

MILITIA IMMACULATÆ



THE KNIGHTHOOD OF THE
IMMACULATE VIRGIN MARY
OF THE TRADITIONAL OBSERVANCE



Fr. Karl Stehlin

MILITIA IMMACULATÆ

The Knighthood of the Immaculate Virgin Mary
of the Traditional Observance

*According to the writings and the spirit
of the founder, St. Maximilian Kolbe*

translated into English by
Michael J. Miller



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Origin of the M.I.

The year 1917 saw not only the October Revolution in Russia, but also, in Fatima, the apparitions of Our Lady! In Rome Freemasonry was celebrating their 200th anniversary — everywhere you looked you could see flags and posters depicting St. Michael the Archangel being conquered and trampled underfoot by Lucifer. Long processions wended their way through the Eternal City toward St. Peter’s Square. The marchers sang blasphemous songs and carried banners with slogans such as: “Satan will reign in the Vatican and the Pope will be his servant.”

At that same time a young Polish Franciscan happened to be in Rome also: Brother Maximilian Maria Kolbe, a theology student at the Gregorian University. He was compelled to witness these menacing demonstrations. “Is it possible,” he asked himself, “that our enemies should make such a display of force in order to defeat us, while we fold our hands in our laps and do nothing? After all, do we not have much more powerful weapons; can we not count on all of heaven, and especially on the Immaculata?”

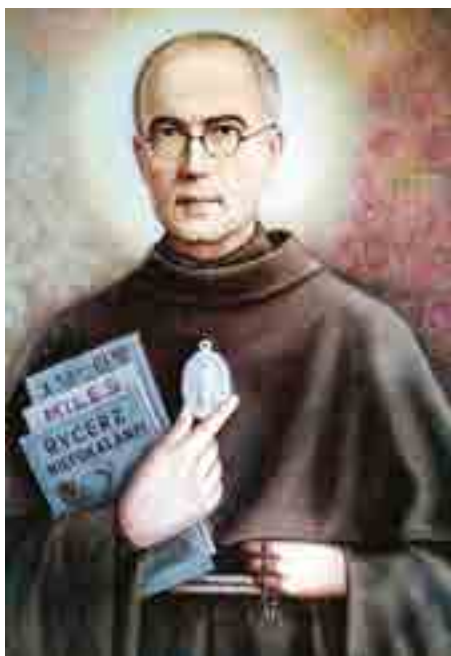


St. Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, one of the greatest Marian saints, whose writings particularly inspired St. Maximilian

The young religious brother meditated on Sacred Scripture, the Fathers of the Church, the teachings of the great Marian saints, for example, those of St. Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort; he also meditated upon the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, as well as the meaning of the appearances of Our Lady in Lourdes. Indeed, all of these truths and mysteries not only have spiritual significance but also are extremely practical because of their social relevance.

“The spotless Virgin, vanquisher of all heresies, will not retreat before the enemy who raises his head against Her. When She finds faithful servants who obey Her commands, She will win new victories, greater than we can ever imagine.”

In 1917 Rome was celebrating another anniversary as well, a day of victory for the Immaculata: the instantaneous conversion of Alphonse Ratisbonne, a Jew, in the year 1842, thanks to graces obtained through the Miraculous Medal. This coincidence gave Br. Maximilian the idea of founding a Knighthood of the Immaculata. Its emblem would be the Miraculous Medal. Three days after the miracle of the sun in Fatima, on October 16, 1917, Br. Maximilian, with permission from his superior founded, together with six confreres, the Militia Immaculatæ while kneeling before Our Lady’s altar in the chapel of the Seraphic College in Rome.



Object of the M.I.

The Militia Immaculatæ is not an association in the conventional sense, with definite concrete activities, designed for a particular group of interested persons.

“It is a movement which should attract the masses and snatch them away from Satan. Once souls have been won over to the Immaculata, there will also be a few who can be led further to the very height of devotion, even to the point of heroism in the service of spreading the Kingdom of God through the Immaculata. All religious orders and congregations, all the movements in the Church can also belong to the M.I. Membership in the M.I. will enable each member to give his best to the apostolate, and in this way attain Christian perfection in his state of life, in his vocation. It is necessary to understand the M.I. as something transcendent rather than general; this means that it should not be viewed as just one organization among many others; rather, it ought to penetrate into the depths of all other organizations.” (From a letter dated December 31, 1935).

“The essence of the M.I. consists of belonging to the Immaculata unconditionally, irrevocably, unreservedly, and entirely. That is why anyone who joins the M.I. becomes entirely Her property. And in precisely this way he belongs to Jesus, just as She belongs to Jesus, and the more he is Her property, the more he belongs to Jesus.”

