

THE MISSION OF THE *Immaculata* E-PUBLICATION OF THE MILITIA OF THE IMMACULATA, USA

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80TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS MARTYRDOM

Ready for the Knightly Challenge

By John W. Galten, MI National President



Dear Knights of the Immaculata,

Maria! I want to continue my consideration of the life and martyrdom of St. Maximilian Kolbe. What were the historical forces in his homeland, Poland, and his experience in the larger world that shaped and prepared him for his martyrdom at Auschwitz, August 1941, the 80th anniversary of which we celebrate in 2021, all of the above considered in the light of our own times for what we must learn to revere and imitate?

Historically, Poland has suffered immensely from wars, partitions of the country, and from invasion East and West. It consecrated itself to and chose the Most Holy Mother of God as its Queen especially during the frequent times that it lost its political freedom. She rules Poland no matter who is politically in charge. This great steadfast faith in the Immaculata and her Savior Son and its capacity for redemptive suffering formed not only the depths of Polish culture but also the depths of St. Maximilian's heart. He and his country were no strangers to suffering, a deeply lived faith, and the deaths of martyrs. The Saint was even tempted to leave the seminary and fight as a regular soldier for Poland which was under threat. In an almost miraculous manner his mother appeared at the seminary door and dissuaded him from leaving the preparation for the priesthood and this providential event revealed to him that he was to fight in another war: the spiritual warfare spoken of by St. Paul in the letter to the Ephesians 6:10-12. St. Maximilian lived on to witness the true and real spiritual battlefield which he recognized in the immense demonstrations of the secularist Freemasons in Rome, marching in their hundreds of thousands to banners of "Death to the Pope" and "Satan will rule the Church," and "The Pope will be his altar boy."

At the dawn of St. Maximilian's priesthood and the 20th century, he saw the threat to the Kingdom of Christ in the secularist philosophy, the very same philosophy that overwhelmed Europe and now grievously threatens our own American culture. We must be ready for the knightly challenge. I want to digress for a moment on what is this

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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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grievous threat to our own times. I wish to do so because what is occurring around us has even affected the view of the world of many of us, at least partially converting many Christians to its evil ends.

In his book, *Prison Journal Vol. 1*, (Ignatius Press), George Cardinal Pell, who had been falsely accused, imprisoned in solitary confinement and after 13 months exonerated and freed, quoted a Protestant friend about the tenets of secularism:

“1. Once a society rejects the concept of loving your enemies, then it is acceptable to hate, denigrate, and demonize anybody who you ideologically oppose.

2. Once society rejects the concept of sin, it is easy to divide society into *in* and *out* groups according to their ideological purity or membership in a group.

3. If a society rejects existential truth, then it will hold and promote any appealing lie.

4. If a society rejects individuals as sons and daughters of a Sovereign Creator, then it has lost its fount of human dignity, purpose and goodness.”

We only need to look around us in our own culture to see the evidence that this philosophy is being promoted; in unjust laws (abortion, euthanasia), trampling of the true meaning of marriage, and the low tone of morality. We can be certain that these will continue to be promoted and for the Church to be increasingly persecuted.

What was St. Maximilian’s answer to the beginning of the assault by the dark powers of his time and now ours? He promoted love of the Kingdom and its King through Total Consecration to the Immaculata, gave out the “silver bullet” (Miraculous Medal), and preached the Gospel in word and witness. Our times are different only in the sense that this spiritual warfare, observed by St. Maximilian in its beginnings, has intensified in our times as to become total war described by St. John Paul II as between the Gospel and the anti-Gospel. This is our true situation and we must recognize it, arm ourselves with the Faith of the Church and start living our Total Consecration with a new resolve, in

that determination by which Christ set His Face toward Jerusalem and His redeeming Death and Resurrection. We do not lack resources for this battle: the intercession of the Immaculata, for we are Hers; the Holy Spirit by virtue of our Baptism and Confirmation, and the witness of our martyr-founder St. Maximilian, and the cloud of “martyr witnesses” who stand before the throne of the Slain Lamb. We can distribute the Miraculous Medal and make its miraculous power available to our brothers and sisters. Allow her to lead others to Her Son. Until next time, “Arise, let us be on our way!”

