

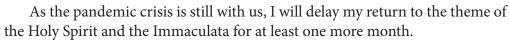
May 1, Reconsecration of the USA to the Blessed Virgin Mary

Rediscovering Family and Home

By John W. Galten, MI National President

Dear Knights of the Immaculata,

Maria! Rejoice, for the Lord has risen as He said! We are still basking in the great light of Easter but also in the presence of the pall of darkness—called the pandemic. May the power of the Resurrection overcome this darkness.



As we now live sequestered in our homes, we continue to pray for the end of this plague and for all the victims—living and deceased. Let us also look for what good may result from this tragedy. We just witnessed in the Paschal Mystery how the terrible suffering and death of Jesus brought to us our redemption in His Resurrection. Thus, out of the greatest of evil—the death of God—was brought the greatest of good.

I am moved by the lessons many of us are learning from the "sheltering in place." What is the place? Well, none other than our homes. Notice that I did not say house but the deeper place called home. It is the place where everyone knows our name, where we can be our real selves and know the security of being loved. Perhaps this enforced "stay at home" is a time to reflect on the family and its home.

We know particularly from the writings of St. John Paul II that the family is threatened, even in crisis, which in itself poses a greater threat for civilization than the plague. Pope John Paul II wrote a marvelous series of teachings on the family: The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World (1981), Letter

(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

(continued from pg. 1)

to Families (1994), The Encyclical The Redeemer of Man (1979) and of course his monumental work on human love, Man and Woman He Created Them (1979-1984), popularly known as the Theology of the Body.

In these works, some of the great papal teachings of all time, he addressed the value, dignity and importance of the family in God's plan and in human history. Although the Church has written much on the family, Pope St. John Paul II could well be called "The Pope of the Family."

I often wondered, however, whether the most valuable wisdom and affirmation of the family would trickle down to those of us who live in our families and homes.

Is it possible that this "sheltering in place" ("stay at home") is the opportunity to experience again the gift that family and home really are? Will we take the time to reflect prayerfully on what a Christian family is and how one creates what Pope St. John Paul II called the Christian family as "domestic Church"...?

Like the larger Church, is our family a place of communion of persons in Christ and the Trinity? Is the center of our family Christ Himself? Are St. Joseph and the Immaculata the models for our home relationships? Is the love relationship of husband and wife reflective of the whole teaching of the Church about marital chastity? Do we pray together? Do we find our joy and fulfillment in Christ and one another? Do we see clearly that the goal of our family is Heaven? Could we consider consecrating our family to the Immaculata or consecrating our home to the Sacred Heart, making Him King of the family?

Many questions! But really, are not these questions looking to find the answer that Christ and His Church give us and to engage in the most valuable occupation of our time during this "sheltering in place?" I leave these questions for you to ponder as I am pondering them. Did not the Immaculata "ponder all these things in her heart?"

Until next month,"Watch and pray," stay healthy, and..."Arise, let us be on our way!"

John W. Galten MI National President

P.S. Please, let others know about our monthly MI e-newsletter and the daily Kolbe emails and invite them to sign up on the MI website—and invite family and friends to consider total consecration to Our Lady, especially during this month of May!



Daily Holy Mass

will be offered throughout 2020 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

The Holy Father's Letter for the Month of May



Dear Brothers and Sisters.

The month of May is approaching, a time when the People of God express with particular intensity their love and devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is traditional in this month to pray the Rosary at home within the family. The restrictions of the pandemic have made us come to appreciate all the more this "family" aspect, also from a spiritual point of view.

For this reason, I want to encourage everyone to rediscover the beauty of praying the Rosary at home in the month of May. This can be done either as a group or individually; you can decide according to your own situations, making the most of both opportunities. The key to doing this is always simplicity, and it is easy also on the Internet to find good models of prayers to follow.

I am also providing two prayers to Our Lady [see pg. 7] that you can recite at the end of the Rosary, and that I myself will pray in the month of May, in spiritual union with all of you. I include them with this letter so that they are available to everyone.

Dear brothers and sisters, contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary our Mother will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial.

