



Bringing Light
into the Darkness
MI Intention 2015

MI Monthly Intention

*Immaculata,
please
intercede...*

*that all believers in
Christ be persuaded
that daily acts of
mutual communion
contribute to
furthering the unity
of Christians.*

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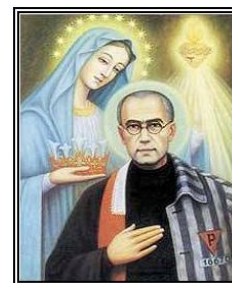
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Simple Gestures

Dear MI Members and Friends,

Fraternal communion is realized by way of little gestures each day. Maximilian Kolbe teaches us this. His life was characterized by a multitude of simple gestures that sowed communion. Thinking about his experience in Rome between 1912 and 1917, we are reminded that the young Franciscan and future martyr of charity promoted communion among his young friar companions. They saw in him a model of charity and patience. We can admire him walking the streets of Rome during the community walk with other friars in formation, as he gently rebukes youth in the streets who blaspheme. Fr. Maximilian's sensitivity and deep desire that everyone knows the love of the Lord and the Immaculate is astonishing.

We see him as a young friar engaged in the editorial activity in Niepokalanów, gently supporting with kind and sincere gestures his brothers engaged in apostolic work and the hardships of life in the friary. The friars who lived with him in the Polish City of the Immaculata testify that each of the numerous religious men who shared his mission had for him great affection and esteem: he loved everyone and valued each individual for his unique talents. One day, while he was the superior of Niepokalanów, Fr. Maximilian took care of the friars in the bakery who risked getting sick due to their strenuous physical activity. He purchased for them a



kneading machine that is still used today to make bread. That rudimentary machinery is a hymn to the kindness and care of the Saint, manifested in small everyday incidents.

In Auschwitz, Fr. Maximilian took care of those with physical and spiritual difficulties, giving generously to support those who were tested the most. Those who have admired Fr. Maximilian in the concentration camp, testify that he radiated charity even before his supreme act of martyrdom.

The love of Fr. Kolbe is able to radiate sentiments of unity and to make harmony reign also between people of different faiths and backgrounds. That happened in Japan, where he was dedicating himself to the printing work and the spreading of the *Knight of the Immaculata* magazine. His first collaborators were people and believers from a very different background. Yet, he was able to establish harmony and balance through small and significant actions of deep charity. St. John Paul II rightly said, "From the years of his youth, Maximilian was filled with the great love of Christ and the desire for martyrdom. This love and this desire accompanied him along the path of his Franciscan and priestly vocation, for which he prepared himself both in Poland and in Rome. This love and this desire followed him through all the places of his priestly and Franciscan service in Poland and in

January 8, 1984-2015
 St. Maximilian 121st
 Birthday

The soul offers to the Immaculate its own acts of love not as one consigns an object to just any intermediary, but as her property, as her complete and exclusive property, since it understands that the Immaculate offers to Jesus these acts as if they were her own, which means that she offers them without stain, immaculate; Jesus, then, offers them to the Father.
 —St. Maximilian Kolbe

his missionary service in Japan" (*Homily* on the occasion of the canonization of St. Maximilian Kolbe).

The testimony of Father Kolbe shows us that: day by day we are committed to patiently build a "web" of small gestures of kindness to help spread unity. Fraternal communion ought to be fostered also toward those who may be considered "enemies". In a December 1922 issue of the *Knight of the Immaculata* magazine we find these very strong expressions of St. Maximilian, where his benevolence extends not only to the magazine's supporters, but also to those who opposed it. "We thank you very much and express a hearty "God bless you" through the Immaculata to all those who in some way, with the advice, pen, or any activity helped the *Knight* in his fight for the highest spiritual ideals. However, we do not wish well only to these people. With the same love we turn to those who have been enemies of the *Knight* and even to

those who tried to hinder its publication. To all of them we wholeheartedly offer our forgiveness (...)"(Kolbe Writings, # 1021).

The teaching of the Polish martyr is particularly bright for the people of today, often caught up in selfishness and self-affirmation. St. Maximilian teaches us that in order to build bridges of unity it is essential to make everyday gestures inspired by charity and great respect for others. In the multicultural society in which we live, the proposal seems particularly timely. Believers in Christ can rediscover the beauty of communion among them from simple everyday gestures that strengthen the bonds of charity within the community of believers and society in general.

