

Bringing Light
into the Darkness
MI Intention 2015

MI Monthly Intention

*Immaculata,
please
intercede...*

*that this Lenten
season may be an
on-going
preparation for the
joy of an ever-
deeper communion
with God.*

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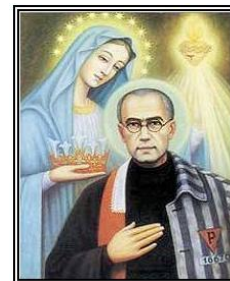
MI National President
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Joy and Penance

Dear MI Members and Friends,

Joy and penance are realities that can go together. St. Maximilian Kolbe is convinced of this, according to whom denial should not be cause for sadness, in the extent that it reduces the pride and selfishness, which act in us. In this perspective, fasts and initiatives typical of the Lenten season become the occasion for joy, since it makes the believer freer from attachments and more ready to be shaped by the work of the Holy Spirit. Significant are the words that follow, taken from a conference of the Polish saint: "Yesterday I met a Japanese person during the trip. We talked about the faith and he asked me if the Catholic faith is not too difficult. I said no. There are still things a little against and unpleasant for our nature such as penance, fasting, confession, but the love of God makes the soul rejoice when it can offer God evidence of his love for him, even if it costs him "(SK 191).

Even if it costs, penance is a herald of abundant fruits of conversion in addition to being a wonderful form of offering to God. The "I" of man tends to assert himself, to act as a master and this is an obstacle to the path of sanctification. St. Maximilian is of the opinion that not only voluntary mortifications are very useful to strengthen the man in humility and utmost dependence on God, but also the trials that come upon us so sudden and providentially. All makes the heart of the believer meek and trusting



in the merciful and providential divine love. Emblematic are the words that follow, taken from a letter written to the friars in 1937. "It is clear that we must be on guard, because more than once self-love, our "I", will rebel. The various difficulties, temptations, opposition, sometimes will almost be able to overwhelm us. But if the roots will sink deeper into the ground and humility takes root more deeply in us, less and less we rely on ourselves, then the Immaculate will ensure that everything is for us only an increase of merit. However, the trials are necessary and these will certainly come, because the gold of love must be purified in the fire of affliction. Indeed, suffering is the food that strengthens love "(SK 755). The saint here is at a time of great spiritual maturity; his path is at the apex of its expression and is therefore able to provide particularly insightful suggestions for the interior life.

Penance means to fight the good fight against spiritual temptations from outside the person, but also against his weakness that may be due to a distancing from the plan of God.

It is fundamental to trust in the Lord, trust the maternal and efficacious protection of the Immaculate, placing oneself in a docile listening to the will of God. Humility is especially important so that we do not make absolute our gifts and to live completely abandoned to the immense love of the Most High. The moments of the cross and trials should

"Indifference to our neighbor and to God also represents a real temptation for us Christians. Each year during Lent we need to hear once more the voice of the prophets who cry out and trouble our conscience.

God is not indifferent to our world; he so loves it that he gave his Son for our salvation." *Pope Francis*

Go to <http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/pope-francis-lenten-message-2015> for Pope Francis' Lenten Message.

strengthen the process of trust in the Almighty, favored by the right perception of oneself and one's own smallness in His sight.

So how will our Lent be? Will it be a time of sadness? Certainly not! This period will be particularly favorable for a peaceful and continuous monitoring in the journey of life because we can identify flaws and imperfections to "prune" and virtue and commitment to further strengthen. These forty days will be lived in the name of the joy that comes from the awareness of those who have the opportunity to make a big leap forward in spiritual progress. We will strive, fight, and suffer, confident that the result will be great in terms of accretion of our communion with the Lord.

