

THE MISSION OF THE *Immaculata*

E-PUBLICATION OF THE MILITIA OF THE IMMACULATA, USA

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The Hour Is Coming...

By John W. Galten, MI National President



Dear Knights of the Immaculata,

Maria! Here we are, already August, and the summer of pandemic virus is half over. This time finds most of us still under sheltering order and perhaps feeling a bit anxious about what the future holds for us, our country and the world. Let us, in imitation of St. Maximilian, resolve to place our total consecration, our complete trust in the Immaculata and her Spouse the Holy Spirit. Let her gather us under her mantle and breathe the Peace of Christ.

We will move forward in our consideration of Last Discourses of Jesus in the Gospel of St. John, but I have a few other things to mention which will keep this consideration short. We now turn our attention to St. John's sixteenth chapter. Jesus warns us that the "hour is coming" when we will suffer and be persecuted, as He is about to willingly endure in His Paschal Mystery. This should not surprise or shock us, as we are His Mystical Body, the Church, and we carry about in us this very same Paschal suffering for we are, as the Church, His mystical presence in the world. We carry out in our very own bodies and in our daily life the redemptive suffering for the sins of the world.

To be sure, this suffering is necessary for our own holiness and redemption for others, both the living and the dead in Purgatory. We hear St. Maximilian frequently mention the need for this purifying suffering. He not only spoke of this "royal road of the Cross," but lived it in his penitential life and finally witnessed to it by his martyrdom of charity for the condemned man.

We, as Knights of the Immaculata, must keep this truth always before our eyes so as to self-consciously live: "victimhood into death."

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"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)

On that note, I want to give you another heads up. The International MI Council will shortly announce a year (2020-2021) specially dedicated to the eightieth anniversary of St. Maximilian's martyrdom (August 14, 1941). Stay tuned for more information on our website for this very important preparation.

Second, the U.S.A. MI Council joyously announces the unveiling of two apostolic projects: the new MI prayer book *Glory to God through the Immaculata!* and the trailer to our film introducing the MI to newcomers. You can find more details on our official website. Consider giving the prayer book to friends and family.

Promote the film trailer by forwarding the link at the right side of this page to friends, fellow MI Knights, family and even your enemies.

I think that you will be as happy as we are when you experience these two remarkable apostolic tools. Tools are meant to be used. Help Our Lady attract more people to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. After all, we have been chosen by Her precisely for this work. Just do it!

Until next month, "Arise, let us be on our way."

John W. Galten

MI National President

P.S. Please, keep in your prayer our MI National Assistant, Fr. Thomas Czek, OFM Conv., as he undergoes treatment for recently diagnosed cancer. Thank you.

P.P.S. Again, watch the Trailer of the MI film to be released on August 14 and tell others about it! Know that the film will be available in several languages.

Watch Trailer - Click Here

How to Use the New MI Film for MI Village Promotion

God's peace to you all from here in the Evergreen State of Washington. I just want to share some encouragement of how the new short MI film, soon to be released, could be used for MI Villages. Certainly, in established MI groups, it will be a lovely refresher for us of why we made our consecration to Jesus through Mary and perhaps it will give us some motivation to speak to others about our mission, if we have become tepid in our zeal.

For those who are considering beginning an MI Village, the MI brief film will be the inspiration they need to reach out to others! Perhaps, consider setting up meetings (even via social platforms) for others to learn about total consecration to Our Lady, have a day of preparation for consecration and open the gathering by showing the film or send the link to the film to interested persons so that they might hear and see what Militia of the Immaculata is all about. And most importantly, for pastors or spiritual directors who may be asked to support the start of an MI Village in their parish or community, this video will be a great tool to educate and illuminate.

Julie Elkinton

Star of the Sea MI Village Moderator,
Bremerton, WA



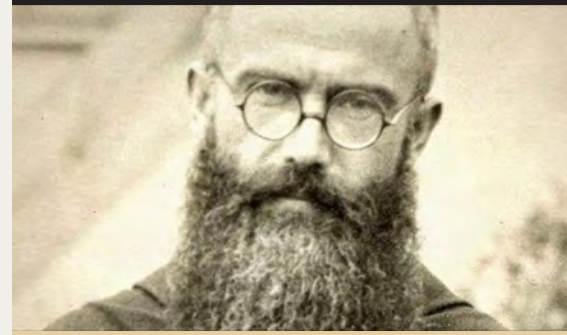
Daily Holy Mass

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

Coming August 14 The New MI Film!



