

## Suffering willed out of love

Dear MI Members and Friends,

She was approached by the social worker, “Nobody wants him. Will you adopt him?” She adopted him and, in him, accepted all the repercussions of the bad choices of his birth mother. Today he is in and out of detention camps and homes causing many difficult situations for his family. His adopted mother stays close by, not condoning his bad actions, but loving him. *Suffering willed out of love.*

His wife of sixty years has Alzheimer’s. He dresses her every morning, cooks the meals, cleans the house and puts a special chair on his bicycle to take her for rides, in memory of their avid bicycle riding years. He said, “I wouldn’t have it any other way. She is my beloved wife.” *Suffering willed out of love.*

She was left by her husband of over twenty years, and with whom she bore seven children, to marry someone else. Almost thirty years later she has forgiven him and prays for his soul and the soul of the woman who took him. *Suffering willed out of love.*

St. Maximilian taught us that it is the highest form of love, a love that he would reach its pinnacle in Auschwitz, in imitation of Jesus Christ’s mounting of the cross for our salvation. When we embrace suffering for love of another we enter into the mystery of Christ’s salvific love. When we love one

who is causing us suffering we become one with Christ. “The way we come to know love was that he laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.” (1Jn 3:16) St. Maximilian wrote, “God as Creator loves his creatures and shares himself with them. The summit of this sacrifice is found in his coming down to earth, dying on the Cross, and in remaining ever after in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar. So, too, a loving soul cannot hold back from giving everything of itself, and it’s very self, even to annihilation... So that love might exist, sacrifice is necessary.” (Maria was His Middle Name, Jerzy Domanski, 1977)

Pope Emeritus Benedict beautifully explains that “the cross is the approbation of our existence, not in words, but in an act so completely radical that it caused God to become flesh and pierced this flesh to the quick: that, to God, it was worth the death of his incarnate Son. One who is so loved that the other identifies his life with this love and no longer desires to live if he is deprived of it; one who is loved even unto death – such a one knows that he is truly loved.” St. Maximilian believed in the love of God for him and believed that this same love was for everyone, leading him to lay down his life for Franciszek Gajowniczek and the Nazi guards.

Through our total consecration St. Maximilian says, and proves by his life, that with the Immaculata we

### MI Monthly Intention

*Immaculata, please intercede...*

#### JULY

...that we may surrender with docility to God in every circumstance of our life, after the example of Mary, model of faith.

#### AUGUST

...that the glorious condition of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our guide in faith, reminds us that we too are called to join her in eternal life.

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**August 14** Feast of St. Maximilian Kolbe

**August 15** Solemnity of Mary's Assumption

[www.consecration.com](http://www.consecration.com)  
for Kolbean celebrations



The Vatican website can be located here: [www.annusfidei.va/content/novaevangelizatio/en.html](http://www.annusfidei.va/content/novaevangelizatio/en.html).

Videos also are available: [www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/newevangelization/year-of-faith/videos.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/newevangelization/year-of-faith/videos.cfm).

can learn to love when it hurts and even learn to love our enemy. Mary shares with us her love for every child of God no matter how disfigured or hidden the image of God may be in the person. This is the strength of the Gospel message which does not rest only on justice but climbs the heights of love.

Blessed John Paul II wrote in his encyclical, *Mother of the Redeemer*, “Living side by side with her Son under the same roof, and faithfully persevering ‘in her union with her Son’ she ‘advanced in her pilgrimage of faith.’ (#17) ‘This blessing reaches its full meaning when Mary stands beneath the Cross of her Son. The Council says that this happened ‘not without a divine plan’: by ‘suffering deeply with her only-begotten Son and joining herself with her maternal spirit to his sacrifice, lovingly consenting to the immolation of the victim to whom she had given birth,’ in this way Mary ‘faithfully preserved her union with her Son even to the Cross.’ (Lumen Gentium, 58) (#18)” At this moment of supreme sacrifice Mary’s heart was opened to a universal maternal love. From the cross Jesus entrusted all of humanity, in the person of John, to her maternal love and care.

A child in the MI once put in a question box, “How much does Mary love us?” She loves us to the sacrifice of her only Divine Son. At the sacrifice of her Son, love explodes in the heart of Mary for each and every person for all times.

“Then he said to all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.’ (Lk 9:24) “There is no greater love than this: to lay

down one’s life for one’s friends.” (Jn 15:13) Blessed John Paul II, in the discourse for St. Maximilian’s canonization proclaimed, “From today on the Church desires to address as ‘Saint’ a man who was granted the grace of carrying out these words of the Redeemer in an absolutely literal manner.”

Be encouraged, for we hear from the scriptures: “Although now for a little while you may have to suffer through various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Although you have not seen him you love him; even though you do not see him now yet believe in him, you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy (1Pt 1:6-8).” Paraphrasing this Gospel message St. Maximilian exhorted his friars, “My dear brothers! How very short life really is, isn’t it? How swiftly time passes us by? The greater the sufferings the better, because after death you cannot suffer. Time is short in which to demonstrate love. And then we live ONE TIME ONLY! (Writings, n. 499). He also wrote, “Hatred is not a creative force. Love alone creates.” “Without sacrifices there is no love.”

