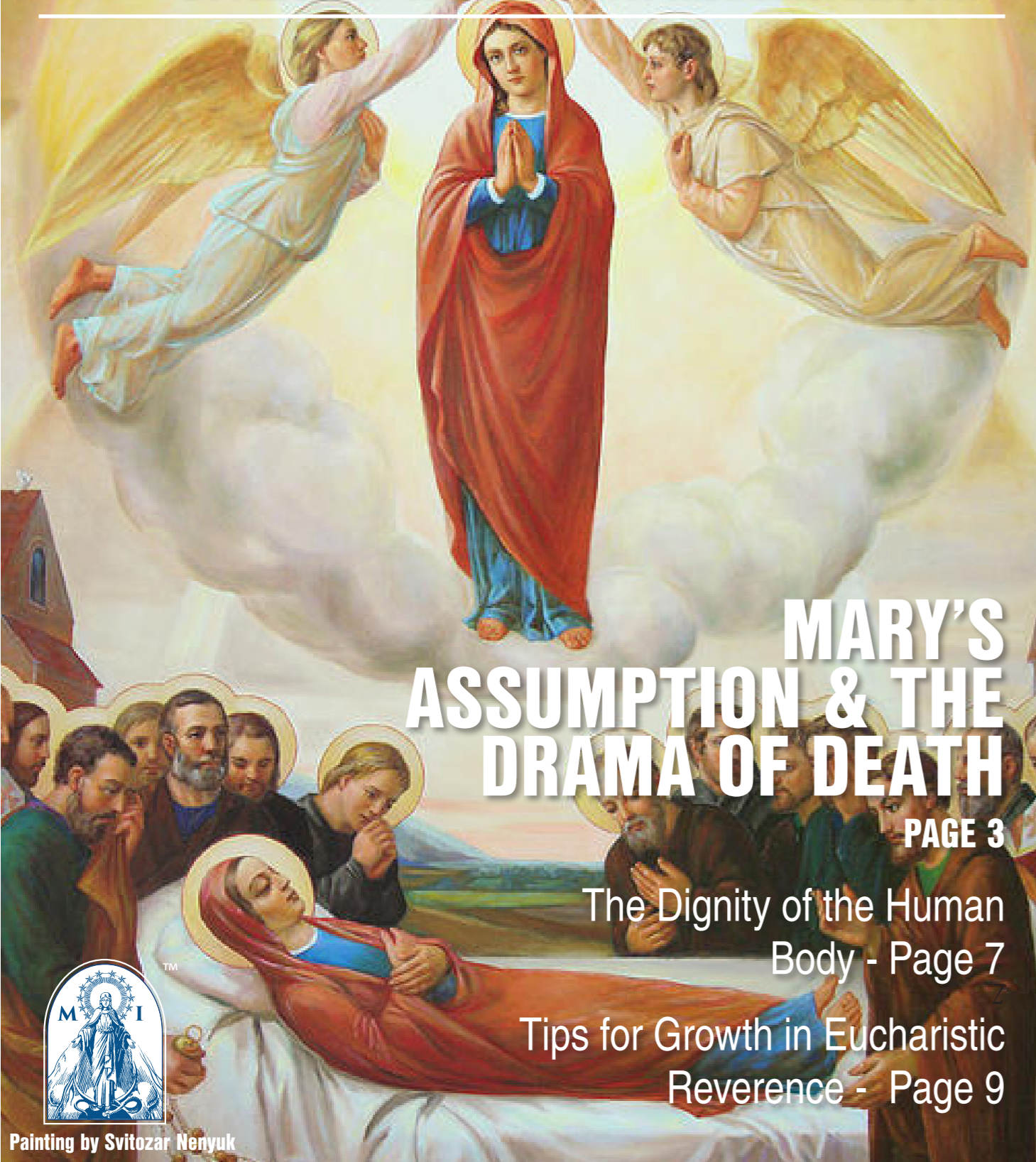


THE KNIGHT OF THE
Immaculata
E-PUBLICATION OF THE MILITIA OF THE IMMACULATA, USA



MARY'S
ASSUMPTION & THE
DRAMA OF DEATH

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Painting by Svitozar Nenyuk

LOOKING BACK AND FORWARD



by Ronald L. Rodrigues, MI National President

Dear Knights of the Immaculata, Maria! It was mid-summer, July was almost gone, and the month of August was upon us. It was a hot summer evening and I couldn't sleep. I awoke and sat outside. It was a dark night with few stars or light from the sky. It was eerie, yet I was peaceful. My mind wandered and I began to think about St. Maximilian and what he had accomplished in his life and the August he must have had. Was I dreaming or were these just thoughts filling my mind in anticipation of the feast of St. Maximilian Kolbe? Then I slightly dozed off and it seemed as if St. Maximilian was speaking to me.

