

THE KNIGHT OF THE *Immaculata*

E-PUBLICATION OF THE MILITIA OF THE IMMACULATA, USA



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100th Anniversary of the First MI Magazine



Why We Celebrate an Anniversary

By John W. Galten, MI National President



Dear Knights of the Immaculata,

Maria! As we begin the year 2022, let us be filled with hope and joy in the fact that Christ makes all things new! This is not a time to surrender to gloom and doom by the seeming imprisonment of action by the pandemic. We ponder the soul-crushing atmosphere of Auschwitz, and yet within these hellish confines St. Maximilian found numerous ways to be the apostle he was called to be. Can we do less?

It is also time to ponder another remarkable event—the 100th anniversary of *The Knight of the Immaculata* magazine—the ancestor of our very own newsletter by the same name.

Not only was St. Maximilian a Marian mystic, supreme organizer and spiritual dynamo of energy but very significantly he was an evangelizing missionary. He was called to give himself to the last and great command of Christ, “Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations” (Mt 19).

The Immaculata herself and her spouse the Holy Spirit planted this divine seed and call in the heart of St. Maximilian. He heard the paraphrased injunction by Christ, “How can they believe if they have not heard?!” That startling and rousing question/command burned in his heart. The love of Christ for souls, shouted out from the Cross as He thirsted for souls, became his evangelizing motive.

St. Maximilian recognized that at the time the printed word was the primary medium to spread the Kingdom of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. The magazine was born in 1922 and contained the call to repentance, for the Kingdom of God is here in our very midst. From the City of the Immaculata (Niepokalanow) the apostolate expanded. In 1930 he traveled to Japan, where he would start the

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“Through Mary Immaculate to Jesus: that is our watchword. The more you spread veneration and love for the Immaculata the more souls you win over to her, and, through her, to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, who loved us unto death on the Cross.”

– St. Maximilian Kolbe

Editorial

Garden of the Immaculata (Mugenzai no Sono) and immediately found *The Knight* in Japanese. The first issue on a hand-cranked printing press ran to 10,000. This feat was achieved barely one month after the friars' arrival in Nagasaki. This shows how much the Saint value this "apostolic tool." We, also, should value our newsletter in the same manner. The friars themselves handed out the first issue.

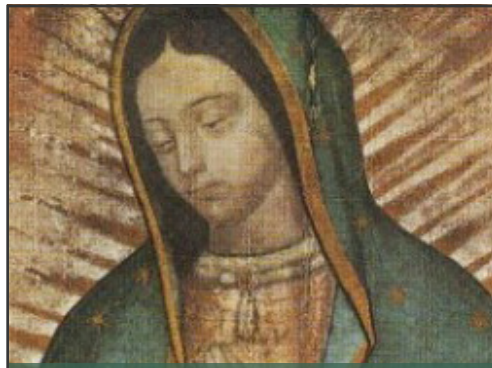
The magazine became not only an evangelizing tool for the Kingdom but also the "food" for the Militia of the Immaculata on its missionary "campaign." Although the primary spiritual "food and supplies" of this Militia is the Holy Eucharist, the holy words and example of St. Maximilian are also food for the soul.

So, dear Knights, our publication, *The Knight of the Immaculata*, is not just helpful information but, if it stays true to St. Maximilian, it becomes a "conference" and an inspiration from our founder Saint! Read it and influence others to read it as it contains the wisdom of an extraordinary Saint and the inspiration to love the Immaculata with our whole hearts and all those who have not heard of her or her Son.

Until next time, read and share *The Knight*. As always... "Arise, let us be on our way!"

John W. Galten
MI National President

P.S. Also, sign up, and invite others as well, for the *Daily Kolbe E-mails*, and enjoy a daily inspiring word from St. Maximilian!



Pray for the Unborn

Virgin of Guadalupe, Patroness of unborn children, we implore your intercession for every child at risk of abortion.

Help expectant parents to welcome from God the priceless gift of their child's life.

Console parents who have lost that gift through abortion, and lead them to forgiveness and healing through the Divine Mercy of your Son.

Teach us to cherish and to care for family and friends until God calls them home. Help us never to see others as burdens.

Guide our public officials to defend each and every human life through just laws. Inspire us all to bring our faith into public life, to speak for those who have no voice.

