

# THE MISSION OF THE Immaculata

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## 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF ST. MAXIMILIAN'S MARTYRDOM

### Enthusiasm and Zealous Love

By John W. Galten, MI National President



Dear Knights of the Immaculata,

Maria! We continue our consideration of the man/priest/saint Maximilian in this preparation year for the 80th anniversary of his martyrdom at Auschwitz, August 14, 1941-2021. Who was he? How did his Franciscanism, Polish heritage, and his family prepare him for the heroic choice to die for another man?

One can say, without fear of contradiction, that St. Kolbe was a man of deep conviction and great zeal for the Immaculata, the Trinity, and his Faith. It is in the light of this enthusiasm, this zeal, that we propose some thoughts.

In the last century, there was a remarkable convert, Monsignor Ronald Knox, who wrote a magnificent treatment on zeal, called *Enthusiasm*. In some 300 pages, he listed historically the problems caused in the Church by enthusiasts. However, after many pages of caution, he concludes that the Church cannot exist and prosper without the zeal called enthusiasm.

By all accounts, St. Maximilian was an apostle fueled by zeal for the Faith. We first get a whiff of this in his encounter with the Immaculata when, in answer to his question "What is to become of me?", she answers with the offer of two crowns, white for chastity and a red one for martyrdom. Seemingly, his generous and zealous love responded with a choice of *both*. This simple response gives us a very deep and significant insight into his fundamental character. This generosity and zeal will characterize his life.

Even as a young seminarian, he exhibited enthusiasm for his studies, his spiritual life, and all the menial work he was given. Evidently, this might be the source of his religious name, Maximilian, because he did everything to the "max." His entire life is characterized by this zeal for the spread of the Gospel, the love of the Immaculata, and his attractiveness to enormous numbers of others, both in the Friary and in the world. Even though affected with tuberculosis and its consequences, he drove himself and others with a single-minded enthusiasm born in charity/love. Even when the illness

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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

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confined him to a sanatorium for the recovery of his health, he worked even there for the conversion of sinners and atheists. This zeal, born of love/charity, was the lived and consistent preparation for his martyrdom. While this individual sacrifice of himself represents a culmination, the highest point of his charitable zeal, it is consistent with the spirit of his daily life. As he did day in and day out, he existed for the praise and glory of God, His Mother, and the good of every human person.

What does this concretely mean for us now in 2021? In imitation of St. Maximilian, our founder, we must first ask for a zeal, an enthusiasm for charity toward God, His Mother, the Church, and our neighbors. As St. Paul exhorts us, we are to ask for the greater gifts: Faith, Hope and, the greatest, Charity, for all three are a necessary “motor” for all of the virtues, the greatest one being the Charity/Love poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit and the Immaculata, the fruit of the sacrifice and rising of Jesus and the love of the Father.

This zeal is the core of St. Maximilian’s, and our, desire to win as many souls as possible for the Immaculata in the shortest possible time. This zeal in our lives must be moderated by the virtue of prudence, docility to the Church, dedicated to the demands of our state in life but always maintaining the apostolic view of life by witnessing to our Baptism and our Total Consecration. “Martyrdom” begins in obedience to God, the Church, our state in life and in fulfillment of our Catholic apostolic call.

Let us unceasingly pray for the greatest gifts, for more zeal for the Immaculata’s work, and the balance of Faith and Reason. The Immaculata will mediate these graces to those who are generous, persistent, and “To him who knocks, it will be opened.” More than ever, the world needs the Light of Faith. Let the darkness be overwhelmed by Light! Until next time, “Arise, let us be on our way!”

John W. Galten,  
MI National President



## Year of St. Joseph

As we observe this special year dedicated to St. Joseph, we are encouraged to imitate his unconditional fidelity to God and to ask his powerful intercession. The following prayer might be useful:

Joseph, strong and gentle saint, dear to God and His faithful

shadow, remember me in all my spiritual and material needs.

Be my advocate before the Father. To you I bring my heart and soul and all my longings. Sanctify them with your burning faith,

your unfaltering hope, and with that great, self-sacrificing love that was the secret of your hidden sanctity.

Christ was your peace: give Him to my heart, then by His light I will see the way that I must walk to stay with Him. Give me the courage not to turn back because of darkness, sorrow, or sufferings.

Teach me the joy of loving God’s Will, and help me to live, as you have done, within its calm and peaceful depths.

Amen.



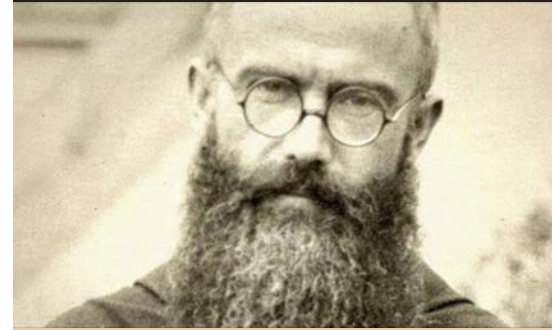
### Daily Holy Mass

will be offered throughout 2021 for the MI-USA and all MI Members, living and deceased, at the City of the Immaculata established by St. Maximilian Kolbe near Warsaw, in Poland.

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

PrayerRequest@MissionImmaculata.com

## See and Share the MI Film!



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

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

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

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





## Immaculate: for Us

As we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, let us ponder the awesome truth of her Immaculate Conception.

A Homily by Fr. Pio Maria, C.F.R., M.I.