"It was a dark and gloomy night and a storm was approaching. I sensed the presence of evil in the air and I knew trouble was coming. We had just finished working on what was to become the last issue of our magazine. We were given permission by the Germans to start up our printing press and print the *Rycerz Niepokalanej* (*The Knight of the Immaculata*) once again. It took us two and a half weeks to get everything up and running with articles written, printed and ready for distribution. Our goal was to get it in the hands of the people on December 8th, the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

"The evil that was lurking would soon become known. Polish friends had warned me. They worked at Gestapo headquarters and overheard conversations

about the plan for our arrest. I didn't want to trouble the few brothers that were left with me at Niepokalanow, but they could sense trouble was on the way. We consumed ourselves in our work and our prayer life. I put it all in the hands of our Blessed Mother. She has always taken care of us so there was no reason to worry. I sent most of the brothers away and only a few of us remained. "I closed my eyes and thought of those days when we were a very large group all working for the greater good of God's People, working for our Mother. Niepokalanow was once a thriving community full of life and joy. We were the largest Conventual Franciscan monastery and a major religious publishing center. I didn't know what would become of Niepokalanow, but I prayed that it would return to its original grandeur and continue to spread the love of



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Mary. Our Immaculate Mother was in the hearts of all the brothers and those who visited us. She had a way of winning the hearts of all who would give her a chance. "As the storm rumbled on, I was overcome with emotions. I knew that my latest article would lead to my demise. I wrote about Truth. That we should find it and hold on to it once we do. I had written that the real conflict is within us. It lies in the depths of each of our souls, good and evil, love and hate, virtue and sin. What good is it to win a victory on the battlefield, but lose the battle within us? I knew the Nazis would not appreciate the truth nor acknowledge it. They did not believe in the Truth nor really understand it. I knew this article needed to be written and published regardless of the consequences.

"As Divine Providence would have it, the evil did come. On February 17, 1941, we were arrested and taken to Pawiak prison, where I remained until May 28, 1941. They had used a falsely obtained confession from our Brother Gorgonio Rembisz. He thought that the statement he signed was the testimony he told them. In it they fabricated that I was an enemy of the state and published many anti-Nazi articles. The truth was I wrote religious articles about the love of God and Mary. After my stay at Pawiak prison I was then transported to what some called 'hell on earth'—the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

(Continues on pg. 12)

MARY'S ASSUMPTION & THE DRAMA OF DEATH

FROM THE MARIAN CATECHESSES OF POPE ST. JOHN PAUL II

Concerning the end of Mary's earthly life, the Council uses the terms of the Bull *Munificentissimus Deus* defining the dogma of the Assumption and states: "The Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, when her earthly life was over" (*Lumen gentium*, n. 59). With this formula, the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium*, following my Venerable Predecessor Pius XII, made no pronouncement on the question of Mary's death. Nevertheless, Pius XII did not intend to deny the fact of her death, but merely did not judge it opportune to affirm solemnly the death of the Mother of God as a truth to be accepted by all believers.

CHRIST MADE DEATH A MEANS OF SALVATION

Some theologians have in fact maintained that the Blessed Virgin did not die and was immediately raised from earthly life to heavenly glory. How-

ever, this opinion was unknown until the 17th century, whereas a common tradition actually exists which sees Mary's death as her entry into heavenly glory. Could Mary of Nazareth have experienced the drama of death in her own flesh? Reflecting on Mary's destiny and her relationship with her divine Son, it seems legitimate to answer in the affirmative: since Christ died, it would be difficult to maintain the contrary for His Mother. The Fathers of the Church, who had no doubts in this regard, reasoned along these lines. One need only quote St. Jacob of Sarug (d. 521), who wrote that when the time came for Mary "to walk on the way of all generations," the way, that is, of death, "the group of the Twelve Apostles" gathered to bury "the virginal body of the Blessed One" (*Discourse on the burial of the Holy Mother of God*, 87-99 in C. Vona, *Lateranum* 19 [1953], 188). St. Modestus of Jerusalem (d. 634), after a lengthy discussion of "the most blessed dormition of the most glorious Mother of God", ends his eulogy by exalting the miraculous intervention of Christ who "raised her from the tomb," to take her

up with Him in glory (*Enc. in dormitionem Deiparae semperque Virginis Mariae*, nn. 7 and 14: PG 86 bis, 3293; 3311). St. John Damascene (d. 704) for his part asks: "Why is it that she who in giving birth surpassed all the limits of nature should now bend to its laws, and her immaculate body be subjected to death?" And he answers: "To be clothed in immortality, it is of course necessary that the mortal part be shed, since even the Master of nature did not refuse the experience of death. Indeed, He died according to the flesh and by dying destroyed death; on corruption He bestowed incorruption and made death the source of resurrection" (*Panegyric on the Dormition of the Mother of God*, n. 10: SC 80, 107). It is true that in Revelation death is presented as a punishment for sin. However, the fact that the Church proclaims Mary free from original sin by a unique divine privilege does not lead to the conclusion that she also received physical immortality. The Mother is not superior to the Son who underwent death, giving it a new meaning and changing it into a means of salvation. Involved in Christ's

“
The Mother is not superior to the Son who underwent death, giving it a new meaning.”



What does the Assumption of Mary mean to us?

At the end of earthly life, Mary was welcomed into Heaven with her body and soul. She now takes her place as the Queen Mother at the right hand of Jesus, our King, just as Queen Mothers did, helping rule the everyday affairs of the kingdom. She is the perfect Daughter of God the Father, the Mother of God the Son, and the Spouse of the Holy Spirit. She is our Mother whom Jesus gave to us while on the Cross. There is no greater human person in Heaven. She is full of grace, exalted above all the angels and saints. How is it that a creature can be raised to such great heights? It is a mystery of Divine Love and we can only understand it through faith. She fully participated in the work of our salvation and followed the footsteps of her Son: the poverty of Bethlehem, the everyday life in Nazareth, the mystery of Cana, His passion, and death on the cross. During her life on this earth with her Son, she slowly began to realize the great role given to her. It all came together that day on Calvary when Jesus called her to become the Mother of the Church, the Mother of all of God's children. Mary's Assumption helps us believe the truth about Jesus' promise that we will all be resurrected on the last day and share eternal life with our Father in Heaven. On August 15, as we celebrate the glorification of our Mother, we should rejoice like the angels did when she was taken up to Heaven, knowing that our Mother is in Heaven watching over us, and remember that we will get there too through our faith and trust in Jesus, holding our Mother's hand. Let us listen to what she tells us and trust in her as St. Maximilian Kolbe did, with all his heart. Mary will lead us ever closer to her Son Jesus Christ and to our eternal Home. As pilgrims on this earth, may we continue our journey holding the hand of our Mother, Mary.