This important new short film, to be released on the feast of St. Maximilian, Friday, August 14, beautifully and eloquently captures the essence of the MI: total consecration to the Immaculata in the evangelical spirit of St. Maximilian Kolbe.

Watch the Trailer

Share the link <http://militiaoftheimmaculata.com/mi-movie/> to the official trailer with at least three people in your circle of friends!

Forward the link to your family and friends or promote the new film by posting on your favorite social media platform!

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



The Chambers of the Heart

On a journey to living our total consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Part Two

Obedience of Faith

Since the fall of our first parents in the Garden, obedience has not been very popular! The devil tricked them into doubting God—and he still tricks us—and thus the filial disposition of willing response and trustful consent toward God has turned into mistrust and disobedience. Our fallen nature carries the scars of original sin, but our wonderful God has redeemed us and given us a fresh new start in Jesus our Lord! If we were able to envision the original relationship with God we were meant to experience as His beloved creatures, and even more so now as His children in Christ, we would see obedience as the joyful fruit of filial love in response to His boundless Love. In the Incarnate Son and the Immaculata we do see what this filial relationship with God looks like.

The Lord Jesus made it very clear that His Heart is beating in unison with the Father's Heart and that Their Will is "one" as They are one. Especially after His baptism at the Jordan River, where the Holy Spirit came upon Him and God the Father's Voice was heard declaring: "This is my beloved Son" (cf. Mt 3:13-17; Lk 3:21-22; Mk 1:9-11), He announced repeatedly that He had come to do the Father's Will. In no ambiguous terms, He affirmed that He had been sent by His Father; that His food was to do the Will of the Father; that He spoke *what* the Father had commanded Him to speak and *as* the Father told Him (cf. Jn 4:34; Jn 6:38; Jn 14). To His puzzled disciples, He declared openly that He must

suffer, be rejected, and die on the Cross and thus accomplish the Father's Plan for the Redemption of man (Mk 8:31-33; Mk 9:30-32; Mk 10:32-34; see also parallel accounts in Matthew and Luke). Indeed, He embraced His Passion and Death, He *freely willed it*, in accord with the Father's definite Plan. We will never fully grasp the depths of Jesus' loving, filial obedience to the Father. We can only contemplate it humbly before the Crib, the Crucifix, and the Most Holy Eucharist.

"The surrender of the soul to God is the highest achievement of its freedom."

- St. Edith Stein

Moreover, in the course of His public ministry, Jesus called His disciples to stay with Him and He schooled them by His example and words, as He continues to do with us now, on how to live in the Will of God. The core of their training was to learn to trust the Father by doing His Will in the footsteps of their Master, the First-born Son. Throughout His ministry, Jesus illustrated patiently the new way of life of a child of God by the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes, the many parables He employed and the example He set before their eyes. He dealt with their (and our) hardness of heart and relapses by calling them back around Him, over and over and over. He could not make it clearer: "My sheep

hear my voice; I know them and they follow me" (Jn 10:27); "Whoever loves me will keep my word" (Jn 14:23); "Whoever listens to you listens to me" (Lk 10:16); "Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mt 12:50).

As He teaches us to pray to the Father, He puts on our lips the exact words He Himself spoke during His agony in the Garden, "Thy will be done!" Even after His Resurrection, His parting words to Peter were an invitation to follow Him (cf. Jn 21:19). In short, throughout His whole life, Jesus presented Himself as our model of filial loving obedience to the all-merciful Father.

The Gospels record very few words of *our blessed Mother*, but poignantly they reveal that one of the "chambers" of her Immaculate Heart, like her Son's, is obedience to the Father's Will. Her response to the divine messenger: "Let it be done to me according to Thy word" at the Annunciation (cf. Lk 1:38), was in fact her *habitual* disposition before God and the unfolding of His Will in her life. She persevered through all the twists and turns her life took as she followed her Son up to His ultimate sacrifice on Calvary. How beautiful to recall that Elizabeth proclaimed her blessed *precisely* because she believed that the word spoken to her would be fulfilled (cf. Lk 1:41-45)! She trusted God and joined in her Son's response, "I come to do your will" (Ps 39). By her obedience to the plan of God for our Redemption, she became also the most perfect member of the Mystical Body of her Son; in fact, she became the Mother of the Church, Mother of every child of God.

