

THE KNIGHT OF THE *Immaculata*

E-PUBLICATION OF THE MILITIA OF THE IMMACULATA, USA



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100th Anniversary of the First MI Magazine

A Time of Joyful Celebration

by Ronald L. Rodrigues, MI National President

Dear Knights of the Immaculata,

Maria! On November 27 we began the Advent season to make ready for the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. Advent is a season of preparation, a time to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of our Savior. Jesus came to the world to save us from our sins. Advent should therefore be a time of celebration, joy and hope. It is a time to look at the coming of Jesus into our lives now. We also anticipate His second coming as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. A Joyous occasion. The birth of our Savior is near!

During Advent, we prepare for Christ's coming in our hearts and in our homes. We set up our Advent wreath in a prominent spot to remind us of His return and our need to prepare for Him. Other preparations during Advent include decorating a Christmas tree and setting up the Nativity scene. This can be a wonderful time for the whole family to learn the real meaning of the season and to celebrate the coming birth of our Lord.

Our preparation for the birth of Christ is made more difficult by the commercialization of Christmas. Many people are more concerned about getting the best deals on Black Friday and Cyber Monday. We might shop on those days, but it should not become so consuming that we forget about the best gift of all, Jesus Christ born in a simple stable in Bethlehem.

On December 8th, shortly after the beginning of the Advent season, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. This feast recalls the Marian dogma of the Church proclaimed by Pope Pius IX, about Mary being conceived immaculate, without the stain of original sin, and full with grace. St. Maximilian Kolbe knew the importance of Our Lady's role in carrying out the providential

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“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

Editorial

(Continued from pg. 1)

plan of God and that she is our driving force, the person we should look to as we seek to understand the truth about Jesus, the Church, and ourselves.

Let us celebrate with our Founder this joyous occasion and renew our total consecration to her.

Following Advent, we enter the Christmas season. It is a time of great joy and peace; when people of all faiths try to come together and enjoy the gifts God has created for us. Christmas is one of the most important days of the year, second only to Easter. The first recorded celebration of Christmas started in Rome in 336, during the time of Roman Emperor Constantine, but it really didn't catch on until sometime in the 9th century. The Christmas season in the liturgical calendar begins with Vespers on Christmas Eve and ends on the Sunday celebrating the Baptism of the Lord, which is usually celebrated on the Sunday after the Feast of the Epiphany. But in the new year, 2023, the feast of Epiphany will be celebrated on Sunday, January 8, and the Baptism of the Lord will be celebrated on Monday, January 9, which brings the Christmas season to a close. There are some Catholics who celebrate the Christmas season until the Presentation of the Lord on February 2. In the Vatican, the Christmas tree and Nativity scene are left up until February 2.

No matter how you celebrate Christmas, the importance of the season is that we remember the real reason for Christmas: Jesus Christ is born anew in our hearts. I hope you will open your hearts to receive the love of Jesus and that the love of Mary may radiate through you in the new year so as to bring others to the love of Jesus through her Immaculate Heart.

Let us continue our journey in the new year renewing daily our consecra-

tion to our dear Immaculata and win the whole word for the Sacred Heart of Jesus through her.

Wishing you and your families a blessed Advent and a joy-filled Christmas season!

Ronald L. Rodrigues
MI National President

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



Daily Holy Mass

will be offered throughout 2022 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:

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being chosen and destined to be the Mother of Christ” (n 9).

God granted Mary the fullness of grace

“Full of grace” is the name Mary possesses in the eyes of God. Indeed, the angel, according to the Evangelist Luke’s account, uses this expression even before he speaks the name “Mary,” and thus emphasizes the predominant aspect which the Lord perceived in the Virgin of Nazareth’s personality.

The expression “Full of grace” is the translation of the Greek word *kecharitomene*, which is a passive participle. Therefore to render more exactly the nuance of the Greek word one should not say merely “full of grace,” but “made full of grace,” or even “filled with grace,” which would clearly indicate that this was a gift given by God to the Blessed Virgin. This term, in the form of a perfect participle, enhances the image of a perfect and lasting grace which implies fullness. The same verb, in the sense of “to bestow grace,” is used in the Letter to the Ephesians to indicate the abundance of grace granted to us by the Father in His beloved Son (Eph 1:6), and which Mary receives as the first fruits of Redemption (cf. *Redemptoris Mater*, n. 10).