-Fr. Raffaele Di Muro,
 MI International Assistant

Translated by Ada Locatelli



For Reflection

- ⚔ What are the small gestures by which I seek to spread sentiments of unity and charity?
- ⚔ Do I believe in the unity of all believers and the new harmony that can liberate humanity from selfishness and the desire to control others?
- ⚔ What does the example of St. Maximilian tell me? What aspect of his life speaks more clearly to me about unity?
- ⚔ Does my membership in the MI encourage me to be an honest brother and builder of good to all the people I meet?
- ⚔ How do I seek to overcome the "barriers" that stand between me and my brothers and sisters in the faith?



Pope Francis for the Feast of the Holy Family Dec 28, 2014 Reflection on Luke 2: 22-40

They do not stand out to the eye, they can't be distinguished. Yet they do not go unnoticed! Two elderly people, Simeon and Anna, moved by the Holy Spirit, approach them and begin to praise God for that Child, in which they recognize the Messiah, light of the peoples and salvation of Israel (cfr Lk 2,22-38). It is a simple moment but rich in prophecy: the meeting between a young couple full of joy and faith for the graces of the Lord and two elderly people also full of joy and faith for the actions of the Spirit. Who brings them together? Jesus! Jesus brings them together, the youth and the elderly. Jesus is the One who brings the generations together. He is the source of that love that unites families and people, overcoming all mistrust, all isolation, every distance. This makes us reflect on grandparents: how important is their presence, the presence of grandparents! How precious is their role within the family and society! The good relation between youth and the elderly is decisive for the path of the civil and ecclesial community. And looking at these two elderly people, Simeon and Anna, we greet with applause all the grandparents of the world!

The message that comes from the Holy Family is above all a message of faith. In the family life of Mary and Joseph, God is truly at the center, and it is in the person of Jesus. This is why the Family of Nazareth is holy. Why? Because it is centered on Jesus!

When parents and children breathe together this climate of faith, they possess an energy that allows them to confront difficult trials, as shown by the experience of the Holy Family, for example, during the tragic event of the flight into Egypt: A hard trial.

The Child Jesus with his Mother Mary and with Saint Joseph are the icon of the family, simple yet illuminating. The light they radiate is a light of mercy and salvation for the whole world, a light of truth for every man, for the human family and for individual families. This light that comes from the Holy Family encourages us to offer human warmth in those family situations in which, for various reasons, lack peace, lack harmony and lack forgiveness. Our concrete solidarity does not fail especially in the challenges of the families that are living in more difficult situations due to sickness, lack of work, discrimination, the need to migrate. And here we pause for a moment and in silence, we pray for all these families in difficulty. Be it difficulties of sickness, lack of work, discrimination, the need to migrate, be it the lack of understanding each other, as well as also disunion. In silence, we pray for all these families.



Prayer to the Holy Family for the Synod on the Family - October 2015

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
in you we contemplate
the splendor of true love,
to you we turn with trust.
Holy Family of Nazareth,
grant that our families too
may be places of communion and prayer,
authentic schools of the Gospel
and small domestic Churches.
Holy Family of Nazareth,



may families never again
 experience violence, rejection and division:
 may all who have been hurt or scandalized
 find ready comfort and healing.
 Holy Family of Nazareth,
 may the approaching Synod of Bishops
 make us once more mindful
 of the sacredness and inviolability of the family,
 and its beauty in God's plan.
 Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
 graciously hear our prayer.
 Amen.



MI News

MI "Domus Mariae" Village Houston, TX

MI Total Consecration, Sunday, December 7, 2014. Special Thanks to Fr. Alvaro Interiano for celebrating the Mass and the Total Consecration Ritual and for MI Members, Steve Lee, Tuffily Ellis and Charles Bienvenu for helping out!



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 enero del 2015

LLAMADOS A ILUMINAR LAS TINIEBLAS

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

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

Para que los que creen en Jesús tengan la certeza de que es posible alcanzar la unidad a través de gestos cotidianos de comunión. La comunión fraterna se realiza mediante los pequeños gestos de cada día. Lo enseña San Maximiliano Kolbe, cuya experiencia espiritual se caracterizó por una infinidad de actitudes simples que siembran comunión. Pensando en su experiencia en Roma, entre 1912 y 1917, el joven franciscano y futuro mártir de la caridad promueve la comunión entre sus jóvenes hermanos que en él ven un modelo de caridad y paciencia. Lo admiran por las calles de Roma, durante el paseo comunitario de los frailes en formación, en el reprender delicadamente a cuantos blasfeman y se dejan llevar por estas expresiones. Lo que sorprende es su sensibilidad y el deseo profundo de que todos conozcan el amor del Señor y de la Inmaculada.

