

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

The MI New Home
Needs YOU - PAGE 7

“Take This from
My Life” - PAGE 3

MI Apostolate to the
Incarcerated - PAGE 4

Getting Equipped for Mission

Dear Knights of the Immaculata,

Maria! I wish all of you a happy new year, both the heavenly calendar of the Church which began on the First Sunday of Advent and the yearly calendar of our earthly life, both important but one having the priority for it speaks of our eternal Home and destination. We are a people with a foot in two worlds paying attention to the details of both.

I want to begin a new tack with you. As you remember we mined the riches of the Centenary of the founding of the Militia of the Immaculata and the appearances of Our Lady at Fatima, each with its own proper messages and calls to action. We spent the year also developing the thoughts of Fr. Raffaele Di Muro on the connection between prayer and mission. Now, I want to situate the work of the MI in the larger reality of the Church. This is crucial because the MI is a charism in the Church, given to the Church as a gift from the Holy Spirit for the purpose of announcing the coming of the Kingdom of the Most Sacred Heart in our times and in our midst. It is imperative that we listen not only to our saintly founder who is part of the charism but to the larger reality of the Church—our Mother and our Teacher who speaks in concert with the Spirit the perennial message in words and concepts fitted to the times.

If we are to speak and witness to our times, we must be aware of two things: to whom are we speaking and of what are we speaking. The Second Vatican Council convened in the early 1960's addressed both these questions: What is the nature of the times to which we must speak the saving Word and the Kingdom which He came to found. In the course of the Council and its deliberations, the Church put a question to herself—“Who are you, O Church?,”
(continues on pg. 2)



*“The goal of the MI (the abbreviation comes from the Latin Militia Immaculatae, or Militia of the Immaculata) is, in fact, to make sure that all become saints. In all this activity, what strikes the eye most of all is its Marian thrust. This is a consequence of a precise understanding of the mission of the Immaculata.”
(KW 1220)*

Editorial

(cont. from pg. 1)

in the words of Saint John Paul II. In other words, what is the nature of the Church, essentially who are we? We shall devote time and words to this question in future columns.

In the light of the above, we must consider, what does a Knight of the Immaculata need today to witness effectively to the Gospel? In preparing to do a job or a project we must assemble not only the ingredients but also the tools necessary to complete the task. I will attempt to put together a complete tool list for the accomplishment of the new call to evangelization. First, we must know what is the message. The Church, Mother and Teacher, has provided for us the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) and its derivatives, the Compendium, YOUCAT and DO-CAT. These compilations of Church teaching with primary emphasis on the CCC give us in an up-to-date manner in contemporary language the true teaching of the Spirit-guided Church founded by Jesus Christ and endowed with the promise of His Presence and His authority to teach in His name.

Let us take a moment to examine each of these tools. The CCC is the fundamental text for adults to understand what the Church teaches now and always. Its language is challenging but accessible and speaks in a very modern voice. It forms an essential part of the armory of every Knight. The Compendium to the CCC is the smaller child of the larger Catechism. It compresses the larger Catechism into a tighter, more condensed question and answer format, often slimming down several pages of the CCC into one question and a paragraph answer. It does not replace the Catechism but is an aid to the study of the Faith.

The YOUCAT is the youth version of the CCC and would be a good



gift to the teenagers and young adults to understand the message. Every young Knight should have it and, as Pope Benedict XVI exhorted young Catholics, "I invite you: Study this Catechism!.... so I beg you: Study this Catechism with passion and perseverance. Make a sacrifice of your time for it! Study it in the quiet of your room; read it with a friend; form study groups and networks; share with each other on the Internet. By all means continue to talk with each other about your faith." This would be essential for every MI youth group. The DO-CAT is the young Catholic's version of the social teachings of the Church, answering the question, "What must I do?"

After purchasing this set of tools, how can I use them effectively? Let me suggest a plan: there is a website, flocknotes.com, which sends you each day, free of charge, a question and a commentary from YOUCAT. You will find in the YOUCAT cross references to the CCC. Such an easy, convenient way to study the Faith!

To conclude this beginning of a list to put into practice the New Evangelization to which the Church exhorts us, please consider purchasing a set of the above mentioned books and study them. Your Faith will be lit up and you won't be able to keep it to yourself. Isn't that the New Evangelization?!

Until next month, "Let us arise, and be on our way."

In the Immaculata,
John Galten
MI National President

Prayer for the Unborn

Lord Jesus,

You who faithfully visit and fulfill with your Presence the Church and the history of men; You who in the miraculous Sacrament of your Body and Blood render us participants in divine Life and allow us a foretaste of the joy of eternal Life; We adore and bless you.