In the Virgin’s case, God’s action certainly seems surprising. Mary has no human claim to receiving the announcement of the Messiah’s coming. She is not the high priest, official representative of the Hebrew religion, nor even a man, but a young woman without any influence in the society of her time. In addition, she is a native of Nazareth, a village which is never mentioned in the Old Testament. It must not have enjoyed a good reputation, as Nathanael’s question, recorded in John’s Gospel makes clear: “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (Jn 1:46).

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Full of Grace: The Name Mary Possesses in the Eyes of God

From the Marian catecheses of Pope St. John Paul II

In the account of the Annunciation, the first word of the Angel’s greeting, *Rejoice*, is an invitation to joy which recalls the oracles of the Old Testament addressed to the “daughter of Zion.” We pointed this out in our previous catecheses and also explained the reasons for this invitation: God’s presence among His people, the coming of the messianic king and maternal fruitfulness. These reasons are fulfilled in Mary.

The Angel Gabriel, addressing the Virgin of Nazareth after the greeting, *chaire*, “Rejoice,” calls her *kecharitomene*, “full of grace.”

The words of the Greek text, *chaire* and *kecharitomene*, are deeply interconnected: Mary is invited to rejoice primarily because God loves her and has filled her with grace in view of her divine motherhood!

The Church’s faith and the experience of the saints teach us that grace is a source of joy, and that true joy comes from God. In Mary, as in Christians, the divine gift produces deep joy.

Kecharitomene: this term addressed to Mary seems to be the proper way to describe the woman destined to become the Mother of Jesus. *Lumen gentium* appropriately recalls this when it affirms: “The Virgin of Nazareth is hailed by the heralding angel, by divine command, as *full of grace*” (*Lumen gentium*, n. 56). The fact that the heavenly messenger addresses her in this way enhances the value of the angelic greeting: it is a manifestation of God’s mysterious saving plan in Mary’s regard. As I wrote in the Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*: “*The fullness of grace* indicates all the supernatural munificence from which Mary benefits by



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



Full of Grace: The Name Mary Possesses in the Eyes of God

(Continued from pg. 4)

The extraordinary and gratuitous nature of God's intervention becomes even clearer in comparison with Luke's text which recounts what happened to Zechariah. The latter's priestly status is highlighted as well as his exemplary life which make him and his wife Elizabeth models of Old Testament righteousness: they walked "blameless in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord" (Lk 1:6). But we are not informed of Mary's origins either: the expression "of the house of David" (Lk 1:27) in fact refers only to Joseph. No mention is made then of Mary's behavior. With this literary choice, Luke stresses that everything in Mary derives from a sovereign grace. All that is granted to her is not due to any claim of merit, but only to God's free and gratuitous choice.

***God's mercy reaches
the highest degree in Mary***

In so doing, the Evangelist does not of course intend to downplay the outstanding personal value of the Blessed Virgin. Rather, he wishes to present

Mary as the pure fruit of God's goodwill: He has so taken possession of her as to make her, according to the title used by the Angel, "full of grace." The abundance of grace itself is the basis of Mary's hidden spiritual richness.

In the Old Testament, Yahweh expresses the superabundance of His love in many ways and on many occasions. At the dawn of the New Testament, the gratuitousness of God's mercy reaches the highest degree in Mary. In her, God's predilection, shown to the chosen people and in particular to the humble and the poor, reaches its culmination.

Nourished by the Word of the Lord and the experience of the saints, the Church urges believers to keep their gaze fixed on the Mother of the Redeemer and to consider themselves, like her, loved by God. She invites them to share Our Lady's humility and poverty, so that, after her example and through her intercession, they may persevere in the grace of God Who sanctifies and transforms hearts.

Pope St. John Paul II
General Audience of May 8, 1996

Happy New Year!

Yes, on the first Sunday of Advent we began a new liturgical year, with all the expectations that accompany every new beginning.

How are we going to walk through the Advent season while celebrating the Eucharistic Revival? Our Lady comes to our aid. As Pope St. Paul VI wrote in his apostolic exhortation, *Marialis Cultus*: “during Advent there are many liturgical references to Mary besides the Solemnity of December 8, which is a joint celebration of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, of the basic preparation (cf. Is 11:1,10) for the coming of the Savior and of the happy beginning of the Church without spot or wrinkle. Such liturgical references are found especially on the days from December 17 to 24, and more particularly on the Sunday before Christmas, which recalls the ancient prophecies concerning the Virgin Mother and the Messiah and includes readings from the Gospel concerning the imminent birth of Christ and His precursor. In this way *the faithful*, living in the liturgy the spirit of Advent, by thinking about the inexpressible love with which the Virgin Mother awaited her Son, *are invited to take her as a model and to prepare themselves to meet the Savior who is to come....* This season... should be considered as a time particularly suited to devotion to the Mother of the Lord.”