We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, who is Love and Mercy itself. Amen

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Daily Holy Mass

will be offered throughout 2022 for the MI-USA and all MI Members, living and deceased, 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

See and Share the MI Film!



This important short film beautifully and eloquently captures the essence of the MI: total consecration to the Immaculata in the evangelical spirit of St. Maximilian Kolbe.

"Simply excellent!"
"Inspirational!"

Share the link
<http://militiaoftheimmaculata.com/mi-movie/>
with your family and friends and 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!





Our Greatest Treasure: The Most Holy Eucharist - Part Two

This is Part Two of the document The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church published by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. May it lead us to an ever-greater appreciation of this unfathomable Gift. We reprint it here for the ongoing formation of all MI members.

A) The Sacrifice of Christ

To begin to comprehend the tremendous gift offered by Christ through His Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection, that gift which is made present to us in the Eucharist, we must first realize how truly profound is our alienation from the Source of all life as a result of sin. We have abundant experience of evil, yet so many of us deny the cause of much of that evil—our own selfishness, our own sins. As St. John wrote in his first letter, *If we say, “we are without sin,” we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us* (1 Jn 1:8).

Sin is an offense against God, a failure to love God and our neighbor which wounds our nature and injures human solidarity. The capabilities, talents, and gifts we have received from God are meant to be used for good—not the false and illusory good that we in our self-centered desire create for ourselves, but the true good that

glorifies the Father of goodness and is directed for the good of others and, in the end, is also good for us. When we misuse the gifts of creation, when we selfishly focus on ourselves, we choose the path of vice rather than the way of virtue.

This self-centeredness is an inheritance of the Fall of our first parents. Without the grace of Christ received at Baptism, strengthened in Confirmation, and nourished by the Eucharist, this selfishness dominates us. In Christ, however, what was lost by sin has been restored and renewed even more wondrously by grace. Jesus, the new Adam, “was crucified under Pontius Pilate,” offering Himself up as a sacrifice so that we may receive the inheritance that was lost by sin. By freely offering His life on the cross, Christ allows us to become the children of God (Jn 1:12) and to inherit the Kingdom of God. St. Peter reminds us, *Christ Himself bore our sins in His body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed* (1 Pt 2:24).

At the Last Supper, celebrating the Passover, Jesus makes explicit that His impending death, freely embraced out of love, is sacrificial: *While they*

were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, “Take and eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins” (Mt 26:27-28). In the words and gestures of the Last Supper, Jesus makes it clear that out of love for us He is freely offering His life for the forgiveness of our sins. In doing so, He is both the priest offering a sacrifice and the victim being offered. As priest, Jesus is offering a sacrifice to God the Father, an offering prefigured by the offering of bread and wine by Melchizedek, Priest of God Most High (Gen 14:18; see Ps 110:4; Heb 5-7 passim). Anticipating His Passion in the institution of the Eucharist, Christ has indicated the forms under which His self-offering would be sacramentally present to us until the end of time.

Why is it so important that we understand the Eucharist as a sacrifice? It is because all that Jesus did for the salvation of humanity is made present in the celebration of the Eucharist, including His sacrificial Death and Res-

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Our Greatest Treasure: The Most Holy Eucharist - Part Two

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urrection. Christ's sacrifice of Himself to the Father was efficacious and salvific because of the supreme love with which He shed His blood, the price of our salvation, and offered Himself to the Father on our behalf. His blood, shed for us, is the eternal sign of that love. As a memorial the Eucharist is not another sacrifice, but the re-presentation of the sacrifice of Christ by which we are reconciled to the Father. It is the way by which we are drawn into Jesus' perfect offering of love, so that His sacrifice becomes the sacrifice of the Church. As Pope Benedict XVI wrote,

The remembrance of His perfect gift consists not in the mere repetition of the Last Supper, but in the Eucharist itself, that is, in the radical newness of Christian worship. In this way, Jesus left us the task of entering into His *hour*. The Eucharist draws us into Jesus' act of self-oblation. More than just statically receiving the incarnate Logos, we enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving.