“The M.I. calls itself a militia, a knighthood, because anyone who belongs to Her does not limit himself to consecrating himself totally to the Immaculata, but he also strives, as much as he can, to win the hearts of others for Her, so that others, too, may consecrate their hearts to Her, just as he has consecrated himself to Her.”

“The object of the M.I. is to strive for the conversion of sinners, heretics, schismatics, etc., and especially of Freemasons, as well as for the sanctification of all, under the protection and through the intercession of the Immaculate Virgin.”

Fr. Maximilian Kolbe distinguishes three degrees in the M.I., depending upon the members’ zeal, their capabilities and their state in life.

1. “In the first degree of the M.I. each one consecrates himself to the Immaculata and endeavours to realize the purpose of the Militia individually, according to his own circumstances and the rules of prudence.”

This degree is the basis, the foundation of the Militia: in his individual, personal life, the Knight of the Immaculata prays, sacrifices and works like a soldier in single combat.

2. “In the second degree of the M.I., the Knights bind themselves by special statutes and programs. They unite their forces, in order to reach their declared goal more quickly and effectively.”

This degree is characterized by united effort and the organization of Knights so as to conduct a public apostolate. The Knights can join forces for various projects, whether in a parish, in a local religious community, or at the level of a religious order or congregation. Associations can also be formed by Knights who share the same spiritual interests, grouped by age or apostolic aims, etc. Furthermore, already existing organizations (e.g. youth movements, study groups, etc.) can subscribe to the ideal of the M.I. and thus function as second-degree M.I. groups.



In 1922 there were only three of them. In 1927, when the City of the Immaculata was founded, there were 18 brothers; in 1939 there were 762



3. “The third degree of the M.I. consists in an unlimited devotion to the Immaculata. Thus She can do with us what She wills and as She wills. We belong entirely to Her and She belongs entirely to us. We do everything with Her help, we live and work under Her protection.”

This is, so to speak, the summit of the M.I.: the consecrated state. The Knight dedicates himself completely and exclusively to the apostolate of the Immaculata and seals this consecration by taking religious vows.

“In this way, the first degree is restricted to individual action, the second degree, to the public and social apostolate, whereas the third degree goes beyond all limits and aims at heroism.” (From a letter dated May 25, 1920).





The historical development of the Militia Immaculatæ

One year after it was founded, the M.I. received an Apostolic Blessing from Pope Benedict XV. On January 2, 1922 it was approved by Pope Pius XI as a pious association [Pia Unio], and in 1927 it was elevated to a Pia Unio Primaria, which means that the M.I. is allowed to found branches everywhere.

Since then the M.I. has spread throughout the world in a unmistakably miraculous way. In 1927 Fr. Maximilian founded NIEPOKALANÓW (The City of the Immaculata), in order to put into practice the ideal of the third degree M.I. A little city arose on a tract of farmland. Twelve years after its founding it numbered 762 religious brothers, who zealously dedicated themselves to the Marian apostolate in every possible form, especially the apostolate of the Catholic press.

Among the eleven periodicals published there were a daily newspaper (which by the year 1939 had 250,000 subscribers), and especially the monthly magazine, Knight of the Immaculata, which had a press run of

almost one million for its Polish edition. This magazine was published in various languages, even in Japanese, and in Latin as well for the clergy.

In 1930 Fr. Kolbe founded a second “City of the Immaculata” in Nagasaki, Japan, which was miraculously spared during the atomic bombing of the city in 1945. In the early 1960’s the M.I. had 500 affiliates on all five continents and numbered more than three million members.



The first chapel in Niepokalanów





Illustration from the title page of the first issue of Knight of the Immaculata. In the middle stands the Immaculata, who crushes the head of the serpent underfoot, encircled by the texts: "She will crush your head", and "Thou alone hast vanquished all heresies throughout the world." Above, in Polish, is the title of the publication, Knight of the Immaculata, which spans two swords, which battle and defeat the embodiments of the serpent here on earth. The defeated foes are depicted as books, which signifies that we fight against errors but love those who are in error. These erroneous doctrines are heresies and Freemasonry (to which we can add Modernism and ecumenism).

Knight of the Immaculata (Seibo na Kishi) — Japanese edition



The M.I. after the Council

The revolution brought about by the Second Vatican Council did not spare the M.I., but introduced radical changes:

1. The name

They began by changing the all-too-militant name of Militia (Knighthood) to “Mission of the Immaculata”, so as to correspond better to the principles of religious freedom and conciliar pacifism. Soon afterwards the Statutes were adapted to the spirit of the Council. The quotations in the new Statutes are taken exclusively from conciliar texts and the writings of Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II, along with a few quotations from St. Maximilian.