Advent is indeed the Marian liturgical season *par excellence*. During this Advent 2022, let us then be “vigilant in prayer and joyful in praise” while journeying in communion with Our Lady.

- *She is the first living tabernacle of history*, for in her the Word has become flesh and has come to dwell among us. Let us commune with her as we prepare to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. May we open our hearts to His transforming word and may her *Fiat* echo in our *Amen* as we receive Him in Holy Communion. He wishes



A Plan for Celebrating Advent and Christmas during the Eucharistic Revival

to find in each of us the same dispositions of faith and love with which His Blessed Mother welcomed Him in her heart and in her whole person, so that He may come to dwell in us.

Let us contemplate with her the mystery of His Real Presence whenever we are before Him in silent Eucharistic adoration. May we choose to spend more time with Him during this new year!

- *Our Lady, right after the Annunciation, went “in haste” to bring her loving service and His presence to her relatives.* At every Mass, let us ask her to remind us of our call “to carry” His presence wherever we go so as to discern the “Elizabeth and Zechariah” who might be waiting to experience

His love through our caring presence. Let us be attentive and creative in our love for others! As always, and as Our Lady experienced, in giving we receive.

- *Our Lady journeyed with St. Joseph to Bethlehem, the “House of Bread,”* where the Divine Son, the Bread of Life, was born in a manger. As they set out for the long journey, they must have certainly *packed light*. Perhaps, we too can take an inventory and see what we need to *let go of* in terms of material possessions, attachments and habits, so as to travel light with the Holy Family and be ready to recognize the King of Kings in the humble and sublime mystery of the Eucharist just as they recognized Him in their new-
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A Plan for Celebrating Advent and Christmas during the Eucharistic Revival

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as they recognized Him in their newborn Child.

- Finally, *let us join our holy Mother as she joyfully adored her Divine Child, our Savior, and as she eagerly presented Him to St. Joseph, the shepherds, and the Wise Men.* Let consider whom we could invite to join us at the Eucharistic celebration so they may hear the glad tidings of the Birth of our Savior and encounter Him in His Real Presence among us.

Pope St. Paul VI again reminds us that “The Christmas season is a prolonged commemoration of the divine, virginal and salvific motherhood of her whose ‘inviolable virginity brought the Savior into the world.’ In fact, on the Solemnity of the Birth of Christ, the Church both adores the Savior and venerates His glorious Mother. On the Epiphany, when she celebrates the universal call to salvation, the Church contemplates the Blessed Virgin, the true Seat of Wisdom and true Mother of the King, who presents to the Wise Men, for their adoration, the Redeemer of all peoples (cf. Mt 2:11). On the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Church meditates with profound reverence upon the holy life led in the house at Nazareth by Jesus,

the Son of God and Son of Man, Mary His Mother, and Joseph the just man (cf. Mt 1:19).”

If we embark on this journey wholeheartedly with our Immaculate Mother, we may be assured that we will have a truly grace-filled Advent and a blessed Christmas season!



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

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.



Online MI Villages

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

MI Village Moderators Online Formation Series

Dive in Search of Pearls: Introduction to The Writings of St. Maximilian Kolbe

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w66FaogDQqU>

On December 17th, Antonella Di Piazza, FKMI, general editor of *The Writings of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe*, will facilitate the second session of the online series on St. Maximilian Kolbe's Writings. The link to Zoom meeting will be sent to MI Village Moderators.

*Find the first presentation on the MI YouTube channel.
Subscribe!*

Upcoming Sessions:

December 17, 2022

January 21, 2023

February 18, 2023

By the way... Are you still looking for a Christmas gift idea?
Get a copy of the updated edition of *The Writings* from
Marytowngiftshop.com



Red Lights Turned Green

Honoring the legacy of late Professor Claude Foster, author of *Mary's Knight*

My first encounter with Professor Claude Foster took place at the end of July 2007, at Niepokalanow, the City of the Immaculata established by St. Maximilian near Warsaw. The following week, Professor Foster came with some American-Polish friends to the St. Maximilian Kolbe Center in Harmęż-Oświęcim, where I was stationed at the time. In the too-short time we had together, we spoke of our “common friend,” St. Maximilian. One evening, I asked Professor Foster if he would let me interview him, and he kindly accepted to speak of the man, Father Maximilian, whom he knew and loved as a first hand-witness. What he shared, I believe, is a great tribute to the Patron Saint of our troubled times and a challenging inspiration for all of us, called to follow in his footsteps, along the way of Christ-like Love. Professor Foster received the St. Maximilian Kolbe Award in 2008. He died 10 years ago, on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. His work remains an invaluable source for everyone who wishes to know accurately the story of St. Maximilian Kolbe.