Kolbe gives us one last important idea about our penitential journey: "The path of one's life is covered with small

crosses. Acceptance of these crosses in a spirit of penance is a vast field for the exercise of penance "(SK 1303). He also points out the importance of the joy that overcomes sadness: "[...] St. Francis could not put up with sad friars. However, sadness's can happen to everyone. [...] This sadness is the result of chaos and confusion. In the book *The Imitation of Christ*, self-love is defined as the cause of sadness. The soul forgets that God governs everything and allows everything. God never allows evil, if not to bring about a greater good"(SK 111). Let us live fully the joyful acceptance of every situation in which there can be a spiritual rebirth determined by growth in humility and deepening of our roots in God.

-Fr. Raffaele Di Muro,
MI International Assistant

Translated by Ann O'Donnell



For Reflection

- ✠ Are we ready for a Lent in which we can live the dimensions of penance and joy, according to the teachings of St. Maximilian?
- ✠ What are those aspects of your journey that you would like to change and improve?
- ✠ What are the virtues that you already practice and would like to see perfected?
- ✠ Are you willing to be tested in areas of your life, aware that these tests can contribute to your growth?
- ✠ Are your prayer life and humble choices leading you to a greater trust in God?

Dear Lord, as I begin
my journey toward
spiritual growth,
help me to look
deep within myself
and let go of the old
and embrace the new
life that comes from you.

ReligionQuotes.info

News

70th anniversary of the liberation of those held in Auschwitz *Zenit News Service*

The Archbishop of Krakow and former personal secretary of John Paul II, Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, represented the Vatican during ceremonies commemorating the victims of the Holocaust.

Organized by the Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau and the International Council of Auschwitz, the ceremonies took place in front of the "Death Gate" of Auschwitz II-Birkenau, in Poland. It was a call to tolerance, freedom and coexistence through one of the most horrible events in mankind's history.

2015 also marks the 70th anniversary of the liberation of those held in Auschwitz, which gathered a group of 300 survivors, prisoners during World War II, in this ill-fated place, in addition to other groups of survivors, who arrived along with delegations of more than 40 countries.

Data from the Museum of Auschwitz indicates that 1.1 million people were killed there, including: close to one million Jews, 64,000 Poles, 21,000 gypsies, 14,000 Soviet prisoners of war, and over 10,000 prisoners of other nationalities.

On January 17, 1945, with the arrival of Allied forces, some 56,000 Auschwitz prisoners were evacuated. It is estimated that between 9,000 to 15,000 people died during the "Death Marches." The camp was liberated by the Russian Army seventy years ago, on January 27, 1945.

The Auschwitz Museum was created in 1947, thanks to the efforts of the surviving prisoners. It covers 191 hectares that include two sections of the Camp: Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II-Birkenau.

January 27 is the date established by the United Nations General Assembly to observe the International Day in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust. The Conventual Franciscan Friars and Fr. Kolbe Missionaries run Sw. Maksymiliana Center of prayer, reparation and hospitality 3 km from the camps.

www.harmeze.franciszkanie.pl/



Papal Visit to the US in September 2015

We MI Members welcome and pray for Pope Francis' first visit to the US September 2015 on the occasion of the World Family Meeting in Philadelphia, **Sept. 22th-27th** and the canonization of missionary Junipero Serra, known as the "Apostle of California," founder of the California missions of faith.



MI News



Rumela Camanga (at podium) and Fr. Peter Malin, OFM Conv, celebrated with the Archdiocese of Los Angeles their 25th anniversary of vows; Rumela as a Fr. Kolbe Missionary of the Immaculata and Father Malin as a Conventual Franciscan. Each year the Archdiocese has a special Mass in January at the Cathedral of the Holy Angels in honor of all consecrated men and women celebrating milestone anniversaries of consecrated life.

West Haven , Utah

Lenten Retreat: St. Mary Catholic Church in West Haven and the Militia Immaculatae (MI) will host a silent, Marian Lenten retreat entitled “Bringing Light into the Darkness: A Quiet Afternoon of Reflection” on Sunday, March 15. Speakers include MI national board member **Mrs. Christine Rossi**, from the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kansas and lay ecclesial minister Tom Devereux from St. Mary Catholic Church. For more information, please visit www.stmarysutah.org Co-ordinated by **Donna Masek**.