The Eucharist is a sacrificial meal, "the sacred banquet of communion with the Lord's body and blood." Its fundamental pattern is found in the Jewish celebration of the Passover,

which involves both a meal and a sacrifice. The Passover meal is celebrated in remembrance of the Exodus, when the Israelites were told to sacrifice a lamb to the Lord and to mark the doorposts of their houses with the blood, so that the angel of death would pass over their houses and leave the Israelites unharmed. This marked a people set apart and chosen by God as His special possession.

Each family was then to eat the lamb with unleavened bread as a reminder of the haste with which the Israelites had to prepare for their departure from Egypt and with bitter herbs as a reminder of their deliverance from slavery. At the Last Supper, Jesus reveals Himself to be the Paschal Lamb ("Behold the Lamb of God") whose sacrifice brings liberation from slavery to sin and whose blood marks out a new people belonging to God. All the sacrifices in the Old Testament prefigure and find their fulfillment in the one perfect sacrifice of Jesus.

The saving work of Jesus Christ, which has brought to fulfillment what was announced in figure in the Passover, is now re-presented in the celebration of the Eucharist. The Eucharist "makes present the one sacrifice of Christ the Savior." As Pope St. John Paul II taught: "The Church constantly draws her life from [this] redeeming

sacrifice; she approaches it not only through faith-filled remembrance, but also through a real contact, since this sacrifice is made present ever anew, sacramentally perpetuated, in every community which offers it at the hands of the consecrated minister."

Finally, this great Sacrament is also a participation in the worship offered in Heaven, in and through Christ, by the angels and saints. Pope Benedict XVI explained that every Eucharistic celebration sacramentally accomplishes the eschatological gathering of the People of God. For us, the eucharistic banquet is a real foretaste of the final banquet foretold by the prophets (cf. Is 25:6-9) and described in the New Testament as the marriage-feast of the Lamb (Rev 19:7-9), to be celebrated in the joy of the communion of saints.

(to be continued)

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Rev Michael J. K. Fuller
General Secretary, USCCB



St. Joseph, a Man Who Dreams

Excerpts from an Audience on St. Joseph

by Pope Francis

In the Bible, as in the cultures of ancient peoples, dreams were considered a means by which God revealed Himself. The dream symbolizes the spiritual life of each of us, that inner space that each of us is called to cultivate and guard, where God manifests Himself and often speaks to us. But we must also say that within each of us there is not only the voice of God: there are many other voices. For example, the voices of our fears, the voices of past experiences, the voices of hopes; and there is also the voice of the evil one who wants to deceive and confuse us. It is therefore important to be able to recognize the voice of God in the midst of other voices. Joseph demonstrates that he knows how to cultivate the necessary silence and, above all, how to make the right decisions before the Word that the Lord addresses to him inwardly. Today, it will be good for us to take up the four dreams in the Gospel which have him as their protagonist, in order to understand how to place ourselves before God's revelation. The Gospel tells us of four dreams of Joseph. In the first dream (cf. Mt 1:18-25), the angel helps Joseph to resolve the drama that assails him when he learns of Mary's pregnancy: "Do not fear to take Mary your

wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit" (vv. 20-21). And his response was immediate: "When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him" (v. 24). Life often puts us in situations that we do not understand and that seem to have no solution. Praying in these moments—this means letting the Lord show us the right thing to do. In fact, very often it is prayer that gives us the intuition of the way out. Dear brothers and sisters, the Lord never allows a problem to arise without also giving us the help we need to deal with it. He does not cast us alone into the fire. He does not cast us among the beasts. No. When the Lord shows us a problem, or reveals a problem, he always gives us the intuition, the help, His presence, to get out of it, to resolve it.

And the second revealing dream of Joseph comes when the life of the child Jesus is in danger. The message is clear: "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him" (Mt 2:13). Joseph obeyed without hesitation: "He rose and took the child and his mother by night," the Gospel says, "and departed to Egypt, and remained there until

the death of Herod" (vv. 14-15). In life we all experience dangers that threaten our existence or the existence of those we love. In these situations, praying means listening to the voice that can give us the same courage as Joseph, to face difficulties without succumbing.