I keep all of you in my prayers, especially those suffering most greatly, and I ask you, please, to pray for me. I thank you, and with great affection I send you my blessing.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, April 25, 2020 Feast of Saint Mark the Evangelist

Pope Francis



[On Easter] Sunday we celebrated the Lord's resurrection; today [Divine Mercy Sunday] we witness the resurrection of His disciple. It has already been a week, a week since the disciples had seen the Risen Lord, but in spite of this, they remained fearful, cringing behind "closed doors" (Jn 20:26), unable even to convince Thomas, the only one absent, of the resurrection. What does Jesus do in the face of this timorous lack of belief? He returns and, standing in the same place, "in the midst" of the disciples, He repeats his greeting: "Peace be with you!" (Jn 20:19, 26). He starts all over. The resurrection of His disciple begins here, from this faithful and patient mercy, from the discovery that God never tires of reaching out to lift us up when we fall. He wants us to see Him, not as a taskmaster with whom we have to settle accounts, but as our Father who always raises us up. In life we go forward tentatively, uncertainly, like a toddler who takes a few steps and falls; a few steps more and falls again, yet each time his father puts him back on his feet. The hand that always puts us back on our feet is mercy: God knows that without mercy we will remain on the ground, that in order to keep walking, we need to be put back on our feet.

You may object: "But I keep falling!". The Lord knows this and He is always ready to raise you up. He does not want us to keep thinking about our failings; rather, He wants us to look to Him. For when we fall, He sees children needing to be put back on their feet; in our failings He sees children in need of His merciful love. Today, in this church that has become a shrine of mercy in Rome, and on this Sunday that Saint John Paul II dedicated to Divine Mercy twenty years ago, we confidently welcome this



Painting by Geoffrey Butz

message. Jesus said to Saint Faustina: "I am love and mercy itself; there is no human misery that could measure up to my mercy" (Diary, September 14, 1937). At one time, the Saint, with satisfaction, told Jesus that she had offered Him all of her life and all that she had. But Jesus' answer stunned her: "You have not offered me the thing is truly yours." What had that holy nun kept for herself? Jesus said to her

with kindness: "My daughter, give me your failings" (October 10, 1937). We too can ask ourselves: "Have I given my failings to the Lord? Have I let Him see me fall so that He can raise me up?" Or is there something I still keep inside me? A sin, a regret from the past, a wound that I have inside, a grudge against someone, an idea about a particular person... The Lord waits for us to offer Him our failings so that He can help us experience His mercy.

Let us go back to the disciples. They had abandoned the Lord at His Passion and felt guilty. But meeting them, Jesus did not give a long sermon. To them, who were wounded within, He shows His own wounds. Thomas can now touch them and know of Jesus' love and how much Jesus had suffered for him, even though he had abandoned Him. In those wounds, he touches with his hands God's tender closeness. Thomas arrived late, but once he received mercy, he overtook the other disciples: he believed not only in the resurrection, but in the boundless love of God. And he makes the most simple and beautiful profession of faith: "My Lord and my God!" (v. 28). Here is the resurrection of the disciple: it is accomplished when his frail and wounded humanity enters into that of Jesus. There, every doubt is resolved; there, God becomes my God; there, we begin to accept ourselves and to love life as it is.

Dear brothers and sisters, in the time of trial that we are presently undergoing, we too, like Thomas, with our fears and our doubts, have experienced our frailty. We need the Lord, who sees beyond that frailty an irrepressible beauty. With Him we rediscover how precious we are even in our vulnerability. We discover that we are like beautiful crystals, fragile and at the same time precious.

(continues on pg. 4)



Living as Resurrected Disciples, in His Mercy

(continued from pg. 3)

And if, like crystal, we are transparent before Him, His light - the light of mercy – will shine in us and through us in the world. As the Letter of Peter said, this is a reason for being "filled with joy, though now for a little while you may have to suffer various trials" (1Pt 1:6).