2. The object

These revised Statutes present a completely new object of the M.I. There is no longer any mention of the conversion of Freemasons, heretics, etc. Even the ejaculatory prayer of the M.I., “O Mary, conceived without sin...” was deprived of its final clause, which the founder had added: “and for all those who do not have recourse to Thee, especially for the Freemasons and for all who have been commended to Thee”. The conversion of souls, the battle against error and efforts to bring fallen-away Catholics back into the bosom of Holy Mother Church are likewise no longer to be found in the Statutes. There is not a word about Satan, the archenemy of the Immaculata and of souls, and therefore, logically, no

mention either of the salvation of souls, which must be snatched from the jaws of hell at any cost.

3. The essence

As for the essence of the M.I., there is still talk about total consecration to the Immaculata, but what this consecration involves concretely has been radically changed. Not a word about obedience to the will of the Immaculata; instead of the apostolate of spreading the true faith, the focus now is on activities designed to promote the dignity of the human person and to protect human life.

4. The Mother of God is presented merely as an example and a model to be imitated

On the other hand, the new Statutes are silent about what Saint Maximilian calls “the practical application of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception”, namely, Her active role as Mediatrix of all graces (a truth which since Vatican II has been reduced to a debatable opinion), especially of the graces of conversion and sanctification. In this manner, what the founder regarded as the foundation of his entire project is being denied. “All of the work of the M.I. is based on the truth that Mary is the Mediatrix of all graces. If this were not the case, then our work and our efforts would be meaningless.” (Conference, June 6, 1933).



The revival of the M.I. in Traditional Catholicism

The M.I. was revived in the spirit and according to the text of its original Statutes on May 6, 2000 by the superior of the Priestly Society of St. Pius X in Poland, with the permission of his General Superior, Bishop Bernard Fellay, in keeping with the principles of the supplementary jurisdiction.

In France the spread of the M.I. was entrusted to the traditional Capuchin Friars of Morgon.

In February 2002 the General Superior wrote in a letter to the members of the Priestly Society: “By all means, I invite you to undertake this wonderful, thoroughly apostolic initiative and to propagate it. We see that it is in perfect agreement with the Fatima message, on the one hand, and on the other hand with that pious devotion toward the Most Blessed Virgin Mary that our Statutes demand of us.”

**On November 2018
the Militia Immaculatæ Traditional Observance
counts 110 000 knights**

We encourage you to use the website which is in many languages, including English, German, French, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Polish:

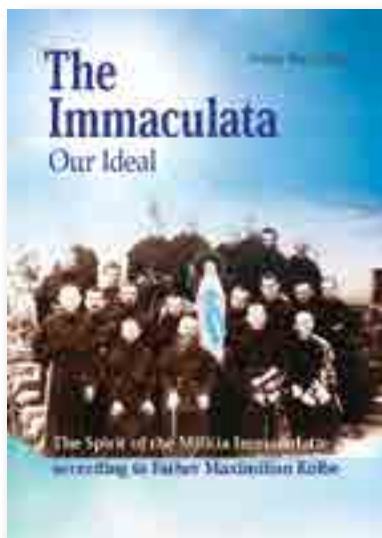
www.militia-immaculatae.info

If anyone in the English-speaking world would like to join the M.I., he can ask any priest of the Society of St. Pius X to perform the ceremony of enrolment. One officially becomes a “Knight of the Immaculata”, however, after the priest signs the certificate of membership and it is filed in the register at the M.I. headquarters. You can write to the headquarters of the traditional M.I. at the following address:

info@militia-immaculatae.org



We recommend books



The Immaculata, Our Ideal

This book by Fr. Karl Stehlin is partly biographical but primarily focuses on St. Maximilian Kolbe's life — a long apostolate of spreading devotion to Our Immaculate Lady following the method of St. Louis de Montfort. Father debunks the typical myths of this so — called “Saint of Ecumenism” and shows his concern with combatting heresy, liberalism, modernism, Freemasonry and the need to convert heretics and Jews.



Consecration to the Immaculata

This book is a preparation for enrolment to the Militia Immaculatae with an introduction and 13-day preparation according to St. Maximilian Kolbe.

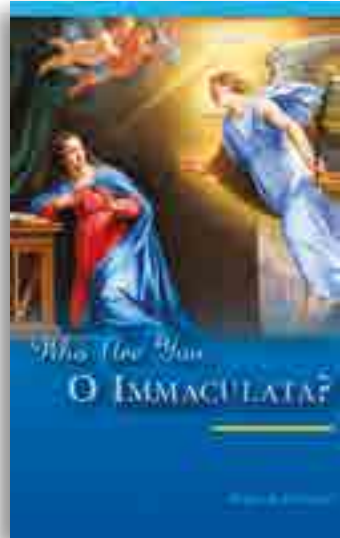
Father Director of M.I. Traditional Observance explains the consecration according St. Louis Maria Grignion de Montfort and also that according to St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe.

about Maximilian Kolbe's spirituality

Who Are You, O Immaculata?