In Egypt, Joseph waited for a sign from God that he could return home, and this is the content of the third dream. The angel reveals to him that those who wanted to kill the Child are dead and orders him to leave with Mary and Jesus and return to his homeland (cf. Mt 2:19-20). Joseph "rose" the Gospel says, "and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel" (v. 21). But on the return journey, "when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there" (v. 22). Here then is the fourth revelation: "Being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth" (vv. 22-23). Fear is also part of life and it too needs our prayer. God does not promise us that we will never have fear, but that, with His help, it will not be the criterion for our decisions. Joseph experiences fear, but God also guides him through it. The power of prayer brings light into situations of darkness. I am thinking at this moment of so many people who are crushed by the weight of life and can no longer hope or pray. May St. Joseph help them to open themselves to dialogue with God in order to find light, strength, and peace....

Prayer is always inextricably linked to charity. It is only when we combine prayer with love, that we are able to understand the Lord's messages. Joseph prayed, worked, and loved and because of this he always received what he needed to face life's trials. Let us entrust ourselves to him and to his intercession.

(January 26, 2022)



Catholic Knights Standing in the Breach

By Joseph Cascone, MI Member

“Only Love Creates.” St. Max taught us this. God, in His infinite love, welcomes us to cooperate with Him in creating human life. What an awesome gift; probably only second in greatness to our Redemption. On January 19, we boarded a motor-coach in northwest Indiana to travel throughout the cold night to our nation’s capital, Washington D.C. We had the Knights of Columbus of Indiana to thank for making it possible for us to make this pilgrimage. It was our first National March For Life event, although we attended a “dry run” to the March For Life in Chicago a few weeks earlier. It was a frigid experience on both occasions but we felt we were compelled to stand up for the preborn, especially in this year of 2022 when we pray that the terrible US Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade* will itself be dismembered by a Mississippi case to be decided in June, called *Dobbs v. Jackson*.

Much like St. Maximilian was met with Freemason signs in Rome when he was a seminarian student, we were met with signs hanging from highway overpasses saying that “D.C. [loves] Abortion Provider.” The struggle is real! It has been a real, terrible struggle for pro-life people for 49 years since the *Roe* decision in 1973. On Thursday January 20 there were thousands of us packed in the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception for Holy Mass and vigil prayers and Rosary, praying for the end of abortion, while unbeknown

to us there was a group called “Catholics for Choice” projecting pro-abortion messages onto its basilica façade.

But inside we were comforted by Our Lord and Our Lady. We saw a beautiful bronze sculpture that reminded us of how Father Patrick Peyton (the Family Rosary priest) would say that we should be like Mary’s donkey, bringing her and her Son into the world.

The next day, January 21, some say that up to 300,000 of us gathered on The Mall to



rally and hear speakers call for the end of abortion. There were no diluted messages of other life issues. Ending *Roe* was what was focused on, like a laser beam. Over 65 million brothers and sisters of ours have been snuffed out by abortion. Defending the inalienable right to life for God’s children in the womb is THE preeminent issue and THE civil/human rights issue that has been a scourge on America and the world for our lifetime.

On our pilgrimage, we had about 30 eighth graders and chaperones attend from St. John the Evangelist school. They were

so moved by visiting Arlington Cemetery and seeing where two million military men and women lie, after making the ultimate sacrifice of their lives. They were moved by the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. They were even more moved by learning that over 65 million “unknown” babies have been sacrificed in our country in the name of CHOICE. They saw the irony that with abortion the babies do not get to choose. Just like with slavery, black people did not get to choose; and with the holocaust, Jews and Polish Catholics and other Christians did not get to choose.

What audacity we have to prevent God the Father from seeing the lives of so many of His children unfold and blossom and turn toward holiness and sainthood. We all know that abortion is a travesty of God’s Holy Justice. What part of “Thou Shall Not Kill” do we not understand? Abortion needs to stop.

Finally, I will be making an effort to raise money to help fund the purchase of one ultra-sound machine to be put in a Women’s Care Center. Statistics show that 90% of the time, seeing the very real and clear images of their babies, mothers choose life. There is no more effective way to help a woman change her mind about abortion than a 3D/4D Ultra Sound machine. It is the most powerful tool we have beside prayer.