John W. Galten,
MI National President

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The International Council of the Militia of the Immaculata announces the resignation of Angela Morais as International President, and thanks her for her dedication to the International Center throughout the last years, wishing her well that she may continue to serve fruitfully the cause of the Immaculata. For the purpose of art. 29 of the General Statutes of the MI, the International Presidency will be temporarily held by its Vice President, Miquel Bordas Proszynski, with the aim to call as soon as possible for the elective assembly, according to the aforesaid article, bearing in mind the global situation of the COVID-19 pandemic.



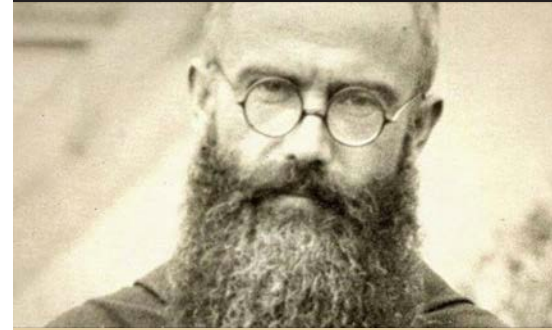
Daily Holy Mass

will be offered throughout 2021 for the MI-USA and all MI Members 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

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

Simply excellent!"
"Inspirational!"

Share the link
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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!*





1941-2021: 80th Anniversary of St. Maximilian's Martyrdom A Homily by Fr. Pio Maria, C.F.R., M.I.

St. Maximilian – it's beautiful that here we treat his memorial almost like a feast. We are using his proper readings because they are so fitting. He is a "martyr of charity," and in today's Gospel Our Lord gives us His new commandment of charity. There are Old Testament commandments, but Our Lord says, "*This* is mine. This is a new commandment – that you love one another as I love you. By this, people will know that you belong to me" [cf. Jn 13:34; 15:12]. It is beautiful. St. Maximilian is the one who, like our Lord, "lays down his life" [Jn 15:13]. He is the one spoken of in the psalm, the one who has such "great affliction," through all of his sicknesses, and who is the "son of your handmaid" [Ps 116: 10, 16]. The reading from 1 John is also perfect, as he is one who has "passed from death to life through love" [cf. 1 Jn 3:14]. St. John says, "By this we know love: that he lays down his life for us. So we should lay down our lives for our neighbor" [1Jn 3:16]. St. Maximilian "lays down his life," not only at the end of his life, but every day of his life, and gives himself for souls. Beautiful! St. John says, "The content of eternal life is in love." We know God is within us because we love, but there can be no eternal life where there is hatred [cf. 1 Jn 3:14-15]. Hatred's extension is murder, but the beginning of murder is hatred; so where there is hatred, there cannot be eternal life. Love is how we gain eternal life. Even in the concentration camp, he was warning prisoners who were starting to hate the Nazis. He said, "No. You have to be careful of hatred, because the only

force in the world that lasts is love. Hatred cannot create. Only love creates."

Kolbe is such an important figure. Pope St. Paul VI and Pope St. John Paul II remind us that he is an important figure for our age. Paul VI, breaking the precious custom, beatified him. He thought that Kolbe is such an important person that he needed to be beatified during the synod of bishops on the topic of priestly life and ministry, during the craziest time of the Seventies and Eighties, when a priest's identity was getting all confused. St. Maximilian is a model for priests of what it means to be a priest – one who gives his life for others. There is a great line from Paul VI from around this time. He says, "It is impossible to separate the name of Father Kolbe, his activity or his mission, from the name of Mary Immaculate." This is awesome. "The Marian aspect of the sanctity of the new blessed ranks him among the greatest saints and far-seeing visionaries who understood, venerated and sang the mystery of Mary." John Paul II had him canonized and, as I told you already [in the talks I gave during the last two weeks], out of the hundreds of saints John Paul II canonized, he only made two of them obligatory celebrations for the whole Church. They have such universal importance that every country should celebrate them: St. Maximilian Kolbe and Padre Pio.

St. Maximilian is such an amazing example for priests, for religious, for evangelists, for everyone. How could we summarize him? What would Kolbe say to us? He

would say, "Above all things, God is love. Above all things, God is a burning love, an eternal flame of love, and when he creates, it is for love and in the name of love." So above all things is charity. God creates; the world comes out of God's hands from love, and we return through love. So man's perfection is primarily found in love. We are made in the image of God, and the more we love, the more we look like God. So, our perfection will look like love, and the most important perfection is love.