Painting by Svitozar Nenyuk

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redemptive work and associated in His saving sacrifice, Mary was able to share in His suffering and death for the sake of humanity's Redemption. What Severus of Antioch says about Christ also applies to her: "Without a preliminary death, how could the Resurrection have taken place?" (*Antijulianistica*, Beirut 1931, 194f.). To share in Christ's Resurrection, Mary had first to share in His death.

The New Testament provides no information on the circumstances of Mary's death. This silence leads one to suppose that it happened naturally, with no detail particularly worthy of mention. If this were not the case, how could the information about it have remained hidden from her contemporaries and not have been passed down to us in some way? As to the cause of Mary's death, the opinions that wish to exclude her from death by natural causes seem groundless. It is more important to look for the Blessed Virgin's spiritual attitude at the moment of her departure from this world. In this regard, St. Francis de Sales maintains that Mary's death was due to a transport of love. He speaks of a dying "in love, from love and through love," going so far as to say that the Mother of God died of love for her Son Jesus (*Treatise on the Love of God*, bk. 7, ch. XIII-XIV).

MARY'S DEATH WAS AN EVENT OF LOVE

Whatever from the physical point of view was the organic, biological cause of the end of her bodily life, it can be said that for Mary the passage from this life to the next was the full development of grace in glory, so

that no death can ever be so fittingly described as a "dormition" as hers. In some of the writings of the Church Fathers we find Jesus Himself described as coming to take His Mother at the time of her death to bring her into heavenly glory. In this way they present the death of Mary as an event of love which conducted her to her divine Son to share His immortal life. At the end of her earthly life, she must have experienced, like Paul and more strongly, the desire to be freed from her body in order to be with Christ for ever (cf. Phil 1:23). The experience of death personally enriched the Blessed Virgin: by undergoing mankind's common destiny, she can more effectively exercise her spiritual motherhood towards those approaching the last moment of their life.

ASSUMPTION IS FRUIT OF MARY'S SHARING IN THE CROSS

Although the New Testament does not explicitly affirm Mary's Assumption, it offers a basis for it because it strongly emphasized the Blessed Virgin's perfect union with Jesus' destiny. This union, which is manifested, from the time of the Savior's miraculous conception, in the Mother's participation in her Son's mission and especially in her association with His redemptive sacrifice, cannot fail to require a continuation after death. Perfectly united with the life and saving work of Jesus, Mary shares His heavenly destiny in body and soul.

Pope St. John Paul II
Excerpts from General Audiences of June 25 and July 2, 1997.

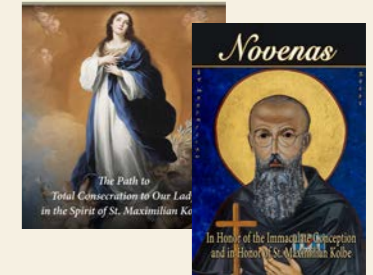


“
The Blessed Virgin's perfect union with Jesus' destiny... cannot fail to require a continuation after death. Mary shares His heavenly destiny in body and soul.”

“The Bull *Munificentissimus Deus* refers to the participation of the woman of the Proto-gospel in the struggle against the serpent, recognizing Mary as the New Eve, and presents the Assumption as a consequence of Mary's union with Christ's saving work. In this regard it says: 'Consequently, just as the glorious Resurrection of Christ was an essential part and the final sign of this victory, so that struggle which was common to the Blessed Virgin and her divine Son should be brought to a close by the glorification of her virginal body' (Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*: AAS 42 [1950], 768). The Assumption is therefore the culmination of the struggle which involved Mary's generous love in the redemption of humanity and is the fruit of her unique sharing in the victory of the Cross.”

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THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN BODY

BY SHEMAIAH GONZALEZ

“Children are hearing a lie that their bodies are not good... that these bodies are malleable... that they can change their sex, an intrinsic aspect of who they are.”

My preteen boys' bodies are changing. They are both, now, taller than me—and I am not a short woman. Their feet are unusually disproportionate to the rest of their bodies, so much so that my husband and I call them *Puppy Feet*. They have begun to stink at unexpected times and have sprouted unruly hairs across their face. It is glorious. So many of our conversations are about their bodies. *Bodies to yourself* and *Gentle touching*, I say, as if they are toddlers once again and we need to teach them boundaries again. Because we do. This is new uncharted territory for them. They are aware of their classmates' changing bodies too. I notice curiosity between all these children, moving into adulthood. I also notice how many dislike and distrust their bodies. I remember that awkward time of adolescence, when I loathed what my body was doing—but these children are up against something different. They are hearing a lie that their bodies are not good. That these bodies are malleable. That they can change their sex, an intrinsic aspect of who they are. They hear this from grownups, through media and from their peers. They are even hearing this from adults in some churches, who think they are being compassionate by spreading these lies. When my sons bring home snippets of these evil lies, I remind them about the Incarnation. The beautiful mystery that the God of