These machines are very expensive but the Knights of Columbus have a special rate (50% discount) which still cost \$35,000. My hope is to place the machine in the Women’s Care Center in the heart of Illinois, the home of our National MI Office, Peoria. Their clinic burned down and they are looking to come out of the ashes like a phoenix with a bigger, better facility to help women choose life. Illinois is already the abortion hub in the Midwest. Once *Roe* falls, we need to be ready to help women make the right choice, help them with their needs for nine months, and perhaps with the adoption process. If abortion is left to the states, all the states surrounding Illinois will ban abortion. We need to be ready to put our money and time where our mouths are. Only love creates!



MI 2022 Intentions - February

This year, the monthly reflections provided by the MI International Office on the 2022 MI Intentions include:

- *A Scripture reading.
- *A text from St. Maximilian's Writings.
- *A quote from the Pope's teachings.
- *A brief commentary.

The goal is to offer MI leaders the possibility to adapt the material to the need of the group and/or the current reality.

February: O Immaculata, please intercede that, as authentic MI members in these difficult times, we may place our trust in you.

Mt 10:26-33 – Therefore do not be afraid of them. Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known. What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father. But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father.

KW 503 – Dear children, let us remember that love lives and is nourished by sacrifices. Let us thank the Immaculata for inner peace, for the ecstasy of love, but let us

not forget that all that, though good and beautiful, is not the essence of love and love, indeed perfect love, may even exist without all that. The summit of love is the state in which Jesus came to find Himself on the cross when He said: "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" (Mt 27:46; Mk15:34). There is no love without sacrifice.... When the love to her, to the goodness of God in her, to the love of the Divine Heart which is personified in her, when that love has seized us and penetrated us, then sacrifices will become a *necessity for the soul*.

Pope Francis on Mt 10:26-33

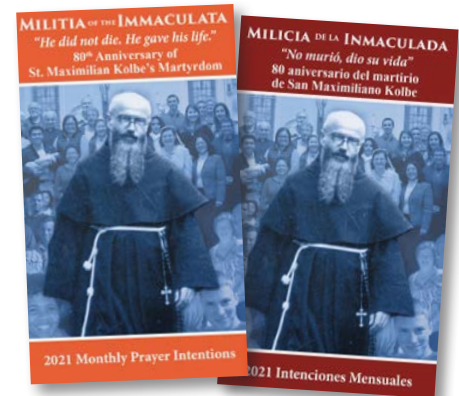
In this Gospel the invitation Jesus addresses to His disciples resonates: to have no fear, to be strong and confident in the face of life's challenges, as He forewarns them of the adversities that await them. Today's passage is part of the missionary discourse, with which the Teacher prepares the Apostles for their first experience of proclaiming the Kingdom of God. Jesus persistently exhorts them "not to be afraid," "do not be afraid," and Jesus describes tangible situations that they will find themselves facing, first and foremost, the hostility of those who would like to stifle the Word of God by sugar-coating it, by watering it down or by silencing those who proclaim it. In this case, Jesus encourages the Apostles to spread the message of salvation that He has entrusted to them. For the moment, He has transmitted it cautiously, somewhat covertly within the small group of the disciples. But they are to utter His Gospel "in the light," that is,

openly; and are to proclaim it "from the housetops"—as Jesus says—that is, publicly. There is no need to be frightened of those who seek to extinguish the evangelizing force with arrogance and violence. Indeed, they can do nothing against the soul, that is, against their union with God: no one can take this away from the disciples, because it is a gift from God. The only fear that a disciple should have is to lose this divine gift, this closeness to and friendship with God, to stop living according to the Gospel, thereby experiencing moral death, which is the effect of sin.

Commentary

We are called to be not afraid, to trust the Immaculata, to surrender everything into her maternal hands as St. Maximilian did: all that we experience, both joys and sorrows, difficulties and successes. Everything we are to offer to her so as to win may souls for Jesus through her Immaculate Heart.

Prayer: Act of Total Consecration to the Immaculata



2022 MI Intentions leaflets are available in English and Spanish. Request them from the MI National Office.

MI

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS



From MI Members Around the World...

As a teenager, I attended a youth event during which I was told, for the very first time, “God is Love and loves you as you are, with your limitations and defects.” I felt that those words were addressed to me and I wanted to listen to the desire they sowed into my heart to respond to that love. But, what confusion, how many fears and uncertainties, at the beginning! As soon as I started on this journey, I had to face my own weaknesses, my pretense to walk on my own, my fright of being ridiculed by others, and my fear of not being able to make it.

