaimed Mary as Mother of God, Queen of the universe, exalted above all angels and men. It makes sense that an angel could be envious of that. One may object that Mary was not yet created at the time of Eden, which is certainly true. But, as the Lord told the prophet, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you." (Jeremiah 1:5) All of God's creatures are always in His mind, since He is eternal. In that sense, Our Lady was in Eden, even though she had not yet been created.

How blessed we are that Our Lord gave His Mother to us from the Cross, to be our Mother. And, how blessed we are to have the writings and witness of St. Maximilian Kolbe, who always urges us higher, to a better understanding of God and His Immaculate Mother.

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THE KNIGHTS AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS

A SPECIAL VANGUARD WITHIN THE MI FAMILY

As we look at the suffering of Christ and follow His Passion, let us not overlook our own suffering, which can be united with Christ for our good and the good of others. We all will suffer in this life. The question is, what will we do with it? Human suffering is difficult to understand. We suffer from physical ailments, psychological issues from abuse or trauma (PTSD), marriage problems, and losing a job or family member. Everyone reacts to suffering in different ways, but most all of us find it difficult to accept it and ask, "why is this happening to me?" We often fear and despise suffering. However, as members of the Body of Christ, we should do as Christ did for us. There is a lot of "wasted" suffering in the world. We should accept our suffering as a blessing and unite it to the cross of Jesus for the salvation of sinners. If we want to be fully united to Jesus, we ought to offer our crosses and participate in God's work of salvation.

Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow me." He didn't say it would be easy but the reward will be great. Let us pray that we may to understand why Jesus gives us the sufferings and crosses we have in our lives. Our Blessed Mother suffered greatly in her life as foreseen by the prophecy of Simeon in Luke 1:34-35. As Knights of the

Immaculata, fully consecrated to our Blessed Mother, we belong to her. We may additionally wish to be united with Our Lady as Knights at the Foot of the Cross (KFC). Then we can embrace our sufferings and crosses, present them to our Blessed Mother, pray for her intercession, and unite them with hers at the foot of Cross as she was united with Jesus in His suffering. Mary, our Mother only wants what is best for her children. As children of God, with Mary as our Blessed Mother, "we will face many storms and nothing great comes without pain in God's works. Is there too great a sacrifice when it comes to the Immaculata? We are consecrated to the Immaculata and until we grow tired in our fight to conquer the world for the Immaculata, suffering will not cease to come upon us. The more we struggle the heavier and more numerous will be the suffering" (St. Maximilian Kolbe's Writings, KW 631). Why do good people suffer? St. Maximilian Kolbe in his writings addressed this question. A man asked him why do good people suffer, while it seems the bad people do not. Where is justice? Is God infinitely just? Maximilian answered him that, yes, of course, God is just, otherwise He wouldn't be God. He must reward every good deed and punish every bad deed. However, is there really any person in the world, even the

“**Our own crosses acquire value if we consider them as a part of the Cross of Christ, if a reflection of His light illuminates them. It is by that Cross alone that our sufferings too are ennobled and acquire their true meaning.**”
Benedict XVI