Prostrated before You, source and lover of Life, truly present and alive among us, we beg you. Reawaken in us respect for every unborn life, make us capable of seeing in the fruit of the maternal womb the miraculous work of the Creator, open our hearts to generously welcoming every child that comes into life.

Bless all families, sanctify the union of spouses, render fruitful their love. Accompany the choices of legislative assemblies with the light of your Spirit, so that peoples and nations may recognize and respect the sacred nature of life, of every human life. Guide the work of scientists and doctors, so that all progress contributes to the integral well-being of the person, and no one endures suppression or injustice.

Give creative charity to administrators and economists, so they may realize and promote sufficient conditions so that young families can serenely embrace the birth of new children. Console the married couples who suffer because they are unable to have children and in Your goodness provide for them. Teach us all to care for orphaned or abandoned children, so they may experience the warmth of your Charity, the consolation of your divine Heart.

Together with Mary, Your Mother, the great believer, in whose womb you took on our human nature, we wait to receive from You, our Only True Good and Savior, the strength to love and serve life, in anticipation of living forever in You, in communion with the Blessed Trinity.

Benedict XVI

“Take this from my life!”

A Mary-led conversion story turned into mission



I'm a senior at Duke University whose life has been changed by the grace given me, from God, through the immaculate hands of Mary. I desperately struggled with sins against purity, struggling with the sins of masturbation and pornography (cf. CCC 2351-2354) for over six years of my life. I wanted so desperately to remove these things from my heart. Although I sought Jesus in the sacrament of reconciliation, I tried to navigate God's grace all on my own. I needed God's help, but I didn't know how to accept it or what to make of it.

I felt this way until I started learning more about Mary and Mary as the Immaculate Conception. I quickly studied up on Fatima, the story of Divine Mercy, and saints who maintained profound Marian devotions like Maximilian Kolbe. Their stories spoke of God's tremendous grace and Mary's role in the midst of it all. Soon enough, I started praying the Rosary. “Take this from my life;” I asked for our Mother's help; I prayed for Kolbe's intercession, the patron of the addicted. I realized that I had to surrender to the Holy Spirit like Mary, the spouse of the Spirit. I had to give myself over to the Lord—so I did that through the hands of Mary: I devoted and consecrated myself to Mary, and joined the MI.

I can't say when, how, or why, but by God's grace, given through our Mother of Mercy, I've been kept free from the sin that bound me for my

young adult life. The Rosary and the Miraculous Medal were the exterior signs of this interior conversion. Once I realized Mary's role in this conversion, I couldn't keep silent, I had to share the truth of our Mother's pure love for us. So a few weeks ago, I emailed the MI to ask for an order of Miraculous Medals.

I felt a nudge on my heart to share this devotion to Mary with my peers

“The medal speaks of how we are not simply seen, but we are loved—loved by God through Mary. There is no greater gift than this.”

and other members of the Duke Catholic Center. The medal had been a message of hope for me. It was through the image of Mary as the Immaculate Conception that I learned of how Mary, conceived without sin, looks at us. She sees the sin on our heart and does all that she can in order to bring us into the grace of the Father. She sees us in sin and knows we were made for something greater. The medal I wore around my neck immediately took on new significance. I realized I had someone not simply watching over me, but actively praying for me, actively drawing me closer and closer to the Sacred Heart of her Son.

The medal took on such a depth and beauty as I learned more about Maximilian's Militia of the Immaculata, set upon winning hearts for the Lord through Mary's Immaculate Heart. As the MI website describes, the medal nearly serves as a mini-catechism. Not only is this the “silver bullet” barraging enemy lines, but it is also a direct signal of our recourse to Mary as her spiritual children!

Only recently have I fully realized the great beauty of this devotion and medal. I've had a desire on my heart to share the good news of Jesus Christ through the example, witness, and love of Mary. I've been trying to encourage my peers to ask for Mary's intercession, to consecrate themselves to her great care. I've seen the saving power of God active through her presence in my heart—let alone, in the lives of so many of the saints! Why, then, would I not want to share this? Quite tangibly, the Miraculous Medal is the very means of this evangelization.

Kolbe's vision is alive and well in so far as we're willing to journey and enter into the fray as foot soldiers of the Immaculata! That's why I now carry these Miraculous Medals with me almost everywhere I go—I seek moments to share this treasure. God sees us; Mary, the saints, the angels, they see us. Yet the medal speaks of how we are not simply seen, but we are loved—loved by God through Mary. There is no greater gift than this.