Kolbe was brilliant: science, math, the natural sciences, etc.... And he says that holiness is actually pretty easy. He gives us a simple equation: $V + v = S$. V is for "voluntas"; "will." The big "V" is for God's will and the small "v" is for my will. God's will plus my will equals holiness, sanctity. Love is primarily in the will. Every day we want to do God's will in a loving way. As religious, we know God's will through our particular way of life and we are called to live this in love. In families too, we know God's will, and that is to love our spouses and children and to be a good example to those with whom we live.

And, St. Maximilian says, to make this easiest, God has given us Our Lady. It is so easy to become a saint. You just love Our Lady. "Those who belong to her already share in her holiness." There is a beautiful passage written in his youth that is very encouraging.

"Loving Mother, I really do not know which direction this whole matter will take. You deign to do with me and with us all you please, to the greatest possible glory of God. I am yours, my Immaculate Loving Mama. You see that I am very wretched. I walk on the brink of a precipice, because I am full of self-love. If you let me slip from your immaculate hands even for an instant, I will be the first to fall into even graver sins and later to the very bottom of hell. However (though I do not deserve it) if you will not let me go and will be my guide, I most certainly shall not fall and I will become a saint, a great saint."

I am wretched of myself, but with your help, I can become a saint. "There is no heroism," he said, "the soul cannot reach if it belongs to Our Lady."

This was his life.

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Recall how he was a rascal in his youth, and that time when he was ten, his mom said in frustration, “What’s going to happen to you?” She then saw him a few days later looking totally changed and praying with great devotion and tears in his eyes. “Therefore,” she said, “I thought he must’ve been sick. ‘What happened to you? You must tell your mother everything.’ ‘Well, you know, when you said to me, ‘What will become of you?’ I got scared. So I asked Our Lady what would become of me, and later in church she appeared to me with two crowns, a white one and a red one – the white one, that I would be pure, the crown of purity, and the red one, that I would die a martyr.’” Ten years old! “And she asked me if I wanted these crowns. I said yes, and she smiled at me tenderly and departed.” Actually, he told his mom, “Pray that I become a martyr.”

You remember how he almost didn’t go to school because his family could not afford education for all the boys. Because of his knowledge of Latin (it’s good to know Latin sometimes!), when he went one day to pick something up at the pharmacy, he asked for it by its Latin name, and the pharmacist was shocked. The pharmacist knew it would be a waste for this smart kid to not go to school and so took care of his education. You know Kolbe distinguished himself in math and science and also how he heard a Franciscan preaching a mission when he was thirteen, and to become a Franciscan he risked his life to crawl through the barbed wire to go become a Franciscan. Again, as a young man, he felt called to fight for Mother Mary, and he almost left the friars to become a Polish soldier. He decided to stay a friar because he realized that this way would be the most effective way for him to serve God and Our Lady.

And then he went to Rome. So smart.... He got his doctorate in philosophy at twenty-one and his doctorate in theology at twenty-three. He sometimes frustrated his teachers because he was smarter than all of them. [“He asks questions we don’t have answers to and then is able to provide the answers.] He even applied for a patent for a spaceship that could break through the earth’s gravitational pull but



was turned down. It was too futuristic. Amazing.

He witnessed the demonstration of Freemasons against the Church, and he says, “They want to destroy the Church. What can we do?” Again, for him, it is very, very easy. From the beginning of the book to the end of the book, Genesis to Revelation, there is a fight between the serpent and the woman. [See Gen 3 and Rev 12 – the serpent attacking the woman and her seed.] “So there is always a fight, but we know we will be triumphant if we join the woman’s army. Let’s start an army.” And so, as a teenager, he founds this international group called the *Militia Immaculatae*, Mary’s Knights, to conquer the world for the Sacred Heart through Mary as soon as possible. Right after this he found out that his bodily health was horrible. [He found out that he had tuberculosis because he collapsed on the soccer field and began to spit up blood.] He realized that for the rest of his life his activity would be stifled but also realized that “most important thing is not my activity, but my trusting my life to Mother Mary.”