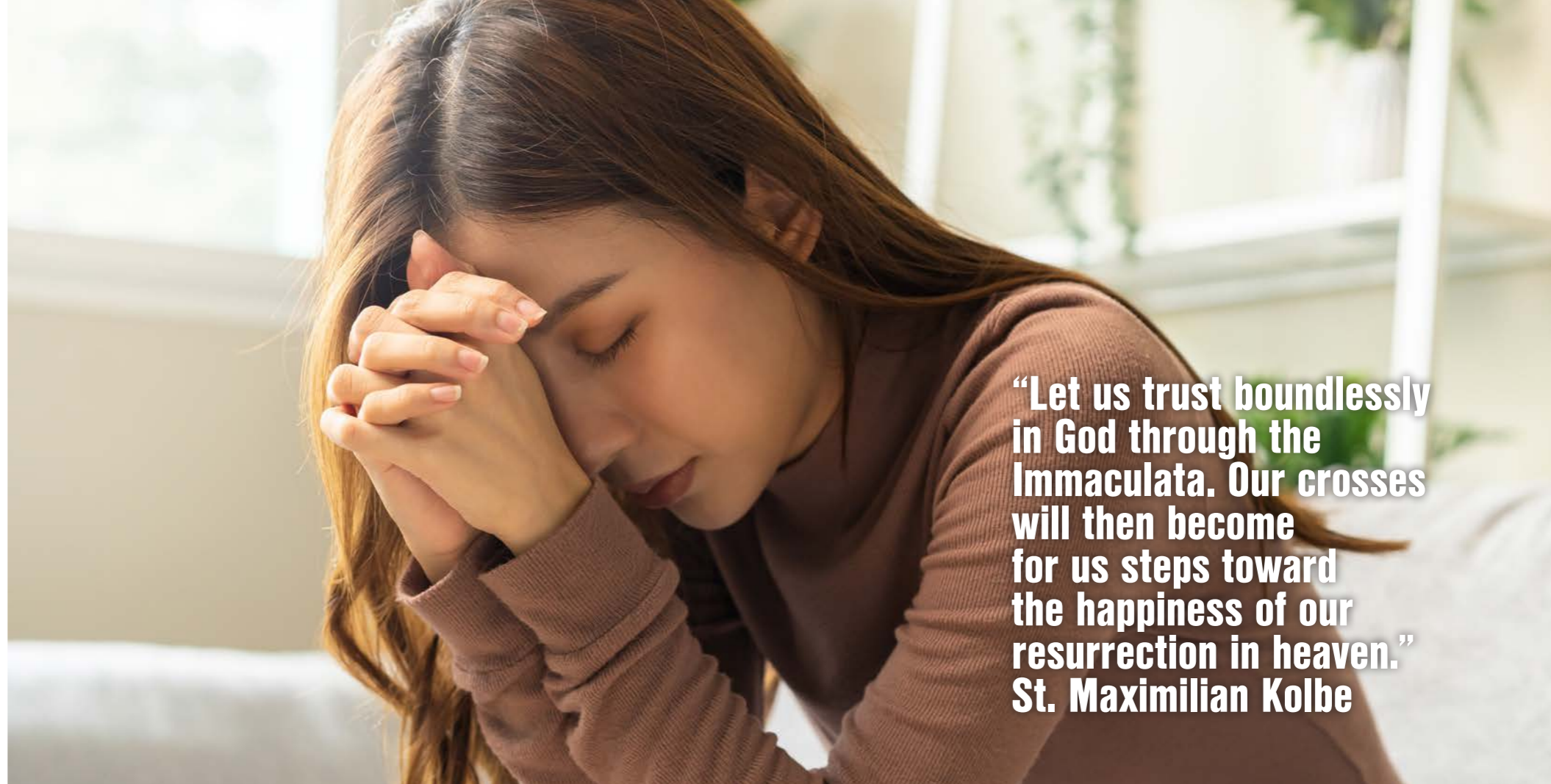
worst person, who never does anything good? If a man has lived so badly in this world to deserve hell after his death, then when could God reward him for the good he has done? In the next world? But only hell awaits him there. So, in this world. Besides is there one person, even the best person who has never done anything wrong? Such person does not exist either. Even the just man falls seven times a day (Prv 24:16). If God wants to shorten his time in purgatory or just grant him paradise, where will the settling of accounts take place? God shows special love to those whom He already punishes in this world since in purgatory there is only a long and heavy punishment. If we are willing to accept the crosses in this world, we merit even greater glory in heaven. "God loves those whom He strikes." Therefore, bad people who enjoy a happy life are not to be envied. They should be fearful, because the life they have now may be

their only reward for the little good they have done. (Cf. St. Maximilian Kolbe's Writings, KW 1050). St. Maximilian understood what it is to suffer and to unite his suffering with Jesus. He was willing to suffer for the Immaculata, even to give his life for her. He accepted suffering as a gift and gave his life for others as he was heard saying, "For Jesus Christ, I am prepared to suffer still more." As Knights of the Immaculata and Knights at the Foot of the Cross, may we offer all our pains and suffering to the Immaculata this day, let her take them to Jesus Christ for our good and the good of all mankind. May the Immaculata take you under her mantle.

Ronald Rodrigues

For more information about the Knights at the Foot of the Cross, please visit our website <https://militiaoftheimmaculata.com/knights-at-the-foot-of-the-cross/>

“Let us trust boundlessly in God through the Immaculata. Our crosses will then become for us steps toward the happiness of our resurrection in heaven.”
St. Maximilian Kolbe



Daily Holy Mass
will be offered throughout 2023 for the MI-USA and all MI Members, living and deceased, at the City of the Immaculata established by St. Maximilian Kolbe near Warsaw, in Poland.

Send your prayer intentions to be placed in the MI Book of Intentions at the feet of Our Lady and St. Maximilian Kolbe's first class relic:
PrayerRequest@MissionImmaculata.com



This year, the monthly reflections provided by the MI International Office on the 2023 MI Intentions include:

- *A Scripture reading.
- *A text from St. Maximilian Kolbe's Writings.
- *A brief commentary by Fr. Sidifredo De La Cruz, OFM Conv., Colombia.