On this feast of Divine Mercy, the most beautiful message comes from Thomas, the disciple who arrived late; he was the only one missing. But the Lord waited for Thomas. Mercy does not abandon those who stay behind. Now, while we are looking forward to a slow and arduous recovery from the pandemic, there is a danger that we will forget those who are left behind. The risk is that we may then be struck by an even worse virus, that of selfish indifference. A virus spread by the thought that life is better if it is better for me, and that everything will be fine if it is fine for me. It begins there and ends up selecting one person over another, discarding the poor, and sacrificing those left behind on the altar of progress. The present pandemic, however, reminds us that there are no differences or borders between those who suffer. We are all frail, all equal, all precious. May we be profoundly shaken by what is happening all around us: the time has come to eliminate inequalities, to heal the injustice that is undermining the health of the entire human family! Let us learn from the early Christian community described in the Acts of the Apostles. It received

mercy and lived with mercy: "All who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need" (Acts 2:44-45). This is not some ideology: it is Christianity.

In that community, after the resurrection of Jesus, only one was left behind and the others waited for him. Today the opposite seems to be the case: a small part of the human family has moved ahead, while the majority has remained behind. Each of us could say: "These are complex problems, it is not my job to take care of the needy, others have to be concerned with it!". Saint Faustina, after meeting Jesus, wrote: "In a soul that is suffering we should see Jesus on the cross, not a parasite and a burden... [Lord] You give us the chance to practice deeds of mercy, and we practice making judgments" (Diary, September 6, 1937). Yet she herself complained one day to Jesus that, in being merciful, one is thought to be naive. She said, "Lord, they often abuse my goodness." And Jesus replied: "Never mind, don't let it bother you, just be merciful to everyone always" (December 24, 1937). To everyone: let us not think only of our interests, our vested interests. Let us welcome this time of trial as an opportunity to prepare for our collective future, a future for all without discarding anyone. Because without an all-embracing vision, there will be no future for anyone.

Today the simple and disarming love of Jesus revives the heart of His disciple. Like the apostle Thomas, let us accept mercy, the salvation of the world. And let us show mercy to those who are most vulnerable; for only in this way will we build a new world.

Pope Francis Second Sunday of Easter, April 19, 2020

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This beautiful 56-page booklet may be used individually or as a group activity (in a home or parish setting, for example), or as a series of classes led by a facilitator, or during a day of preparation for MI consecration to Our Lady. If you can offer a series of meetings, you can read each chapter with the group and invite the participants to reflect and comment on it. Alternatively, you can invite them to read each chapter beforehand and come together for discussion.

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Reflection on May MI Intention

O Immaculata, please intercede that your example may help us to improve our Christian discipleship.

"His mother kept all these things in her heart." (Lk 2:51)

In her pilgrimage of faith, Mary learned day after day to welcome the events of life, not so much through a rational process but rather through the experience of meditation. She kept and pondered in her heart everything life presented, what she understood and what she did not, and in doing so she embraced all the events and words, welcoming them even if she did not grasp them completely.

In Our Lady's disposition, we may discover the secret for being authentic disciples of her Son. She teaches us to be attentive to what we live, to treasure in our hearts every experience we go through in life, to leave the Lord free to fill them with meaning, that is, to see in them His Presence and how He forms and transforms us through them. Nothing we live is meaningless, if we learn to discern the action of God who never abandons us.

Without a doubt, St. Maximilian lived this attitude of Mary in his own life and learned from her the best way to follow Jesus, which does not spare us from difficulties and hardships. He wrote: "Day after day, hour after hour, moment by moment, in the faithful discharge of our ordinary duties and the commitment to conform to the will of God, she will teach us how to give proof of our love for the Divine Heart: a generous love, through fulfillment of His Will, despite difficulties, sacrifices and crosses" (KW 1233).

Our Blessed Mother was for him a teacher of the spiritual life, as also St. Paul VI suggested a few years later, "The faithful at a very early date began to look to Mary and to imitate her in making their lives an act of worship of God and making their worship a commitment of their lives" (Marialis Cultus, 21).

Our Founder's life had been dedicated fully to the apostolate but, in wartime, the occupying forces sealed the printing presses, thus causing the missionary activity of the City of the Immaculata to stop. In response to the friars' despondency and uncertainty, he urged them not to forget love and shared with them how he was pondering every event in his heart: "Here, the Immaculata lets us see for ourselves her protection. Since our release from captivity, on the day of her Immaculate Conception, she always grants us new graces. If only we were at least able to respond to those graces! Like everywhere else right now, tomorrow is uncertain, but without the Will of God nothing can happen. Also, the Immaculata is the Owner and the Lady here, and she may do as she pleases" (KW 901).