Today is the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. It's a special Franciscan day, and we will talk about that in a little bit. Franciscans were involved in defending the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Our Lady is also Patroness of the United States under this title. I am from south Louisiana, and we have a river there called the Mississippi River. At one point in American history, it was named the River of the Immaculate Conception.

On the day that the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed, St. John Vianney was so happy that he was like a little child rejoicing in this Mother of all mothers. He was ringing the bells with such gusto that the villagers mistakenly thought that there was a fire. He was almost seventy, and he was like a little child. He said, "If by selling myself I could give something to the Blessed Virgin, I should sell myself!" His biographer writes, "Notwithstanding his exhaustion, he insisted on singing the parish Mass that day." He wore the most beautiful vestments and adorned the church to the utmost. In the afternoon, there was a procession with the Blessed Virgin's statue. At the service in the evening, "What happiness! what happiness!" he exclaimed at the beginning of his homily. This day was assuredly one of the happiest of his life. Though nearly seventy years of age, he looked like a youth of twenty. Never did a child enjoy its mother's triumph as he enjoyed the triumph of his heavenly Mother; and he it was who had prompted and organized this immense manifestation of joy." So that's what our hearts should be like – this "immense manifestation of joy." It's like a child who has the greatest of mothers. And we stand in line with all of the saints, sharing their heavenly joy over this great gift.

There's no way to say everything she deserves. In fact, the papal statement proclaiming the dogma, *Ineffabilis Deus*, says it's just not possible to adequately wrap our minds around the splendor God has given this woman. Listen to what it says: "She is more holy than holiness, singularly holy, and most pure in soul and body. She surpassed all integrity and virginity. She has become the dwelling place of all the graces of the Most Holy Spirit." And here is a great word: "God alone excepted, Mary is more excellent than all, and by nature fair and beautiful, more holy than the cherubim and seraphim. To praise her, all the tongues of heaven and earth do not suffice." So we'll try, but to praise her all the tongues of heaven and earth will not suffice, and outside of God, there is nothing that compares – more immaculate than immaculateness, more pure than purity, more holy than holiness, etc.

I'll just "throw a few things out here," so that you can have something to go

home with! We're going to look at the Immaculate Conception as it relates to her [I], and as it relates to us [II]. We'll throw some things out there, but we can never say enough.

I – This moment of her conception was "like a white dawn announcing the rising of her Son." She is like a white dawn letting the world know that the sun is about to come up. She has the fullness of her Son's grace, and when she shows up on the scene, it's the dawn. This dawn says, "Something bright is coming!" Her conception is the dawn. Like I once before told you from the writings of St. Anthony, her conception is like the dove bringing the olive branch. With her conception, graces come back. It's the beginning of the end of sin. In her conception, someone shows up whom the devil has no part in. This was a horrible sign for the Evil One. Her conception says, "Your day is done." Her conception is someone arriving who belongs totally to God, and there's no trace in this one. The Evil One has no part in her. Again, she is like the dove bringing the olive branch, a sign that destruction is over. She is the rainbow, the sign that the flood is over.

She is, as we heard in Genesis, the "Woman" of Genesis 3:15. She is present at the beginning of the Bible and the end of the Bible. At the beginning, there is this fight between the Woman and her Son and the serpent. At the end, there is this fight between the Woman and her Son and the serpent [cf. Rev. 12]. At the beginning of the book and the end of the book, there is a battle. God's first prophecy is, "Yes, I know you messed up, but there is a Woman coming with her Son." He said, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between her seed and yours." So the first prophecy of the Bible is a prophecy of Our Lady and her Son, and that she is immaculate. There is "enmity." The snake has no place in her. The first prophecy is that she is the mother, and she is the crusher. The first book, the last book. And so our life should be easy: just be on the side of the Woman and her Seed, and you're going to be fine. All of history is the fight between the serpent and these two, so we join these two. She is this Woman who, with her Son, takes part in crushing.

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## Immaculate: for Us

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She is the worthy mother. There is a beautiful line in *Ineffabilis Deus*: “In fact, it was quite fitting that, as the Only-Begotten has a Father in heaven, whom the Seraphim extol as thrice holy, so He should have a Mother on earth who would never be without the splendor of holiness.” Her conception was to make her a worthy mother of this Son. From the very beginning of her life, she was ready for Him and increased in grace. Her Immaculate Conception shows us what God deserves, and allows her to be a good mom for such a unique Child.

Her Immaculate Conception allows her to be a new Eve. Just as the first Eve was an assistant to the first Adam, and he brought sin, so Mary is the new Eve with the new Adam, who brings an end to sin. The angel comes to Eve; the angel comes to Our Lady. Eve says “Yes,” and Eve’s “yes” leads to Adam’s “yes.” Mary’s “yes” will lead to Christ’s “yes.” Adam’s and Eve’s “yes” was to a tree of life which brings death. Mary’s and Christ’s “yes” is to a tree of death which brings life. Just as Genesis says when God makes Eve, “I will make a helper fit for him,” so God also, for the new Adam, makes a helper fit for Him. Just as Eve was totally without sin when the angel comes to her, and she makes a free choice, Our Lady also has that same fullness, but she makes a better choice. She is immaculate for the sake of her Son,

a worthy mother and a new Eve. Her Immaculate Conception allows her to be the new Eve to bring about a new grace for the world. She is a praise of her Son’s power.