In the weariness of the journey, Mary, the mother of Jesus, came next to me, and I discovered her to be a discreet, quiet loving, and encouraging presence. Our Lady, who knew how to welcome fully God’s will and who stood at the foot her Son’s Cross, has taught me to accept my toughest times and to stand at the foot of my own crosses. Mary welcomes us and offers us hospitality into her home. She doesn’t like to appear; she prefers that we speak little about her. She welcomes us in her home to lead us to her Son Jesus, to make Him and the overwhelming strength of His love known to us. If we have the humility and perseverance to know Mary more closely, we find out that she has much to teach us. Her life is so simple and attractive to fill ours, too, with those dispositions and values which will draw us straight to the heart of Jesus, the Source of every good and of that love which He wishes to share with us. Moreover, through the MI we have the possibility to know the exceptional story of a brother, Fr. Maximilian Kolbe, who lived the love of God to the full, to the point of being consumed by the fire of that love. What a full and intense life he lived! To St. Maximilian we may ask for help in opening our hearts to the knowledge of the Mother of Jesus, the Immaculata, for he was her passionate minstrel and zealous apostle. Let’s ourselves be led by the enthusiasm of this son of St. Francis, and we’ll discover the desire and joy to lead others to know Jesus by surrendering to the tender love of the Immaculata.

Fr. Roberto Brandinelli, OFM Conv., Padua, Italy

Dear Friend, I wish you to experience the immense grace to know Our Lady, as did a man who placed all his life in her hands: St. Maximilian Kolbe. May you encounter her within yourself, open your heart to her, and place your hand into hers, just as she placed hers in the Heavenly Father’s hand. The Immaculata more than anything wishes that we become her children, so as to share with us the greatest gift: her Son Jesus. In Him, through faith, you’ll be able to taste and see “how good the Lord is.” As you trust in His goodness and surrender yourself completely to Him, He will make of you the person that you really are...

The experience that you begin or continue with the MI, it’s one of TRUE love. The beauty of coming to know Mary is that she truly takes you by the hand and this changes your life. If you open up to her, she listens to you, for She is a Mother to whom you can confide ANY secret and ask for help ANY TIME. She listens, because she is YOUR Mother—the sweetest and best Mom who could ever meet. You may be her little child, through whom she will work wonders... to be shared, graces to pass onto others, for in her God’s promise has become a reality. I assure you that if you give yourself to her, she will sustain your every step. With her even suffering is sweet, for when you feel loved in such a unique way, each moment of your life is brightened and renewed. Because God makes everything new.... Enjoy your journey with the MI! Laura, MI Adult Leader, Ferrara, Italy



MARY'S VOICE in the GOSPEL according to JOHN



MICHAEL PAKALUK
A NEW TRANSLATION WITH COMMENTARY



Discover Mary's Voice in the Gospel A Book Review

If you are looking for an enjoyable way to meditate on the Gospel in the company of Our Lady, find a copy of *Mary's Voice in the Gospel of John—A New Translation With Commentary*, by Michael Pakaluk (Regnery Publishing, 2021).

The author's starting point was to assume the truth that Our Lady had a special part to play in St. John's Gospel. He asked himself which verses, parts, structures, or characteristics of the Gospel text might show Mary's influence. "How much of the text is illuminated or becomes suggestive in new ways if we take the thesis to be true? If enough of the text is newly illuminated by the thesis, then that fact itself constitutes an argument for the truth of the thesis" (xxvi).

Pakaluk suggests that Our Lady exerted four "modes" of influence and he also indicates six "roles" that Mary

exercised (*Theotokos* [or God-bearer], woman, mother, virgin, spouse and handmaiden). Therefore, "if a particular feature of John's Gospel issues from the viewpoint of someone who occupied one of these roles that John did not occupy, then this feature can be ascribed to Mary's influence" (xxviii).

So that you may not be deterred from picking up the book, know that while Pakaluk is a professor at Catholic University of America he didn't write this book as a work of scholarship.