Luke

MI Members, please send your testimony for everyone's inspiration!

For info about the MI Youth & Young Adults visit:
MIYouth.org

**Check the MI official Facebook page:
Mission of the Immaculata**

God Comes to Us Wherever We Are!



November 2012, I had just retired from a position held for 13 years. My husband and I had been active MI members for many years. It now appeared Our Blessed Mother was about to take us to a new level of our consecration. I learned there was great need for volunteers in prison ministry and I had time.

Like many, I admit I had hang-ups at first, for the inmates were in jail because of justice, right? But, through correspondence with many inmates, the experience of their being cut-off from family, friends, loved ones, from the society in which they lived and from their Church communities was a tremendous weight. Some even asked: How could they be forgiven by God and those they have offended?

That's when it hit me, in a way I had never understood before, "God comes to us where we are." Whether we are in prison or at home, whether ill and bedridden, at work and supporting a family. Wherever we are God knows us and loves us. He comes to us in His time, at a place and time where and when at last we will allow Him into our hearts and souls. The meeting place is in us, at that moment in time when we say "yes."

Many prisoners have never known God! They are first coming to know God in prison. They are aching to know His healing presence in their lives. They pray for the Church and the state of the world. Some have inquired whether they could be ordained so they could more greatly minister to others within prison walls.

One of my favorite passages in the New Testament is Lk 5: Jesus says to St. Peter, "Put out into the deep and let your nets down for a catch." St. Peter says to Him: "Lord, we've been fishing all night and we've taken nothing." Yet, at Our Lord's word he takes his boat back out on the water, casts out the nets into the deep and they catch so many fish their nets were breaking and they needed help bringing them in.

There's a story from our brother MM in Corcoran, CA: He and his MI Village of the Immaculata had petitioned to process through the prison yard honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe. They decided to do what's never been done before at their prison: a procession around the prison yard on December 9th, the day of Our Lady's first appearance to St. Juan Diego, with a large image of "La Guadalupana" while reciting the Rosary. As the procession commenced along the rocky path that snakes around our yard, it was humbling to see a non-participating prisoner approach the image of the Mother of God, kneel and venerate it with a holy simplicity and humility of heart.

Miracles are happening within prison walls! Sadly, in everyday life there is so much activity many cannot find time for God.

In union with St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe who was a prisoner in the Auschwitz prison camp, MI Apostolate to the Incarcerated desires to promote self-worth, healing, community and prayer among all prisoners through

consecration to the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Mary brings them to the foot of the Cross of Christ where they are graced with His love and forgiveness.

God is love and with Him all things are possible. Jesus said the well have no need of a physician. He came to save the sick, to lift the down-hearted and the poor of spirit. Jesus was also rejected, cast out from His people, misunderstood and crucified; even punished for crimes He didn't commit. He bore the burden of the world upon His shoulders. Through His suffering and death on the Cross, He made the greatest proclamation of love without limits—asking His Father to forgive us.

With Mary, we can all place the weight of our sufferings into her hands and she will unite them with the redemptive sufferings of her Son thus obtaining countless graces for us and for all souls, so they will once more be reunited with God.

Sandy Kisel
Village Moderator
MI Apostolate to the Incarcerated

If you would like to know more about the MI Apostolate to the Incarcerated let us hear from you. If you know of anyone who is incarcerated we would love to correspond with them.

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We would like to feature
MI VILLAGES
in each upcoming newsletter.
Please send reports, photos and
testimonies to:
MINational@MissionImmaculata.com

Reflection on January MI Intention

O Immaculata please intercede that the MI throughout the world may be a sign of unity and fraternity.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Gal 3:28)

Probably many of us share the experience of having relatives who live at a distance, and this may result in infrequent opportunities to see each other and to enter into a deep relationship with one another. A true relationship entails more than just an occasional phone call; it calls for a mutual exchange of thoughts, sentiments and experiences. The longing we feel for someone who is far from us is not usually caused simply by the fact of being blood-related. Our hearts long for the mutual giving and receiving that creates a strong and permanent bond between human beings.

Now let us turn to our MI Family. Have we ever thought about how many MI brothers and sisters we have all over the world, who share the same wonderful Marian missionary charism that calls us to move beyond our own circle of family and friends?

St. Maximilian is a prime witness and thus a teacher in pointing out two essential and parallel dimensions of our life: the commitment to carry out the little things of daily life, in which God's call reveals itself each day, while maintaining our hearts open and attentive to a spirit of universal fraternity.