Modesto, California

The MI Villages of St. Joseph’s Catholic Church and Fr. Kolbe Missionaries will host their all day 9th Annual Silent Bi-lingual Marian Retreat on February 7th.

“Bringing Light Into the Darkness”

Speakers are all MI Members: Fr. Mark Wagner, Pastor of St. Joseph, Fr. Matthew O’Donnell, Pastor of All Saints University Parish in Turlock, CA, Fr. Kolbe Missionaries – Ada Locatelli and Jillian Cooke, MI member Carmen Marquez. Info. www.stjmod.com



Daily Renewal of Total Consecration

Immaculata, Queen and Mother of the Church, I renew my consecration to you this day and for always, so that you may use me for the coming of the Kingdom of Jesus in the whole world. To this end I offer you all my prayers, actions and sacrifices of this day.

Daily Miraculous Medal Prayer of St. Maximilian

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all those who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of Holy Church and all those recommended to you.



Links for MI & MI Calendars in the US

- www.marytown.com/
- www.miyouth.org
- www.consecration-midwest.org
- www.kolbemission.org/en

International WEB

www.mi-international.org

Others

http://www.usccb.org/

www.vatican.va www.zenit.org

www.mariologicalsociety.com/



Tema de la MI para febrero del 2015

Alegria y Penitencia

COMENTARIO A LAS INTENCIONES DE LA M.I. - 2015 Español

A cargo del padre Raffaele Di Muro
Asistente Internacional M.I.

Alegria y penitencia son realidades que pueden convivir: de eso estaba convencido San Maximiliano Kolbe, según el cual la renuncia propia no debe ser motivo de tristeza, en la medida en que reduce la fuerza del orgullo y del egoísmo que actúan en nosotros. En esta perspectiva el ayuno y las iniciativas típicas del tiempo de cuaresma se convierten en ocasiones de alegría, puesto que hacen al creyente más libre de las propias ataduras y más disponible a dejarse moldear por la obra del Espíritu Santo. Significativas son las palabras que siguen, extraídas de una conferencia del santo polaco: «Ayer encontré a un japonés durante el viaje. Hablamos de la fe y me preguntó si la fe católica no es demasiado difícil. Le respondí que no. Es cierto que hay cosas un poco en contra y desagradables para nuestra naturaleza como la penitencia, el ayuno, la confesión... pero el amor a Dios hace que el alma goce cuando puede ofrecer a Dios las pruebas de su amor a Él, aún si les resultan difíciles» (CK 191).

Aunque cueste, la penitencia es fuente de abundantes frutos de conversión además de representar una maravillosa forma de ofrecimiento al Señor. El «yo» del hombre tiende a acertarse, a actuar como amo y eso es un obstáculo para el camino de la santificación. San Maximiliano es del parecer que no solo las mortificaciones voluntarias son muy útiles para reforzar al hombre en la humildad y en la máxima dependencia de Dios, sino también las pruebas que llegan a nosotros de modo imprevisto y providencial. Todo hace al corazón del creyente manso y confiado en el amor divino, misericordioso y providente. Simbólicas son las palabras que siguen, extraídas de una carta escrita a los hermanos en 1937: «Es evidente que tenemos que estar en guardia, ya que más de una vez el amor propio, nuestro “yo” se rebelará. Las diversas dificultades, tentaciones, contrariedades, en ocasiones casi podrán agobiarnos. Pero si las raíces se hunden más profundamente en la tierra y la humildad arraiga cada vez más intensamente en nosotros de manera que nos fiemos cada vez menos de nosotros mismos, entonces la Inmaculada se asegurara de que todo aumente los méritos dentro de nosotros. Sin embargo, las pruebas son necesarias y sin duda vendrán, ya que el oro del amor debe purificarse en el fuego de las aflicciones. En efecto, el sufrimiento es el alimento que refuerza el amor» (EK 755). El Santo se encuentra aquí en una fase de gran madurez espiritual; su camino se encuentra en la cima de su expresión y por esto puede dar sugerencias particularmente perspicaces para la vida interior.