Kolbe’s writings and life are an echo of the gospels. He felt that his love for God, and as a consequence for his neighbor, could not be divorced. This love could only be lived in sacrifice and suffering. We, too, then, consecrated to the Immaculata can’t hide from this gospel law. Only when we learn to offer up the sufferings, sorrows, humiliations, fatigue of our work and all else Our Lord pleases to send us in this life will our love be

revealed and be one with Christ. Let us transform the world with the gift of this highest form of love. St. Maximilian, continue to inspire and encourage us as we seek to carry our cross out of love.

Happy Feast of St. Maximilian Kolbe, August 14

and Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary, August 15.

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### POINTS TO PONDER AND REFLECTIONS

- ★ Ponder what love God has for you to give his only Son to die a horrible death for you.
- ★ What cross are you carrying or whose cross are you asked to share out of love? How does St. Maximilian teach you to carry this cross with love?
- ★ **Read Fr. Patrick Greenough, OFM Conv. letter to the United States Senate on Immigration reform.**

In our journey of faith let us never be accused of hating others who think differently than we do, or profess other faiths.



*As things become clearly more and more conflicting with the natural law in our government's rulings let us prepare to always love and never stoop to lies, slander and demeaning the dignity of the other person. Read the USCCB's reaction to the recent Supreme Court ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act, June 26.*

### SUPREME COURT DECISIONS ON MARRIAGE: 'TRAGIC DAY FOR MARRIAGE AND OUR NATION,' STATE U.S. BISHOPS

"Today is a tragic day for marriage and our nation. The Supreme Court has dealt a profound injustice to

the American people by striking down in part the federal Defense of Marriage Act. The Court got it

wrong. The federal government ought to respect the truth that marriage is the union of one man and one woman, even where states fail to do so. The preservation of liberty and justice requires that all laws, federal and state, respect the truth, including the truth about marriage. It is also unfortunate that the Court did not take the opportunity to uphold California's Proposition 8 but instead decided not to rule on the matter. The common good of all, especially our children, depends upon a society that strives to uphold the truth of marriage. Now is the time to redouble our efforts in witness to this truth. These decisions are part of a public debate of great consequence. The future of marriage and the well-being of our society hang in the balance.

"Marriage is the only institution that brings together a man and a woman for life, providing any child who comes from their union with the secure foundation of a mother and a father.

"Our culture has taken for granted for far too long what human nature, experience, common sense, and God's wise design all confirm: the difference

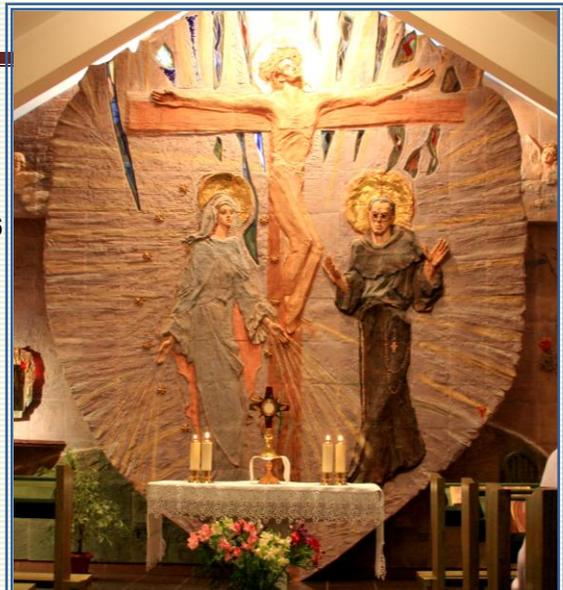
between a man and a woman matters, and the difference between a mom and a dad matters. While the culture has failed in many ways to be marriage-strengthening, this is no reason to give up. Now is the time to strengthen marriage, not redefine it.

"When Jesus taught about the meaning of marriage – the lifelong, exclusive union of husband and wife – he pointed back to "the beginning" of God's creation of the human person as male and female (see Matthew 19). In the face of the customs and laws of his time, Jesus taught an unpopular truth that everyone could understand. The truth of marriage endures, and we will continue to boldly proclaim it with confidence and charity.

"Now that the Supreme Court has issued its decisions, with renewed purpose we call upon all of our leaders and the people of this good nation to stand steadfastly together in promoting and defending the unique meaning of marriage: one man, one woman, for life. We also ask for prayers as the Court's decisions are reviewed and their implications further clarified."

"The Christian is not to 'be ashamed of testifying to our Lord' (2Tim 1:8) in deed and word. Martyrdom is the supreme witness given to the truth of the faith." CCC 2506

"And just think how good we will feel on our deathbed if we are able to say to her in all sincerity, 'O Immaculate, through your kindness I have consecrated my entire life to you. For you I have worked and suffered and for you I am dying. I am yours!' What peace! What serene joy will flood our hearts because of our hope of seeing her soon." St. Maximilian (149).



Chapel in Harmeze, Poland dedicated to the Victorious Love of Christ.