In fact, the Saint himself wanted the MI to be understood as a global vision of Catholic life. As if the word "Catholic" were not clear enough, he added "global," so as to emphasize the cosmopolitan dimension of the Association.

In light of all this, it becomes clearer how the elements of fraternity and unity belong to the essence of the Militia of the Immaculata. Its rapid spreading throughout the world gives witness to its universality and ability to insert itself in varied countries and cultures while fostering in all members a deep sense of unity, rooted in our shared total consecration to the Immaculata. St. Maximilian's passionate desire to establish a City of the Immaculata in every country sprang forth from this missionary spirit, which makes us one and yet a diversified family, present and active on every continent.

During this month, then, let us pray that we may grow closer to our spiritual family present in every corner of the world, to foster the zeal that comes from our mutual belonging to the Mother of God. We share a common gift and calling to be Our Lady's instruments and we are to make Fr. Kolbe's words a reality: "It also seems to me that all the Niepokalanóws of every single nation will build a strongly compact unity, one world army fighting nonstop until the end of time" (KW 382). An army that fights always and everywhere with the same maternal love of the Immaculata, who welcomes each person in search of happiness and truth, without distinction.

(From the MI International Office)

**Request your
2018 MI Intentions leaflet
if you have not received it yet!
Call (331) 223-5564**

News from the MI International Center

On November 21-23, 2017, the International President of the Militia of the Immaculata, Fr. Raffaele Di Muro, went to Japan where he visited the National Center of the MI in Nagasaki, the one that St. Maximilian Kolbe had founded and called "Mugenzai no Sono" (Garden of the Immaculata). Significant and meaningful visits were made to the Kolbean sites in this area, particularly the cell where the saint lived. In addition, Fr. Raffaele was able to exchange views and ideas with the National Assistant, Fr. Iohannes Baptista Yamaguchi, and to greet those who work at the Province of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M. in Japan. With the invaluable help of an interpreter, Fr. Lucas (Shin-ichiroh) Tanizaki, Fr. Raffaele was able to discuss the history and current situation of the MI. It was a productive time for planning the future of the MI movement in this nation. The visit was concluded with the celebration of Holy Mass presided over by the Most Reverend Berard Toshio Oshikawa, OFM Conv., Bishop of Naha, Japan. The visit was very fruitful as it was an opportunity for conversation between the friars and the MI International President regarding the MI in Japan, and it culminated with some ambitious planning for the future. Mugenzai no Sono is deeply rooted in Kolbean history. In the past, it yielded countless fruits and even today, it continues to produce new missionary shoots.

The Secret of Success in Catholic Action

In October 1924, Fr. Maximilian wrote the following article (*KW 1071*), which is still very relevant for us today.



How many times do we hear complaints even by zealous Catholic activists, who say that action lags, that its fruits are very scarce and do not last long. Where does the cause lie?

Before my eyes I have a golden book, a truly golden one, entitled *The Soul of the Apostolate*. Written in French (*L'Âme de tout apostolat*), it was translated into Italian at the command of Msgr. Volpi, Bishop of Arezzo. In the preface, the Bishop states: "Having devoted myself to Catholic action since the early years of priestly life, I noticed that the greatest help came to me from people, even if laymen, spiritually formed by an old priest, who was also a guide and teacher to me.

"Moreover, even then, but more so when—in the inscrutable design of God—I was burdened with the heavy office of bishop, it dawned on me that Catholic action could also be a source of dissipation for those who were involved in it, including even priests. I realized that in most cases it was quite out of proportion to the hard work and the many means that are used without producing any fruits.

"I clearly saw what the cause of such great sterility was, and dared voice my view more than once, but was always ignored. The most generous would only concede some expression of pity toward me, as if I did not know the spirit of contemporary men and the kind of action that must be carried out to their advantage."

What, then, is the cause? Catholic action is a most sublime undertak-

ing: it is a form of cooperation (if one may so speak) with God in perfecting, sanctifying, and making men happy. But about such undertaking, our Savior Himself expressly told the Apostles: "Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:4–5).

The Savior is not saying that without Him we cannot do "many things" but "nothing," absolutely nothing. The fruitfulness of work, therefore, does not depend on abilities, efforts or money, even though those also are gifts of God and useful for Catholic action. It only and exclusively depends on our degree of union with God. If that fails, or if that bond is weakened, all other means avail nothing. If, instead, our bond to God is alive, all the rest will come without difficulty. Therefore, the venerable Bishop Volpi adds: "I often felt the need to restore my spirit in solitude and to resort to prayer, in order to reap from my activity the fruits I ardently longed for."