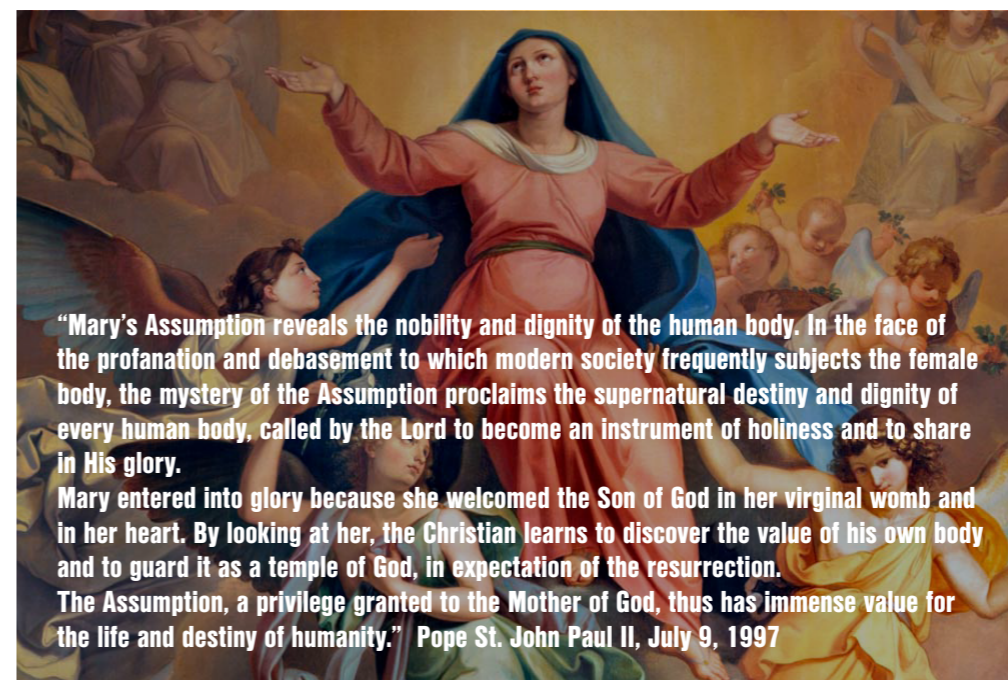


the universe loved us so much, He chose to become a man with a body. In doing this He showed us that our body and spirit are connected. And that our bodies are holy. St. Paul reminds us, in his First Letter to the Corinthians, that our body and spirit are connected to Christ. This is why we should not do harmful things to our bodies or the bodies of others. “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you?” St. Paul implores us. The reality is that our bodies are “not our own” (1 Corinthians 6) but belong to Christ through His act of redemption. I think back to the Garden of Eden. Before the snake and sin, Adam and Eve talked to God just as they did to each other. They “were both naked, yet they felt no shame” (Genesis 2). It was only when sin entered the world that they felt shame over their bodies. Shame was a result of sin, separating us from God. And yet, we still bear God’s Image, the *Imago Dei* within us. We were tenderly created, our sex, whether we are an introvert or extrovert, the spiritual gifts we have been given, so that there can never be someone else like us. We cannot be duplicated. When we allow ourselves to experience

God’s love for us, it brings freedom. We are able to care more tenderly for this body He has given us—this temple of the Holy Spirit. We are able to see ourselves more clearly ... as God sees us. St. Paul understood this. He saw how pagan thought and rituals had pervaded the early Church. He witnessed the definitions of love and sex become warped and distorted, to the point that both became evil. He wrote to the Romans and told them to offer their bodies as “living sacrifices” as part of their “worship.” “Do not

conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind,” he implores the Church. So I remind my sons who they are. I remind them of the truth. I must guide them to healthy holy places. I give them boundaries as they navigate this new space in life. I remind them that first and foremost, their identity is that they are children of God — and that their bodies give glory to God.

Gonzalez, Shemaiah: (c) 2023 EWTN News, Inc. Reprinted with permission from the National Catholic Register - <http://www.ncregister.com>



“Mary’s Assumption reveals the nobility and dignity of the human body. In the face of the profanation and debasement to which modern society frequently subjects the female body, the mystery of the Assumption proclaims the supernatural destiny and dignity of every human body, called by the Lord to become an instrument of holiness and to share in His glory. Mary entered into glory because she welcomed the Son of God in her virginal womb and in her heart. By looking at her, the Christian learns to discover the value of his own body and to guard it as a temple of God, in expectation of the resurrection. The Assumption, a privilege granted to the Mother of God, thus has immense value for the life and destiny of humanity.” Pope St. John Paul II, July 9, 1997



New MI Villages

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Who: All Men and Women, Married and Unmarried

What: Monthly Adoration, Rosary, Holy Mass, and St. Maximilian Kolbe Reflections

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Where: Malvern Retreat House, 315 S. Warren Ave, Malvern, PA, Blessed Carlo Shrine

Contact: Brian J. Gail at 484-318-8685 or brianjgail69@gmail.com

Wentzville, MO Holy Spirit MI Village

Contact: Dianna Meinecke for more details at Dianna30@gmail.com

San Diego, CA MI Village

Where: St. Thérèse of Carmel Catholic Church
Contact: Fr. Chris Tozzi, Pastor at <https://misandiego.org> for details.

TIPS FOR GROWTH IN EUCHARISTIC REVERENCE



Reverence is the trait of a person who is aware of God's presence and action, no matter what language he uses to express that awareness."