He returned to his country after ordination and then came up with the idea to spread the Gospel through publications – though he knew nothing about publishing at that time. This would lead to many papers, magazines and journals – in this he was a pioneer and way ahead of his time. And then Kolbe said, “You know, I think she wants me to build a friary. I don’t

know if I can do this,” ... but he built a friary which would become the largest friary in the world, with over 700 religious living there. The friary was like a city, with electrical power, fire departments, food production, all of these things. Then he said, “You know, I feel called to be a missionary.” He goes to the superior. “Where are you going to go?” “To the Far East.” “Do you speak the language?” “No.” “Do you know where you are going?” “No.” “Do you have any money?” “No. But I know Mother Mary wants it.” So he went, and you already know of his success in Nagasaki. He later returned to Poland and was put in charge of the friary again when World War II was happening.

It was during this period that he went to Auschwitz – and this is the only thing that most people know of him. He went to Auschwitz because he was a priest, and an influential priest. I told the Sisters yesterday of how priests, after the Jews, were singled out for the worst beatings, the worst brutality. Father Kolbe trusted that God was going to make his soul glorious in sufferings, and accepted all this as a sacrifice for souls, with total confidence that Mother Mary would help him. He encouraged the others, and he lasted longer than many others, even with his poor health! [He had only partial use of one lung.] And he gave away most of his food. Many nights were spent hearing confessions, even when he was ravaged by fever. One day a prisoner escaped, and ten men were condemned



Last photo of St. Maximilian Kolbe

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to die for that one man. When the Commandant was walking through the rows of prisoners and selecting these ten men, St. Maximilian was not picked, but he walked to the front of the lines and offered to take the place of another. He felt moved to offer up his life, “to pass from death to life because we love our brothers”, laying down our lives for them. We have the testimony of witnesses during of his dying days. There was a Polish man forced to be the translator between the dying men and the Germans and he would often go down to the cell where the men were kept. He said, “In the midst of Auschwitz, I was so shocked, because every time I would go down to their cell to comfort these dying men, I would hear singing. I would hear church songs and the rosary. I would hear the patriotic hymns. And sometimes they were singing so loudly and praying so devotedly that when the guards came, they did not even notice.” St. Maximilian lived on until the very end, and these men were living “too long,” so they were given a lethal injection. And – the beauty of Father Kolbe! – when the man came to kill him, he raised his arm to help the man.

Remember too, how St. Maximilian always desired to be forgotten – that his name would be forgotten, and the names of Jesus and Mary would endure. He said, “I hope that one day my ashes will be scattered to the wind, and no one will remember me.” He also wanted to die on a Marian day, and know he died on this day, the eve of the Assumption – his life is overtaken by the Assumption. His body is burned on

the vigil of the Assumption, and his ashes are scattered to the winds on the vigil of the Assumption. John Paul II called him the “Patron of this difficult century,” and “Prophet of the civilization of love.” Also, “He has become an eloquent sign for the times in which we live. ... I beg that that sign be pondered by all of us.”

So that’s St. Maximilian Kolbe.

If he were here, what would he say? God above all things is love, and everything comes down to love, and love is primarily in the will, and God gives His Mother Mary. “You want to be loving. Let us not forget love. Let us do everything we can to be perfect in love, and God will make it easy with the help of Mother Mary. We can all be great saints. We can all lay down our lives by laying down our life every day, and Mother Mary will help.” That’s him. Don’t forget love. Don’t forget love. Love above all things.

Then to bring down more concretely to this celebration [of the Mass], he would say, “At the altar, Jesus wants love even more than worship.” He has come down to give us love and to help us love.” He would say, “It was not enough for God’s love to just create the world. It was not enough for God’s love to send His Son to become incarnate. It was not enough for God’s love to die on the Cross and redeem us two thousand years ago. God’s love wants to go further. He doesn’t want our redemption just to be a memory, but He wants it to be present, even in the Blessed Sacrament.” God’s love goes to extreme limits always, but this is what the meaning of the Eucharist is. He doesn’t want us to be alone. He wants to be with us to the very end. He gives us His love, and makes it possible for us to be loved and to love back in response. So through the intercession of St. Maximilian Kolbe, and through the intercession of our great Lady, let us respond to God’s love, let us receive God’s love, and confidently respond with love by our actions.