The first time that God communicates his own name to us in Holy Scripture he says, "I AM WHO AM." When Our Lady spoke to little Saint Bernadette at Lourdes she told her "I AM THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION." Oh the depths of mystery and of beauty that lies in those twin utterances!

The full role of the Immaculata is explored and refined, and its relevance to the world in our time is detailed in an easy to read and understand format.



She Leadeth Me

Learn True Marian Devotion from one of the Greatest Marian Saints of All Time!

If you are looking for a source of meditation on Mary, and a book that will help you to become closer to her Immaculate Heart, then this is it.

St. Maximilian Kolbe, in this short collection, shows that there is no other way to please God but through this total devotion to Mary.



Orders: www.kolbepublications.com

The original Statutes of the M.I.

“She will crush your head” (Genesis 3:15).

“Thou alone hast vanquished all heresies throughout the world” (from the Roman Breviary).

I. Object:

To work for the conversion to God of all men, be they sinners, heretics, schismatics, Jews, etc., in particular the Freemasons; and that all become saints, under the patronage and through the mediation of the Immaculate Virgin.

II. Conditions:

1. To consecrate oneself entirely to the Immaculate Virgin, placing oneself freely as a docile and generous instrument in Her hands.

2. To wear the Miraculous Medal.

III. Means:

1. If possible, to pray the following ejaculation at least once a day: “O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee, and for all those who do not have recourse to Thee, especially for the Masons and for all those who are commended to Thee.”

2. To use all other valid and legitimate means for the conversion and sanctification of men, according to one’s means, in the different states and conditions of life, as the occasions present themselves; this is entrusted to the zeal and prudence of each one. Particularly recommended, however, is spreading the Miraculous Medal.

N.B. These means are recommended only as suggestions and not as an obligation; not one of them obliges under pain of sin, not even venial sin. Our principal motive is to help the greatest possible number of souls to be united with the Sacred Heart of Jesus through the mediation of the Immaculata.

Militia Immaculatae

„Ipsa consuetudo caput tuum. Sec. 24.
„Conculus haereticorum et indivisi in univer-
so mundo“

I- Terminis: Quocirca in universis pecca-
torum, haereticorum, schismaticorum,
indivision etc. et prosecutionem in universis
in universis; et in unificationem omnium
ut potest et mediante B. H. U.
Immaculata.

II- Conditiones: 1) In latere universitatis
et B. H. U. In latere status, termi-
num et conditionum in universitatibus
et in universitatibus. 2) Inter universitates
et universitates“

III- Notitia et possibilitate omni quo-
tidie Immaculatam in universitatibus:
„Cellam sine peccato concepta, ora
pro rebus, qui ad de recurre omnes et
pro omnibus, qui ad de non recur-
rent, et prosecutionem pro in universitatibus
et in universitatibus“

4) Cum legittima media
recundum possibilitatem in diver-
sitate status, conditionis, occasions;
quod rele et prudenter universis
cum que et pro in universitatibus
et in universitatibus“

The Statutes, handwritten in Latin
by St. Maximilian on the day
when the M.I. was founded

Explanatory notes about the M.I. by St. Maximilian Kolbe



Why should we turn to the Immaculata in particular?

“As for the conversion of sinners, we can accomplish this in no other way than through Mary. In His infinite goodness, God appointed His Most Holy Mother as the treasurer of all graces, and they are poured out upon the world only through Her. Of course, we must ask God Himself for these graces, but always through the intercession of the Immaculata.” (Conference, May 30, 1933).

What is entailed in “Total Consecration” to Her?

“We wish to belong so completely to the Immaculata that nothing belonging to us remains, so that we are, so to speak, annihilated in Her, as though transformed into Her, so that She alone remains in us... So that we belong to Her just as She belongs to God.” (Letter, April 12, 1933).

Is the Act of Total Consecration sufficient?

“Love for the Immaculata does not consist solely in the Act of Consecration, even when it is carried out with great zeal, but also in taking on many privations and constantly working for Her cause.” (Letter, February 10, 1937).

Is this Consecration really irrevocable?

“In the M.I. we must distinguish two things very carefully: its essence and its additional features. The essential thing is not this or that form of organization, but rather the unconditional and unrestricted consecration of oneself to the Immaculata: love for the Immaculata, which shines forth to such a degree that the souls around us are enkindled by this fire.” (Letter, December 13, 1938).