(Letter by Most Rev. John R. Keating Bishop of Arlington, December 1988)

When we go to church to pray or to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, we appreciate reverence and we should all contribute to creating a reverent atmosphere. Here is a collection of good suggestions.

DRESS FOR THE FEAST

Usually, our clothing indicates to us and others that we are participating in a special event and meeting someone important. For Catholics, there is nothing more solemn and important than the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, and certainly no one more important in life than Jesus Christ. Therefore, dressing reverently is very important when going to church. How then? We should simply use common sense: avoid shorts and over-casual clothing (you wouldn't show up for an interview dressed down, would you?); no mini-skirts, no cleavage. In one word: reverence.

PRAYER BEFORE MASS

It's a good practice to arrive a bit early to Mass, but if you have

children, it might be challenging. As much as possible, we don't want to show up right when Mass starts because we will have no time to prepare and may cause unintended commotion. The time of prayer before Mass may help focus on giving praise to God for His mercy and love, read the Gospel that will be proclaimed, and formulate the special intention and petition we want to bring to the altar.

RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

As we prepare to receive Our Lord in Holy Communion, we should unite with Our Lady so as to welcome Him with her humble

faith and unconditional love. Our posture in receiving our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, whether on the tongue or in the hand, should signify that we acknowledge that He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and reflect our inner disposition of humility, faith, and reverent love.

PRAYER AFTER MASS

Having received an exceptional gift, we should avoid leaving in a hurry, immediately after Mass, except for a good reason. Instead, it is a great habit to linger a few minutes after the Mass has ended to extend our thanksgiving for Holy Communion and the inner conversation with the Divine Guest, to pray for the people He

has entrusted to our care and for a fruitful week.

ONE LAST TIP

Unless we are responsible for other people's lives, as in the case of a caregiver, we should strive to ignore the cell phone while in church and especially during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It is distracting for those around you, and not very reverent toward the Lord.

Properly practiced, reverence is not for showing others how "holy" we are nor for drawing attention to ourselves. Rather, it is in itself a beautiful way of proclaiming: Our Lord Jesus is here! Come, let us adore Him!



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.

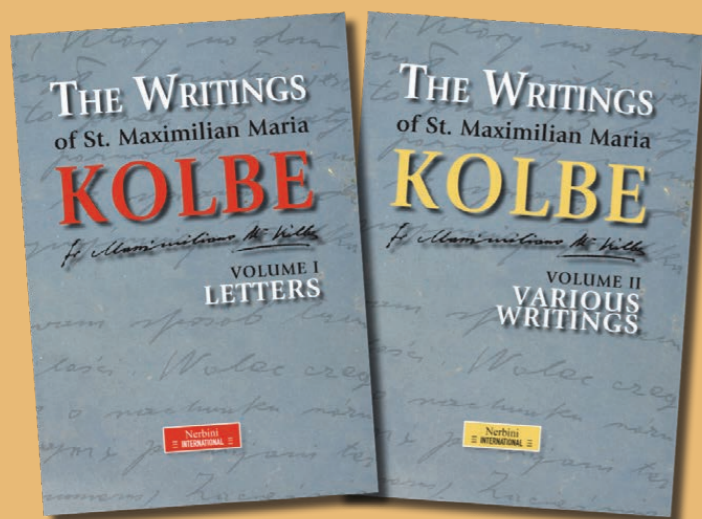
Nourished by the Eucharist, send us forth to walk faithfully as missionary disciples, proclaiming the Gospel to every heart and extending Your kingdom to every land.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

by Most Reverend José H. Gomez Archbishop of Los Angeles

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The Martyr of Charity, St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe (1894-1941), before his death in the Auschwitz concentration camp, 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. The publication of the first English critical edition, *The Writings of St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe*, constitutes a historic event for the English-speaking readership. The sublime inspiration of the Saint's Marian thought and spirituality transpires from every page of his writings, whether it be a treatise on the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Immaculate Conception, an evangelization plan, a message of counsel to religious and laity, or a filial letter to his mother. His deep personal relationship with the Immaculate Virgin Mary colors and enflames nearly every page. His leitmotif is love for God, the Church, the world and all its peoples. His goal is the conversion and sanctification of that world.



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— Fr. James McCurry, OFM Conv.

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



LOOKING BACK AND FORWARD

(CONTINUED FROM PG. 2)

"During my stay in Auschwitz, I tried my best to inspire others and instill in them the love of God. In such a terrible place, with death all around you, it was difficult, but the men needed hope and love that only God could provide. As much as possible I helped others with some of my rations and used the bread we were given to hold Communion service and give the Body of Christ to those in need. I never lost hope and put all my trust in Our Lady. I was willing to suffer even more for her. "Toward the end of July, a prisoner had escaped from Auschwitz. The

commandant, Rudolf Hoess, ordered ten men to be starved to death in an underground bunker in retaliation for the escape. One of those men was Polish Sergeant Franciszek Gajowniczek. After he was chosen, he cried out that he had a wife and children. I could not bear to see his pain and suffering about his wife and children. I wanted to help this man so I stepped out of line and walked to the front to address the Commandant. I hadn't stopped to think of the repercussions for breaking ranks, which at the very least would be a severe beating. This seemed to be a

near-daily routine for me, as the hate for Catholic priests was unimaginable. The starvation bunker was a cold dark place. Death lurked all around us and fed into our fear. I knew I needed to provide them as much comfort and hope as possible. I did my best to bring the love of God and Mary into the dark corners of their lives within this Sarcophagus Mausoleum. I led the men in prayer and we sang hymns to Mary. I prayed for all the men giving them hope. I told them Mary was interceding for us and a better life awaited us. It was difficult to watch the despair but wonderful to see in their eyes the love of Mary. When most of the other prisoners had died, the Nazis sent their doctor to inject me with carbolic acid and sent me to my Loving Father in Heaven. "My life ended on August 14, 1941. I was cremated on August 15, the Feast of the Assumption of my Blessed Mother. My only regret about going to Heaven was I would not be able to suffer anymore for Jesus. The last words on my mind were of my Blessed Mother: 'Hail Mary.'