The Immaculate Conception is the patroness of all Franciscans because, as St. Maximilian said, “This is the pearl of our Order.” The Immaculate Conception is the “golden thread” that goes through all of Franciscan history. During the Middle Ages, people got a little bit knotted up in their minds. With what they thought they knew about the biology, they couldn’t imagine her being immaculate. They had all these mental constrictions. It was Blessed John Duns Scotus who untied them all. They said, “If she’s immaculate, then she didn’t need her Son.” Some people thought it was a dishonor to Jesus to say that she was immaculate. Scotus shows that her Immaculate Conception is not a dishonor, but the greatest proof of Christ’s dignity. Scotus said, “She is preserved in anticipation of her Son.” It is His power—and boy, does it show His power! Isn’t it fitting that the Redeemer shows all these different ways to redeem?

Scotus gives us two types of redemption. You can redeem after the fact – this is called “liberative.” All of us here have received redemption—liberative. God frees us after the fact. The grace of the Redeemer comes to us and frees us after. Scotus teaches us that Our Lady’s conception shows Jesus’ power in a “preservative” re-

demption. There is a doctor that can heal you after, and there is a doctor that can stop the wound ahead of time. Scotus says that this is the type of doctor Jesus is to Our Lady. And so, she is redeemed by the merits of Christ in a more perfect way. She is redeemed like we are, in anticipation of her Son, but in a more powerful way. God’s redemptive power shows in all of us, but especially in the one who is called to be the new Eve. She is the perfect fruit of the perfect Redeemer’s perfect act of redemption. Awesome.

This teaching is part of the Franciscan heritage, and through Scotus’ defense, we defended it for years, and finally it was proclaimed as a dogma. So here we are. God bless the Franciscans! Today we hear Scotus’ terminology in all of the Mass prayers: “preserved ahead of time... preserved by the merits of your Son... preserved by your prevenient grace.” This is all from Scotus. When we hear this Catholic teaching, we rejoice to know that Our Lady has given us the gift to be special defenders of the Immaculate Conception.

II – This day is a special day for all the baptized, because the Immaculate Conception is not a strange grace related only to her, but it relates her to us in a very special way. God has given Our Lady so many special graces, and then He has given her to us. All of her gifts are also our possession.

Everything given to her is connected to the Church, and we are supposed to find it as a gift to all of us as well. Because of her conception, Our Lady is so given to God that she holds back nothing of herself. There is no one who belongs to God as completely as she does. And with her “yes,” He is able to take everything in her and fashion her into what the Church is in its most essential identity. Our Lady is not a private person. She is a public person in the Church, and with her “yes,” God fashions her as a model for what is the Church in its deepest mystery. The [Second Vatican] Council returned to the idea of inseparability of Our Lady and the Church. Earliest Christian teaching tells us that what is said of Mary can also be said of the Church.

When we speak about Our Lady, we also speak about something which is for

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# Immaculate: for Us

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all of us. God writes in her humanity the mystery of every member of the Church. It is related to us.

The Preface brings to mind that St. Paul says Our Lord has given Himself to purify for Himself a bride without stain. That is the Church, and God worked this in Our Lady ahead of time. In her, we first see the Bride without stain. We hear this in the Preface: “You preserved the most blessed Virgin Mary from all stain of original sin, so that in her, endowed with the rich fullness of your grace, you might prepare a worthy mother for your Son, and signify the beginning of the Church, the beautiful bride without spot or wrinkle.” Again, related to us: She for us, and we with her, make up the bride without spot or wrinkle. All of us in the Church are called to have virginal faith. We belong to Him without adultery. All of us are called to be a virgin and mother – virginal faith and apostolic, motherly fruitfulness. These were first in her. All of us are called to walk the pilgrimage of faith. All of us are called to be raised body and soul. These happened first in her. All of us are called to be cooperators in the Redeemer’s work. Again, first in her. Awesome. The Immaculate Conception is what allowed her to be this for us.

We have these words, “mother and model.” She is a model of all these things. We look at her and we learn the way we are supposed to live our life. But she is also the mother, so we don’t just look at her. We have a mother who mothers in us the same things. She is a mother who mothers in us what she models. The Immaculate

Conception allows her to be a model, but also to mother in us what she models. So good! That is the gift of the Immaculate Conception.

So that’s it. Thanks be to God for his gift to us of the Immaculate Conception. All of us should rejoice today, all of us standing in line with the great Franciscan saints and all the other saints. This is the day of great rejoicing.

She is the Genesis 3:15 woman. This Immaculate Conception was the beginning of the end [of evil]. It is the sign of purity coming back. It is the sign of the end of sin. She is the rainbow. She is the olive branch. She is the prophesied woman who is the mother and the crusher. She is the fit helper. She is the new Eve. She is the manifestation of her Son’s redeeming work. She is for us. Her gifts also belong to us as her children, and also because she is connected to the Church. She is mother and model. She is the first, she is the bride, she is the faithful virgin, she is the apostolic motherly woman, she is the cooperator, she is the pilgrim, she is all of these things for us. Amen! That’s all we can say today, and we’re still at the surface!

Today we thank God for this great gift, for her. We thank God for this great gift to us. And we ask her for her help; we give her permission to act upon us. We give her permission to mother us today even more. We give her permission to mother in us what she models for us.

Father Pio Maria, C.F.R., M.I.  
(Homily given on December 8, 2020, by Father Pio Maria, C.F.R., M.I., at the Poor Clare Monastery in Roswell, New Mexico)

Invite Friends to be consecrated to Our Lady!



