

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

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Getting Equipped for Mission - IV

Dear Knights of the Immaculata,

Maria! We have been presenting the call of the Church to the New Evangelization. This call fits in completely with the entire core of our total consecration to draw all men to Christ through Mary. There is a missionary impulse at the heart of our consecration and actions.

It might be helpful here to pause, catch our breath and do a brief review of our catechesis on evangelization. We have seen that the call to evangelize, to proclaim the Good News to the whole world, is the Church's fundamental mission. The mission began with the Incarnation of the Son, entering the world to proclaim the advent of the Kingdom of God. He is the very substance of the message—"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." He has given this work, this message, to His Church, which faces new challenges to save and renew every creature.

It is also clear that we ourselves must be evangelized more deeply and this requires that through the Immaculata's maternal guidance we encounter and commit to Christ her Son in a more profound way. She and her Spouse the Holy Spirit have the mission to form more truly the image of the Son in us.

With astonishing clarity, St. John Paul II outlined steps to accomplish our formation as apostolic witnesses—the call to holiness so as to be a more perfect image of Jesus; *prayer* as training in holiness; *the Eucharist*, the Food of our union with Christ; *the Sacrament of Reconciliation* to be restored to our Baptismal innocence; *the primacy of Grace*, which is the very life of God poured into our souls and conforming us to Christ; *listening to the Word*, that is, beholding the Face of Jesus and listening to Him; and finally *proclaiming the Word*, that

(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)

is, to experience the joy of Jesus and to seek opportunities to share this joy with all the world.

As Knights of the Immaculata we can add to the above the power of Our Lady's work in our lives to draw us quickly to ever deeper union with her Son. The steps, the path, outlined above constitute our marching orders as true Knights.

How are we to understand the situation of our present world and the necessities of our deeper conversion and consequent evangelical witness? Father Hans Urs Von Balthazar, in a small book, *Mary for Today*, points to Revelation 12 as the place to begin to appreciate the context of our current situation. It would be helpful here for you to open to that passage and meditatively consider the message. We are the children of the Woman clothed with the sun against whom the Red Dragon makes war and pursues us now and until the end of time. It is quite simply a spiritual warfare conducted without material weapons, but nonetheless a very, very serious business. We see evidence of this war all around us in contemporary culture. We must make no mistake about the deadliness of the warfare, for it involves the spiritual life and death of souls. As grim as the picture is we must realize and be conscious of the fact that Jesus has overcome the prince of this world, the Red Dragon, Satan, who is the murderer of souls. We have the means in the Church to proclaim the antidote to the poison of the Dragon and to make souls truly live in hope. Mary has promised that in the end her Immaculate Heart will triumph!

As Knights, facing the adversary, we must be brave and heed the call to action. Our response must be proportionate to the need, which is of the

most urgent kind. With joyful confidence but with deep steely conviction we must hear and heed this call to fight the one who "makes war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus" (Revelation 12:17). That is, I think, the sum total of our present situation. Everyone who has ears to hear, hear.

Next month we will consider the social teachings of the Church and their role in the New Evangelization. Until then, Easter Blessings on one and all as we enter into the profundity of the mysteries of our salvation and redemption.

As always—"Arise, let us be on our way."

In the Immaculata,
John Galten
MI National President

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

MINational@MissionImmaculata.com

Daily Holy Mass

will be offered throughout
2018 for the MI-USA
and all MI Members at
Niepokalanow, the City of
the Immaculata established
by St. Maximilian Kolbe near
Warsaw, Poland.

**A six-part Itinerary of
Preparation for Consecration
to the Immaculata in the
Spirit of St. Maximilian Kolbe
Now available on our website
[CLICK HERE](#)**



Regina Coeli

A Prayer for
the Easter Season

The Easter prayer Regina Coeli ("Queen of Heaven" in Latin) is a beautiful tribute to our Lord's resurrection and to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Although its origins are unknown, it dates back to the 13th century.