What effect does this Consecration have on our actions and our work?

“This Consecration by no means requires that we leave the world and family behind and enter a cloister. No, one can continue to devote himself to all his previous respectable activities in his previous state of life. Now, however, we ourselves do not offer up these daily activities, but rather the Immaculata, whose property we have become, offers them up Herself. And She offers them up, not as our feeble works, which are fraught with all sorts of imperfections, but rather as Her own. For we



belong to Her with everything that is ours. Therefore all of our activities belong to Her as well. The Spotless Virgin, however, cannot offer up to God anything that is spotted or stained. In Her immaculate hands our imperfect works also become immaculate, pure, and hence incomparably more valuable.” (First circular letter in German, June 10, 1938).

Do our works belong to the Immaculata only when we think about Her as we are performing them?

“The essence of devotion to the Immaculata does not consist of thinking about Her constantly, but rather willingly. Thus the soul that is completely occupied in performing its duties does not cease being the property of the Immaculata, and its thoughts, words, and deeds do not cease belonging to the Immaculata, even when the person himself is not thinking about it.” (First circular letter in German, June 10, 1938).

Why should we wear the Miraculous Medal and propagate it?

“In this work that the M.I. sets before us, we must use every possible legitimate means. In particular, however, we must select those means which the Immaculata Herself gives to us, and one of these is the Miraculous Medal.” (Knight of the Immaculata, 1937).

“Let us distribute the Miraculous Medal everywhere that we possibly can, to good people and to the wicked as well, to Catholics and to unbelievers. For if someone gives Her even the least bit of honor, She will not give up on him, but will bring him to the faith and to repentance. Therefore we must propagate Her Medal and at the same time fervently implore Her to obtain our own conversion and that of others.” (Knight, December 1927).

Are there other methods of carrying on the apostolate?

“We must not only defend the faith and collaborate in the salvation of souls, but we must also courageously and unselfishly go on the offen-

sive and win souls for the Immaculata, one after the other, and push on from one outpost to the next: through publishing houses, daily newspapers, periodicals, books, press agencies, radio stations, artistic and literary institutes, theater, film, legislative bodies. In short, we must present souls to the Immaculata everywhere, as far as the earth extends, and with all imaginable honorable means that we have at our disposal.” (Letter, December 21, 1928).

What is the special character of the M.I.?

“The Militia of the Immaculata exists not only as a defensive force, but especially as an offensive. For us it is not enough just to defend religion. With all our might, and trusting in our Queen, we advance even into the enemy camp, in order to hunt down souls and to win them for the Immaculata... Every heart that is beating somewhere on the world and every one that shall beat until the end of the world, must be captured for the Immaculata: that is our goal! And we want to accomplish this as quickly as possible.” (Letter, April 23, 1929).

“The Knight is haunted by the very thought that so many souls have not even heard the name of Mary. He would like to win the whole world for Her. To bring Her to every beating heart under the sun and to every



heart that shall ever beat, so that She may enlighten these hearts with abundant graces and warm them with the love of Her maternal Heart, and enkindle in them and fan the flames of love for God, for the Sacred Heart of Jesus.” (First circular letter in German, June 10, 1938).

Is the M.I., then, a real militia, an army equipped for battle?

“Faced with such powerful deeds perpetrated by the enemies of God’s Church, are we allowed to stand about idle? Is it permissible merely to complain and shed tears? No! Consider that at the last judgment we will not only give an accounting of what we have done, but God will also count up all those good deeds that we could have done but failed to do.” (Knight 1923).

“And so we must suffer, work, and die as Knights, but not an ordinary death. Why not by a bullet in the brain, in order to seal our love for the Immaculata? Why not shed our last drop of blood as a true Knight in order to hasten the conquest of the whole world for her?!” (Knight 1939).

Who and what are the greatest enemies in this battle?

“All over the globe a battle is being waged against the Church and the salvation of souls. The enemy manifests himself in various guises and under different names. It is no secret that socialism exploits the misery of the workers, so as to inject them with the poison of unbelief. We see how the Bolsheviks trample on religion. We hear the teachings of materialists, who narrow down the universe to what is immediately perceptible to the senses, and so they persuade each other that neither God nor the immortal soul exists. Theosophy spreads religious indifference, and the Jehovah’s Witnesses and other Protestants use fat wads of dollar bills to recruit more and more adherents. All these camps join to form a front line against the Church.” (Knight 1923).

“But the enemy’s most important troops are to be found behind these front lines: the preeminent, mightiest and deadliest enemy of the Church is Freemasonry.” (Manuscript, “The Enemies of the Church Today”).