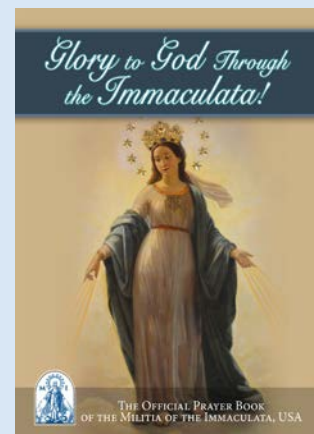
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# MI

## YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS




## St. Max and His Friends

Stefan P. Wilk, M.D., a practicing physician in Los Angeles, lived at Niepokalanow as a junior seminarian from 1931 to 1935 when he was about fourteen. Kolbe was a missionary in Japan during that time and only home on visits. Here is Dr. Wilk's view of Kolbe and Niepokalanow:

*Kolbe at that time was at Japan, but his personality permeated everything that went on at Niepokalanow. When he came back [on visits], it was as the great missionary who appealed to me in his soldierly aspect. We knew his goal was to raise up legions of spiritual soldiers and conquer the world for Christ through Mary. The whole friary was like a military camp. Most of the Brothers were young. They lived in big dormitories with just a box for each one's personal possessions.... The food was simple. For breakfast there was only coffee with milk, bread, and occasionally some cheese. But it was nourishing. There were lots of sports. Each class also competed to see which one could say the most prayers.*

*It was a very healthy place. Very well-disciplined. Not from rules, like a real military camp, but from religious obedience.*

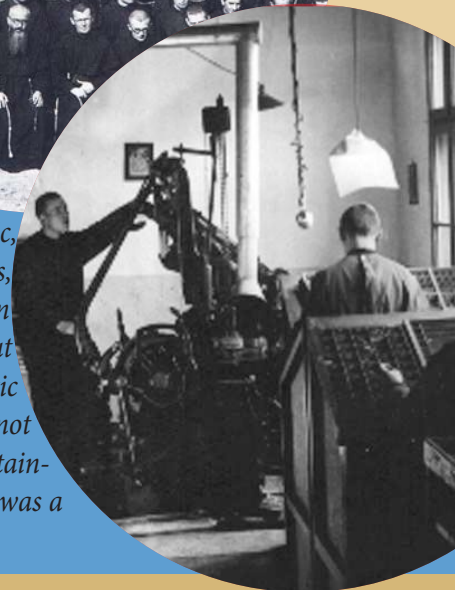
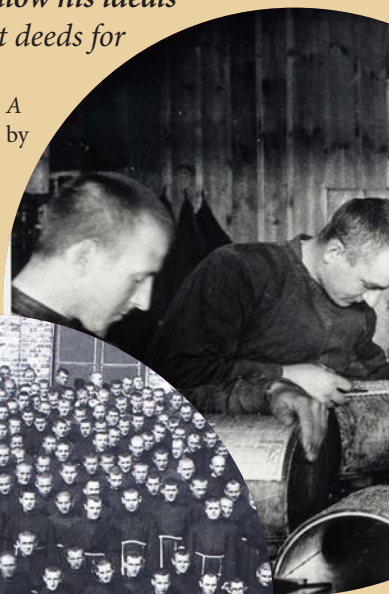
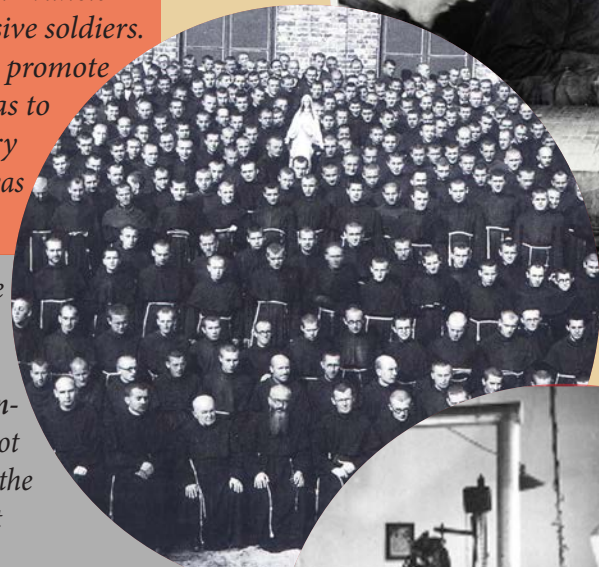
*Niepokalanow was not a retreat from the world, as one might picture a Franciscan friary. It was a beehive of activity. Kolbe was not interested in passive soldiers. What counted above all were deeds deeds deeds—how much you did to promote the mission. Everyone worked hard. As future missionaries, our job was to learn languages, math, chemistry, physics, etc. When I left the seminary and returned to regular high school, I found it a breeze. Kolbe himself was a very fine mathematician and a man with a great flair for science.*

*He himself did not teach any classes in the junior seminary, but he used to give lectures and talks to small groups of us. Mostly these were about Japan. I can still see him. He always had his hands under his Franciscan scapular and his head always tilted slightly to one side. Then he had this long, long beard. Whenever he greeted us it was with a big, cheerful smile. But his personality was not what you would expect of a great leader. Although there was no doubt he was the spiritual head and spirit behind the whole friary, in many ways he seemed just an ordinary Franciscan, quiet and shy and soft-spoken.*