The Regina Coeli is one of four antiphons (short liturgical texts sung or chanted, often as seen below, in a responsorial pattern) dedicated to Our Lady. It is often sung as a hymn and has had numerous musical settings in its original Latin text.

Traditionally, it is prayed standing, in the morning, at noon and in the evening, in place of the Angelus, during the Easter Season from Easter Sunday to Pentecost. (Adapted from OurCatholicPrayer.com)

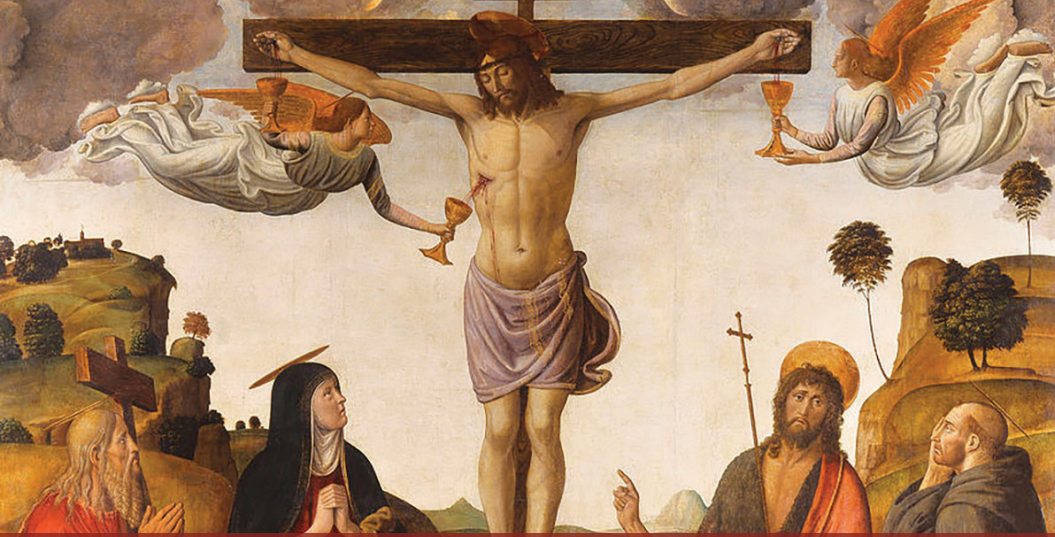
Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.
For He whom you did merit to bear,
alleluia.

Has risen, as He said, alleluia.
Pray for us to God, alleluia.

Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary,
alleluia.
For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia.

Let us pray:

O God, who gave joy to the world through the Resurrection of Thy Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may obtain the joys of everlasting Life. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.



The Knights at the Foot of the Cross

Let Our Lady lead you to make your suffering fruitful!

The Knights at the Foot of the Cross (KFC) is a special vanguard within the Militia of the Immaculata (MI) movement, consisting of Catholics who, regardless of age, are afflicted by suffering, whether physical, spiritual or emotional. As MI members, they consecrate themselves to Mary, so as to respond with her to the universal call to holiness. As she did at the foot of the Cross of her Son, they too participate in Christ's redemptive suffering (also called sacrificial or reparational suffering), by offering their daily prayer and trials to Jesus through Mary for the conversion and sanctification of all people and for the success of the MI's evangelizing mission, ultimately fostering the reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in all people.

Knights at the Foot of the Cross, though often unable to evangelize more actively because of illnesses, nonetheless become fruitful instruments of grace as they join their sufferings with those of Our Lord Jesus Christ through the intercession of Mary. As stated in the MI General Statutes, "Their consecration to the Immaculata makes the entire MI Family a participant in the redemptive mystery of Christ and renews its missionary thrust." They truly become a spiritual powerhouse.