"Do whatever He tells you" were her last recorded words, which she addressed to the servants, at the wedding feast of Cana in Galilee (cf. Jn 2:1-11). Those are the words she repeats to each of us as we allow her to guide us to be authentic disciples of Jesus through our total consecration: "Follow Him!"

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by Matthew Alderman ©Militia Immaculatae, Inc

Obedience of Faith

(continued from pg. 3)

No wonder, then, *St. Maximilian* held wholeheartedly and pointed out constantly that willing obedience is *the key* to holiness and to fruitful participation in the life and mission of the Church. It did require for him, as for us, the patient and painful process of letting go, dying to self, and surrendering his own will. He was not born a saint and struggled with his own weaknesses and sinfulness, but he did so inspired by Jesus' and Our Lady's example and enlightened by faith. Faith led him to see with God's eyes, so to speak, to be converted and to recognize God's

providential guidance at every step of his life.

Obedience to God's Will—revealed by His Word, in the Church's life and magisterial teaching, through his superiors, and also inner inspirations or life's events—became the compass of Maximilian's journey and the disposition with which he embarked on every project for winning the whole world for Christ through the Immaculata.

Once again, the Word of God shows how the “chambers of the heart” are interconnected: “Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him” (Jn 14:23). Familiarity with God and obedience are intimately related.

Our total consecration to Our Lady finds its essential feature in our readiness to respond and to surrender to God's Will, that is, to walk the path of discipleship she trod before us. Through our consecration to her, she invites us constantly to do the same and to repeat, “Here I am, Lord!” As we “let ourselves be led by her,” we come to participate in her maternal mission effectively, fruitfully, even unknowingly. We do become her instruments, making her presence visible, felt, and tangible to the people we encounter. We participate actively in the building up of the Body of Christ.

St. Maximilian's greatest concern was always not to be an obstacle to Our Lady's action, not to have his own agenda, not to be in the way. It requires from us constant vigilance, humility, and... *obedience*. Far from depriving us of creativity, initiative and freedom, obedience of faith makes us truly free: free from our ego, free to let our God-given gifts and talents blossom and flourish, free to make of our lives a gift back to the Giver and to our brothers and sisters.

Antonella Di Piazza, FKMI
(to be continued)

Pray, Ponder, Propose

Take some time every day during this month to reflect on the second *Chamber of the Heart* – *Obedience of Faith*.

- ✓ Invoke the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ As you re-read the paragraphs about Jesus and Mary's obedience, consider the Gospel passages quoted. Feel free to recall other accounts that are implied. Look them up, ponder them in prayer, and let the Word of God speak to your heart.
- ✓ Read the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* nos. 144; 494; 511-560; 615; 1730-1794; 2197-2246.
- ✓ Reflect on *The Writings of St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe* that illustrate his understanding of the Immaculata's obedience of faith and how through total consecration we may imitate her and become her instruments: KW 987 H, 428, 432, 575, 1248, 1318, 1320.
- ✓ **Questions for reflection:** How do I understand “Obedience of faith” in light of the pattern shown by the Lord Jesus and Our Lady, the teaching of the *Catechism* and *St. Maximilian*? What obstacles do I experience in living in the Will of God and practicing obedience in my life? How could I become more docile and creative under the action of the Holy Spirit, in union with the Immaculata?
- ✓ Take your journal and put down in writing what may be relevant for your journey at this time.
- ✓ Close with a prayer.



Victorious in Love

As we approach the feast days of Sts. Edith Stein and Maximilian Kolbe, we may draw inspiration from the short reflection that Pope Benedict XVI offered during the August 13, 2008, general audience.

Those who pray never lose hope, even when they find themselves in a difficult and even humanly hopeless plight. Sacred Scripture teaches us this and Church history bears witness to this.