Father Pio Maria, C.F.R., M.I.

(Homily for Friday, August 14, 2020, given at the Poor Clare Monastery in Roswell, New Mexico, on the Memorial of St. Maximilian Kolbe, Priest and Martyr. Readings: 1 Jn 3:13-18 / Ps 116:10-11, 12-13, 16-17 / Jn15:12-16).

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MI

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS



“The Almighty has done great things for me.”

An MI Young Adult's Testimonial

My name is Patrick Jekanowski and this year marks the two-year anniversary of my official MI consecration to our Blessed Mother. In the past two years so much grace has been leading me closer towards Jesus. I started the year blessed by an MI Young Adult Retreat at the Shrine of St. Maximilian Kolbe in Libertyville, Illinois (north of Chicago) and I ended the year 2020, like many of you, celebrating Christmas 2020 under Covid-19 concerns and protocols. What a year! Through this reflection I will describe what the MI means to me, and how my official devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Immaculate Conception, affects my faith, prayer life, work, and relationships with my family, loved ones and neighbors.

A member of the Mission Immaculatae Capital 16670 (short for MI Capital), a Marian young adult ministry based in the Washington, D.C. area, I became a member while working on my Master's degree in Sacred Music at the Catholic University of America. Music, especially religious music, has always inspired me, lifted my spirits, and led me closer to Christ. Marian music, from traditional *Magnificat* and *Ave Maria* settings to the more contemporary “Gentle Woman” and “Holy Is His Name,” have always captured my soul with their inherent mysticism, ultimately drawing me closer to God in the Trinity. The year after finishing my degree, I was in a difficult situation where I was working multiple part-time music ministry jobs while applying for full-time jobs across music education and ministry. My time in the Washington D.C. area came to end in May 2019, at which point I moved out to Dubuque, Iowa, with my brother and parents. An East Coaster my entire life, this was quite the crazy and abrupt move.

Upon my arrival in Dubuque summer 2019, I accepted a job as a receptionist for a hospital while working as a part-time music instructor of private lessons at the local private music academy. I was grateful for the work but still frustrated and struggling with

my life's direction (what many millennials refer to as the “quarter life crisis”). Winter 2019 came quickly. It was at this point that I decided to attend an MI Young Adult Retreat, which is a convenient 3-hour drive from Dubuque.

“Aim higher! Put out into the Deep” was the theme of the retreat, which spanned the weekend after Christmas 2019, into early January 2020. The entire weekend was a beautiful experience. I felt inspired by the life and example of Mary, St. Maximilian Kolbe, and various other saints to aim higher. While part of me wanted to give up on music, I could sense God, through Our Lady, telling me that my work across music ministry and education was not done. I returned home and continued my routine.

2020 held many surprises. By March 2020, I found myself in an interesting situation: I was preparing myself to be laid off from my hospital job while a full-time Director of Music and Liturgy job opened up in Dubuque. I applied, interviewed, and the next day was offered the job! All of a sudden, I had a full-time job in music ministry and a part-time job teaching private music lesson at a music academy. The location might not have been in my dreams, but this is the ideal working situation for me! Clearly, prayer and the intercession of Our Lady made this happen!

Praise God that I have all this work in my area of specialty, especially in a year when many have been laid off; even better that I get to use my gifts to praise God in such an active way! Like everywhere else, 2020 Covid-19 protocols have hit us hard in the church and in school.

We have been celebrating in-person Masses since June with just instrumental music, no singing. All things considered, what a blessing it is to attend Mass. In any Catholic Church situation, I always bring Marian music into the Mass and the liturgy of the hours. Marian chant antiphons are my favorite. For example, I play variations on the *Salve Regina* chant during Communion on Sunday. Each Marian chant antiphon draws us closer to Christ, the mystery of His life, death, and resurrection. *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, the chant antiphon for Advent Liturgy of the Hours, provides a powerful example: “Loving mother of the Redeemer, gate of heaven, star of the sea, assist your people who have fallen yet strive to rise again. To the wonderment of nature, you bore your Creator yet remained a virgin as before. You who received Gabriel's joyful greeting, have pity on us, poor sinners.”