*And when he talked to us, his message was always extremely simplistic. I don't think he was simplistic, but the message was. He would speak very, very tenderly something like this: "My dear, dear Brothers, our dear little, little Mother, the Immaculate Mary, can do anything for us. We are her children. Turn to her. She will overcome everything." He spoke this way, not as one speaks of a spiritual personage, but like a son talking of a tenderly loved mother. This was always his message. To me, in spite of the simplistic message, which I see as only the vehicle he used—as Buddhists and Hindus have theirs—and definitely not the most important thing at all, he epitomized greatness. He inspired a towering spiritual force. Certainly in his heart he was a soldier. If he had not become a priest he would have been a great general. He was a great leader. Not because he was a spellbinding orator. I've said he was not.*

*Nor because he was an intellectual: He never gave us any big dogmatic discussions. Nor did he use political means. So under all these circumstances his leadership is remarkable. To me, what it consisted of was that in his particular time and place he knew how to inspire and mobilize many, many people to follow his ideals and do great deeds for them.*

(Excerpts from *A Man for Others*, by Patricia Treece. Reprinted with permission of Marytown Press)



# Reflection on February MI Intention

O Immaculata, please intercede that Father Kolbe may inspire us to imitate his compassionate attitude in welcoming the sick and encouraging the afflicted, by proclaiming Jesus, the Source of life and hope.

*"I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, [rise and] walk." (Acts 3:6)*

The Gospel challenges us to love as Jesus has loved us. Our love for Jesus is manifested by the way we look at every one of our brethren in whom He is present. In each person, we can see Jesus who wishes to be welcomed, loved and supported.

During the Nazi occupation of Poland, St. Maximilian's City of the Immaculata underwent major transformations. The friars could not continue their publishing apostolate because, in addition to the Nazi's prohibition, the best machinery had been confiscated or destroyed. When he returned after the first arrest, precisely on December 8, 1940, Father Kolbe, though weak and malnourished, was not deterred by the devastation he saw. Instead of complaining, he began immediately to work with the brothers to restore the community life and activity of Niepokalanow and to help their neighbors.

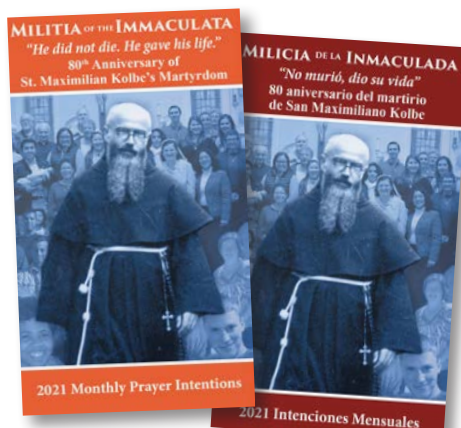
Echoing St. Peter's words, "what I do have I give you," St. Maximilian opened the doors of the friary to the sick and injured, to refugees and prisoners of war, who were cared for in the Niepokalanow little hospital. The Nazis themselves were taking refugees, including Jews, to Niepokalanow, and leaving them at the doorstep of the friary. Niepokalanow offered about 3,000 meals a day. Father Kolbe personally cared for the people, prayed for them and offered spiritual assistance.

Through the care given them by the Franciscans, these suffering people did experience God's presence and love. Thus, His paternal embrace helped them to restore hope.

During this month, together with St. Maximilian, let us be more attentive to the people we encounter, so as to perceive their needs and to discern how we may be able to love them effectively.

The Immaculata is the Mother of all, the Mother whom Jesus gave us from the Cross, at the most painful hour of His life. Let us ask Mary to share with us her love, to teach us to see in every person the very presence of Jesus. When we encounter a person in need, may our hands be instruments of charity and blessing. May our whole being become a vehicle of God's unconditional love.

Fr. Sebastiano B. Quaglio, OFM Conv.



**2021 MI Intentions leaflets  
are available in English and Spanish  
Request them from  
the MI National Office**

## 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.



# St. Thomas More: A Man for This Season

By Deacon Keith Fournier

On October 31, 2000, Saint John Paul II responded to petitions from the faithful across the world and issued an apostolic letter, on his own authority. In it he proclaimed Thomas More the Patron of Statesmen and Politicians.

The letter was addressed to “the Bishops of the Catholic Church and, in a particular way, to Catholic politicians and all lay members of the faithful called to participate in the political life of democratic societies.”

On the Feast of Christ the King in 2002, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of the Catholic Church issued an instruction entitled a *Doctrinal Note on some questions regarding the Participation of Catholics in Political Life*.

Sadly, I doubt many Catholics in political life or public service have ever read this tremendous teaching document. Even more regrettably, it is rarely if ever used by bishops, priests or deacons in their teaching and preaching, to confront the utter lack of moral coherence demonstrated by too many Catholics in public service and to help to catechize them.

The instruction in the Doctrinal Note is reflected in the teaching of the sections of the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* pertaining to the political participation of Catholics. (See, e.g. nos. 565-574). Here is an excerpt:

“The social doctrine of the Church is not an intrusion into the government of individual countries. It is a question of the lay Catholic’s duty to be morally coherent, found within one’s conscience, which is one and indivisible.

“There cannot be two parallel lives in their existence: on the one hand, the so-called *spiritual* life, with its values and demands; and on the other, the so-called *secular* life, that is, life in a family, at work, in social responsibilities, in the responsibilities of public life and in culture. The branch, engrafted to the vine which is Christ, bears its fruit in every sphere of existence and activity.” Saint John Paul II held Thomas More up as a model, “Precisely because of the witness which he bore, even at the price of his life, to the primacy of truth

over power, Saint Thomas More is venerated as an imperishable example of moral integrity. And even outside the Church, particularly among those with responsibility for the destinies of peoples, he is acknowledged as a source of inspiration for a political system which has as its supreme goal the service of the human person.