In fact, how many examples we could cite of situations in which it was precisely prayer that sustained the journey of Saints and of the Christian people! Among the testimonies of our epoch I would like to mention the examples of two Saints whom we are commemorating in these days: Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Edith Stein, whose feast we celebrated on August 9, and Maximilian Maria Kolbe, whom we will commemorate, on August 14, the eve of the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Both ended their earthly life with martyrdom in the concentration camp of Auschwitz. Their lives might seem to have been a defeat, but it is precisely in their martyrdom that the brightness of Love which dispels the gloom of selfishness and hatred shines forth. The following words are attributed to St. Maximilian Kolbe, who is said to

have spoken them when the Nazi persecution was raging: "Hatred is not a creative force: only love is creative." And heroic proof of his love was the generous offering he made of himself in exchange for a fellow prisoner, an offer that culminated in his death in the starvation bunker on August 14, 1941.

On August 6 the following year, three days before her tragic end, Edith Stein approaching some Sisters in the monastery of Echt, in the Netherlands, said to them: "I am ready for anything. Jesus is also here in our midst. Thus far I have been able to pray very well and I have said with all my heart: *Ave, Crux, spes unica.*" Witnesses who managed to escape the terrible massacre recounted that while Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, dressed in the Carmelite habit, was making her way, consciously, toward death, she distinguished herself by her conduct full of peace, her serene attitude and her calm behavior, attentive to the needs of all. Prayer was the secret of this Saint, Co-Patroness of Europe, who, "Even after she found the truth in the peace of the contemplative life, she was to live to the full the mystery of the Cross" (Apostolic Letter *Spes Aedificandi*).

"Hail Mary!" was the last prayer on the lips of St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe, as he offered his arm to the person who was about to kill him with an injection of phenolic acid. It is moving to note how humble and trusting recourse to Our Lady is always a source of courage and serenity. While we prepare to celebrate the Solemnity of the Assumption, which is one of the best-loved Marian feasts in the Christian tradition, let us renew our entrustment to her who from Heaven watches over us with motherly love at every moment. In fact, we say this in the familiar prayer of the Hail Mary, asking her to pray for us "now and at the hour of our death."

Invite Friends to be consecrated to Our Lady!



Behold Your Mother: The Path to Total Consecration to Our Lady in the Spirit of St. Maximilian Kolbe

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.

Many people have expressed the desire to promote total consecration to Mary in their parish and local area. **The Path to Total Consecration** offers you an effective tool for making that possible!

The suggested donation for multiple copies of the booklet is \$1.00/ea. plus shipping; for a single copy, the suggested donation is \$3.75 shipping included.



Order copies of both today from the MI National Office:
MINational@MissionImmaculata.com
Or call: 331-223-5564

MI

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS




St. John Paul II to Youth

In his Letter to Youth, St. John Paul II spoke to young people as dearest friends and addressed a broad series of subjects. Among them, the Holy Father's special attention was devoted to the importance of education and self-education, a timely topic as we approach the time when school resumes.

He called young people embrace the responsibility to nurture and safeguard the sacred sphere of one's mind, to search and to live the Truth with persevering courage.

Youth is the time for discerning talents. It is also the time when one starts out on the many paths along which all human activity, work and creativity have developed and continue to do so. I hope that all of you will discover yourselves along these paths. I hope that you will set out upon them with interest, diligence and enthusiasm. Work—all work—is linked to effort: “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread,” and this experience of hard work is shared by each one of you from your earliest years. At the same time, however, work in a specific way forms man, and in a certain sense creates him. So it is always a question of effort which is creative.

Preparation for Adulthood

This refers not only to study or mental and intellectual work in general but also to the ordinary kinds of physical work that seemingly have nothing “creative” about them.

The work which characterizes the period of youth is, above all, a preparation for the work of adulthood, and so is linked to the school. As I write these words to you young people, I am therefore thinking of all the schools all over the world to which your young lives are linked for a number of years, at higher and higher levels, according to your degree of intellectual development and your inclinations: from elementary schools to universities.

Hunger for Truth

Education is one of the fundamental benefits of human civilization. It is especially important for the young. Upon it also depends to a great extent the future of the whole of society. When we discuss the question of education, study, learning and school, there emerges a question of fundamental importance for the human person, and in a special way for a young person. This is the question of truth. Truth is the light of the human intellect. Hunger for truth is the fundamental aspiration and expression of the human spirit.