That advice applies to us as well, members of the Militia of the Immaculata, because it shows how we are supposed to set to work in our environment. Union with the Immaculata, being instruments in her immaculate hands: there lies the secret that ensures success.

MK

Official Act of Total Consecration to the Immaculata

(composed by St. Maximilian Kolbe)

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

If it pleases you, use all that I am and have without reserve, wholly to accomplish what was said of you: "She will crush your head," and, "You alone have destroyed all heresies in the world." Let me be a fit instrument in your immaculate and merciful hands for introducing and increasing your glory to the maximum in all the many strayed and indifferent souls, and thus help extend as far as possible the blessed kingdom of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus. For wherever you enter, you obtain the grace of conversion and growth in holiness, since it is through your hands that all graces come to us from the most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

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

R. Give me strength against your enemies.



MI Centennial Celebration in Kansas City

Guests and members from the eleven MI Villages spread across the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph and Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kansas, gathered at Our Lady of Perpetual Help on October 7, 2017, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the MI.

The day started with the Rosary, members of the MI renewing their consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and Holy Mass with Polish music, celebrated by Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas. In his homily, Archbishop Nau-

mann spoke on the value of the Rosary and its roots in Scripture and on what consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary means.

After Mass, the group snacked on Polish pastries as they listened to a keynote talk by Mike Scherschligt, founder of the Holy Family School of Faith who has a Licentiate in Sacred Theology from the Marianum in Rome. Mr. Scherschligt explained that in the Immaculate Conception, the Holy Spirit fashioned Mary from the first moment of her existence to be the perfect hu-

man visible sign and perfect model of God dwelling in the soul, and how that relates to the Holy Spirit working in our spiritual development.

“Consecration to Mary continues this process. We choose to cooperate and help this process, by giving ourselves entirely to the Holy Spirit and Mary so they can form Jesus in us,” Mr. Scherschligt said. He also noted the interesting fact that the Militia of the Immaculata, whose mission involves consecration, was founded three days after the final apparition at Fatima where Our Lady asked for consecration to her Immaculate Heart.

After his talk, accordion music and polka dancing kept the celebration and conversation hopping during the luncheon of cabbage rolls, kielbasa and other Polish delicacies. The day concluded with the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

(Adapted from Catholic Key-News by Megan Marley)

The MI New Home Needs YOU!

MI-USA will soon have a new, permanent home! The prayers of so many MI members have been beautifully answered. It comes complete with meeting rooms, offices, a library, sixteen bedrooms for MI retreatants, and a lovely chapel situated at the heart of the building. The Bishop of Peoria has given his blessing to the MI National Center in his diocese. The new National Center will cost \$15,000 per year over a period of 15 years, far less than the market value of the property.

As we prepare for the new MI National Center, we are seeking 12 “MI Apos-

ties” to commit to \$100 per month to cover the purchase payments. Such a sizable donation is truly heroic, but it will greatly ease the financial burden of this necessary step in the life of MI-USA. A few MI members have already generously responded and we are most grateful.

Will YOU prayerfully consider making such a commitment in this critical time and be Our Lady’s instrument to achieve the greatest glory of God?

If you are part of an MI Village, you could do this as a group! What a wonderful way to come together and contribute to Our Lady’s home and mission!

Please keep the MI National in your prayers and know that ALL MI Members are included in daily prayers at the National Center.

Send your prayer intentions to be placed at the feet of Our Lady in the MI Book of Intentions:

MINational@MissionImmaculata.com

New MI resources available from the MI National Center



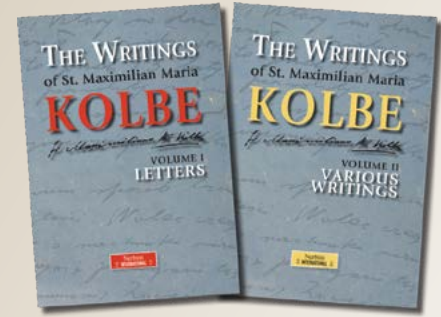
Disseminate the Miraculous Medal and introduce Our Lady and the MI to others!

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

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

The Definitive English Edition!

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



"I heartily welcome 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, 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.

"These two volumes give vigorous new life to the prophetic voice of truth of one of the greatest saints of our times." — Fr. James McCurry, OFM Conv

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

St. Maximilian Kolbe

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