Antonella Di Piazza, FKMI

Professor Foster, in the opinion of many, and, in particular, in the opinion of your late dear friend, Brother Jerome Maria Wierzba of Niepokalanow, you are the author of the most comprehensive and authentic biography of St. Maximilian Kolbe. Before we continue, would you please tell us something about yourself?

I was born and raised in Delaware. I attended the University of Delaware. I received my Master's Degree from the University of Delaware and then completed my Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. I had a Fulbright Scholarship which enabled me to study at the University of Freiburg in the Black Forest in Germany and, after finishing that course of studies, I was offered a teaching job in the German school system. After my Freiburg

residence, I returned to the United States and began teaching. After teaching in a private school for eight years, I accepted a university professorship at West Chester University in West Chester, Pennsylvania. I have held this tenure for forty-one years. As to my family, I'm the youngest child. My parents and two older sisters are deceased. I am married. My wife is a retired nurse. We have two children, a son and a daughter, and five grandchildren.

When and how did you come to know about Father Maximilian Kolbe? What caused you to invest so much time and energy, over thirteen years, to study and to write about Saint Maximilian; a project which also demanded extensive travel and expense?

I came to Poland in 1987 to visit friends in Poznan. When they ask me what I wanted to do and to see, I mentioned that I had remembered reading an article about Father Kolbe. I recalled that the article referred to a museum at Niepokalanow and I suggested to my friends that it might be interesting to visit this museum. They agreed to take me there. When we got to the museum, I noticed that they didn't have a guide for English speaking guests. There were only guides available for German or Polish speaking guests. Since I am fluent in the German language, I said, “Well, give me the guide who speaks German.” Brother Jerome came and we started a tour of the museum. As Brother Jerome began explaining all the exhibits to me, I realized that much of what he was telling me wasn't in the literature which I had read concerning Father Maximilian. It also dawned on me that there was too much information to assimilate in one afternoon and, because I had a tight schedule, I couldn't extend my visit. I asked Brother Jerome, “If I return next Summer and remain here for an extended period, will you make yourself available to me?” Brother Jerome said that he would. I took his telephone number.

Because he administered the friary's mission to the poor, Brother Jerome had a telephone in his room. Once I had returned to the United States, Brother Jerome and I began a lively correspondence. I read everything I could find, in German and in English, on the ministry of St. Maximilian. When I returned to Niepokalanow in the Summer of 1988, I took my video camera. I told Brother Jerome, “I see much literature about Father Maximilian, but most of it centers on spiritual aspects of his life or on his final days at Auschwitz. I don't see any work which deals with St. Maximilian's life in its complete context; in the context of Twentieth Century European history. I think that such a study is needed, but I can't prepare such a biography alone. If you will help me and introduce me to the other friars who knew Father Kolbe, and if they will permit me to interview them and record their stories, we, together, could write an historical biography.” Brother Jerome said that he would be delighted to collaborate with me in such a venture. We began to work and thirteen years later we had a manuscript.

How old was Brother Jerome at that time?

He was seventy-six-years old at that time, and still healthy. Later, about two years before we completed our work, Brother Jerome began to suffer from congestive heart failure. When Brother Jerome visited me twice in the United States in 1992 and 1994, respectively, he still was very robust and could work very energetically. I collected the information which Brother Jerome provided and sought to arrange it in a chronologically narrative depicting the life and ministry of St. Maximilian. Without such cooperation from the friars, and especially from Brother Jerome, I couldn't have written this biography. I am only the scribe.

So you recorded and videotaped and then transcribed interviews. A lot of work and very time-consuming...

Very time-consuming indeed, but Father Domanski and Brother Jerome, particularly those two, selected the letters and homilies that they thought were most significant. Obviously Father Kolbe's works are so extensive and voluminous that we couldn't possibly include all of them. We had to be selective and Brother Jerome and Father Domanski were in the best position to select the most illustrative works. Brother Jerome translated the various texts into German. Then Father George Domanski, with his command of Polish, German and English, read the manuscript to check that everything was correct. We also enlisted other readers to review the manuscript in order to ensure accuracy.