To Live the Truth and to Be Truly Free

Now Christ says: “*You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.*” Of the words contained in the Gospel these are certainly among the most important. For they refer to man in his totality. They explain what the dignity and greatness proper to man are built upon from within, in the dimensions of the human spirit. The knowledge which frees man does not depend on education alone, even of university standard—an illiterate person can have it too; though education, the systematic knowledge of reality, should serve the dignity of the human person. *It should therefore serve the truth.* The service of truth is also carried out in the work that you will be called upon to perform when you have completed the program of your education.

Young people have an inborn “sense of truth.” And truth must be used for freedom: young people also have a spontaneous “desire for freedom.” And what does it mean to be free? It means to know how to use one’s freedom in truth—to be *truly* free. To be truly free does not at all mean doing everything that pleases me, or doing what I want to do. *To be truly free means to use one's own freedom for what is a true good*, to be a person of upright conscience, to be responsible, to be a person for others.





R&R, Etc. by Prof. Michael Pakaluk

Is there a Catholic approach to summer vacation? Can a vacation be sanctified? If so, what does that mean, and what would it imply for the rest of the year?

Let's say that this topic should go to the top of anyone's list, as of the highest importance, not least because of its connection with Sunday. The word "vacation" is nowhere to be found in the *Catechism*, yet "rest" is frequently mentioned, always in connection with the Lord's Day: "The institution of the Lord's Day helps everyone enjoy adequate rest and leisure to cultivate their familial, cultural, social, and religious lives." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 2184)

Indeed, the *Catechism* reminds us that the First Precept of the Church is "You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor." If we are having difficulties with Mass attendance, either imposed or of our own making, we are likely to have

difficulties too with a Christian's "rest," which is not something negative but a positive focus on the goods of family, culture, association, and religion. Should we expect that someone who does not live well the weekly day of rest, would do so with his yearly time of rest?

Perhaps COVID-19 has made things clearer for us. When Mass attendance is impossible, we may want other ways of observing the Lord's Day to assume due importance; and yet we can see and sense that they don't flourish on their own, that they get their meaning precisely as a fruit and blessing of divine worship.

Vacation means a time made empty (vacant). From what? From claims on our time related to procuring the necessities of life, which, in a simpler age, meant food, clothing and shelter. In short, a vacation is leisure. Like time for prayer, leisure is made, not found. The greater our necessities, or felt necessities, the harder it is to make

time for them, but also the more important it is to do so.

Joseph Pieper has been praised for reviving, as a deep philosophical topic, the question of leisure. He revived it, because Aristotle's ethics was already, in the end, about how to use leisure. For the ancients, it was a test of a man's character: how would he choose to use "free" time (really, his *freedom*) if he had it? Suppose he found himself on the Isles of the Blest (so they put it), what would he do? Or would he be unfit for such a blessing?

"If I were a rich man," sings Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*, he'd finally have leisure, and spend his time disputing questions of the Law (or so he says). This is an admirable Jewish conception. A Christian might rather ask: if I were in heaven, what would I do? – since one might liken heaven to the fullest realization of what a Christian should choose in leisure. *Requiescat in pace*: may he enjoy, in the way that God wants, his eternal vacation.

It follows that vacation should be, insofar as we are able, an anticipation of and participation in heaven. Many things then follow from this. For instance, those who think that vacation is a time when one needn't bother about Mass or Confession have got it exactly wrong. A vacation, rather, is when a family has freedom to go to the sacraments and to pray together easily. Importantly, it is a time when children can easily see their parents praying.

(continues on pg. 8)



R & R, Etc.

(continued from pg. 7)

We have bad habits of enjoying necessities and fleeing from leisure. So it is with prayer, and so too with “school,” derived curiously from the Greek word for leisure (*scholē*) – on the grounds that it was good for young people to have time free from farm work and manufacture, so that they could devote themselves to knowledge, culture and religion.

When there is no servile work waiting in the wings, school appears onerous, no longer a mark of freedom, and a privilege. The truth is that both are highly important, but only in the proper place, and leisure rightly lived puts everything else in its proper place.