Understanding Redemptive Suffering

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that, "The cross is the unique sacrifice of Christ, the 'one mediator between God and men' (1 Tim 2:5). But because in His incarnate divine Person He has in some way united Himself to every man, 'the possibility of being made partners, in a way known

"The MI mission - leading all to Christ through Mary - gives me a great goal in bearing and offering my daily sufferings." Peter, KFC

to God, in the paschal mystery'... is offered to all men. He calls His disciples to 'take up [their] cross and follow [Him] (Mt 16:24), for 'Christ also suffered for [us], leaving [us] an example so that [we] should follow in His steps' (1 Pet 2:21). In fact, Jesus desires to associate with His redeeming sacrifice those who were to be its first beneficiaries. This is achieved supremely in the case of His Mother, who was associated more intimately than any other person in the mystery of His redemptive suffering." (CCC 618) When we expe-

rience suffering in various ways, we are reminded that, just as Jesus confronted the Evil One with the power of the love that came to Him from the Father, so too can we confront and live through our trials "keeping our heart immersed in God's love" (Pope Benedict XVI).

Mary and St. Maximilian: Model of Redemptive Suffering

Mary Immaculate is our paramount model in embracing redemptive suffering. As she presented the Child Jesus at the temple, she consented to be associated in the mystery of His life, passion and death for our redemption. As she followed Jesus during His public ministry and ultimately when she stood at the Cross, her soul was indeed "pierced by a sword" (Lk 2:35). Pope St. John Paul II taught that on Calvary her suffering "reached an intensity which can hardly be imagined from a human point of view, but which was mysteriously fruitful for the redemption of the world... a special sort of sharing in the redeeming death of her Son." She encourages us to make our own sufferings fruitful through our MI consecration as a Knight at the Foot of the Cross.

The founder of the MI, St. Maximilian Kolbe, is also a special example of redemptive suffering. Throughout his whole life he embraced the Gospel logic of self-giving out of love for God and others. He was convinced that through total consecration to Our Lady, "souls will love the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus as they had never loved Him before, because, like her, and in ways they have never experienced before, they will plunge into the mysteries of Love: the Cross and the Eucharist. Through her, God's Love shall kindle the world, set it on fire" (*The Writings of St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe*, 991 Q). (continues on pg. 4)

The Knights at the Foot of the Cross



(Continued from pg. 3)

Once he was arrested and eventually taken to the Auschwitz death camp, Maximilian continued to follow the Gospel call to the Christ-like emptying of himself (cf. Phil 2:7). Not only did he share his scanty food and water with fellow prisoners while ministering to their spiritual needs, but he persevered in charity toward his Nazi captors who singled him out because he was a Catholic priest. He willingly endured the torture of the starvation bunker by offering his own life in place of another prisoner condemned to death. Pope St. John Paul II stated, “Fr. Maximilian did not die but gave his life for... his brother” and thus became a sign and a prophet of the new era, the civilization of love.

How Do I Join the KFC?

If you are already a member of the Militia of the Immaculata, you can join the KFC by registering with the MI National Center. Recite the KFC consecration prayer and send to the MI National Center-USA the completed form found in the MI brochure. You may also enroll online at the MI website, MissionImmaculata.com.

If you are not an MI member yet, you can join the KFC with your enrollment in the MI. Please find more information about joining the MI at MissionImmaculata.com or in the MI brochure.

As you consecrate yourself to Mary in St. Maximilian’s Militia of the Immaculata movement, you will be placing yourself under the maternal guidance of the Immaculata, Mother of the Church and Comfort of the Afflicted. Through your MI total consecration, you will cooperate with Mary in the work of building up and renewing the Church of the third millennium. As our Mediatrix, she will intercede for you and guide you in responding to the call to holiness. Moreover, you will share in the intercessory prayers of our MI Family throughout the world, who pray daily for the sanctification of its members.

KFC Consecration Prayer

O IMMACULATA,
Queen of heaven and earth,
health of the sick, and our most loving
Mother, God has willed to entrust the
entire order of mercy to you.

You stood at the foot of the Cross,
uniting yourself with the sufferings of
Jesus, and so you became for all the
Church a model of compassion.

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 daily
sufferings and crosses,
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 whole world.” Through my prayers
and sufferings, let me be a fit
instrument in your immaculate and
merciful hands for introducing and
increasing your glory to the max-
imum in all the many strayed and
indifferent souls, and thus help to
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.