“Whenever men or women heed the call of truth, their conscience then guides their actions reliably towards good. Precisely because of the witness which he bore, even at the price of his life, to the primacy of truth over power, Saint Thomas More is venerated as an imperishable example of moral integrity. And even outside the Church, particularly among those with responsibility for the destinies of peoples, he is acknowledged as a source of inspiration for a political system which has as its supreme goal, the service of the human person.”

The England of the sixteenth century was in a serious crisis of politics, culture and faith, much like the times in which we now live in the United States of America. In 1534, all citizens who were of age were required to take an oath called “The Act of Succession”.

It acknowledged that King Henry VIII was married to Anne Boleyn, even though he was not married to Anne Boleyn. His desire to divorce Catherine was not sufficient to make that marriage null and his attempt to use his political power to change the objective truth of that fact proved unsuccessful.

So, the King used the power of his office to promulgate an unjust civil Law by which he simply proclaimed, in a sense by his version of our modern “executive order” that he and Anne were lawfully married. He also declared himself to be the Supreme Head of the Church in England, thus abrogating to himself the authority to determine that his lawful marital bond was dissolved. In doing so he denied the authority of the Bible, the Christian Tradition, the natural law, and the correct position taken

by the successor of the Apostle Peter, the Bishop of Rome.

The Pope refused to succumb to Henry’s demand to grant him an annulment from his lawful marriage so that he could pursue a different woman as his wife. He would not affirm Henry’s decision to place his disordered sexual desires for a woman who was not his wife, over the objective truth of the indissolubility of the marriage bond.

Thomas More knew the order of truth. He applied a hierarchy of values in both his personal life and his public life. He lived as a faithful Catholic Christian, demonstrating a unity of life by his moral coherence. He stayed faithful to the Truth and did not separate out his call to live as a Christian from any sphere of his daily life.

In 1532, knowing that he could not enforce the declaration of his temporal King to usurp the authority of the Church which had been granted to it by the King of Kings, he resigned his political position. He tried to do so with the kind of integrity that had characterized his entire life.

He withdrew from public life and bore the ridicule and taunts of those who once praised him. He offered the suffering to the Lord by joining it to the Cross of the Savior. He then tried to continue to care for his beloved family, the domestic church of the home, by teaching them how to live lives of virtue and simplicity. He had lost his prestige and his considerable financial resources, but he gained the peace which always comes through fidelity to the Lord.

His hopes for a life with his family, lived in simplicity and fidelity to the Church, were short lived. The King, by now drunk on his own power, insisted that Thomas take the oath under the Act of Succession, thereby acknowledging the legitimacy of his marriage to Anne and his authority over the Church.

Thomas would not do so because he refused to violate his truly informed conscience. So, the King had his former counselor imprisoned in the Tower of London. There he underwent intense tortures of both body and soul. These came not only from the henchmen of the State but even from some within his own family and circle of friends who failed to understand his actions because their minds had been dulled by compromise.

At the time, few would have even noticed if Thomas had succumbed to the Royal request. He could have even tried to justify the action through using his well-honed rhetorical and logical skills and calling it a merely perfunctory action, deluding many.

He could have thereby restored his political position, some would have argued, in  
(continues on pg. 9)



(continued from pg. 8)

order to try to influence the King for the good over the long haul. He could have had his substantial properties restored if he had just sworn that oath, others would say, in order to provide material safety for his beloved family. Instead, this man who loved life, loved his family, loved his career, and properly loved the created world and all of its true goods, loved the Lord first and would not compromise the Truth. It is that courage which cries out to us from his grave.

He was an ordinary Christian who shows the rest of us ordinary Christians the way to living a unity of life in the midst of the creeping darkness and distractions of our own age. He held in harmony his vocation as the father of a family with his profession as a lawyer and his service in the highest of political offices. He knew that there is a hierarchy of values which bring with them a hierarchy of duties and loyalties. His witness in life and in death challenges us to examine whether we do. How did he do it? Quite simply, he prayed. He lived in a communion with the Risen Lord as a faithful son of the Church which is His Body.

He was truly in love with the Lord and chose to live in the Heart of the Church for the sake of the world. He teaches us that the Christian vocation requires our constant response to the Lord's invitation to follow Him and that we cannot get by on yesterday's decisions. During that brief time which he had with his family, after attempting to quietly resign rather than violate his formed conscience and before he was imprisoned, when his wife or children complained about their lack he would tell them that they could not expect to "go to heaven in featherbeds."

He taught them regularly to reflect upon the privation and sufferings of Jesus on our behalf and he prayed with them for the grace to join their own to Him on the Cross. He would not compromise the truth. Thomas More was a morally coherent Christian. That is the lesson of his life - and of his martyr's death. He beckons millions, across the expanse of time unto today, to follow his example as he followed the example of the Lord.

This champion of heroic courage, living in the midst of a State which had lost its soul, never wavered in his fidelity to the Truth. He would not betray the truth. He would not compromise it on the altar of public opinion or for political opportunism. He knew that to do so would not only have dishonored God and led his family and so many others astray, but that it would have given tacit assent to the emerging despotism of his age. He was brought to trial for his fidelity to the Truth. As is always the case with persecution against Christians, it was framed as a charge against the positive or civil law, even though that law was unjust and contradicted the natural moral law. There, this outstand-



Detail from "The meeting of Sir Thomas More with his daughter after his sentence of death" (1872) by William Frederick Yeames

ing lawyer defended the Truth for which he would later give his life. Thomas used the occasion of the courtroom, where he had practiced his trade, to defend the Truth and its obligations in the temporal order. In the eloquent words of Saint John Paul II, who proclaimed him not only the Patron of all lawyers but the Patron of all politicians, "he made an impassioned defense of his own convictions on the indissolubility of marriage, the respect due to the juridical patrimony of Christian civilization, and the freedom of the Church in her relations with the State."