During a year in which I am as frustrated as everyone that I cannot sing, the words of Mary in Scripture help ground me and bring me back to a state of grace. Each evening I love to pray evening prayer with a chanted *Magnificat* setting. Dwelling on the words of Mary in the *Magnificat* leads me to greater humility, inward participation, and makes me think of all the great things God has done for me each day. “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, the Almighty, has done great things for me, and holy is His name.”

Happy New Year!
In Christ and Mary,
Patrick

Patrick Jekanowski is the Director of Worship, Music and Liturgy at the Holy Spirit Parish Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Dubuque, Iowa. Patrick remains an active member of the Mission Immaculatae Capital 16670 Village, and takes part of the group's meetings virtually and works of charities remotely from Dubuque. Since becoming an MI member, his Catholic faith and relationship with Jesus Christ grew even stronger as a result of a renewed closeness with the Immaculata..

Reflection on January MI Intention

O Immaculata, please intercede that by accepting the message of the Martyr of Auschwitz, we also strive to be a light in the darkness of our world in need of hope.

*"You are the salt of the earth."
(Mt 5:13)*

People look everywhere for novelties in our tech world, but nothing can fulfill man's desire for happiness. Only Jesus can give meaning to one's life. Only Jesus can bring light, warmth and flavor to our lives as children of God. In this Gospel account, Jesus uses the present tense: "You are." The Lord Jesus is the Light, but He states, "You are the light of the world" (Mt 5:17). Light is life and nothing can replace it. Therefore, we, enlightened by Jesus, ought to become bearers of light and bring comfort to others by pointing out the path that leads to Him.

St. Maximilian Kolbe is widely known for offering to die in the concentration camp of Auschwitz in place of another prisoner who wept for his family. That heroic gesture was the consequence of an entire life offered to Christ, the Church and his brethren, and illumined the darkness that pervaded the camp, bringing hope to the hearts of many. St. Maximilian Kolbe's entire life was marked by generosity and self-giving. Many factors contributed to prepare him for the final offering of his life: his Franciscan formation, his love for the Immaculata, inherited from his family, his mission work and, without a doubt, his life of prayer. His life was driven by love for God, Our Lady and mankind and showed that only Jesus has the power to redeem our lives and give us joy and hope.

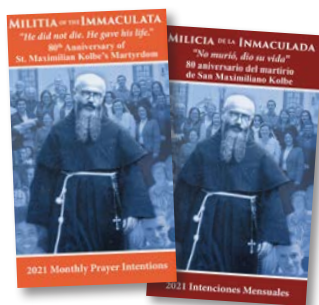
Shortly before the canonization of St. Maximilian, on August 26, 1982, Pope John Paul II said that Kolbe "is a gift of the Mother of mankind to the people and nations of our time." Later during the canonization of Edith Stein, October 1998, he added: "I have always been convinced that these two Martyrs of Auschwitz lead us toward the future. Their message remains alive to illumine the future." The Polish

Pope, during the 100th anniversary of St. Maximilian's birth, received representatives of the Franciscan Conventual Friars and told them, "From the blood of martyrs, of your Father Kolbe, a new springtime is born in the Church. The whole mankind needs this springtime of hope."

In the darkness of Auschwitz, Kolbe revealed that only love overcomes hatred and that *"the good God is in every place and with great love He thinks about everyone and everything,"* as he wrote in his last letter addressed to his mother (cf. KW 961). He brought light into the camp by means of the only enduring realities: Jesus, our Savior, and the Immaculata, Mother of all. Today humanity needs light because life is constantly threatened and attacked. Jesus is the Light, but this Light is to be lit in the hearts of all through our apostolate.

Knights of the Immaculata, take courage! We ought to make the Militia of the Immaculata be the dawn that enlightens the world with the Truth of Christ. We are to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, here and now. No one can replace the mission entrusted to each of us in history. May we be instruments of light as St. Maximilian Kolbe was in the concentration camp. May Our Lady inspire all her Knights to give Divine flavor to our lives and the lives of others.

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.



The Church and Socialism

In 1923, young Fr. Maximilian wrote this well-documented article for the MI magazine (KW 1026).

Sometimes you come across the following question: “Why does the Church condemn socialism?” Not long ago I too was asked a similar question. I promised I would give an answer in *Rycerz*, so here I am to keep that promise.

