

*FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS
IN SAINT MAXIMILIAN'S THEOLOGICAL VIEW*

The time available does not permit reading the ample introduction, where I have tried to demonstrate that behind the fragmentary Kolbian writings there is a theological vision. Without forcing things, this allowed to group together the main doctrinal elements strewn throughout these writings and to put them in order in the known treatises on God One and Trine and Creator, original justice and sin, Christ, Church, sacraments and grace. I will read only the main results.

God One and Trine

God demonstrates his existence in two ways: through revelation and through Creation. Kolbe explains this dual knowledge with an example drawn from experience of learning new things. The viewing of a work of art already furnishes us with an idea about its author. Then we learn more about it through the news we gather about the artist. Finally, if we encounter him personally, "one gets to know him better than before without any paragon". The first things gathered about a being, obtained through its effects, are the "least clear". It becomes clearer through faith in the information given by experts. But the way to know about it that is "the simplest and the clearest is immediate contact with the subject itself of knowledge". Then he adds that most of knowledge does not come "from a direct contact" with the object in question, but "through faith in others", or through its effects: "The same occurs about the knowledge of God. We know God mainly through the effects, from the creatures, inasmuch as He is the Primary Cause, and through their perfection we may deduce the perfection of the Creator. However, this knowledge is imperfect. Also, we know of Him better through faith, believing in He who knows God directly and amply spoke about Him, Jesus Christ. He then sealed His doctrine with the glorious resurrection after dying on the cross. Finally, we will know God clearly and directly, [only] after death, in Paradise".

Therefore, the God the Christian believes in is the God revealed by His word, but also through created nature, considered in itself, value and end. For this reason Kolbe states that we must have faith in reason and in the capacity of not only knowing God, but also in demonstrating His existence with valid argumentations of reason, and saying something about His essence and His attributes.

Then, in various texts, Kolbe makes argumentations analogous to the traditional proof of the existence of God. Starting, on one hand from life experience and one's own existence and that of others, and on the other hand from the sensation and knowledge of one's impotence and insufficiency of all other things, human reason opens up to a personal, absolute, unchanging, transcendent Being, free of all contingent bonds (the Absolute). A Being, because of its perfection, which possesses the fullness of being and therefore its existence is identified with its essence (the pure Act).

Then using the world's progress as a starting point, reason opens up to a cause that stands on its own, support and foundation of all series of causes: "All of nature is

composed of millions and billions of organisms that live, develop and reproduce. Therefore, could we assert that these marvels of nature are there by pure chance? Some might say: 'None of this occurs without a cause, this is true; but these causes have a cause, and, these [causes] have still other causes'. However, in these series of causes, pushed to the infinite, must we not admit to a primary cause? Alone, in fact, the causes give no perfection, but only communicate what they have received, while we are interested in the author of this perfection. There *must* be a primary cause [...] and [...] this is God".

From the finality and from the observable order of Creation, reason can go back to a first intelligent being: "Why do many today try to *convince* themselves that there is no God, while even all the scientists put together cannot even give life to a lowly mosquito?" The order, the regularity, the certitude with which "the existing changes in nature" evolve (vegetal, animal, cosmic phenomena) cannot be explained by chance: in fact, chance is "intrinsically lack of order, regularity, certitude. Any being and any phenomenon constant in the universe must have, in a certain way, chains linking to space and to a foundation of existence, otherwise one cannot imagine it existing in space. Is it not natural [logical] they must come from a Being who exists in Himself [...], a being that is the source of its own existence. If this Being did not exist even for an instant, it would be inexistent forever... Clearly, this Being, who is the source of its own existence, must be omniscient, omnipotent, the supreme good, absolute, supreme and unique Creator, that is to say God". "Whoever observes nature serenely, can but smile when facing the impudence of atheism".

Kolbe warns the socialists and Mussolini of the incongruence between their denial of God's existence (the soul's immortality...) and their just assertion of the greatness and the joys of the experienced values down here: in fact, our reason discovers the insufficiency and failings, which lead the mind necessarily to the knowledge of a prime value.

Even if the evolutionary theory is correct, he says, one must still answer to the question on the origin of matter. And, to explain the origin, the evolution and the actual state of the cosmos, "one must necessarily recognize that the cause of the initial movement of primary matter is beyond the matter itself [...]. This force, which is beyond any other human consideration or reasoning, we call it God".