He was found guilty, even though he was a guardian of true innocence. That unjust verdict brings shame upon every unjust tribunal and misuse of governmental power. Thomas More was martyred for his moral coherence, his fidelity to the Christian faith. He was beheaded by the minions of a temporal leader who had abused his office and wielded the awful sword, the power of the State (which has as its very source God Himself) to inflict evil against those who refused to bow down in idolatrous worship of the State.

Thomas faced his executioners with the very same dignity he had shown in life, speaking with humor and affection to them even before they beheaded him. After his death it was found that he had left these words in the margin of his Book of the Liturgy of Hours which he prayed every day: "Give me your grace, good Lord, to set the world at naught...to have my mind well united to you; to not depend on the changing opinions of others...so that I may think joyfully of the things of God and tenderly implore his help. So that I may lean on God's strength and make an effort to love him... So as to thank Him ceaselessly for his benefits; so as to redeem the time I have wasted..."

We need to reflect on how we are living our own Christian faith in the midst of an increasingly hostile age. In our day, we face a similar challenge to that which faced St. Thomas More. The attacks on true marriage are increasing in their severity. We are being compelled by the police power of the State to compromise for our own convenience and are tempted to accept the rulings of judicial oligarchs and alchemists who think that they can change the nature of this institution by the stroke of a pen. Their

collaborators in political office, some of whom are apostate Christians, are now beginning to wield the figurative sword of temporal power against us.

The truths taught by the Church, based in the Bible, confirmed in the sacred tradition, and revealed within the common patrimony of the natural moral law, are being rejected in an age struggling under what was called by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI a "dictatorship of relativism."

The most egregious example is the rejection of the truth concerning the dignity and inviolability of every human life, from conception to natural death. This fundamental right to life is taught by the natural law and confirmed by medical science. Yet it is denied by those in control of the power of the State, and the blood of the innocent flows.

Thomas More is called *A Man for all Seasons*. He is certainly a man for this season.

He calls us to a unity of life, to moral coherence and integrity in our exercise of our civic duty. The life, death, and eternal witness of St. Thomas More is a model for us. Let us reflect on this patron assigned to a special role in political affairs and ask for his intercession.

Let us light the light and dispel the darkness. Let us hold high the hope which this current age so desperately needs. Let us hold back the collapse, defend religious freedom, restore to the civil law the natural law's recognition of the right to life, and allow the Christian community, in all of its confessional diversity, to be truly free to do what she alone can do, bring authentic conversion to the Nation.

Let us turn to the Lord whom Thomas More followed with heroic virtue and choose, with the help of God's grace, to become the men and women the Lord can use in this hour. These may be difficult times, but they are our times. We were born, and born again, for these times.

Let us fall to our knees in prayer and adoration and then rise and get to work!

*This article is republished with the permission of Bishop Joseph Strickland, who posted it on his blog, and its author Deacon Keith Fournier who serves the Bishop as Director of Deacon Formation, General Legal Counsel and Dean of Catholic Identity for the Diocese of Tyler, Texas.*



## St. Maximilian Writes...

In 1924, Fr. Maximilian wrote this letter, sharing his vision about MI lay apostolate (KW 92).

Dear Sir!

I apologize for the late response, but there is such a huge amount of work in our editorial department that it is difficult to find a free moment.

The Immaculata promotes greatly her Militia (not organized, according to the enrollment card). So far, two printings of the enrollment card, 5,000 copies each, have run out. Given that for the third printing of the enrollment cards there have already been hundreds of requests, we are now at more than 10,000 members of the “body-guard” of the Immaculata. Even parish priests sign up and recruit their parishioners to the Militia. Glory to the Immaculata!

*Rycerz*, too, is developing strongly. Of the last issue, 6,000 copies were printed and we have already sold out, even if we send only a few copies to America. For April we are printing 7,000 copies. With the help of the Immaculata everything adjusts itself in a unique way. I purchased a hundred more kilograms of typeface.

About the “Men’s Circle.” Not having found a place in the March issue, I

included the “Supplement to the Statute” in the April issue, expanding it by eight pages.

With regard to the program of activities, previous experience has taught me not to be limited by too many rules and regulations, but to make room for more spontaneity in projects and proposals. Above all, conformity to the will of the Immaculata is the secret of success. Prayer then, humble, trusting, and loving prayer, gives light to the intellect and gives strength to the will. The Immaculata herself removes the obstacles. As to the reading room, I think that maybe it would be better if there is a boy or a lady working there; the members of the Militia, on the other hand, are to be the soul of every-

thing, but on the outside it is better that they be seen *as little as possible*. It is better that they be not known by anybody. This way they can insert themselves in many places where entrance would be completely denied if they were in the open.