The restricted columns of a short article do not allow me to provide a detailed analysis of the beginning, the essence, the development, and the various phenomena that characterize socialism. I will limit myself to a brief presentation of its basic principles in their relation to the Church. Every system, both political and economic and, ultimately, even social, must be based on an actual and real state of things and not pay homage to baseless claims and illusions of an excited imagination. Unfortunately, that is precisely what socialism suffers from.

Baseless claims are slogans repeated relentlessly and never proven, which assert at there is neither God nor an immortal soul, neither life beyond the grave nor heaven or hell, and so on. Mussolini, for instance, dismisses all such notions as anachronisms that persist quite forcefully in the minds of the populace. And socialism is rooted in similar ideas.

Let us hear the words of the masters. *Bebel*: “It was not the gods who created men, but men who created the gods and God himself” (*Die Frau*, 426). *Liebknecht*: “As for me, I rid myself of religion long ago. I was born at a time of history in which German students were taught very early on the princi-

ples of atheism” (*Volksblatt*, 1890, no. 281). *Hoffmann* considers the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, the divinity of Jesus, the immortality of the soul, and eternal salvation as the most utopian of utopias. *Dietzgen*: “If religion is based on faith in otherworldly beings, beyond our world, and in superior forces, in spiritual beings and gods, then democracy has to be without religion.” For his part, Marx’s friend, *Leo Frankel*, wrote in his will: “I believe, neither in Heaven nor in Hell nor in the final prize or punishment” (*Vorwärts*, 1896, pg. 81). And in the parliamentary session of December 31, 1881, *Bebel* clearly stated: “In the political field we aim to a republic, in the economic field to socialism, while in what is called the religious field we aim to atheism.”

Thus the horizon of a socialist who is aware of his purpose does not go beyond the coffin. It does not hover above and beyond a purely material world. Wrapped up in matter as in a cocoon, he envisions all his happiness in using the world as an animal does, while a more idealistic man may think of learning and art.

Is all of this not too little for a man, whose thought penetrates the atmosphere, reaches between the stars, and spans across the spaces of the firmament? A man whose reason, constantly eager to find out causes, reaches up to the first cause and the ultimate end of the universe? A man whose heart, eager to possess glory and happiness, as much as it conquers, the more he desires? A heart that feels that nothing

circumscribed, even if extremely vast but always with a limit, can really fulfill its longings? He desires the Good, but an infinite Good! Can we ask ourselves if we want to impose constraints or borders on our happiness? And how can such narrow-minded people, embroiled in a gross materialism, possibly herald happiness for humanity? Will they be able to make mankind happy through material means? Will they be able to cover every man with gold, surround him with glory, and give him the chance to enjoy any pleasure?

Delusions of a morbid imagination! I have already pointed out that anything the world can give is still not enough for man. All worldly goods have their limits: they let people down and arouse desire for greater and longer lasting happiness. And when happiness ceases, then the soul is seized upon by ennui, weariness, and a kind of darkness. If the soul still has the ability to think carefully, it feels it has taken the wrong road to happiness.

But perhaps socialism will at least make it possible for men to have their fill of earthly goods? No, not even that.

Liberty, equality, fraternity: they are fine principles. Yet since socialism has violated human nature, which longs for wider horizons and aspires to infinity, it cannot possibly provide those ideals: they are far too noble and too sublime.

Liberty. Socialism abolishes private property, or at least ownership of the means of production. It is the state, then, that establishes the type of work; the state that appraises it; the state that pays for it. And that is supposed to be freedom. On that subject, I recall a conversation I had with a farmer in Zakopane. He had returned from imprisonment in Russia, and was enthralled by the Bolshevik notion that one should go to the rich to take away their possessions. However, when I asked him what would then happen



(Continued from pg. 8)

to his own patch of land, he claimed he would do the tilling himself. "What if later you no longer wanted to till it?" I asked. "Then the others will have a duty to force..." (at this point he broke off). "But I would rather have my little piece of land and I prefer to do what and how I like it when I like it, than have someone above me."

Now there lies the natural drive to innate freedom that the socialists, in the name of freedom (?!), set out to crush.