The biography is written in a narrative style, but anchored on primary sources, such as correspondence and articles. It also contains homilies and conversations recalled by friars and priests who heard them. You personally interviewed many of them. Your words reveal the profound admiration and love that you have for him. May I be so bold

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Red Lights Turned Green

(Continued from pg. 9)

as to ask: Who is Father Maximilian Kolbe to you, personally? How has he affected, impacted, or even changed your life?

There is a simile which I like to employ when describing the mission of St. Maximilian. Picture an automobile traveling down a broad boulevard and up ahead, at each intersection, are a series of traffic lights. Each one of the traffic lights is red. Father Kolbe is driving this automobile. The transit down the boulevard is the allegory for his career. Father Kolbe approaches each intersection in anticipation that the red light will turn green—and it does! Think about the improbability. In a homeland occupied by a foreign, totalitarian regime, what is the probability that little Mundek will be able to gain an education?—that the red light will turn green, and yet it did. What are the possibilities that this poor Polish youth would be able to enroll in the Lvov Franciscan Minor Seminary, study in Rome, receive a doctorate in philosophy and a doctorate in Theology and be ordained a priest in the Eternal City? Before he was ordained, he almost lost a thumb. The physicians wanted to amputate the thumb, but it was miraculously healed—red light turned green. After having returned to Poland, he wanted, against all odds, to publish a journal for his Militia of the Immaculata—red light turned green. He wanted to establish a Christian mission in Japan. He was asked, “Do you know the language?” “No.” “Do you have contacts in Japan?” “No.” “Do you have funds?” “No.” He traveled to Japan and the red light turned green. Father Kolbe arrived in Nagasaki with the desire to publish a journal in the Japanese language. The bishop Hayasaka exclaimed, “That’s impossible. You don’t know the language and you have no money. I have other concerns.” It turned out that the bishop needed a philosophy professor for his seminary and that he had traveled far and wide in Japan searching for one. When the bishop returned to Nagasaki, Father Maximilian and two of his friars were seated on the bishop’s doorstep. Father Kolbe drew from his briefcase his doctorate in philosophy from the Gregorian University in Rome and said, “Bishop, if I may have my journal, you may have your profes-

sor.” Bishop Hayasaka laughed and replied, “While I diligently searched far and wide for a professor, one is seated on my doorstep. All right, Father.” The red light had turned green.

He never liked to show off, to promote himself... but when needed to for the cause, he did. He knew what the right timing was.

Right. He knew the right timing with Prince Jan Drucki Lubecki when he needed land for the City of the Immaculata, Niepokalanow. He knew that Drucki Lubecki’s middle name was Maria. Father Kolbe and his brother Alfons already had set up a statue of Mary on the land. When the Provincial didn’t accept Drucki Lubecki’s terms, the prince, of course, could have canceled the grant. The prince said that, since the grant now would be canceled, Father Kolbe could remove the Virgin Mary statue. Father Kolbe replied, “Permit the statue to remain on your estate. The Holy Mother will bless your estate. We’ve already dedicated it to Her.” Drucki Lubecki could not possibly take back something that had been dedicated to the Blessed Mother. So, you may say that St. Maximilian was very clever.

...the Gospel’s cleverness...!

That’s right. Sly as a fox. And the fact that he was able to publish *Rycerz Niepokalanej*, even if only once, in Nazi-occupied Poland, demonstrates Father Kolbe’s slyness. Think about that for a moment. Do you think that any Polish Franciscan priest was going to get permission to publish 120,000 journals and distribute them? That’s out of the question. You can’t possibly imagine that Father Kolbe published 120,000 journals in December 1940 and January 1941, a double number—that’s impossible! But he did it. When the Gestapo in Warsaw turned him down, he went to Krakow. Because the left hand (the German system at that point) did not know what the right hand was doing, Father Kolbe got permission from Krakow and also from the Bureau of Public Education. The man in charge was a German, but he had taught, before the war, at a Warsaw University, and he had a sympathy for the poor priest. He gave Father Kolbe permission. Of course when the Gestapo found that out, they were furious. I think that there is a relationship between the pub-

lication of the journal and what happened later. The journal was distributed in December 1940, January 1941, and Father Kolbe was arrested in February. He would have been arrested anyway down the line, but the fact that his arrest came so soon after the journal publication, I think, speaks for itself.

Father Kolbe speaks and writes about Our Lady as a living being, a person alive and active in the world. She was very real to him, in his daily journey of Faith. She is the key person in his life, the Mother he wants to make known and loved by everyone.