Mere *rest* is like sleep, an absence of exertion, which allows for the recovery of our faculties for action.

Relaxation is opposite to tension: periods of alternating extreme

tension and complete relaxation are invaluable for growth, and creativity.

Recreation is a new and repeated creation, not an absence of activity, but activities of a different type, which build up new faculties for action.

Rejuvenation is becoming young again, typically by doing what we did when young, in order to regain optimism and see things new.

These are all divine things, and a Christian’s vacation should include all of them. (Note that “entertainment” is not on the list: it gets included only when it is attached to one of the others.)

Already one can see that every vacation must be planned, even two weeks of “free time” at the beach, so as not to create more false necessities, but also not to squander time, to make the time as fruitful as possible. Husband and wife should

plan the vacation together, and families should have “councils,” so that everyone understands the plan and cooperates together for a common good. Minimally, one needs to draw up lists and follow some kind of daily schedule: there must be a discipline, yet not anything burdensome.

No Christian vacation is complete without the Cross, that seasoning of sanctification. Rarely will the Cross be something like an encounter with “The Misfit” (in that vacation described by Flannery O’Connor) – although sometimes it is. More typically one encounters it in the stomach flu, a car breakdown, a theft, or maybe just a bad value for one’s money.

When God presents us with an unexpected Cross, parents can set an example by showing a specifically Christian resourcefulness, through embracing the Cross with good humor and waiting to see, confidently, what graces will flow from it.

Michael Pakaluk

Michael Pakaluk, an Aristotle scholar and Ordinarius of the Pontifical Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas, is a professor in the Busch School of Business at the Catholic University of America. He lives in Hyattsville, MD with his wife Catherine, also a professor at the Busch School, and their eight children. His latest book, on the Gospel of Mark, The Memoirs of St Peter. His next book, Mary’s Voice in the Gospel of John, is forthcoming from Regnery Gateway.

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Reflection on August MI Intention

O Immaculata, please intercede that our ability to love may extend generously toward every person.

“Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give.”
(Mt 10:8)

Jesus spoke these words to the disciples as He was preparing them for their mission. It’s a beautiful statement, revealing the deepest meaning of our lives: self-giving love. Each of us was born of the mutual love of our parents and, even before that, of the infinite Love of God, Who willed us into existence from all eternity and Who gratuitously sustains us constantly in existence by His merciful Love. The fact that we have been loved eternally by God, that we exist in His Heart is a certainty that makes us able to love in response, to give to others the love we have freely received. Every human being can find authentic and complete fulfillment only through self-giving love. Jesus taught us that we must take the risk of loving. His Incarnation, His coming to dwell among us, was a sheer act of love. He shared in our human condition in everything, except sin (cf. Heb 4:15). He entered our homes, ate at our tables, walked on our dusty roads, played with children, enjoyed friendships, and grieved over the dead. He loved every human being without distinction. We, His disciples, are called to do the same, to follow His example and to love as He does.

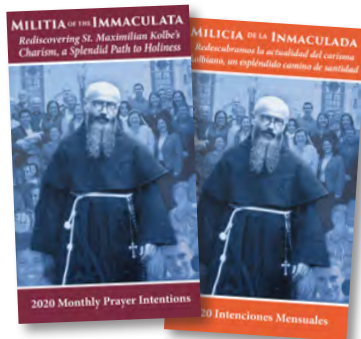
Many a time we have pondered St. Maximilian Kolbe’s heroic act of love in the concentration camp of Auschwitz, when he offered to take the place of a condemned prisoner selected to die in the starvation bunker. His heart, “trained” to love, could not but empathize with the grief of the young fellow prisoner as he cried at the thought of his wife and children. St. Maximilian desired to love without limits, with no exceptions, in response to Jesus’ infinite love: *“Hatred divides, separates and destroys, while, to the contrary, love unites, brings about peace, and is con-*

structive” (KW 1205). Eyewitnesses testified that this amazing act of love affected the life of all in the camp, where he had continued to be Our Lady’s instrument of peace and comfort. The Militia of the Immaculata was founded precisely for the purpose of drawing all hearts to the Sacred Heart through the Immaculata.