And *equality*? Before God we are all equal because we are all the work of His hands, all redeemed by the blood of the Man-God. We all have God as our ultimate goal; we all live only to give proof of our loyalty and so deserve to possess God forever after death. There is equality in all that. However, is equality achievable on this earth in every aspect? That would be possible only if we could exist all together at the same time, in the same place, and under the same conditions, both in nature and the environment.

It is physically impossible. We are different by age and place of birth; on account of our skills, our inclinations, our health, our zeal, our foresight; on account of the various events that occur during our lives and of our different activities. All that depends on the nature of things and therefore cannot be changed. In addition, there must be both parents and children, both superiors and subjects.

Fraternity, noble fraternity, so highly commended by Christ the Lord. Does it perhaps flourish, in socialism? I have here at hand a report from a correspondent, from Sopot, of the *Kurier Warszawski* [Warsaw Courier], who among other things writes: "The local Russian cabarets target a specific audience, who are certainly not sparing with money. For them to enjoy there are fresh sea prawns, pineapple, and peaches with ice and champagne, grapes, sweets, ice cream with glasses of hot punch." ... There is also a passage from a letter from Odessa, published in *Dziennik Wołyński* [Journal of Wołyń]: "Who cares if I make 300,000 rubles per day, when a sack [40 pounds] of flour costs 12,000,000; one of wheat flour 20,000,000; a pound of bread 300,000; white bread 500,000; a pound of butter 1,500,000 and a pound of lard the same; eggs are 100,000 and so on. The epidemic is assuming frightening proportions. In the past, the corpses of people who died of hunger were sometimes left lying on the street pavement for several days... Nowadays, in addition to these, even the bodies of those who die of cholera, typhus, bubonic plague, etc., are abandoned. And people are buried in the ground like dogs, naked, because the least expensive, unpolished coffin costs 10 million rubles. Your children have great desire for You, they want to go forth, they want to fly toward their homeland. But the heavy Soviet hand firmly holds large and sharp scissors in its fingers, to cut

off the wings of those who have a great desire to fly. We have all contracted typhus. After surviving such a serious disease, it is essential, as you know, to eat adequately, but where can we find the means to do so? Otherwise, we are bound to have a relapse, but we know a relapse would spell death for us all. However, I prefer death brought on by an infectious disease, when man dies in feverish delirium, rather than having to fade away slowly in starvation..."

Could these really be the fraternity and equality proclaimed by the Bolsheviks?

Can that really be the paradise dreamed of by Marx?

The road does not go that way!

It must be acknowledged that the working class was largely neglected and that socialism has defended it. But we must deplore the fact that socialism should have struck the Church, that it should be doing everything it can to deprive the worker, and even the child, of the most precious treasure of faith and of their most sublime and innate ideals. Having thus gone down along the wrong road, socialism engenders only slavery and the tyranny of government over citizens. It fails to recognize the aspirations of the noble and free human nature. Such deviations, however, are no accident. Rather, they are the business method of the "brothers" of the hammer and trowel, [the Freemasons] who exploit every opportunity in order to implement the motto they decreed in the year 1717: "To destroy all religion, especially the Christian one."

Social relationships develop and are perfected over time. Situations require some kind of accommodation. However, such accommodation will never be reached in a way that is at variance with truth and with human nature.

Faced with these facts, do we still need to ask: why does the Church forbid her children to be socialists?

Rycerz Niepokalanej

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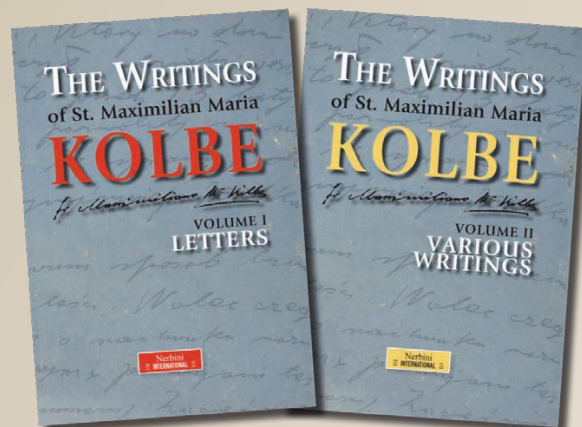
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