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray
for us who have recourse to you, and for
all those who do not have recourse to you,
especially the enemies of Holy Church
and all those recommended to you.

**THE KNIGHTS
AT THE FOOT
OF THE CROSS**

*Let Our Lady Lead You
to Make Your Suffering
Fruitful!*

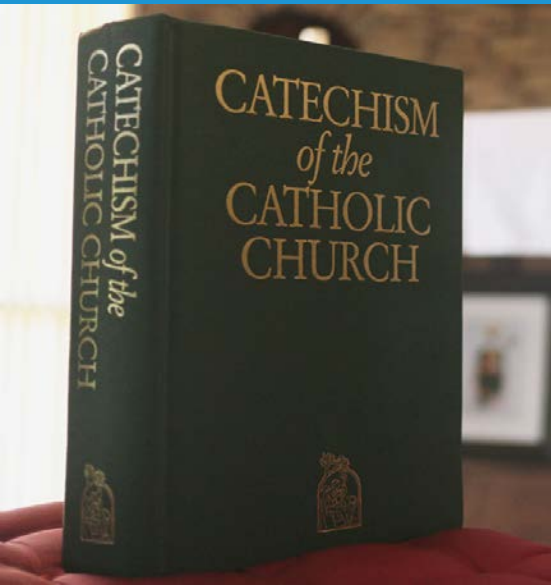
**MILITIA OF THE
IMMACULATA**

**Request the new
KFC brochure from the
MI National Center:
MINational@MissionImmaculata.com
or call
(331) 223-5564**

MI FORMATION

Some thoughts on the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the MI goals and ideals.

By John Galten, MI National President



In this column I will continue expanding on some points of comparison between the components of every MI program and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC).

Every MI program has a *Eucharistic component*. This is so Catholic as to almost bear not saying. It is not too obvious to say that the Eucharist is at the heart of Catholic identity and is almost synonymous with the term “Catholic.”

The Eucharist enables Catholics almost to say the words of St. John the Evangelist’s first Letter: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it” (1 John 1-2). For those Catholics who really discern in the Eucharist the living Resurrected Person of Jesus, know the joy and consolation of the Apostles who witnessed the One risen from the dead with the cry, “It is the Lord.”

For the MI, the Eucharist is the very content of our striving on this earth: “to know Jesus Christ.” In that vein, it is hardly

seen as necessary to cite instances from the life of St. Maximilian. Let it be said that he made numerous visits to the Blessed Sacrament each day and was almost instantly in adoration, born, I suspect, by his always being conscious of living in the presence of God all during the day. His addition of having Friars in turn being in adoration in front of the Sacrament illustrates his understanding that Jesus in this Holy Sacrament was the source and inspiration of all their apostolic efforts, and, so it should be for us Knights.

During the process for Fr. Kolbe beatification, one of the Niepokalanow friars recounted: “Immediately after his return from prison (1939), Fr. Maximilian introduced adoration of the most Blessed Sacrament throughout the entire day. He regarded this as the most efficacious means for meeting the needs of Niepokalanow and of his country. He announced this in the refectory, and ordered me to assign groups of friars from each work sector to take turn adoring for half-hour each. In this way each, including Fr. Maximilian, had his own time of adoration each day. Great care

“The marks or characteristics of the MI consist in the following: Catholic, Eucharistic, Marian and Apostolic.”

and attention were given to this activity... Often, in the early days, he himself would check and remind the brothers of this commitment, so that they would come to consider it of vital importance. But above all, he encouraged us with his example... When he did not feel well, he would take his cane and, leaning on it, would take his place in the chapel for the period of adoration assigned him.”

The *Catechism* speaks eloquently and at length about the Eucharist. The Sacrament of the Eucharist is given its fullest treatment in Part Two of the *Catechism* which deals

with the celebration of the Christian Mystery. The Spirit-guided Church describes in this section how she worships and how the Divine Life given to us in the Sacraments accomplishes in us unification with Christ, the Trinity, one another. The most explicit and detailed presentation on the Eucharist is found in Paragraphs 1322-1421 of the *Catechism*. In the beginning of the section on the Holy Eucharist, the CCC gives us, the Church, the jewel of the summation of the Eucharist: “The Eucharist is ‘the source and summit of the Church’s life.’ ‘The other Sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are orientated toward it. For in the Blessed Sacrament is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ Himself, our Pasch.’”