Lo vemos como un joven fraile comprometido en la actividad de la prensa en Niepokalanów, en el sostener con gestos delicados y sinceros a sus hermanos comprometidos en el trabajo apostólico y en las fatigas de la vida en el convento. Los frailes que vivieron con él en la Ciudad de la Inmaculada polaca atestiguan que cada uno de los numerosos religiosos que compartieron su misión tenían por él un gran afecto y estima: a todos amaba y buscaba valorizar a partir de los talentos de cada uno. Un día, mientras tenía el servicio de guardia se dio cuenta que los

Intención mensual de la MI

Inmaculada, por favor intercede...

que todos los creyentes en Cristo sean persuadidos a creer que los actos de comunión mutua diaria contribuyen a avanzar la unión de entre los cristianos.

hermanos panaderos se arriesgaban a enfermarse debido a su agotadora actividad física y compró para ellos una máquina amasadora que todavía hoy se utiliza para confeccionar el pan.

Aquella maquinaria rudimentaria es un himno a la bondad y al caridad del santo que se manifiesta en las pequeñas vivencias de cada día. En Auschwitz se encargó de todos los que tienen dificultades físicas y espirituales acompañando de diversos modos a aquellos que eran mayormente probados. Los que conocieron a Maximiliano en el campo de concentración atestiguan que la luz de la caridad se irradiaba aún antes del acto supremo del martirio. El amor del Padre Kolbe es capaz de irradiar sentimientos de unidad y hacer reinar la armonía también entre personas de credos y procedencias diferentes. Eso ocurre en Japón cuando está comprometido con el trabajo de la prensa y en la difusión de *El Caballero de la Inmaculada*. Sus primeros colaboradores son de procedencias y pensamientos muy diferentes de las suyas, sin embargo logra crear armonía y equilibrio a través de las pequeñas y significativas acciones de profunda caridad. San Juan Pablo II afirmó justamente: «Desde los años de la juventud lo invadía un gran amor a Jesús y un gran deseo de martirio. Este amor y este deseo lo acompañaron a lo largo del camino de su vocación franciscana y sacerdotal, a la cual se preparaba tanto en Polonia como en Roma. Este amor y este deseo lo siguieron a través de todos los lugares del servicio sacerdotal y franciscano en Polonia, y también en el servicio misionero en Japón» (Homilía en ocasión de la canonización de San Maximiliano Kolbe, n. 4).






El testimonio del Padre Kolbe va en esta dirección: día a día estamos comprometidos a construir con paciencia una «telaraña» de pequeñas actitudes de bondad que contribuyen a transmitir sentimientos de unidad. La comunión fraterna se favorece también hacia aquellos que pueden ser considerados «enemigos». Son muy fuertes estas expresiones de San Maximiliano, escritas en *El Caballero de la Inmaculada* (en su edición polaca) en diciembre de 1922, donde extiende su benevolencia no solo a quienes sostienen la revista sino también a aquellos que se oponen: «Damos muchas gracias y un cordial “Dios se lo pague” a través de la Inmaculada a todos aquellos que de alguna manera, con el consejo, la pluma, o cualquier actividad han ayudado al *Caballero* en su lucha por los más altos ideales espirituales. Sin embargo, nosotros no deseamos lo mejor solo para estas personas. Con la misma caridad nos dirigimos a quienes han sido enemigos del *Caballero* e incluso a quienes han hecho lo posible para que no saliera. A todos ellos los perdonamos de corazón (...))» (EK 1021).

La enseñanza del mártir polaco es particularmente luminosa para las personas de hoy, a menudo «contaminadas» por la manía de egoísmo y autoafirmación. El santo nos enseña que para construir puentes de unidad es fundamental realizar gestos cotidianos inspirados en la caridad y el máximo respeto al prójimo. En la sociedad multicultural en la que vivimos, la propuesta de Kolbe nos parece particularmente actual. Los creyentes en Cristo pueden redescubrir la belleza de la comunión entre ellos desde los más simples gestos cotidianos, que consolidan los vínculos de caridad al interno de la comunidad de los creyentes y de la sociedad en general.

- Traducido por Gabriela Rodríguez



Para la reflexión

-  Cuáles son los pequeños gestos mediante los cuales buscó difundir sentimientos de unidad y de caridad?
-  ¿Creo en la unidad de todos los creyentes y en la nueva armonía que puede liberar a la humanidad del egoísmo y del deseo de dominar a los demás?
-  ¿Qué me dice el ejemplo de San Maximiliano? ¿Qué aspecto de su vida me habla más claramente acerca de unidad?
-  ¿El pertenecer a la MI me estimula a ser hermano sincero y constructor de bien hacia las personas que encuentro?
-  ¿De qué manera busco superar las «barreras» que se interponen entre mí y mis hermanos en la fe?