Through his insights and commentary, you will find yourself immersed in a beautiful and inspiring *Lectio Divina* (that is, prayerful reading of the Gospel) with Our Lady, an experience which is all the more significant for us who are totally consecrated to her and strive to become like her in following Jesus her Son.

ADP

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. **Behold Your Mother!** offers you an effective tool for making that possible!

Available also in audio book form.

Listen anytime, anywhere!

The suggested donation for multiple copies of the booklet is \$1.00/ea. plus shipping; for a single copy, the suggested donation is \$4.00 shipping included.

Now available in Spanish



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



St. Maximilian Writes... Celebrating the Centenary of the First MI Magazine

As noted last month and in the Editorial of this issue, in 1922 St. Maximilian launched the humble MI magazine Rycerz Niepokalanej (The Knight of the Immaculata). One of its goals was to deepen and strengthen faith, to point out the true path to asceticism, and to acquaint the faithful with Christian mysticism. In the first issues St. Maximilian wrote about the call to holiness. The following article (KW 1010) is probably the text of a talk that Fr. Maximilian gave at a meeting of a group of MI lay people in Krakow. It is clearly connected with KW 1001 and 1004 (which we published in the November 2017 issue of our MI newsletter). Enjoy it!

God has assigned each person a specific mission in this world: as He created the universe, He arranged primal causes so that the uninterrupted chain of their effects would engender the conditions and circumstances most favorable to carrying out that mission. Every man, therefore, is born with skills proportionate to the mission entrusted to him and, throughout the course of his life, environment, circumstances, and everything else contribute to make it possible and easy for

him to achieve his aim. In fact, man's perfection entirely consists in the attainment of that aim. The more accurately he manages to realize his task, the more scrupulously he fulfills its mission, the greater and holier he becomes in God's eyes.

In addition to natural gifts, from the cradle to the grave man is also accompanied by the grace of God, which is poured out upon each of us in such quantity and quality that our weak human forces can be properly reinforced and acquire the supernatural energy needed to cope with our own mission.

Many saints throughout the course of their lives have worked along tirelessly cooperating with God's gifts, both natural and supernatural. I am not thinking at this time only of the most pure Mother of God, who, by special privilege, already immaculate in her conception never stained her soul with even the smallest of sins. I am thinking of the ranks of those pure souls, such as St. Aloysius [Gonzaga], or our countryman St. Stanisław Kostka, who appeared before God's tribunal

with the robe of innocence they had received in Holy Baptism. However, among the saints there are also those who, for a longer or shorter period of time, abused the gifts of God and were deaf to the silent call of grace. Some of them forgot their sublime destiny because they were too tied up with work and amusements, albeit not sinful, as in the case of the seraphic St. Francis, the jewel of the rich youth of Assisi. Others, having fallen down and wallowed in the mud of vice, had almost completely estranged themselves from God, as did St. Mary Magdalene and St. Margaret of Cortona. Others still did not even know the true path assigned to them, like St. Paul the Apostle, who openly confessed that out of ignorance he had persecuted the Church of God [cf. 1 Tm 1:13].

And now we see how God pursued them with His grace, how He knocked at the door of their hearts under favorable conditions, how He pointed out to them ever more clearly the path of their mission.

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Fr. Maximilian M. Kolbe



St. Maximilian Writes...

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Finally, as they began to collaborate with the gifts of God, they became saints. So for instance, St. Francis heard a voice calling him to go and fight, but while he was getting his horse and armor ready in obedience to that command, God made it clear to him that he was meant to take charge of a spiritual army, and with it, fight against the powers of Hell; and there began a new life. St. Margaret of Cortona regarded her lover, by then... a fetid corpse, and, under the impression of that view, left her sinful life and converted. And when St. Paul, trembling with anger, was approaching the gates of Damascus to imprison Christians, he was thrown to the ground, and from stubborn enemy he was made ardent apostle of the doctrine of Christ. After their conversion all these saints no longer knew measure or limit in their service to God; they were no longer content with keeping a mediocre righteousness, but, climbing to the highest peaks of Christian perfection, strove to make up for the time and graces they had previously dissipated.