Intención mensual
de la MI

*Inmaculada, por
favor intercede...*

*para que la Cuaresma
sea la preparación a
una alegría profunda y
de comunión con Dios.*

Penitencia significa pelear la buena batalla en contra de las tentaciones espirituales externas a la propia persona, pero también contra su propia debilidad que puede ser por causa del distanciamiento del proyecto de Dios.

Es fundamental abandonarse en el Señor, confiarse a la protección materna y eficaz de la Inmaculada colocándose dócilmente a la escucha de la Voluntad de Dios. La humildad es particularmente importante para no hacer absolutos nuestros dones y para vivir completamente abandonados al amor inmenso del Altísimo. Los momentos de cruz y de prueba deberían fortalecer el proceso de confianza en el Omnipotente, favorecida por la percepción correcta en nuestra propia pequeñez ante Su vista.

Y entonces, ¿cómo será nuestra Cuaresma? ¿Será un tiempo de tristeza? ¡Claro que no! Este periodo será particularmente propicio para una serena y continua verificación de nuestro viaje en la vida para que podamos identificar manchas e imperfecciones para podar, y las virtudes y compromisos para fortalecer. Estos cuarenta días serán vividos en nombre del júbilo que nace de la conciencia de quien tiene la posibilidad de hacer un gran salto hacia adelante en el desarrollo espiritual. Nos esforzaremos, lucharemos, y sufriremos, seguros de que el fruto será grande en términos de crecimiento de nuestra comunión con el Señor.

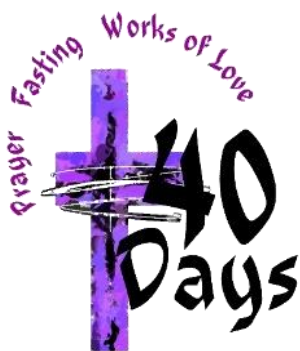
Kolbe nos ofrece una última e importante clave acerca de nuestro viaje penitencial: «El camino de nuestra vida está cubierto de pequeñas cruces. La aceptación de estas cruces con espíritu de penitencia es un campo extenso para el ejercicio de la penitencia» (EK 1303). También nos indica la importancia de la alegría que vence a la tristeza: «[...] A San Francisco no le gustaban los frailes tristes. Sin embargo, la tristeza le puede suceder a cualquiera. [...] esta tristeza es resultado del caos y de la confusión. En el libro *La imitación de Cristo* el amor propio es definido como la causa de la tristeza. El alma olvida que Dios gobierna todo y permite todo. Dios nunca permite un mal, si no tuviese como fin un bien mayor» (CK 111). Vivamos plenamente la aceptación jubilosa de cada situación en la cual puede ser posible un renacimiento espiritual determinado por un crecimiento en nuestra humildad y profundizarse de nuestras raíces en Dios.

-Fr. Raffaele Di Muro,
Asistente de la MI Internacional

Traducido por Gabriela Rodríguez



Para la reflexionar



- ✠ ¿Estamos listos para una Cuaresma en la cual puedan convivir las dimensiones de la penitencia y de la alegría, según las enseñanzas de San Maximiliano?
- ✠ ¿Cuáles son los aspectos de tu propio camino que desearías modificar y mejorar?
- ✠ ¿Cuáles son las virtudes que ya practicas y quisiera ver perfeccionadas?
- ✠ ¿Estás dispuesto a aceptar las pruebas en áreas de tu vida, consciente que estas pruebas pueden contribuir a tu crecimiento?
- ✠ ¿Tu vida de oración y selecciones humildes te están guiando a una confianza más profunda en Dios?