"As the Allies closed in on Auschwitz and the occupied territory of Poland, the Germans executed most of the prisoners and took five hundred on a death march to Germany. Only twenty-five survived the march. Sergeant Franciszek Gajowniczek was one of the twenty-five and spent the rest of his life traveling around telling everyone of the great things I had accomplished in my life. To tell the truth, I don't feel I did enough. I did it all for Mary and would do it again. Sergeant Gajowniczek was present at my canonization and died in 1995. "I was canonized as a Saint and Martyr of Charity on October 10, 1982, by the Vicar of Christ, St. John Paul II, who said of me: 'Maximilian did not die but gave his life for his brother.' On my Feast Day, let us consecrate ourselves to our Blessed Mother and win the world for her, and through her, for the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the shortest possible time. May we love all her children as she loves us." Ronald Rodrigues
MI National President



ST. MAXIMILIAN WRITES...

HIS TEACHING ON OUR LADY'S MEDIATION IS INSIGHTFUL, WHILE OF COURSE LEAVING THE DECISION TO PROCLAIM IT A DOGMA OR NOT TO THE MAGISTERIUM (KW 1229).

We all know how tight the links are that join together the truths of Christian doctrine. The Catholic dogmas, in fact, stem from each other and perfect each other. Here is an example: Relying solely on the Catholic doctrine of the hypostatic union of the divine nature and human nature in the person of the Word, the Fathers of the Council of Ephesus proclaimed the divine Motherhood of Mary. In addition, as soon as the relationship between Jesus and Mary, His Mother, was recognized, there arose the doctrine of the Catholic faith whereby the Mother of the Savior was preserved from original sin. Catholics dared not even suppose that Mary could have possibly remained under the bondage of the devil for even a single moment. From the singular mission of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her ineffable union with the Holy Spirit (Immaculate Conception) there also emerged among the faithful the wonderful

hope of securing the sweet protection of Mary. It is clear that our relationship with Mary, Co-Redemptrix and Dispenser of Graces in the economy of redemption, was not entirely understood from the outset in all its perfection. In our times, however, faith in the mediation of the Blessed Virgin Mary grows increasingly strong each day. In this short article, we set out to explain how the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary can contribute to the dogma of her mediation. The work of redemption depends directly on the second Divine Person, Jesus Christ, Who with His own blood reconciled us to the Father, and gave Him reparation for the sin of Adam. He merited for us sanctifying grace, actual graces, and the right to enter the kingdom of heaven. However, the Third Person of the Most Holy Trinity also participates in this work, since by virtue of the redemption accomplished by Christ, He transforms the souls of men into temples of God: He makes us adoptive children of God

“It is the task of the Holy Spirit to form the new members of those predestined to the Mystical Body of Christ until the end of the world. But this work is brought to fruition with Mary, in Mary, and through Mary.”

and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. St. Paul, in fact, states: “You have been washed, [...] justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God” [1 Cor 6:11]. By penetrating into the depths of our souls, the Holy Spirit, who is God-Love, connects us with the other two Persons. For this reason, in his Letter to the Romans, St. Paul wrote: “We know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” [Rom 8:26]. In his Letter to the Corinthians, too, Paul says that the distribution of graces depends on the will of the Holy Spirit: “To one the Spirit gives wisdom in discourse, to another the power to express knowledge... by the same Spirit another is given the gift of healing, and still another miraculous powers. Prophecy is given to one... But it is one and the same Spirit who produces all these gifts” [cf. 1 Cor 12:8-11]. Yet, just as Jesus made himself Man-God in order to manifest His boundless love toward us, so also

the Third Person, God-Love, resolved to manifest with an external sign His own mediation with the Father and the Son. That sign is the Heart of the Immaculate Virgin, as appears from the writings of the saints, especially those who consider Mary the Spouse of the Holy Spirit. Blessed Louis-Marie Grignion [de Montfort], therefore, following the thought of the Fathers, draws the following conclusions: “The Holy Spirit, who is infertile within the Trinity, because no Divine Person proceeds from Him, became fruitful through Mary, whom He chose as His bride. With her, in her, and through her He realizes His masterpiece, that is to say, the Word incarnate. ‘The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee’ [Lk 1:35]. That, however, should not be understood to mean that the Blessed Virgin gave the Holy Spirit the fruitfulness that He, as God, would have to have, like the Father and the Son, even though in fact He did not put it to fruition, for the simple reason

that no divine Person proceeds from Him. Rather, we should understand it in the sense that the Holy Spirit resolved to use the mediation of Mary, while having absolutely no need of it in order to manifest His own fertility, forming through her and with her the human nature of Christ.” (See Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary,)