Trinity

1) Importance of the Trinity in Christian existence. – Many fundamental Marian texts go back to the Trinitarian Mystery to explain and theologically delve into the realization of God's saving plan and its repercussions on man's life. They insist particularly on the presence of Mary in this Trinitarian design, as the Immaculate Mother of God and as the Mediatrix of grace. Given the nature and the prevalently Marian preoccupation of these writings, the theological formulation of Trinitarian faith above all intends to describe and deepen the experience of Christian life as participation in the Trinitarian life through the work of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Kolbe illustrates this going back to this prototype, the experience of Mary's grace and its place in the saving plan of the Trinity.

These texts are the fruit of the Kolbian contemplation of God, Trinity of love, residing in man (primarily and eminently in Mary) and, through the Holy Spirit, reveals Jesus Christ's face: a God that can be but One-Trine. These have been the subject of

various studies on the theme “The Immaculate and the Holy Spirit in Kolbian writings”. I will recall only the main elements that reflect, partially, even the importance of the Trinitarian Mystery for the Christian: the Immaculate Conception is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, almost its incarnation, joined to Him in an analogous union, not identical, the hypostatical union of the Son with human nature assumed in incarnation: in fact, he says, within the Trinity, the Spirit is a concept of mutual eternal love of the Father and the Son. (For lack of time, I will omit reading some appropriate texts).

2) Trinitarian Doctrine. – The God Kolbe often speaks about without specifying is always the true and living God. He exists in intangible unity and identity, however, possessing three distinct ways: the only God exists in the numerical oneness of His essence, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and therefore in the uniqueness of mutual relation of three distinct Persons. Here, for example, a text with extremely theological and dogmatic precision (he uses it to state that the Spirit [...] is a most holy, infinitely holy, immaculate concept): “the Father generates, the Son is generated, the Spirit proceeds, this is their essence, the way they are distinct from each other. The same nature unites them; divine existence through essence”.

The Trinity, as we know, is founded on the perfection of God and is the expression of the over brimming fullness of divine life, of His infinite richness: it pours forth therefore from the deepest roots of the divine being, to the point that God would not be God if He were not three persons. Kolbe says this calling upon the vision of God as love: “God is love” [1Jn 4:16]. In the fullness of this life the Father generates the Son, while the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son”. “God knows Himself, loves, and thus the Father generates the Son and the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son”.

The three divine persons achieve any work external from the Trinity indistinctly, inseparably, but also in an orderly way. He recalls this when speaking about Creation and salvation, and when illustrating the participation of Mary to the realization of the divine plan. The Father, he repeats, acts through the Son and the Holy Spirit. All comes down from the Father, through the Son and for the Holy Spirit. Certainly, he need not explicitly explain that the *ad extra* action by the three Persons is numerically one, unique. This is made clear by the expressions he uses.

This doctrine must be kept in mind when Kolbe attributes this or that external work to the Father or to the Son or to the Holy Spirit. As theologians say, this is “appropriation”, useful to learn better about the constitutive and distinctive “properties” of each person. But Kolbe doesn’t expound any of these.

Also, Trinitarian theology tells the temporal missions of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. These represent a particular way of one and trine *ad extra* action. To appreciate Kolbe’s complete orthodoxy when speaking about the relationship between the Immaculate and the Holy Spirit, theology distinguishes between visible and invisible missions of the second and third Trinitarian Person. A visible mission is where communication by the person sent is accompanied by a sign, understandable only through faith. Also, this visible mission may be substantial or accidental. The first occurs in the Incarnation of the Son, because in this divine nature hypostatically unites with human nature. The second occurs in the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, but without the hypostatic union between the Spirit and the dove. This last point is particularly developed in the known Kolbian doctrine on the relation between Mary and the Holy Spirit, sent to Her: this relation is “analogous” to the one existing between

human and divine nature in the incarnation of the Son, it is almost an incarnation of the Spirit in Mary. We fully respect orthodoxy here. In fact, even in the case of Mary, the visible mission of the Holy Spirit is not substantial but accidental. Evidently, Kolbe wishes to above all underline the difference of the relation between the dove and the Holy Spirit from the one between the Immaculate and the Holy Spirit: this last relation, while not being a hypostatic union, “goes beyond any comprehension”. We are not facing a mere speculation. No, Marian mediation and the spirituality of the Militia of the Immaculate are above all based on the singularity and the universality of this relation between Mary and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, in speaking about the masterpiece of the Trinity, the Immaculate, and in describing the mission of the Mother of God and Mediatrix of grace, he goes back to this doctrine on the missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit. (Omitting citations).