Correct. In a way She replaced his mother, Marianna. When he had to go away to school, his mother told him to trust now in the Holy Mother, “She will be your *Mamusia*. She will never leave you or forsake you.” Because he had to go away from home, he couldn’t be physically near his earthly mother, but there was no problem with space and time in his relationship with the Holy Mother. Another scene took place in Rome when he was there as a student, before he was ordained. Father Joseph Pal tells us that one day, when they were walking home, reciting the Rosary, some youth started making fun of them and using Mary’s name in a vulgar manner. The desecration of the Immaculata’s name brought tears to Maximilian’s eyes. He tried to reason with the youth and to persuade them not to use offensive language when they were referring to the Virgin Mary. Maximilian couldn’t tolerate the profanation of the sacred name of Mary.

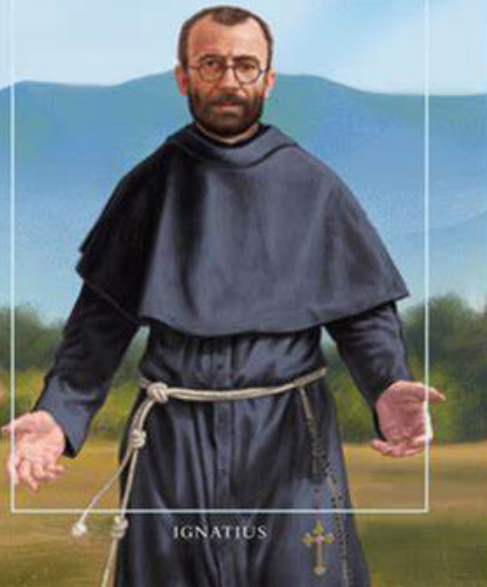
And what about his extraordinary missionary zeal and innovative approach to evangelization?

If you look at Benedict XV and Pius XI, they were both very missionary-minded popes, and there are several encyclicals which were promulgated during their pontificates. Benedict lived until 1922. He succeeded Pius X, who died in 1914. During this period (1914-1939) you can see how Benedict XV in his pontificate, from 1914 to 1922, and especially Pius XI, from 1922 to 1939, put a strong emphasis on missionary activity, and going out in the world to preach the Gospel. We should remember that in 1914, Brother Maximilian was a student in Rome. He was listening to this clear message from the Pope. Even when he came back to Poland, he always was very well-informed. He read all the news and particularly the news from the Vatican. He saw the changes occurring in the world, including the experience he had in 1917 when he witnessed the Masons’ demonstration against the Pope in Rome.

These events led him to the conclusion that it’s not enough for us to simply sit behind monastery walls and pray. The Christian must go out on the highways and the byways and fight against the enemies of Christ and His Church, not with carnal means, but with weapons of love and sacrifice and persuasion. The Christian must seek to *win the world for Christ through Mary*. That’s the bottom line. You could sum up his whole Theology with
(Continues on pg. 10)

SAINT MAXIMILIAN KOLBE

A Hero of the Holocaust



Recently I received a review copy of *Saint Maximilian Kolbe: A Hero of the Holocaust* by Fiorella De Maria. This 192-page biography is one of the latest additions to the popular Vision Book Series published by Ignatius Press. This series is a collection of historic biographies targeted at Catholic youth from ages 9-15, but readers of all ages will find them informative and inspiring for they stimulate the mind as well as nourish the soul.

Fiorella De Maria creatively unfolds the story of Raymond Kolbe, a Polish weavers' son, who was inspired at an early age to become a Franciscan, a missionary, and martyr. Having experienced a mystical vision of the Immaculate Virgin Mary as an adolescent, this gifted young man was offered two crowns: a white one symbolizing purity and a red one symbolizing martyrdom. Raymond eagerly chose both crowns and soon afterward with his older brother he entered the minor seminary of the Conventual Franciscan Friars, where he was both intellectually and spiritually formed. Later, having been sent for graduate studies to Rome, where he earned doctorates in philosophy and theology, the then-Friar Maximilian, along with six fellow student friars, founded the Militia of the Immaculata (MI) movement seeking the conversion and sanctification of souls. De Maria, a Cambridge University

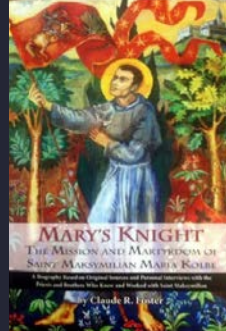
BOOK REVIEW

Saint Maximilian Kolbe: A Hero of the Holocaust

graduate with a BA in English Literature and a Master's Degree in Renaissance Literature, masterfully recreates the significant moments of Maximilian Kolbe's life with details and dialogue inviting the reader to enter into the story of political unrest, social change, and spiritual battles that uniquely shaped the incredible life of this friar-priest whom Pope St. John Paul II would call the "patron of our difficult century" in 1982. The author highlights in a marvelous way how this son of St. Francis never lost his sense of youthful wonder as he matured, and how Kolbe's infectious zeal for souls was rooted in his perfect imitation of Christ, especially in his total consecration to the Immaculata.