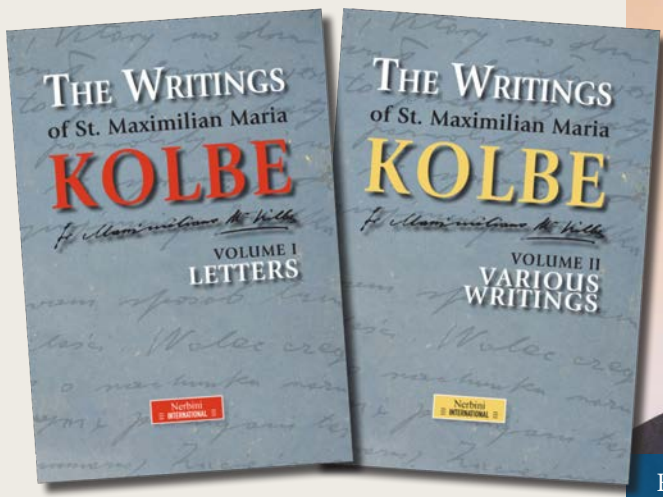
With the help of the Immaculata we have to tend to this: that the faithful Knights of the Immaculata be everywhere, but particularly in the most important places such as: (1) youth education (professors of scientific institutes, teachers, sports clubs); (2) the management of public opinion (magazines, newspapers, their drafting and dissemination, public libraries, circulating libraries, etc., conferences, movies, cinemas, etc.); (3) fine arts (sculpture, painting, music, theater); and finally (4) our Knights of the Immaculata in every field should become the pioneers and leaders in science (natural sciences, history, literature, medicine, law, exact sciences, etc.). Under our influence and with the assistance of the MI, industrial complexes, businesses, banks, etc., should arise and develop.

In a word, the Militia should permeate everything, and in a healthy spirit heal, strengthen, and develop all to the greater glory of God through the Immaculata and for the good of humanity.

With the highest consideration,  
Fr. Maximilian



*Fr. Maximiliano M. Kolbe*



Fr. James McCurry, OFM Conv.

Dr. Mark Miravalle

## Enrich Your Life With St. Maximilian's Own Words

Saint Maximilian Kolbe died at Auschwitz Concentration Camp as a “Martyr of Charity” in 1941.

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.

I heartily welcomed this first English critical edition of *The Writings of St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe*. Its pages are suffused with Christian hope.

Under the general editorship of Antonella Di Piazza, FKMI, the text has meticulous footnotes, comprehensive indices, and a brilliant introduction by Fr. Giuseppe Simbula, OFM Conv.

Because the frenetic pace of St. Kolbe’s active ministry afforded him no time to compose a theological *Summa*, this edition assembles together the wide scope of his extant writings into a unified synthesis. It represents a virtual *magnum opus* of Kolbean thought—at one and the same time pastoral, anthropological, philosophical, spiritual, ascetical and mystical.

The cataclysms of the 20th Century, with the upheavals of two World Wars, provide the backdrop for St. Kolbe’s writings. Immersed in the throes of sweeping movements for social change, he founded six publications to offer a Catholic optic amidst the growing forces of global secularism.

Included in the two volumes are: his wartime article on “Truth,” which infuriated the Nazis; his insightful theological treatise on the Immaculate Conception,

written hours before his final arrest; innumerable Marian articles; letters of counsel to religious and laity; sketches for galactic space travel; historical and social commentaries; evangelization strategies; Catholic apologetics; and moral admonitions. His tone is optimistic. 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.

In the person of St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe, the first half of the 20th Century found a fresh voice fearlessly defending timeless values in the contemporary context. These two volumes give vigorous new life to this prophetic voice of truth.

Fr. James McCurry, OFM Conv.

Recipient of the 2015 St. Maximilian Kolbe Award

The publication of *The Writings of St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe* constitutes a historic Mariological moment for the English speaking world. The sublimity and inspiration of St. Maximilian’s Marian mind and heart comes forward in each writing, whether it be a lofty speculative treatise on the intricacies of the relationship between the Uncreated Immaculate Conception (Holy Spirit) and the created Immaculate Conception (Immaculata), or a simple letter home to his mother, organically immersed with love for God’s Mother. The unique Kolbean contribution to authentic Mariology contained in this book demands, in justice, a place on the shelf of every serious student of Mariology, and well as every genuine lover of the Immaculate Heart.

Dr. Mark Miravalle

Professor of Theology and Mariology  
at the Franciscan University of Steubenville

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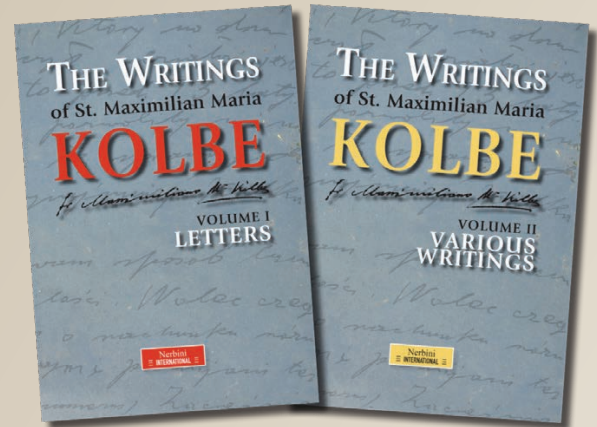
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*Ave Maria! The complete works of the great Franciscan martyr of charity are finally available in English! St. Maximilian was a theological and Mariological genius and this opera omnia is sure to be one of the greatest tomes to ever grace a bookshelf. It provides the wisdom, the answers, and the weapons that are needed for our times: total allegiance to Christ and the Church, consecration to the Immaculata, the mediation of Mary, the bullet of the Miraculous Medal, and the spiritual sword of the Rosary! --Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC*

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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