3) The Trinity shines in Creation for the believer. – There are various referrals to the analogies of the Trinity in creatures, Even if divine external action proceeds from the three Persons as a sole beginning, however every being is created by God, who can but be one-trine, and who was revealed as the Trinity, must bear the impression within itself of the Trinity: “From divine revelation we know that from eternity and forever, the Father generates the Son, while the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and from the Son. This life [intimate, *ad intra*] of the Holy Trinity echoes in the creatures of the One and Trine God, with more or less close similarities. The beginning whose effect is similar to the cause also may be fully applied here: it is an even more rigorous application here because God created from nothing ...”.

One of the similarities created by the Trinity is, for Kolbe, mutual love between father, mother and son within a family: in fact, “God is love, Holy Trinity. Therefore also reciprocated love of persons uniting to form a family is the authentic echo of divine love...”

4) Theological precisions on the Trinity. – Differing from the Fathers and the Scholastics, he does not attempt to clarify faith in God’s Trinity, first of all, resolving the problem of agreement between the unity of the essence and the numeric three of the persons in God. However, in the frequent statements on the Trinitarian Mystery he often inserts the calling to a dual fruitful, vital and immanent movement that eternally flows within the Trinity: “generation of the Son” and the “procession or spiration of the Holy Spirit”, so that the divine persons do exist and can truly be distinct, without the one essence of God being multiplied. He does not go into these two eternal processions. But, in a text from 1941 (I will not read it here, because it is long), after describing the two intra-divine processions, he notes that this is one of the analogies one can turn to when speaking about the mystery of the intimate life of the Trinity: “We must use the words drawn from the creatures’ dictionary, since we have no others, even if we must always recall that these are rather imperfect words”.

Creation

The One Trine God, revealed at best in the Son’s incarnation, is already revealed in the Creation of the universe and, in particular, of man (image of God). Knowledge deriving from this revelation does not only have God as the object, but also says something about the world and particularly about man, in other words, on the extra-

divine forms where revelation is achieved. For this reason, any attempt to know Creation better and, in particular, man helps to know better the glory of God, which is manifested in a finite way for and in His creatures. This is probably the reason for Kolbe's interest in the sciences. However, as we shall see, faith in the Creator is for him the key to accessing the real meaning of the world and of man, and to guarantee the ontological consistency of the created being despite his limits.

1) Values and limitations of the world created by God. – Regarding this, while being fragmentary his assertions let us understand that, for faith, the Creator is not only the “Prime immobile Motor”, but is the personal beginning of all extra-divine reality. The creative action of God, in fact, is not merely the source of existence of all that is not God. God created from nothing. But one must add that God freely chooses all created beings among all those possible.

On one hand, Creation tells the finite and the contingency (or lack of necessity) of created beings, including man, who created from nothing, is “in himself an absolute nothing”. On the other hand however, Creation as a work of God the Omnipotent assures us that creatures, being chosen and created freely and knowledgeably by God Himself, and thereby conforming to the thinking and the will of God, have an ontological consistency, nor are they menaced in their being, but are full of meaning and references to God. The principle of action-reaction, our Saint says, is a law inscribed by God the Creator in every one of his works: it is like the seal of the Trinity on them. Therefore, even if divine creative action is in a certain way a real separation of the creature from God, the creatures because created by God are stable in their being and becoming, not pure appearance “in force of the natural law received from God, the creatures in turn perfect themselves, become similar this God; they return to Him, rational creatures love Him knowingly, unite to Him always more through love and return to Him”.

Thus the dependency of the creatures upon the Creator in being and acting does not take away their value, their force, their perfection: God the Creator does not check Creation. To believe in God the Creator does not mean considering the creatures being as inconsistent. Kolbe fiercely attacks this thesis that is the foundation of materialistic atheism and modern existential naturalism, by which human reason must choose between the existences of God the Creator and the certainties of the world (*aut... aut*). On the contrary, he says, the creatures with their being, their beauty and goodness are, in different ways, proclamations of God's glory. Their perfection is real, even of only an echo varying, a hymn of praise, in various tones, of the first and most beautiful of mysteries (the Trinity).