Even after Christ’s death the Holy Spirit works all things in us through Mary. In fact, what the Creator said to the serpent in reference to the Immaculate, “She will crush your head” [cf. Gn 3:15], is, according to the teaching of theologians, to be understood to have no limitations of time. It is the task of the Holy Spirit to form the new members of those predestined to the Mystical Body of Christ until the end of the world. But, as Blessed Louis Grignion demonstrates, this work is brought to fruition with Mary, in Mary, and through Mary. To this conclusion, namely that the Holy Spirit works through Mary, we are led by the texts of Scripture and by the assertions of the saints, who are the best interpreters of the Holy Scripture: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Paraclete—to be with you always; the Spirit of truth.... The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will instruct you in everything, and remind you of all that I told you.... When he comes, however, being the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth... In doing this he will give glory to me” [cf. Jn 14:16-17, 26; 16:13, 14]. Blessed Louis Grignion uses expressions that mean more or less the same, referring them, however, to the Immaculate: “We do not yet know Mary, and for this reason we do not know Christ as we ought to either. However, if Christ will be known and His kingdom established in the world—and that will happen, despite all—it will be an effect of the knowledge of Mary and her reign over us; for Mary, who once already gave birth to Jesus for the salvation of the world, now makes us able to know Jesus better.” (Continues on pp. 15-16)

ST. MAXIMILIAN WRITES...

As the Second Person Incarnate of the God-head manifests Himself under the name of “seed of the woman” [cf. Gn 3:15], so also the Holy Spirit, through the Immaculate Virgin, whom He united to Himself so closely that it is impossible to understand it in full—while maintaining the distinction between the two Persons— outwardly manifests His participation in the work of redemption. It is therefore different from what happens in the hypostatic union of the two natures, the divine and the human, in the one Person of Christ, which, however, in no way prevents an action of Mary from being the most perfect action of the Holy Spirit. In fact Mary, as the Bride of the Holy Spirit, and therefore high above every created perfection, thoroughly accomplishes the will of the Holy Spirit who dwells in her, and that from the first moment of her conception. Taking all these statements together, it seems reasonable to conclude that Mary, for the fact that she is the Mother of Jesus the Savior, has become Co-redemptrix of humankind, while, for the fact that she was the Bride of the Holy Spirit, she partakes of the distribution of all graces. Therefore, we can say with theologians: “As the first Eve, with truly free actions, contributed to our downfall, in which she exercised a real influence, so Mary,

with her own actions collaborated in the reparation.... Therein is contained now very clearly a true and properly termed mediation” (J. Bittremieux, *De Mediatione universali B.M.V.*). Especially in recent times, we have seen that the Immaculata, Bride of the Holy Spirit, has manifested herself as our Mediatrix. For in the year 1830 the Immaculate Virgin appeared to Sister Catherine Labouré. From the account of this novice nun, we understand what the purpose of the apparition of Mary was: to reveal her Immaculate Conception and her marvelous power with God: “The Most Holy Virgin turned her eyes toward me and at the same time I heard a voice: ‘This globe represents all people and every single person.’ And also: ‘Here is the symbol of the graces that I intend to bestow upon all those who invoke me.’ Then around the Most Blessed Virgin there appeared an oval frame on which was written in letters of gold, the following invocation: ‘O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.’ At the same time I heard a voice: ‘Mint a medal after this model; all who wear it will receive many graces.’” In Lourdes, the Immaculate Virgin exhorted all people to do penance. In addition, during these apparitions, as if to show us a source of help, she recited the “Hail Mary.” Since then, in Lourdes the Immaculata began to fulfill the office of Mediatrix for



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For the fact that she was the Bride of the Holy Spirit, the Immaculata partakes of the distribution of all graces.”

us: she invites the sick, gathers the lame and the weak to heal them, and helps us understand how much we depend on her in our natural life. She lovingly attracts those who are sick in the soul, that is, unbelievers and sinners with an obstinate heart, and instills supernatural life in their hearts, to convince them of the power that she has to give us supernatural life. In addition, we must above all consider the fact that Christ works miracles precisely in a location (Lourdes) chosen by His Mother. Everything that is achieved by the

Blessed Virgin Mary at Lourdes attests to the truth of the words of St. Peter Damian: “Through a woman, a curse fell upon the earth; through a woman upon the earth a blessing is returned, as well as those of St. Augustine: “The poison to deceive man was presented to him by a woman; through a woman a salvation for man’s recovery is presented.” Therefore, the Immaculate Virgin confirms with facts what St. Bernard asserts in words: “Such is the will of Him who wanted us to obtain all things through Mary. Fr. M.



“Confident and Clear”

On July 1st, the Corpus Christi Priory of the Norbertine Fathers of St. Michael’s Abbey (Orange, California) was officially opened in Springfield, Illinois, with Holy Mass presided by Bishop Thomas J. J. Paprocki with the presence of many priests, consecrated persons and friends. **Great news for the Midwest!** Since the 80s, the Norbertine Fathers of St. Michael’s Abbey have been closely associated with the Militia of the Immaculata, and total consecration to Our Lady according to St. Maximilian Kolbe has become an integral part of their spiritual life. Every Saturday they renew it after the community’s midday prayer. The Norbertine Fathers have also established **The Evermode Institute** involving both St. Michael’s Abbey and at the Corpus Christ Priory, which will serve those most responsible for teaching the Faith -- Catholic teachers and administrators, lay catechists, formators, and parents -- offering a complete online catechetical program that is “confident in its Catholicism and clear in its approach.” The first year begins with a “Back to the Basics” course on the way to a full Catholic identity. The full five-year program walks participants through 12 courses that track all four pillars of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and includes a certification track. MI members will find this to be a wonderful solid resource. Check the website for the curriculum overview: Evermode.org

fr. Maximilianus M. Kolbe



NOW THAT YOU ARE CONSECRATED...