How does the M.I. view ecumenism?

“Thou alone hast vanquished all heresies throughout the world! How are we to understand that? She destroys heresies, not heretics, for she loves the latter and desires their conversion. Precisely because she loves them, she frees them from heresy and destroys their false opinions and convictions.

“She VANQUISHES heresies, that is to say, she does not only lessen or weaken them, but completely and utterly destroys them, so that no trace of them remains. “All? All of them without exception! Where? Through all the earth. Not just in this country or that, therefore, but in all the countries in the world. She alone! Nothing more is needed, therefore, since she is capable of accomplishing this alone.” (Knight 1933).

Why the ejaculatory prayers?

“We are among those souls that are destined to keep their hands uplifted in prayer; the future depends to a large extent on these souls. Besides our daily prayers in common, we say many additional ejaculatory prayers. The slightest prayer and the most insignificant deed have their effect. God wills that we rule the world through prayer.” (Conference, March 10, 1940).

Are there also gatherings and meetings in the M.I.?

“A second-degree M.I. group can be formed in any place, and its significance will not depend so much on the number of





members as on their zeal. These groups, which vary according to social differences, conditions and the circumstances in which the members live and work, look together for ways of reaching their great goal; they examine the results and improve their work methods as they gain more experience.” (Letter, December 2, 1931).

Is such an organization necessary for the apostolate?

“External activity is good, but it goes without saying that it is secondary, and even less than secondary in comparison with the interior life, the life of recollection and prayer, the life of personal love for God. To the extent that we ourselves burn more and more with divine love, we will be able to kindle the hearts of others with this love.” (Letter, September 10, 1940).

Doesn't the Mother of God ask us to do penance as well?

“In supernatural matters, the means at our disposal are prayer and suffering. If we have worked much without sacrificing ourselves, then all that effort has no value.” (Conference, March 5, 1938).

“We must accept from the hands of the Immaculata everything that She sees fit to send to us, when and in the manner that She wills it, whether

it be pleasant or unpleasant. Crosses are necessary, for the Immaculata, too, experienced crosses here on earth, and Jesus Himself chose no other way.” (Letter, December 28, 1934).

How can this ideal be summed up?

“Isn’t it beautiful, this ideal in life? The battle to conquer the whole world, the hearts of all men and of each one in particular, beginning with oneself.... Our strength consists of recognizing our own stupidity, weakness and misery, and entrusting ourselves entirely to the goodness and power of the Immaculata.” (Letter, December 11, 1930).

“Under the banner of the Immaculata we march to the great battle, and we will set up our flags on the bastions of the princes of this world. Then the Immaculata will be the Queen of the whole world and of every individual person....” (Letter, May 30, 1931).



The relic of St. Maximilian: a few strands of hair



The Immaculata is our ideal!
To draw near to Her, to become like Her,
to allow Her to rule over our heart and soul forever,
so that She might live and work through men,
so that She might love God with our hearts.
To belong to Her unreservedly — that is our ideal!
To shine forth into our surroundings,
to win souls for Her,
so that our neighbors will open their hearts to Her,
so that She might rule in all hearts
beating everywhere in the world,
without distinction as to race, nationality, or language,
and that She might be in all hearts
which would ever exist, until the end of the world —
that is our ideal!
And that Her life might extend and grow
in every soul that exists now or shall be,
that is our precious ideal!

St. Maximilian Kolbe

Father Maximilian Kolbe, O.F.M., was born on January 7, 1894 in Zdunska-Wola near Lodz, Poland. His simple, pious parents had him baptized with the name Raymond. When he was ten years old, the Mother of God appeared to him. She showed him two crowns, one white and the other red, and said, “Which crown do you want? The white one stands for the martyrdom of purity, and the red one — the martyrdom of blood.” Raymond answered, “I choose both!”

In 1907 he entered the minor seminary of the Franciscans in Lvov [Lemberg]. In 1911 he professed temporary vows. In 1912 he was sent to Rome to study. There, on the Feast of All Saints in the year 1914, he made perpetual vows, and on April 28, 1918 he was ordained a priest. Fr. Maximilian returned to Poland in 1919, with doctorates in philosophy and theology, but seriously ill with tuberculosis. The doctors gave him very little time to live. During his long stay in a sanatorium, several freethinkers were converted through his lectures and conversations. After he had recuperated somewhat, he dedicated himself enthusiastically to spreading the Militia Immaculatæ, which he had founded while still a student in Rome.