April

O Immaculata, please intercede...

That the newness of Easter may open us to the experience of communicating the Risen Lord's New Life and of discovering His presence in every reality and encounter with others.

Lk 24:5-7 - "Why do you seek the living one among the dead? He is not here, but He has been raised. Remember what He said to you while He was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified, and rise on the third day."

KW 1230 - The Lord is risen: hundreds of mouths repeat today. "We too must rise again," announces an Easter hymn, but not only after death, because every year the holy Church invites the faithful to rise again, urging them

to come to Easter Confession. Even if one had the misfortune to die spiritually, even though Satan had told him he would never rise from the dead, never again, all one needs is sincerely to appeal to the Mediatrix of all graces, to the Immaculata, not only to obtain the grace of resurrection, but also to reach the high steps, very high indeed, of holiness. The closer one approaches her, the more abundantly one draws from the graces of knowledge and of love, of a generous love toward God, Who for our sake mounted the Cross.

Reflection - Overcoming error and sin is the work of a lifetime but, thanks to the Lord's death and Resurrection and Our Lady's intercession, we have the certain hope that we can achieve it and become saints.

If we have risen with Christ, as MI Knights we should strive to give witness to the power of His Resurrection. May the Easter season be the fitting time for proclaiming the joy of our encounter with the Risen Lord to everyone we meet. May our smile, actions, and words reflect the work of grace in our lives and radiate His presence.

Prayer - Act of Total Consecration to the Immaculata

Act of Total Consecration to the Immaculata

(Prayer composed by St. Maximilian Kolbe)

O Immaculata, Queen of Heaven and earth, refuge of sinners and our most loving Mother, God has willed to entrust the entire order of mercy to you. I, (name), a repentant sinner, cast myself at your feet humbly imploring you to take me with all that I am and have, wholly to yourself as your possession and property. Please make of me, of all my powers of soul and body, of my whole life, death and eternity, whatever most pleases you.

If it pleases you, use all that I am and have without reserve, wholly to accomplish what was said of you: "She will crush your head," and, "You alone have destroyed all heresies in the world."

Let me be a fit instrument in your immaculate and merciful hands for introducing and increasing your glory to the maximum in all the many strayed and indifferent souls, and thus help extend as far as possible the blessed Kingdom of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus. For wherever you enter, you obtain the grace of conversion and growth in holiness, since it is through your hands that all graces come to us from the most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

V. Allow me to praise you, O sacred Virgin.

R. Give me strength against your enemies.

MI Resources

Available from the MI National Center



Disseminate the Miraculous Medal and introduce Our Lady and the MI to others!

Miraculous Medals and various MI resources can be requested from the MI National Office via email: MINational@MissionImmaculata.com



Check the MI website MilitiaoftheImmaculata.com often for updates and follow us on



Support Our Lady's Work by Helping the MI **DONATE HERE**

"Through Mary Immaculate to Jesus: that is our watchword. The more you spread veneration and love for the Immaculata the more souls you win over to her, and, through her, to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, who loved us unto death on the Cross."

- St. Maximilian Kolbe



Want to connect and pray with other MI members? Looking for support in deepening or preparing for your consecration? Join a virtual MI Village and live out your consecration with others. Email Moderators for information.

****Moderator: Scott Richard**

Email: Virtual.MI.Village@gmail.com
Mtg Day: Friday (Last Friday of each month)
Mtg Time: 8:00pm CST
Weekly Consecration Renewal & Virtual Village Rosary Tuesdays @ 8:30pm CST

****Moderator: Douglas Eschbach**

Email: MI.village.marytown@gmail.com
Mtg Day: Sunday (3rd Sunday of each month)
Mtg Time: 5:00pm CST

****Moderator: Donna**

Knights at the Foot of the Cross (KFC)
Village of the Immaculata
E-mail: miutah.stmary@gmail.com
Mtg Day: Every Friday evening
Mtg Time: 8:00pm-9:00pm MST

****Moderator: Bill Bielawski**

Email: william.bielawski@gmail.com
Mtg Day: Sunday (3rd Sunday of each month)
Mtg Time: 7:00pm CST

****Moderator: Lisa Fulgenzi**

Email: drlisafmi@gmail.com
Write to request Google Meet join info
Mtg Day: Wednesdays
Mtg Time: 8-00-9:00pm EST