Saint Maximilian Kolbe: A Hero of the Holocaust is a fine work that will introduce many more young readers to one of the greatest stories of heroism and hope to emerge from the Holocaust. While certain liberty is taken by the author to recreate historic moments through fictitious dialogue, this book is an extremely engaging reading experience. MI members might consider getting copies to share with Catholic parishes and schools so that many more young people might be afforded the opportunity to get to know our beloved founder and to learn the secret of his sanctity--total consecration to Mary!

Michael D. Wick



RED LIGHTS TURNED GREEN

(Continued from pg. 9)

that sentence. If you look at everything he wrote, everything he did, everything he was trying to do... What is the climatic statement which crowns his Theology? *Win the world for Christ through Mary!* That's it.

And everything else revolves around that ambition. This is the whole mission and this is why all those Brothers came to join him. That's why he went to Japan. He went to India and wanted to establish a Niepokalanow there. He couldn't at that time establish a station in India or in China, but he was trying to do so. He wanted *Rycerz Niepokalanej* translated into all languages. The journal was in Italian and in Polish, but he wanted to use all languages. Finally he had a radio station that in December 1938 opened in Niepokalanow and he was thinking about building an airstrip. Two of the Brothers acquired a pilot's license. Even as a youth he had designed a rocket to travel to the moon. So you see, he was ahead of his time. He had a very fertile mind, a very alert mind and a mind which was well-informed, but at the same time an obedient mind. Everything he did, he submitted to the will of the Immaculata. To win the world for Christ through Mary. That is the essence of his Theology.

We could go on forever! But before closing this precious time, let me ask you one more question. What do you think is Father Kolbe's core message to the world, to young people, to us today?

Have noble ideals and pursue those noble ideals and be prepared to live a life of sacrifice and love. I think of what Father Kolbe told the Brothers when, just before the arrival of the Wehrmacht at Niepokalanow, he sent the friars away, "Don't forget Love!"—and then his other admonition, "Hatred is not creative; Love alone is creative!" It doesn't sound profound at all, but once it is translated into action, it does become profound. Remember, Father Kolbe stood in line at Auschwitz when Franciszek Gajowniczek was selected for the starvation bunker. That which is indelibly stamped in my mind is that Father Kolbe is among the few in history who literally followed the example of the Lord Jesus Christ: "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends" [John 15:13]. Father Kolbe is the only person I know of in the history of the concentration camps who translated this WORD into the DEED. The Word summons us all.

We know the Word and the word demands response. Father Kolbe answered the challenge. Christians are called upon to emulate the example of Our Lord and of this Polish Franciscan priest who, having committed himself in total consecration to the Lord Jesus Christ through the Immaculata, boldly was able to accept martyrdom on behalf of his brother in the Faith. We are called upon to do the same.



St. Maximilian Writes...

An inspiring text from the 1938-1940 drafts *For a Book (KW 1305)*.

Who are you, O Lady?
Who are you, O Immaculata?

I am unable to delve into what it means to be a “creature of God.” Even understanding what it means to be an “adoptive son of God” already surpasses my strength.

But you, Immaculata, who are you?

You are not only creature, you are not only adopted daughter, but also Mother of God, and you are not only adopted Mother, but true Mother of God.

And that is not just a theory, a probability, but a certainty, a full certainty, a dogma of faith.

Are you still the Mother of God? The title of Mother admits of no alterations.

For all eternity God will call you “My mother”... He who established the fourth commandment, will honor you for all eternity, forever... Who are you, O divine one?

He Himself, the God incarnate,

loved to call Himself “Son of man.” Yet men did not understand Him. And even today how few are the souls that understand Him, and how many as yet imperfectly understand Him!

Allow me to praise you, O Virgin Most Holy.

I adore You, our Father in Heaven, because You placed in her most pure womb Your only-begotten Son.

I adore You, O Son of God, for You have deigned to enter her womb and became the real, true Son of her.