When it comes to God's glory and the salvation of souls, no effort was heavy for them, no cross unpleasant; from that moment on, everything was a pleasure, everything to them was a treasure, for everything was in the service of God's love. Varied and countless are the ways in which God leads the saints to a sublime destiny. He often strengthens the inclinations

of nature with supernatural gifts. In fact, He allows and commands men to use them. Yet at times, He demands that those inclinations of nature be sacrificed, whenever it is necessary for a higher formation of the soul. "If God," says Bossuet, "wishes to make them worthy of Himself, He must train them in various ways, in order to mold them according to His plan. As He does that, there is only one thing He respects: He will not do explicit violence to our innate disposition." That is why God led some into the desert and fully distanced them from other men; He called others to common life and to support each other in the progress toward perfection; He left others still in the whirl of the world, next to the plow, in the workshops of artisans, or on royal thrones. Some He made famous for their secular or religious knowledge, or for their social activity. Others He left in the shadows of oblivion during all their earthly life. Some in a way He pampered, feeding them with the milk of spiritual sweetness, while others He fed with the hard bread of suffering. All that depended on the needs of individual souls and on the type of mission to which a soul had been intended.

Although faithfully following the inspiration of divine grace, the saints did not cease to be people like us, and usually their actions and their words carried within them the typical traces of their environment, their country, their homeland. Take for instance St. Catherine of Siena, who felt she had

"Sienese blood" running through her veins, which meant, in the words of St. Bernadine, that it was a "sweet blood." She would at times cover children with kisses, and once, summoned to comfort a convict sentenced to death and to get him to go to confession, she kept his head close to her chest all night long, as a mother would to her son. In St. Teresa, on the other hand, we start to envision the spirit of chivalry. Born in Avila, the "city of knights"—where even the women once, during the absence of their husbands, were able to withstand a siege—she was deeply imbued with the spirit of her city and her nation. That is why in her writings we often find the expression: "God of battles," "the banner of God," "serve God with manly courage." The same attitude is found in St. Teresa's compatriot, St. Ignatius Loyola, who had been a soldier.

Many saints were music lovers. At times, when St. Francis felt inspired, he took two pieces of wood in his hand and rubbed them on each other, as if he were playing a violin. On holidays, St. Teresa used to play a small flute and struck a tambourine, while St. Ignatius Loyola was so carried away by music that he no longer felt any pain.

Usually, the saints behaved in a perfectly natural way, but for the sake of a higher virtue, and especially to escape the praise and approval of men, under the influence of grace they would at times do things that, to those around them, seemed utterly unreasonable and humiliating. A true master in this sense was St. Philip Neri. For example, one day some Polish delegates who had gone to visit the Pope, having been told that there was a "saint" in Rome, wanted to see him. When St. Philip was informed of that, he had a stool set up with a few books. He then sent for some children and once they were

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St. Maximilian Writes...

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around him, instructed one of them to read out a book of humorous content and began to listen with great earnestness. The delegates went in with much reverence, yet the saint did not allow the boy to stop reading, but begged the guests to wait. Since, however, he had the child read one chapter after another and they could not possibly wait until reading would end, the delegates departed, outraged and shocked, while St. Philip thanked God for having avoided the praise of men.

We see, therefore, that the saints proceeded by different routes: they each had a different way of acting with regard to the gifts of nature. One thing they all had in common: the fact that they always subdued such gifts to grace, the very grace that so many times had raised them up from a state of prolonged listlessness or even from the slavery of sin. All, therefore, experienced a higher and supernatural life, regardless of the fact that they had been imposed upon by grace to walk along a path that was either in keeping with or in contrast to their nature. Their only purpose was God and His holy love, and everything else—facts either natural or supernatural, pleasant or unpleasant—were simply means to that end. In this way, nothing turned against them, but rather they drew endless benefit from everything, be-

cause their benefit was spiritual: as a matter of fact, “We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose” [Rom 8:28].



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(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.

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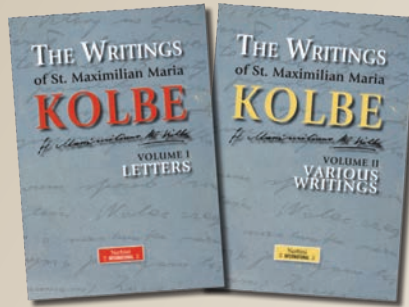
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St. Maximilian Kolbe