2) Creation, conservation, world governing as acts of love of God. – Keeping these suggestive thoughts in mind, we can also understand Kolbe's admiration for the landscapes' beauty and his sensitivity to creatures' voices, which murmur the praises of God and whisper to man to love God. As a consequence, to assert the lordship of the Creator over creatures (on their being, subsisting and acting) does not mean, *ipso facto*, denying any consistency in their being and actions: actually, it is a dominion practiced in full respect of the course of nature. In other terms, Kolbe prefers to speak about a divine dominion over creatures, whose practice however is an act of love. Divine conservation of the created beings and the divine accompaniment in their actions are

also acts of love. These are more acts of love by which God communicates His love to the numerous finite similitudes. And, as a “reaction” to this divine “action”, all creatures respond to the lordship of love of the creating Trinity through love.

3) Reason and finality of Creation. – Therefore for Kolbe, the reason for creation by God, just like the reason for redemption, is one alone: love. God, he says, has loved us for all of eternity, from the moment He was God.

In the same way, the end or the scope the world and men tend towards is the extrinsic glory of God. Here are some of his reflections. All creatures, he writes, glorify Him because they are revelations of His love. Then man, being intelligent, can recognize the image of God in himself and praise the glory of his Creator. In other writings, he prefers to indicate how the goal of the world and of man is unwitting love (of the irrational creatures) or willful love (of man) for God the Creator and Father: a love, that of man, which must be ever greater, should be a growing divinization, a perfect return to Him, a fruitful love. In other words, the goal of man is God, the Holy Trinity, “union with God”. It is an arduous task to achieve, which needs help from the Immaculate: in fact, between Her and God, there is maximum closeness to a pure creature and, therefore, no creature may introduce us in a better way to intimacy with God than Mary the Immaculate. This is also the meaning behind consecration to as a knight of the Immaculate.

Christ

Speaking about Christ is not one of the many aspects of Kolbe’s faith, which emerge from his writings. He explicitly states that when asserting some aspect or another of our faith we are always speaking about Christ. This could lead us to think about a theology as total Christology. For this reason, calling upon the Christological mystery always enters into his Mariological pages. This is not surprising. In fact, his insistence on Immaculate Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, partner of Christ in the work of salvation and Mediatrix of grace, is often indicated as a correlative to the person and to the work of Christ Her Son.

1) The Son of God made man. – Logically, Kolbe does not pause with his readers upon explicit and profound considerations on Christ’s being (hypostatic union; the divine act by which the Person of the Word united with its creature; the grace of union...). Based on the divine Motherhood of Mary, he limits himself to recall that Christ’s humanity depends on two interdependent and simultaneous actions: His production and His union with the Word. His production, in turn, Kolbe repeats, on one hand includes the human generating power of Mary and, on the other hand, the direct creation of Christ’s human soul by God. Because of this, the human being generated by Mary is truly God, and She, based on Christological dogma, is proclaimed as the true Mother of God, of the Church.

She is the Mother of God, however, only through the work of God, as a pure gift, which She willingly accepts in faith: in fact with this gift, God gives Himself totally to Her, and She, believing the word, welcomes Him willingly and, in faith, conceives, under Her virginal heart, in Her pure womb, the Son of God. Rather, as Kolbe specifies further, Incarnation is the common work of the three divine Persons: the act that unites human and divine nature in the Incarnation is an act of the entire Trinity, while the

sentiment of this common act by the three divine Persons is the union of that human nature to only one of these, the Son as distinct truly from the Father and the Holy Spirit.

The work of the Holy Spirit, attributed with the conception of Christ under the virginal heart of Mary (*et concepit de Spiritu Sancto*), therefore is not an efficacious cause exclusive to the third divine Person. The Spirit is like the inspiration for the divine efficacy in incarnation. Kolbe adds that, in fact, incarnation is the work of eternal mutual Love, where the Father and Son are one, from which proceeds eternally the Person of the Holy Spirit, who is their love made into flesh. The temporal mission of the Holy Spirit is above all made in the human nature of the Word made Flesh, and from this point must extend to all men. And it is barely necessary to recall the great development Kolbe gave to the fact that this universal mission of the Holy Spirit begins in Mary's soul on the day of the Annunciation, and because of this is an "almost incarnation" of the Spirit in the Immaculate. For this reason, as we have seen, in describing how the Trinity operates *ad extra*, he speaks about, in descending order, of "action" by the Father through Jesus and the Immaculate, and, in ascending order, about the "reaction" of the creature through the Immaculate and Jesus. This explains the singularity of Her mission and at the same time its universality.