Our Association, he wrote, *“it is called ‘Militia’ because it cannot afford to rest, but rather intends to conquer hearts for the Immaculata by way of love, and through her, for the Divine Heart of Jesus and, ultimately, for the heavenly Father”* (KW 1237).

Convinced that charity transforms everything, he urged MIs to win for the Immaculata people whose hearts are restless and dejected: *“These poor people, therefore, need light, a great deal of supernatural light... How can we fail to reach out to them? How can we not help them placate their hearts, lift their minds above all that passes toward the one ultimate purpose, God?”* (KW 1237). Every MI member cannot but strive to put his total consecration into action in the service of others: *“Love for one’s neighbor pushes those souls who have already found the true ideal of life not to forget their brothers and sisters around them”* (ibid.). St. Maximilian lived what he preached. Let’s do the same.

(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 MI Knights Act

Early on in his ministry, St. Maximilian offered a clear portrait of an authentic MI Knight (KW 1088).

He does not confine his heart only to himself or to his family, his relatives, his neighbors, his friends, his fellow countrymen. Rather, along with them he embraces the whole world, each and every person individually, for all were redeemed by the Blood of Jesus without exception, and all are our brothers and sisters. He desires true happiness for all, enlightenment through the light of faith, purification from sin, a rekindling of the heart through love for God, a love that sets no limits. The happiness of all humanity in God through the Immaculata: there lies his dream.

Thus, he is not at all indifferent to the evil that rages on. Rather, he hates it with all his heart and at every opportunity, in every place and at all times he attacks any evil that poisons the souls of men.

Yet, he does not rely on himself. He is mindful of the fact that he can do nothing by himself and that whatever he has or he can do, he has from God. And being also aware that the Mediatrix of all graces is the Immaculata—in her he places boundless hope. Also, he clearly understands that conver-

sion, sanctification and perseverance in good are the work of *divine grace*. Divine grace is a gift of divine mercy. In the words of St. Bernard, God entrusted the whole economy of grace to his Blessed Mother, the Immaculata. She is unable to abandon anyone, because it was never heard that anyone who fled to her protection was left unaided. Thus, the most direct way to save souls is to urge them to do or suffer anything, even the smallest thing, for the sake of the one who, by the will of Almighty God, is the most gracious Queen of heaven and earth.

With all his zeal, therefore, the knight of the Immaculata propagates devotion to her and filial love toward her. He is not content with vague statements, but looks around with zeal, in order to win *the greatest possible number of souls* over to the Immaculata.

He urges them to join the Militia of the Immaculata. He makes them understand that not much time is needed to offer oneself up to the Immaculata forever, to wear her medal, and repeat the short ejaculatory prayer once a day. Let them do at least a little something for the Immaculata and she will slowly enter their hearts, cleanse them, and rekindle them with love for the Heart of Jesus, a love that brings joy. If one of his acquaintances or relatives *does not want even to think* of the Immaculata, he could always sew a medal inside their clothes, so that the Immaculata may lovingly pursue them. Then he will pray, pray with fervor that she may want to win that heart over to herself. A prayer both simple and sublime that the Immaculata herself indicated when she appeared in Lourdes is the *Holy Rosary*. May it become the sword of each knight of the Immaculata, just as the Miraculous Medal is the bullet that strikes down evil!

In places where members of the Militia of the Immaculata are now quite numerous, *they should come together* from time to time to manage

this holy war with keen minds, good method, and full resolve in order to win souls over to the Immaculata and thus make them happy.

First, the men and women knights of the Immaculata always keep clearly in mind that they are instruments in the hand of the Immaculata. Therefore, they do not tolerate sin in their hearts even for an instant and, if they regrettably happen to sin, they wipe it clean at once with an act of perfect contrition and the intention to go to Confession at the first opportunity. They also remember to receive God into their hearts at least *once a month* in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar. And then... they have great fear, *indeed are very afraid* of ever ascribing to themselves even the smallest good that the Immaculata deigns to work through them.

They know that they will do nothing without her, while with her help *nothing will be able to resist them*.

O Immaculata, Queen of Heaven, may you be as soon as possible the true Queen of the whole earth and of every single soul.