Perhaps nothing says it better than this quote. It would be worth a long meditation on this quote to mine the spiritual gold and the vision for our daily life that it contains. We as Catholics and as Knights must be completely immersed in and convinced of the profundity of this greatest gift of Christ to His Church, that is He Himself, in the Holy Eucharist. More on the Eucharist next month.



Reflection on April MI Intention

O Immaculata please
intercede that the MI
missionary spirit may be
rooted firmly in communion.

“I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us.”

(Jn 17:20-21a)

There is a restlessness in man's heart, as St. Augustine stated. If we look inside ourselves we discover that it is truly so. It is not the passing anxiety we experience when facing difficult situations. It is a restlessness we all share, even when we are unable to identify it as a thirst for God, the supreme Good. This restlessness made St. Maximilian exclaim: “But where do my thoughts lead me? Ever new horizons attract me” (KW 503). This thirst should call us to move out of ourselves, out of our comfort zone. That is what our call to mission implies, and St. Maximilian is a living example of this.

However, while he allowed himself to be attracted by new horizons, he would always make sure his ideas, proposals or inspirations were not just his own. The virtue of obedience, which was not only a vow but an authentic virtue, a lived-out value that permeated his whole life, directed him always to seek communion. He would undertake no missionary initiative if it were not shared with his superiors and confreres. We may recall that during his intense apostolic work, he was the object of accusations claiming that what he was doing would bring about division within the Franciscan Order and was aimed at the founding of a new community. He promptly replied that the idea had never crossed his mind; his actions proved how he always strove to build communion within his Franciscan family.

On one occasion, he wrote, “We can be sure that all division and misunderstanding does not come from the Immaculata, but solely and exclusively from that snake that is under her feet. Consequently, each, for his part, ought to endeavor to mitigate any disagreement with humility, love, patience and prayer, to enhance mutual love ever more deeply and to help one another in striving toward our Ideal of spreading the kingdom of the Immaculata into souls” (KW 926).

A spiritual family that is rooted in communion, rather than antagonism, focuses on perfecting its missionary work drawing from the richness that the Lord provides, in order to live out the same Ideal in various parts of the world. Communion with the Lord and with one another is the solid rock on which the house is to be built, on which mission finds its reason to exist. And just as there could not be true missionary spirit without communion, there would not be authentic communion if it were not open to mission.

When Jesus asked the Father that the disciples may be one, He was not asking for them to enjoy the security of a safety net. To be one means to participate in the life of the Most Holy Trinity, our Triune God Who is self-giving Love, fruitful Love. The more we strive to live in communion, the more our work will bear fruit for the life of the world and the salvation of souls: “The deeper such [mutual] love, the more effective will missionary activity be” (KW 925).

(From the MI International Office)

Call us to request your 2018 MI Intentions leaflet: (331) 223-5564

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.

“By the mercy of God through the Immaculata... I was ordained a priest of Our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Celebrating the 100th anniversary of St. Maximilian’s ordination



*By the mercy of God through the Immaculata on the 28th day of April in the year 1918
Feast of St. Paul of the Cross
Fourth Sunday after Easter
in Rome
in the Church of Sant’Andrea della Valle
by the Most Eminent Card. Vicar Basilio Pompili
I was ordained
a priest of Our Lord Jesus Christ.*

This text is found on the first page of the personal register of Holy Masses, which Fr. Maximilian kept up to date until February 14, 1941. In the original, the text is preceded by a large cross, hand-drawn by Fr. Maximilian. Despite its rather dry layout, this register, which consists of two notebooks, was invaluable in establishing the exact chronology of Fr. Maximilian’s life as well as the dates of many of his writings. During his first year of priesthood, Fr. Maximilian celebrated one of his Christmas Masses with the intention “*Pro amore usque ad victimam*,” that is, for the grace to love to the point of becoming a sacrificial victim (cf. Jerzy Domański, *For the Life of the World. St. Maximilian and the Eucharist*, Academy of the Immaculate, New Bedford, MA 1999, pp. 54 and 64).