2) The reason for Incarnation. – At times, Kolbe speaks about the reason why the Son was made flesh. Yet he doesn't explicitly ask the well-known question on the primary motive of this mystery, which, for centuries, opposed the Dominicans to the Franciscans. However, without a doubt, for Kolbe, the finality of the Incarnation is the divinization of man, an effusion of divine love outside of God, loving self-communication of God to man. In a word, for him as well, the Incarnation of the Son is a sort of perfection of Creation. But because of original sin, he also and mainly insists on the redeeming finality of Incarnation and the concept of ransom. For this reason, he says, the full return of man to God (the "reaction" of creatures to the divine creative "action", as he often states), his divinization, his perfect communion with the Trinity, will go through poverty, suffering, humiliation, pain and the death on the cross of Jesus. Keeping this redeeming prospect in mind, he often speaks about the infinite value of Christ's work, which (except for God's freedom) is required by his justice infinitely damaged by sin.

Bearing in mind the culture of those listening to him, while speaking about the finality of incarnation, he prefers to recall that Jesus redeems us also through His teachings and with the examples of His life, which place a man who believes in Jesus and in the Gospel in front of existential choices. Various texts move in this direction, which conforms to the way the New Testament often speaks about Jesus and His mission. For the same reason, also, he avoids the clearly theological problems regarding what the hypostatic union of human and divine nature influence or not in the human nature of Jesus (today, we speak about "Christology from above"): therefore, he ignores the speech on the psychological consequences, which the grace of the hypostatic union may have on thinking and human consciences, on love and Christ's human will, without the spiritual richness of Jesus ever ceasing to be truly human.

3) The reasons behind the Redeemer's suffering. – He does not only insist on the Passion and the Death of the Redeemer and on the good for all humanity that derived from this excess of love. He also seems to ask why there was the need for so much suffering to liberate us from sin. He gives an explicit answer when he sees the cross as a

supreme example of love and an efficient invitation to renounce to ourselves, when the faithfulness to the mission received from the Father is in play. Conforming to the New Testament, however, he sees in the Cross the price of forgiveness of sin and, in consequence of this, the source of grace, of salvation. Due to this, on one hand he underlines the gravity and the seriousness of sin, which is a temerarious self-assertion made by man to the expense of God, a break-off from the order of Creation and, above all, given the supernatural original elevation of man, a break-off from God Himself, treason to His friendship. On the other hand and logically, he opposes to the offense of all to divine love, the satisfaction and the expiation that, in and for all, the Son of God made man could render to this offended infinite love: in fact, Christ represents all men before God, whose totality is represented by She who, as the first and most perfect, practice the redeeming values the merits of the Savior. Even here, Kolbe ignores the questions on why God requires infinite satisfaction (impossible for man), on the relation between Jesus' death and the Father's will, on the intensity of Christ's suffering...

Grace (Christian Anthropology)

The present reminders on Kolbian assertions about the grace Christ earned for us (Christian anthropology) will act as a conclusion to my report.

1) The paths of grace: Mary and the Church. – Starting with the reason for being of the person of Christ and His work (which we have just dealt with) one can understand the mission of the Church and of Mary Mediatrix of Grace during the period between the Ascension and the Parusia: to extend the victory of Christ to humanity and, in such a way, to make man participate in eternal life (already begun in the Mystery). Given the period he lived in, he never knew a strictly theological-dogmatic ecclesiology (when he explicitly speaks about the Church, he does so in rather apologetic and hierarchical terms). And his speech on sacraments is, quantitatively, restricted and is not influenced yet by the liturgical movement of the XXth Century. However, if we bear in mind his doctrine on the Holy Spirit and the Trinitarian background in which his theological thinking is based, fundamentally we may say that, even for him, when God, in Christ resurrected and ascended to heaven and through the Holy Spirit, acts as Father and Lord of a human being, welcoming Christ present through the work of the Holy Spirit in faith and in the sacraments of the Church, he enters into a loving communion with God (converting to the Trinity), begins to live mysteriously, anticipating the perfect eschatological return to the creating and saving Trinity, already participates in God's being and life. However, if Kolbe does not adequately develop this mediating role of the Church, the same cannot be said for Mary's.