In 1922 he published the first issue of a publication with the title, Knight of the Immaculata. The expenses were covered by funds that had been collected by begging. From 1922 to 1927 he was stationed with his little printing press in the convent in Grodno. Because of the throngs of vocations and the expansion of his press apostolate, he left Grodno and in 1927 founded Niepokalanów, the “City of the Immaculata”, of which he would be appointed superior until 1930.



Printing House in Niepokalanów

From 1930 to 1936 he served as a missionary in Nagasaki, Japan, teaching as a professor of philosophy in the major seminary. There he also founded a second “City of the Immaculata” (Mugenzai no Sono), which developed into one of the great missionary centers in Japan.

From 1936 until his death he was again Guardian in Niepokalanów, Poland, which under his direction developed into one of the greatest strongholds of the spiritual life and the apostolate. In 1922 his press apostolate had begun with two religious brothers printing and distributing 5,000 copies

of a little newsletter. By 1939, on the eve of the Second World War, the religious community consisted of 762 friars, who staffed a gigantic publishing house that produced a daily newspaper, a monthly magazine, a calendar, books, etc., printed in various languages.



In Mugenzai no Sono in Japan

The “City of the Immaculata” was sorely afflicted by the war. Many brothers perished, some of them in the concentration camps. On February 17, 1941 Father Maximilian was arrested. During an inspection by S.S. troops he was brutally beaten. When he regained consciousness, he consoled his companions in suffering by saying, “My friends, you must rejoice with me; this is for souls, for the Immaculata!”

On May 28 he was brought to the concentration camp in Auschwitz. There he asked the commandant whether he might replace the father of a family who had been condemned to death. He survived for eleven days in a starvation bunker and prepared the other condemned men to enter eternity. On August 14, the vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he was killed by a lethal injection. He was beatified in 1971 and declared a saint in 1984.

Indulgences granted to the M.I.

According to the Brief of Pope Pius XI dated December 18, 1926, the members of the Militia Immaculatæ can obtain a plenary indulgence on the following days:

- the day of their enrolment in the M.I.,
- the anniversary of the founding of the M.I. (October 16),
- the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (December 8),
- the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25),
- the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes (February 11),
- the anniversary of the first appearance of Our Lady in Fatima (May 13),
- the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi (October 4), and
- the Feast of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal (November 27).

Besides the usual conditions for receiving a plenary indulgence (sacramental Confession within eight days, reception of Holy Communion, prayer for the intentions of the Popes, freedom from attachment to any sin), one must renew his promise to adhere to the Statues of the M.I. and to keep them faithfully.

Ceremony of reception into the Militia Immaculatæ

Reception preferably takes place on a Marian feast.

I. Opening Hymns

- 1/ one of the Holy Ghost hymns: 'Veni Creator Spiritus', 'Veni Sancte Spiritus' or 'Come, Holy Ghost' etc.
- 2/ one of the hymns to the blessed Virgin Mary: Ave Stella Maris or others.

Veni Creator Spiritus

Veni, Creátor Spíritus,
Mentes tuórum vísita,
Imple supérna grátia
Quae tu creásti péctora.

Qui díceris Paráclitus,
Altíssimi donum Dei,
Fons vivus, ignis cáritas,
Et spiritalís únctio.

Tu septifórmis múnere,
Dígitus paternæ déxteræ,
Tu rite promíssum Patris,
Sermóne ditans gúttura.

Accénde lumen sénsibus,
Infúnde amorem córdibus,

Infirma nostris córporis
Virtúte firmans pépeti.

Hostem repéllas lóngius,
Pacémque dones prótinus,
Ductóre sic te praévio
Vitémus omne nóxium.

Per Te sciámus da Patrem,
Noscámus atque Fílium,
Teque utriúsque Spíritum
Credámus omni témpore.

Deo Patri sit glória,
Et Fílio, qui a mórtuis
Surréxit, ac Paráclito,
In sæculórum saécula. Amen.

Ave Maris Stella

Ave Maris Stella	Qui pro nobis natus,
Dei Mater Alma,	Tulit esse tuus.
Atque semper Virgo,	Virgo singularis,
Felix cæli porta.	Inter omnes mitis,
Sumens illud Ave,	Nos culpis solutos,
Gabrielis ore,	Mites fac et castos.
Funda nos in pace,	Vitam præsta puram,
Mutans Hevæ nomen.	Inter para tutum,
Solve vincla reis,	Ut videntes Jesum,
Profer lumen cæcis,	Semper collætetur.
Mala nostra pelle,	Sit laus Deo Patri,
Bona cuncta posce.	Summo Christo decus,
Monstra te esse Matrem	Spiritui Sancto,
Sumat per te preces,	Tribus honor unus. Amen.

II. Allocution by the priest

At this point the priest can give a short allocution in which he explains the consecration to the Immaculata, praises the resolution to make it and encourages the applicants to live it.