Rycerz Niepokalanej





My Dad Lived with St. Kolbe... *An MI Member Testimony*

It is a great joy for me to be part of the MI. St. Maximilian Kolbe and his great love for the Immaculata has been a great part of my life.

My dad, Francis Samsel, lived with St. Kolbe in Poland at the city of the Immaculata from 1932 to 1938. He made his first vows in the Community, helped construct many of the buildings there, learning the trade of a very skilled “brick-layer.” He, his siblings and my grandparents left the U.S. in 1920 (the children and my grandmother always retaining their American citizenship) to live in a small village in Poland where my grandfather owned property. He had come to the U.S. in 1908, met and married my grandmother in 1910.

My dad was 5 years old when he sailed to Poland. He got his education in a one-room school house, lived a life of hardship, hunger, and experienced firsthand what it meant to be poor. Yet, in their poorness, they knew only joy, happiness and were deeply religious.

He met the Franciscans, was drawn to them and wanted to become a brother in the Community, not a priest. Dad told me so many stories about St. Kolbe and his life in the Community.

My dad himself became so imbued with love and devotion to the Immaculata. He also told us about working on the presses to print the magazine St. Kolbe published. I have some of the copies my dad saved (all in Polish, which I cannot read, but hold onto as treasures).

When the Nazi plans began to unfold and times were getting difficult, St. Kolbe told my dad it was important for him to leave the Community since he was an American citizen. If not he would be inducted into the army and lose his citizenship. With guidance and loving encouragement from St. Kolbe, dad left with his blessings and he and my dad's brothers and sister left for America. My grandparents and his youngest sister, a Polish citizen, remained.

During the war, all the sufferings St. Kolbe and the Community endured were always foremost in my dad's heart. Many of the brothers kept him updated about St. Kolbe especially when he was captured and sent to the concentration camp along with other priests and brothers. When my dad came to the United States, he was not able to find a Franciscan Community to join, and in his deep praying came to accept the fact that God had different plans for him. He met my mom in 1938 and married in 1939.

In my years of growing up my dad exhibited a very prayerful life. We prayed the Rosary every night as a family and were faithful Church goers. Dad did eventually join the Third Order Fraternity in Toledo, Ohio, and was a faithful member for 50 years. He was buried in his Franciscan habit in 2001 at the age of 85.

During my years of growing up, I always wanted to be a sister and dad and mom encouraged me and were

very happy when I entered the Sisters of St. Francis of the Congregation of Our Lady of Lourdes, whose Mother house was and still is in Sylvania, Ohio, built on the style of the California Missions.

My dad always spent special time with me to share the life he shared with St. Kolbe. My dad and mom were present in Rome for the canonization of St. Kolbe. Dad and mom even met the man with whom St. Kolbe exchanged places; dad met many of the priests and brothers with whom he lived. Dad and mom were so overjoyed.

A year later dad and mom traveled to Poland to visit family members they both had there and took a special trip to the city of the Immaculata revisiting his home of years ago. They also went to the concentration camp where St. Maximilian Kolbe died, bringing back small stones that could have been walked on by St. Kolbe.

Through my dad and mom, I have been instilled with a love and devotion to the Immaculata and St. Maximilian Kolbe. So, I have been a member of the MI since 1995.

This year I celebrate 60 years as a Sister of St. Francis and am so happy to share in many blessings, a part of this Holy Franciscan Community. When my dad left the Community in Poland, St. Kolbe wrote a short letter of release, also commenting on my dad's life there. St. Kolbe signed it. Today, that document is at the St. Maximilian Kolbe Shrine. I think you could consider it a second or third relic because it has St. Kolbe's signature on it. It's not a copy, but the original.

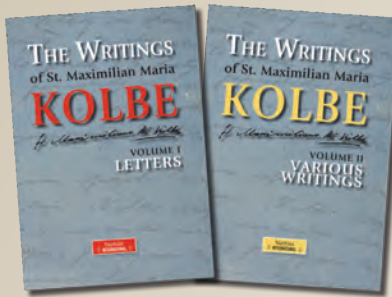
Thank you for letting me share this with you. What joy must fill my parents as today they share in the blessedness of Heaven and see St. Kolbe face to face.

In Francis. Peace!
Sister Mary Irenaeus Samsel, OSF

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