Once you have decided to undertake total consecration to Our Lady and have become part of her MI Family, you may ask yourself: *And now, what do I do?*

1. DEEPEN YOUR OWN CONSECRATION

St. Maximilian said there are three “fronts of action” to more effectively “win the world for the Immaculata.” We must conquer ourselves, then those around us – family, friends, co-workers, etc. and finally the entire world with the Gospel message. But to win victory on the first front, over our own weakness of will and attraction to sin, we must cultivate our spiritual lives. Continual interior conversion is the seedbed of apostolic activity which will bring about real fruitfulness in the vineyard. How do we as MI members deepen our spiritual lives and strengthen our total consecration to Mary? Here are some suggestions: *Attend daily Mass, if possible, the “source

“Continual conversion is the seedbed of apostolic activity which will bring about real fruitfulness.”

and summit” of the Church’s life and activity; *Regularly participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, monthly if possible; *Spend time in adoration before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament; *Pray the Rosary, individually or in a group or family setting; *Spend quiet time with the Lord each and every day (start with 15 minutes); * Read Scripture, especially the New Testament, to know Christ better; *Read good Catholic spiritual literature and subscribe to solid Catholic resources; *Study Pope St. John Paul II’s teachings and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*; *Delve into *The Writings of St. Maximilian Kolbe*; *For spiritual support, join a small prayer group in your parish or among like-minded friends.

2. PROMOTE MARIAN CONSECRATION

The only way for a movement to grow is when its members reach out and invite others to join. We need to extend the invitation to join the MI to our family, friends, co-workers, fellow parishioners and whomever we meet. Why not order quantities of the “Be Consecrated to Mary in the Militia of the Immaculata” brochure to

distribute? To request this and all MI resources please write to: MINational@MissionImmaculata.com

3. PASS OUT MIRACULOUS MEDALS

St. Maximilian called this Catholic sacramental a “bullet” of supernatural grace. He encouraged MIs to share this gift from Our Lady to sow the seeds of conversion and sanctification (wearing it ourselves in faith protects and empowers our own consecration). Why not use this tool of catechesis, which encapsulates the Church’s teaching about Mary, to introduce others to the Immaculata? Carry them in your pocket, purse or briefcase.

4. PROMOTE THE KNIGHTS AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS (KFC)

St. Maximilian considered MI members who are experiencing suffering of any kind as the “spiritual vanguard” of the movement, a powerful army of prayer. By their KFC consecration these MI members, afflicted with sufferings

large and small, generate untold graces as they link their trials with those of our Lord Jesus Christ in an act of “redemptive suffering.” Why not promote the KFC among the aged, disabled, sick and all those who embrace the Cross? Visit nursing homes, hospitals, hospices and whomever may wish to participate in this valuable ministry.

5. CONSIDER FORMING A “VILLAGE OF THE IMMACULATA” – MI GROUP

By gathering MIs together in small groups of spiritual solidarity, we can help bring about the Kingdom of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To inquire about how to start an MI Village, please write to MI National.

6. UNITE WITH MI MEMBERS IN DAILY RENEWAL OF YOUR MARIAN CONSECRATION AND REFLECTION

Unite yourself with your MI Family while petitioning the intercession of the Immaculata, month by month, throughout the year, through the MI Monthly Intentions. Sign up for the Daily Kolbe Emails.

7. ENCOURAGE PARISH CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATA

As Mother of the Church, she brings purity of faith and unity among its members, her children. Why not approach your pastor and propose that your parish make a formal act of total consecration to Our Lady? The booklet *Behold Your Mother!* (available in English and Spanish) may be used effectively in a parish setting. Contact Us for more information.





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.

August

O Immaculata, please intercede...

That, following in the footsteps of St. Maximilian Kolbe, we may allow ourselves to be guided by you, Mother Mary, and like him radiate trust, inner strength and joyful surrender in the world.

Mt 10:11-12 - Whatever town or village you enter, look for a worthy person in it, and stay there until you leave. As you enter a house, wish it peace.

KW 1301 - If we are of the Immaculata, then all that is ours belongs to her, and Jesus accepts everything that comes from us as if it came from her, as if it belonged to her....That is why a soul consecrated to the Immaculata must freely follow its heart's inspiration and approach the tabernacle, the Cross, and the Most Holy Trinity with greater resolve, for it will not

be approaching them alone, but together with the heavenly Mother, the Immaculata. Thus, we need to pray freely, both with ejaculatory prayers and with other prayers, wherever the wings of God's love lead us, wherever the Holy Spirit blows, shattering all barriers.

Reflection - Fr. Kolbe found in the Immaculata the creative power of love that gives itself without reserve. From her he learned to accept God's Plan, to welcome His word, and to actualize it in daily life. Out of love for her, he was not afraid to give his very life for another man. Following his footsteps, we, MI Knights, ought to belong unreservedly to her so as to win souls for Christ. St. Maximilian teaches us that authentic love is to be translated into action by choices that often require sacrifice. May we endeavor each day to choose confidently what is right and good, even when it may be costly. Let us not wait for exceptional occasions. Rather, let us discern the opportunities to make heroic choices in the humble and ordinary situations of life. With the Immaculata we will have the strength to be faithful and give God the greatest possible glory.

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



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331-223-5564
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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



MI Villages

Want to connect and pray with other MI members? Looking for support in deepening or preparing for your consecration? Join an MI Village and live out your consecration with others. For information about an MI Village in your area, email the MI National Center. For *online MI Villages*, email the Moderators listed below.

****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