2) The theology of grace as anthropology of Christian life. – The traditional theology of grace is articulated on three points: a) the ontological change that comes about in man when participating in God's being and life (the *state of grace*); b) the method and genesis of this supernatural state in man (in other words, the first *justification* of the sinner and the following increase of sanctifying grace, due on one hand to the absolutely free, gratuitous, merciful and loving initiative of God in Christ through the Spirit; and on the other hand, the free human response of man's faith; c) finally, the way in which this man justified by God, grasped and totally renewed by the sanctifying and deifying grace, supernaturally enriched by God with the theological

virtues, with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, with the beatitudes and with the crown of all the other infused virtues, which accompany grace, may achieve his duties in earthly life (the realization of union with God in thought and act, growing in virtue towards the eschaton...).

These themes from Christian anthropology, as expected, are present here and there in many of Kolbe's writings, which are spiritual points attached to theological motives. But it would be a useless and artificial enterprise to try to isolate them from their literary context and place them in an order in the aforementioned scheme of Christian anthropology (*de gratia et virtutibus infusis*). I believe it would be preferable to reflect on the fact that, in Kolbe, the elements of theological anthropology concerning the fruits of man's redemption generally begin with the vision of Mary as the Immaculate full of grace and from the Holy Spirit, the first and unequal fruit of redemption, and from the singular relations She, the true Mother of God and Mediatrix of grace, has with the Persons of the saving Trinity. This Kolbian method of procedure is based on the fact that the election of Mary is particular, yes, but it is essentially charged with a universal meaning: this is true because in the supernatural order of grace in Mary this occurs in a singular way, what has occurred for all at the moment of justification and made us participate in divine life. In fact, She represents the free act of faith understood in the human generation of the Word, conceived by the work of the Holy Spirit: Her *fiat*, Her totally free and believing adherence to the coming of the Son of God in Her, is pronounced, as even Kolbe says, for all of mankind. (This explains the foundation, the nature and the function of consecration by the Knight of the Immaculate, completely bent to answer this gift of grace with a holy life, and committed to spreading the victory of the dead and resurrected Christ over sin and death. The Knight of the Immaculate, entrusting himself unconditionally to Her, explicitly associates his *fiat* to the *fiat* full of faith and love of Mary, that it may become Her property, in other words, become pure and immaculate like Hers and to become an instrument of the Mediatrix of grace. In a word, the Knight consecrates himself to the Immaculate, not to avoid his human-Christian responsibilities, not to subtract himself from personal participation in Christ's mission, founded on Baptism and Confirmation, not to seriously take up the necessary battle to follow Christ, rather, to be like Her a person in the history of salvation, a free person who, in history, responsibly collaborates in building the Kingdom begun by Christ. In other words, to be a new man in Christ).

For now, I will not insist any further and in any detail on the elements of Christian anthropology, which are the basis of Kolbian consecration to Mary. I would only like to underline that in them the true meaning of Kolbe's insistence on the person of the Immaculate Mary: founded on the singular and universal role of the Immaculate Mother of God and Mediatrix of grace, he strategically uses this to also illustrate to the readers the Christian organism and to justify it theologically. All of this leads him to say that, even when we do not think about it, our Christian life is the free answer of loving faith to the gift of God (grace), because it is the Immaculate's duty to make it thus.

And in a more general way, we can conclude this modest presentation of Kolbe's theological vision saying that, for him, Mary, the icon of new humanity issuing from the pierced heart of the crucified Redeemer, is a determining factor for a certain comprehension of humanity by the Lord Himself (the unique prototype of «new man»), is the personal guarantee of man's achievement under the grace of Christ (Christian anthropology) and (but Kolbian texts are very limited) is a singular figure of the Church (ecclesiology and sacraments). In a word, according to the spirit of Kolbe, Marian

access gives theological (God, Trinity, Christ), anthropological (sin, redemption, freedom), ecclesiological (the Church as saving mystery) richness.

My report was but a modest attempt to demonstrate the surprising doctrinal richness towards which the reflection, the contemplation, the praise, the devotion of Saint Maximilian towards the Immaculate often turns to.

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