In his Holy Mass Register (KW 1336), he recorded: “On the morning of the 28th, after prayers, we came out of the chapel. Around seven we left the College and headed toward the Church of Sant’Andrea della Valle. There, having put on deacon vestments, I prepared for my first Holy Mass. Fr. Giulio arrived, called each of us out by name, and arranged us into two

parallel lines. The Cardinal Vicar passed between them, and took a seat in a small armchair placed at the back of the sacristy. The master of ceremonies gave a nod, and we all (there were over a hundred of us) entered the church two by two. We lined up in the choir stalls of the presbytery. His Eminence the Cardinal Vicar was wearing holy vestments and began the celebration of the Holy Mass. The tonsure took place, then the Minor Orders, interspersed with some sections of the Holy Mass. Finally we heard the invitation: “*Accedant qui ordinandi sunt ad presbyteratus ordinem*” [Let those who will be ordained priests come forward.] Then, as the name and surname of each ordinand was announced, they all replied aloud, “*Adsum*” [Here I am], and one after the other they all joined the small group of subdeacons and deacons who were already in the middle of the presbytery....

“Both Fr. Kamil and I were assisted by Fr. Sobuś (an American priest of Polish descent). After the consecration I had tears in my eyes, but I needed to hold back my emotion to recite the prayers of the Canon with His Eminence the Cardinal. After ordination I went back home. What feelings! It should be acknowledged that the Immaculata has deigned to bring me this far. We later went to see the Most Rev. Fr. Vicar [Domenico Tavani]. In the afternoon, in the rain, I went with Fr. Granata to visit Fr. Luke, a Passionist, who is ill.

“On the following day, the 29th, I celebrated Holy Mass at the very altar where the Immaculata deigned to appear to Fr. Ratisbonne; what is more (against all hopes) the Mass of the Miraculous Medal. Fr. Petru Iosif Pal (Romanian) assisted and Br. Girolamo Biasi (originally from Trentino) acted as acolyte. Each of them spiritual friends in the Immaculata.”

M.K.

News from the MI International Center

The MI International invites all MI members to celebrate the **100th anniversary of St. Maximilian Kolbe’s priestly ordination**. Official events are scheduled in Rome to celebrate the centenary of the MI Founder’s ordination.

April 28, 2018

9:00 a.m.

At the St. Maximilian Kolbe Friary and MI International Center, Via San Teodoro 42, Rome: Visit to the cell of the founding of the MI, the chapel and the multimedia Kolbe exhibit.

Franciscan Student & Founder of the MI
“*The happiness of all humanity in God through the Immaculata: there lies our dream.*” (KW 1088)

5:00 p.m.

Celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at Sant’Andrea della Valle Basilica, where St. Maximilian was ordained a priest.
Priestly Ordination
“*Be holy; if others have managed, why could you not do it as well?*” (KW 969)

April 29, 2018

9:00 a.m.

At the St. Maximilian Kolbe Friary and MI International Center: Visit to the cell of the founding of the MI, the chapel and the multimedia Kolbe exhibit.

5:00 p.m.

Celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at Sant’Andrea delle Fratte Basilica, where St. Maximilian celebrated his first Mass at the altar of the apparition of the Immaculata to Ratisbonne.

Celebration of Fr. Kolbe’s First Mass
“*Allow me to praise you, O sacred Virgin. Give me strength against your enemies.*” (KW 1339)

For more information or to plan a visit to the Kolbe exhibit and the MI International Center, please contact roma@mi-international.org



Encountering St. Maximilian Kolbe in Franklin Square, Long Island

My initial encounter with St. Kolbe came at a time in my life when desolation was upon me: My ex-fiancée had moved across the world out of disgust with American culture; my steadily declining interest in worldly pleasures rendered me unfathomable to friends who sought God in blaring music, politicians, alcohol, drugs and carnality; and I longed to return to studying, but could not just yet commit to one area of study. As a great deal of what I had once considered infallible truths in life slipped by the wayside, I aimed to seek the company of people who were living a sober life. This brought me, on a viciously cold winter's night, to an AA meeting across town.