Addressing the friars' concern about the future of the work of the Militia of the Immaculata, shortly before his final arrest in 1941 he wrote: "Let us remain peaceful. If the cause of the MI is a work of the Immaculata, we may rest assured that no trouble could possibly be harmful to it; but if it is not, then it might as well collapse. When we do what conscience tells us, we may look to the future with confidence, even in spite of our shortcomings. I commend you to the Immaculata and ask for a prayer" (KW 942).

In the words of St. Ambrose, let us pray: "May the heart of Mary be in each of us to proclaim the greatness of the Lord; and her spirit be in everyone to exult in Him!"

(from the MI International Office)



2020 **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.



How to Be Our Lady's Missionaries

In St. Maximilian Kolbe's own words to his confreres from his Japan mission outpost.

To Fr. Antonio Vivoda, Padua

What is the Immaculata? Who will ever understand it perfectly? Mary, Mother of God, the Immaculata.... In an ineffable way, the Immaculate Spouse of the Holy Spirit has the same Son as the Father in Heaven. What an ineffable family?!...

And then we are hers, of the Immaculata, hers without limits, most perfectly hers; we are almost herself. Through us, she loves the Good God. Through our poor hearts she loves her divine Son. We become the means whereby the Immaculata loves Jesus, and Jesus, seeing us as her property, almost a part of His most beloved Mother, loves her in us and through us. What wondrous mysteries!...

We know of obsessed, possessed people, through whom the devil thought, spoke and acted. We want to be like that, and still more fully possessed by her, that she herself may think, speak, act by means of us. We want to be of the Immaculata to the point that not only is there nothing left in us that is not hers, but that we become nearly annihilated in her, changed into her, transubstantiated into her, so that she herself remains. That we may be hers in the same way as she is God's. She is God's to the point of becoming His Mother, and we want to become the mother who brings forth the Immaculata into all hearts that are and will be.

That is the MI: to let her into all hearts, to bring her into being within all hearts, that by entering those hearts and taking most perfect possession of them, she may there give birth to

the sweet Jesus, God, and there raise Him to perfect age.

What a beautiful mission!... Is that not true?... Divinisatio hominis usque ad Deum-hominem per Dei-hominis Matrem. [The divinization of man until he becomes the Man-God, through the Mother of the God-

(KW 508)

To Franciscan Seminarians, Krakow

Neither theoretically, nor much less practically do I know how we should serve the Immaculata, be an instrument to her, a servant, child, slave, possession and property, and... herself. She alone must instruct each of us at every moment, must lead us, transform us into herself, so that it is no longer we who live, but she in us, just as Jesus lives in her and the Father in the Son.

Let us allow her to operate in us and through us whatever she wishes. She will definitely work miracles of grace, and we ourselves shall become holy saints, great saints, for, as we become even like her, she will conquer, through us, the whole world and each individual soul. Let us hasten that time by deepening our consecration to her through ever more perfect obedience. Assimilation of our will to hers, a union so intimate as to nearly manage to obliterate all differences between our will and hers.

Glory to the Immaculata, for the fact that her spirit grows in you, dear Children. The task of an MI circle in the major seminary is most important. The seminary, in fact, is by its nature a preparation for the apostolate, and if the MI circle is unable to fulfill its task, preparation designed for that end will be faulty.

And that end is important, both because it has been ours ever since the beginning of the Order, and because, since she is Mediatrix of all graces, it is only to the extent in which we draw near to her that we can also possibly become a channel of grace, mediators of the graces that must flow from the Father, through the Son (who merited them) and the Immaculata (who bestows them), to us and, through us, to souls. May the Immaculata bless you and clasp you to her Heart during your preparation for missionary work.