III. Renewal of baptismal promises (optional):

Priest: On the day of our Baptism we renounced Satan, his works and the world. We promised to serve God faithfully in His holy Catholic Church. Let us renew these sacred baptismal vows. And so I ask you: Do you renounce Satan? — **R:** We do.

Priest: And all his works? — **R:** We do.

Priest: And all his pomps? — **R:** We do.

Priest: Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth? — **R:** We do believe.

Priest: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only-begotten Son, Our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered, died and was buried? — **R:** We do believe.

Priest: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting? — **R:** We do believe.

Priest: Let us therefore pray to God the Father in the words that Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us: Our Father...

IV. Blessing and imposition in the Miraculous Medal

(from the *Rituale Romanum*):

V. Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini.

R. Qui fecit coelum et terram.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

V. Oremus. Omnipotens et misericors Deus, qui per multiplices Immaculate Mariae Virginis apparitiones in terris mirabilia jugiter pro animarum salute operari dignatus es: super hoc numismatis signum, tuam bene + dictionem benignus infunde; ut pie hoc recolentes ac devote gestantes et illius patrocinium sentiant et tuam misericordiam consequantur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

R. Amen.

The priest sprinkles the Medals with holy water and places them individually upon each person requesting enrolment, praying as follows:

V. Accipe sanctum Numisma, gesta fideliter, et digna veneratione prosequere: ut piissima et immaculata caelorum Domina te protegat atque defendat: et pietatis suae prodigia renovans, quae a Deo suppliciter postulaveris,

tibi misericorditer impetret, ut vivens et moriens in materno ejus amplexu feliciter requiescas.

R. Amen.

After all are invested the Priest prays:

V. Kyrie, eleison.

R. Christe, eleison. Kyrie, eleison.

V. Pater noster... (continues silently until the words...) *Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.*

R. Sed libera nos a malo.

V. Regina sine labe originale concepta.

R. Ora pro nobis.

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

V. Oremus. Domine Jesu Christe, qui beatissimam Virginem Mariam matrem tuam ab origine immaculatam innumeris miraculis clarescere voluisti, concede: ut ejusdem patrocinium semper implorantes, gaudia consequamur aeterna: Qui vivis et regnas cum Deo Patre in unitate Spiritus Sancti, Deus, per omnia saecula saeculorum.

R. Amen.

V. Act of Consecration to the Immaculata

O Immaculata, Queen of heaven and earth, refuge of sinners and our Mother who loves us so much and to whom God has entrusted the entire kingdom of mercy!

I, N.N., an unworthy sinner, cast myself down at your feet and implore you with all my heart: deign to accept me utterly and entirely as your possession and your property. Do what you will with me, with all the faculties of my soul and my body, with my whole life, with my death and my eternity.

Dispose of me as it pleases thee, so as to fulfill what is said of thee: “She will crush the head of the serpent,” and also: “Thou alone hast vanquished all heresies throughout the world.”

Make me an instrument in your immaculate and merciful hands to serve thee, so as to increase as much as possible thy honor in so many tepid souls that have fallen away from the faith and thus to extend the kingdom of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. For upon whatever place you enter, you implore the grace of conversion and sanctification, for all graces come to us from the Sacred Heart of Jesus only through thy hands.

*Grant to me to praise thee, O most Blessed Virgin,
Give me strength against thine enemies.*

VI. Ejaculatory prayer of the M.I.

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee, and for all those who do not have recourse to thee, especially for the Freemasons and for those who are commended to thy care.

VII. Blessing of the priest and Final Hymn to Our Lady.

VIII. Signing of the certificate of enrolment in the M.I.

St. Maximilian Kolbe's praise of Mary

Grant to me that I may praise you, most Blessed Virgin.

Grant that I may praise you with all my strength.

Grant that I may live and work and suffer for you and for you alone, that I may be consumed and die for you.

Grant that I may contribute to your greater and more extensive glorification.

Grant that I may pay you such homage as no one has yet paid you.

Grant that others may surpass me in their zeal for your glorification and that I may then, as though in a noble competition, propagate devotion to you ever more deeply and swiftly and magnificently, as desired by Him Who exalted you so ineffably above all other creatures. Amen.

Prayer for the Feast of St. Maximilian Kolbe (August 14)

O God, Thou hast filled the heart of Thy Servant, St. Maximilian Maria, with zeal for the salvation of souls, with love of neighbor and with fervent devotion to the Immaculata. Grant us, through his intercession, the grace to work for the honor of God and the salvation of souls and to be conformed increasingly until death to Thy Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, from eternity to eternity. Amen.

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