I adore You, O Holy Spirit, for You deigned to shape in her immaculate womb the body of the Son of God.

I adore You, O Most Holy Trinity, one God in the Holy Trinity, for having raised up the Immaculata in such a divine way.

And I shall never cease, every day, as I wake up from sleep, to most

humbly adore You, O Triune God, with my face to the ground, repeating three times: “Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.”

Allow me to praise you, O Virgin Most Holy.

Allow me to praise you with my commitment and personal sacrifice.

Allow me to live, work, suffer, be consumed and die for you, only for you.

Allow me to bring the whole world to you.

Allow me to contribute to an ever-greater exaltation of you, to the greatest Allow me to render such glory unto you as no one has ever rendered unto you so far.

Allow others to pass me in zeal for your exaltation, and grant that I may surpass them, so that in noble emulation your glory may grow deeper and deeper, faster and faster, more and more intensely, as the One wishes who raised you up so ineffably above all created beings.

In you alone was God worshiped incomparably more than in all His saints.

For you God created the world. For you God called even me into existence.

Where does this fortune of mine come from?

I pray you, grant that I may praise you, O Most Holy Virgin!

M.

fr Maximiliano M. Kilber



MI Intentions - December

This year, the monthly reflections provided by the MI International Office on the 2022 MI Intentions include:

*A Scripture reading.

*A text from St. Maximilian Kolbe's Writings.

*A quote from the Pope's teachings.

*A brief commentary.

The goal is to offer MI leaders the possibility to adapt the material to the need of the group and/or the current reality.

December: O Immaculata, please intercede that, following St. Maximilian's example, we may rejoice in your Immaculate Conception and be for everyone a sign of the evangelical call to holiness.

Mt 28:16-20 – The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore,* and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

KW 1218 – First of all, on December 8, let us renew together or individually our consecration to the Immaculata according to the formula contained in the enrolment card. **KW 1233** – We, who consecrated ourselves as property to the Immaculata in the ranks of her knights, look back to the whole year elapsed since her last feast and ask ourselves personally:

–Have we come closer to the Immaculata during this year?

–Has our love for her grown?

–Have we come closer to the most sweet Heart of Jesus through the Immaculata?

–Do we spend time with Jesus in the tabernacle with deeper familiarity?

And even more so after we received Him in Holy Communion?

–Is the love of Jesus drawing us toward the Cross and urging us to repay Him with a love willing to sacrifice, at our expense, with suffering accepted for His sake?

Pope Francis on the Call to Holiness – The Blessed Virgin Mary is that woman who rejoiced in the presence of God, who treasured everything in her heart, and who let herself be pierced by the sword. Mary is the saint among the saints,

blessed above all others. She teaches us the way of holiness and she walks ever at our side. She does not let us remain fallen and at times she takes us into her arms without judging us. Our converse with her consoles, frees and sanctifies us. Mary our Mother does not need a flood of words. She does not need us to tell her what is happening in our lives. All we need do is whisper, time and time again: “Hail Mary....” Let us ask the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us a fervent longing to be saints for God's greater glory, and let us encourage one another in this effort. In this way, we will share a happiness that the world will not be able to take from us.

(Gaudete et Exsultate 176-177)

Commentary

Like St. Maximilian, may we be courageous in proclaiming the Gospel and witnessing it by our lives. During this month, let us commit ourselves to introduce many others to the gift of total consecration to the Immaculata. May we win for her many hearts so as to win the whole world for Jesus!

Prayer: Act of Total Consecration to the Immaculata

MI RESOURCES

Available from the MI National Center



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

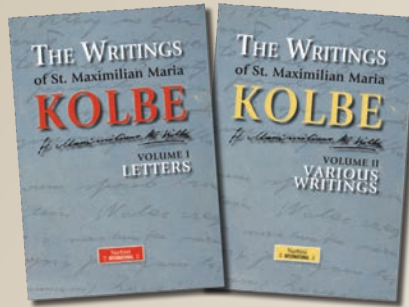
Miraculous medals and various MI brochures can be requested from the MI National Office at 331-223-5564 or via email: MINational@MissionImmaculata.com

The Writings of St. Maximilian Kolbe

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, at long last, 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.



Available also in e-Book Format!



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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"If you love the Immaculata, if your heart burns with gratitude to her, offer your contribution to this work, according to your capabilities! It is worth making such an effort! The Immaculata will not forget it! May all MI Knights be zealous in winning the world over to the Immaculata!"

St. Maximilian Kolbe