Let us remain joyful in peace in the Immaculata and let us be shaped by her without placing any restriction, as she pleases, through pleasant and unpleasant events, outer or intimate joys, sorrows, temptations, etc., etc.: everything for her. I ask for a prayer. Yours,

> Br. Maximilian M. MI (KW 556)

DEAR ST. MAXIMILIAN...

(From the Office of Communications of the Franciscan Conventual Order)

It would be nice to have a chat with St. Maximilian M. Kolbe, to ask his advice and to learn more about his missionary, formational and administrative choices. However, it seems this is not possible. At least in this case, it has nothing to do with Covid-19.

Let us imagine, then, that it is April 24, 1930, a memorable day for Friar Maximilian. On that day, ninety years ago, his ship docked in Japan after almost two months of travel and Friar Maximilian set foot for the first time on Japanese soil. Why Japan? Maximilian wanted to conquer the whole world for Christ, under the protection of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. However, his missionary project was marked by failures big and small and was beset by many problems. Nonetheless, Friar Maximilian never gave up and never calculated his plans according to "human" logic.

In 1927, he moved from Grodno (now in Belarus) to the newly built Friary of Niepokalanów, in Poland, and brought with him the publishing house he founded a few years earlier. When he moved his publishing house from Krakow to Grodno, he was on his own and his whole publishing house fit in a suitcase. However, when he transferred his publishing house from Grodno to Niepokalanów, he had some thirty friars working for him and a train was needed to transport the machinery. Early in 1930, he decided to take four friars with him and leave for the mission. By that time there were 104 friars in Niepokalanów, and every month 120,000 copies of the "Knight of the Immaculata" were printed. From a human standpoint, he picked the worst time to leave. Niepokalanów was just getting off the ground and the only person who could replace Maximilian as the head of the friary was his biological brother, Friar Alfons, who had serious health problems.

In any case, on February 26, 1930, Friar Maximilian finally departed. After many misadventures, he arrived in Japan, where he began his missionary activity. Maximilian's decision shows us a little bit of everything about him: his courage to leave Niepokalanów, even though there was still so much left to do there; his ability to seek God's will in small things and in encounters, firmly trusting that God was in charge; his ability to accept that not everything had to be in place, but that it was more important to get started; and finally, there was his holy folly of just jumping right into the impossible.

The fact remains that our presence in Japan began on that day and has continued



First Prayer

O Mary,

You shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick. who, at the foot of the Cross, were united with Jesus' suffering, and persevered in your faith.

"Protectress of the Roman people," you know our needs, and we know that you will provide, so that, as at Cana in Galilee, joy and celebration may return after this time of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the will of the Father and to do what Jesus tells us. For He took upon Himself our suffering, and burdened Himself with our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.

We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God; Do not despise our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from every danger, O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.

Second Prayer

"We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God."

In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the front line of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out His all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

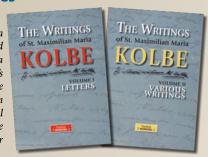
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The Writings of St. Maximilian Kolbe

VOLUME I: LETTERS • VOLUME II: VARIOUS WRITINGS

The Definitive English Edition!

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 those writings collected together in a two-volume compendium published by Nerbini International.





At long last the complete works of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe in English: accurate, readable and with explanatory introduction and footnotes. Both scholars and general readers will find this edition of the Writings of St. Maximilian Kolbe an

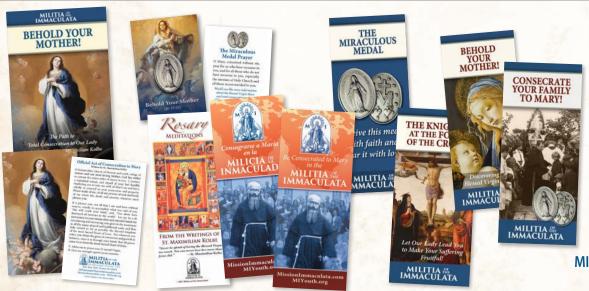
inspiring practical aid for learning what this Franciscan saint has contributed to the study of Mariology and living the consecration to Mary's Immaculate Heart. May the translators' work contribute to a renewal of Kolbean studies in the English speaking world. - Fr. Peter D. Fehlner, OFM Conv.

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

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