Although I soon found that I was in the minority of attendees in that I was not bound by health problems or legal issues, I was encouraged to speak anyway. I spoke for some minutes on the shock I'd been experiencing in the new, profound, ascetic solitude of a once-freewheeling life.

As the meeting adjourned I got to speak with many people who related to me. We made loose plans to keep in touch. One of the speakers who'd responded to my improvised testimony approached me: "You're Catholic, Joseph – right?" "Yes," I said.

Although I had never left our Church, I had spent several years in San Francisco and Manhattan as a bystander and a witness to profane, atheistic rises and perishing in these concrete harbors of neon promise, cheap grace and failing promises. In this atmosphere I had done much by way of silently absorbing constant attacks on Christ and Catholicism. I often skipped brunch and attended Mass

on Sunday morning, later making something else up [false excuses not to be with atheist friends]. Then one day I decided I was sick of making things up, set out to tell the truth by mouth and pen, and thereby met God.

A friend offered me something that night. "It's a medallion of Saint Kolbe. I didn't know who I was going to give this to, but I've been carrying it around for weeks. Look up his life when you get home. Nothing is impossible."

That evening I walked some miles back home. It was so cold my beard froze on the way home. When I got inside I fell asleep in bed with my shoes on. The next morning, over coffee, I recalled the coin. I took the train out to the Garden City library, which had several books – including a profound, oral biography – on this St. Kolbe. I turned off my phone and started reading.

What can I say, three years later almost to the day? I will say some of things that St. Kolbe has taught in his life, legacy, through prayer and heavenly intercession, a ceaseless provider of spiritual profundity, his life centered on grace, mercy, courage and truth. To this day the coin of St. Kolbe is safe within my wallet always. And as my friend offered me the coin that night, I offer this evening a poem for my brothers and sisters in the Militia of the Immaculata:

Saint Kolbe, whose medallion was given to me by a brother in the Lord at Franklin Square, Long Island

On a blizzard night, wherein my beard froze as I crumbled to my knees in prayer to Holy Mary, Mother of God

And I heard through prayer, "The most deadly poison of our times is indifference"

And walked three miles back to my rooms, to research and to pray

Saint Kolbe, Saint of the Immaculata,

Thy spirit of the living Christ, of John the Baptist unto Herod, Kolbe unto Hitler

Who was put into a concentration camp and governed by psychopaths

Who had righteousness, let alone humanity, stripped from him, nothing but a number

Who prayed Proverbs with Christians and Jews at the Final Hour

Who sacrificed himself for the innocent and who was starved to death by fascists

Saint Kolbe, we pray unto Thee, for you have fulfilled the saintly dream

Your life's work transcends death, in the name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior

You laid down your life; you did not contemplate it, but did it

You are to this day on our minds, and in our prayers

You bring us in times of peril your disquieting magnitude

For no man is an island, and our problems are subjective

Though in the eternal scope of things we flinch to recollect your holiness

Let us learn from you, Saint Kolbe

And your medallion shall be in my pocket for all of my life

And we pray to God Almighty for the angelic touch of Saint Kolbe's wisdom

And we pray that many more shall encourage the providence of thy name,

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

Amen.

Joseph W. D. Nicoletto

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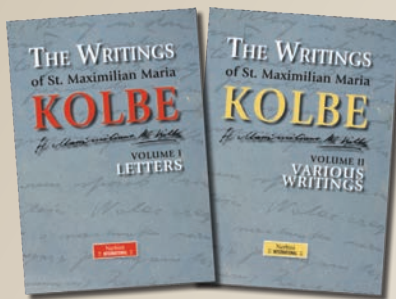
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